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Home > Imam 'Ali Sunshine of Civilized Islam > Advent of Islam and the Role of Imam 'Ali (as) > The Battle of Nahrawan

Advent of Islam and the Role of Imam 'Ali (as)

The matter in hand is about Imam 'Ali (as), whose life was closely bound up with the first age of the history of Islam. All the necessary conditions gathered together and consequently made him a prodigy of learning.

He, who wishes to know and understand Islam, has to be familiar with Imam 'Ali's particulars because he was really the mirror, the echo and also the voice of Islam. His every word and deed was quite in accordance to the Holy Qur'an's injunctions.

It is likely that many of the readers know a little about Islam, therefore I have to give them an account of a short history about it with the intent of making them acquainted with Imam 'Ali. Then I shall explain some of his characteristics and to show you how he resisted difficulties and how he stood against unjust discriminations and partiality especially during his incumbency when he faced many problems.

After a great deal of time, 621 years after Christ, God gave a mission to Muhammad, His last Messenger, to guide people in the right way.

Muhammad (S), that great lawgiver, brought into existence a sudden and basic change in Arabia that was the most fundamental of all other social or religious movements, which have ever arisen all over the world.

He managed to lay the foundation of a new systematic ordinance that, within fifty years, gained supremacy over the great civilizations of Rome and Iran and it also had a great influence over the original rules of the Christian Europe, which is still new and novel until nowadays.

At an early part of the 20th century, a declaration was issued by the U.N. Organization concerning liberty and equality of mankind, whereas Islam had given women and girls the legal rights and independence in the economic matters fourteen centuries ago when they were buried alive because they were considered as troublesome and superfluous objects.

They were empowered to deal with their affairs independently and finally were entitled to ownership at

the same time, whereas in France, the cradle of liberty, women could not sell their properties without permission of their husbands until 1938.

According to the laws of ancient Iran and Rome a system of rights and privileges kept the casts separate from each other. A merchant could not marry a daughter of a nobleman and a nobleman could not marry a princess. Slaves and ordinary people could not mix with the noblemen as well.

But Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam (S), offered people a perfect and applicable religion that responded to the subjects of theological matters, social justice, economic affairs, equality and the rights of women in general and in detail.

It was rumored that there was a drought in Mecca and that Muhammad (S) went to his uncles Abbas and Hamzah with a proposal. He said to them, "Look, your brother Abu-Talib has a big family. Let us go to him and ask him to permit us adopting some of his children."

Finally Ja'far and Talib were adopted by Hamzah and Abbas whereas 'Ali (as) was brought up under the care of Muhammad when he was at the age of six. In this manner the foundation of the moral and spiritual education of this intelligent child was based near the Prophet of Islam, the greatest educator of mankind.

His mental faculties was to that extent that he believed in the Prophet at the age of 8, therefore he, on the contrary of the other companions of the Prophet, had never worshipped idols and never shared in unreasonable demands, oppressive treatments and unfair acts of chieftains.

A new religion with its rule of equity and brotherly love came severely in contact with the previous customs. The unbelievers closed all the doors of livelihood in front the believers. They left no deficiency in creating difficulties for them; therefore the Prophet had to invite people to theism in concealment.

The secret invitation took three years of time and then a verse came down from the Heaven:

"And warn your nearest relations and be kind to him who follows you of the believers" (26:214–215)

The Prophet's relations (Quraysh family) were the most obstinate opponents of him. They were also of property and influence. They were called to gather together in the house of the Prophet's uncle, Abu–Talib.

The Prophet decided to unveil what was concealed. After a primal speech about God and His attributes and after reproaching the idols and idolatry, he said:

"The first one among you, who believes in the unique God and adopts me as His Messenger, will be my successor."

No one of those, who were present, gave his adhesion except 'Ali ibn Abu-Talib (S).

As some of the great Sunni scholars mentioned that the proposal was repeated three times and there was only 'Ali, who answered affirmatively and said: "O the Prophet of Allah, I believe in Allah and His messenger and I will be your assistant towards difficulties".

The Prophet said: "I notify you of this fact that 'Ali ibn Abu-Talib will be my successor after my death" 1

It is memorable to be said that their paternal relation (Muhammad and 'Ali) was not the reason in accepting the new law by 'Ali (as).

Many other relatives were persistently faithful to their ancestral customs like Aqil, 'Ali's elder brother, who was with the enemies in the first war between the Muslims and the unbelievers of Quraysh (Badr battle).

But 'Ali ibn Abu-Talib on account of his natural genius, which he was gifted with by God, his education acquired from the Prophet (S) at the early part of his life and because of the influence of the Prophet's manner and behavior, all these factors, made him to meditate on the subject and believe in God.

After this meeting, the heathens, for the sake of safekeeping their position among people and their estates and also for stopping the development of Islam, made many troubles for the Muslims many times. All the devilish forces became armed to suppress this heavenly mission.

Not only the believers were put to torture, but also the Prophet himself was not accepted.

It was mentioned that the Prophet had said: "No Prophet has ever got hurt so much as I got".

In spite of many sufferings and restrictions, the Prophet would gradually gain power over the people by moral injunctions of the Holy Qur'an with his high- toned eloquence, his good humor and his laudable qualities.

The idolaters tried hard to dispense and dispirit the believers around the Prophet by force but their efforts were of no avail and the Muslims were regularly increasing.

Now the heathens' harshness got to that extent that many Muslims, by the permission of the Prophet, determined on emigrating towards Abyssinia to live in safety under the care of the king Negus.

Although the heathens did their best to dissuade the king from supporting the Muslims, they came to nothing.

Now thirteen years passed away in this manner until the notables of Mecca put their heads together to slay the Prophet because they denied Islam to be true. Forty persons of their great men gathered in a place and decided that one person should be selected from each tribe and that men should, altogether, attack the Prophet.

In this way the Hashemites (the Prophet's family) would not be able to face all the tribes and the matter would be settled down with payment of blood money and at the end they would get rid of this trouble.

Muhammad was informed of the plot by revelation and then he introduced the matter before 'Ali (as), who was the nearest to his heart, for seeking a remedy.

'Ali (as) volunteered to lie in the Prophet's bed even though there were great dangers impended over him. At last he did that risking his life and consequently the Prophet's life was saved.

When the plotters attacked the Prophet's bed and unsheathed their swords they found 'Ali (as) sleeping in the bed.

They asked: "Where is Muhammad (S)". 'Ali replied: "Had you entrusted me with him that you are asking me now".

They had no reply to this. They left seeking after the Prophet.

Imam 'Ali was highly praised by God on account of this devotion. The Holy Qur'an says:

"And among men is one who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah and Allah is affectionate to the servants". (2:207)

Many of the Sunni commentators2 confessed that the mentioned verse was due to 'Ali's dignity.

The Prophet emigrated towards Medina at the same night accompanied by Abu-Bakr.

This event made an epoch in the history of Islam and it was fixed as the Islamic date by the second caliph 'Umar (The Hijrah).

Imam 'Ali (as) after managing the Prophet's home affairs decided to migrate to Medina with Muhammad's household and other companions of the Prophet, who gave up their concerns and gradually set out to join the Prophet (S).

Following troubles and oppressions that were imposed on the Prophet in Mecca, the idolaters would incite the Jews and the nomads about Medina to kill and pillage the animals and the properties of the Muslims.

Several encounters took place in order to create disorder about Medina but the doers were chased by the companions of the Prophet and they fled away to the mountains and sheltered into the caves until the second year of Hijrah when the great men of Mecca decided to uproot the new ordinance and the believers totally.

The Battle of Badr

Now a well-appointed army including nine hundred and fifty men of experienced warriors made preparations to fight the Prophet. Among them were many of the most obstinate enemies of Islam who were of Muhammad's (S) cousins.

The Prophet was not ready for such a war. He sent them a message saying: "We have descended from one family and most of you are my paternal uncles and cousins. Leave me alone to encounter the Arabs. It will be your credit if I gain victory against them, but if I fail you will obtain your desire". He received no answer except a warlike reply and the Muslims were finally involved in the war.

Although the Prophet's army consisted of three hundred and thirteen men but they were more powerful than one thousand persons because of their faith in God and steadfastness in belief. These men of iron came before the enemy.

Three men of the most revengeful enemies of Islam; Utbah, his son Shaybah and his brother Waleed made an inroad, boasting about their riches and chieftaincy. They challenged three fighters of their rank because it would not fit them to fight common fighters as they thought.

'Ali (as), his uncle Hamzah and his cousin Ubaydah confronted them. 'Ali (as) encountered Waleed and inflicted a blow on his shoulder so that as the sword came out of his armpit and he ran away towards his father Utbah to seek refuge. 'Ali (as) chased him and, by another stroke on his thigh, killed him.

Then he went to help his uncle Hamzah, who was facing Shaybah. They had crossed swords with each other for some time to that extent that their swords broke and had started to grapple and punch each other.

Hamzah was a strapping man so that his enemy was not seen behind his back.

'Ali (as) said: "Mind your head, uncle". He immediately threw the enemy (Shaybah) down on the ground by a dint of his sword.

Utbah and Ubaydah both were brave and dauntless. When they were crossing swords with one another and the quarrel was still raging when Utbah was killed by a sudden attack but Ubaydah's leg was seriously injured. He died on his way back to Medina.

At last the two armies attacked each other by swords. High morale and spirit of self-sacrifice were seen among the Muslim so that when the dazzling and lightening of the swords finished, the killed warriors of the enemy were seventy. The history mentioned that half of them were killed by 'Ali's sword.

The enemy fled away from the field and seventy persons were taken as captives by the Islamic army.

Although the Muslims won the battle but the fate would be different if 'Ali (as) had not come to the field.

Most of the captives knew reading and writing. The Prophet's ordered to set free any captive, who would teach ten Muslims how to write and read.

Fraternization Among The Muslims

The Holy Qur'an says:

"The believers are but brethren, therefore make peace between your brothers and be careful of (your duty to) Allah that mercy may be had on you." (49:10).

Therefore the Prophet (S) directed the believers to brotherly, two by two, in an agreement of fraternization. The Prophet (S) fraternized between every two Muslims except 'Ali, who remained alone. He became depressed for that.

The Prophet said to him: "You are but my own brother and you are to me as Aaron was to Moses, but no Prophet will come after me". This is mentioned by many historians.3

This reliable tradition was an essential argument of the Shia to prove the immediate succession of Imam 'Ali (as) after the Prophet's death.

In the second year of Hijrah Imam 'Ali (as) got married to Fatima, the only daughter of the Prophet. She, because of her steady belief in God, her chastity and her virtuousness was unique among all classes of people.

The Prophet (S) had a great respect for her. She was requested to give her hand for marriage by some men of importance but Muhammad would not accede to their requests. In reply to the suitors, he used to say: "I am waiting for a call from the Heaven in regard to her marriage".

Eventually this glory was won by 'Ali (as).

The Battle Of Uhud

In the third year of Hijrah, the battle of Uhud took place. Many encounters happened after the battle of Badr and the Muslims drove the enemy back.

But the clan of Quraysh was always planning to take vengeance on Muhammad (S), therefore an army of five thousand strong warriors headed by Abu–Sufyan left Mecca to attack Medina.

The Prophet's army in consultation with the companions flew to arms and came out of Medina.

The two armies met near Uhud Mountain six kilometers far away from the city.

The bearer of the idolaters' banner was a brave man named Talhah ibn Abu-Talhah, who was

continuously challenging. 'Ali (as) came forward and as soon as Talhah saw Imam 'Ali he said: "Nobody else had courage to fight me except you".

The historians mentioned that 'Ali had killed him in the turning of a hand and then his brother lifted the banner and was killed by 'Ali too. Some other fighters of the same family were killed one by one and finally a huge slave with the intent of avenging his owners challenged. The historians mentioned that 'Ali (as) had divided him into two halves by the first strike of his sword as his body was still standing on the ground for a few moments.

The enemy, struck with terror, fled away from the field but suddenly an accident drew their attention.

A good few of the Muslims, about fifty persons, were keeping watch on a hilly narrow pass where the enemy might cross the hill and attack from behind the Muslims' back.

In spite of the Prophet's recommendations, they left the place to collect spoils when the enemy was running away.

Suddenly they saw that the place was without guardians and then the enemy seized the opportunity and passed along the mountain and made an attack upon the Muslims at the rear. In the meantime somebody cried loudly: "Muhammad was killed".

Soon after spreading this dreadful rumor the Muslims became struck with terror and drew swords among themselves. They left Muhammad (S) alone and ran away to the mountains except four or six persons, who remained to defend him.

Some of the Sunni historians mentioned: "All of the Prophet's army, even the great companions, escaped except 'Ali (as), Al-Zubayr, Talhah and Abu-Dajanah.

'Ali's sword was broken because of the sternness of the war. It was said that the sword named Thu'l–Fiqaar was put in his hand by an angel from the invisible world and then an unknown voice proclaimed: "There is no manly youth except 'Ali and there is no sword like Thu'l–Fiqaar". 4 One of the great fighters of Islam named Hamzah the Prophet's uncle was killed in this war. This bereavement left a deep impression on the Prophet's heart.

At last the Muslims were defeated in this battle but the enemy did not continue the war and left for Mecca without occupying the supportless Medina.

It was said that 'Ali (as) had received ninety sword cuts in this field and in spite of the much tiredness he did not stop his support to the Prophet (S) for an instant.

In the meanwhile Gabriel came down from the Heaven and said to Muhammad: "Look there, how 'Ali (as) fights in high spirit of sacrifice". The Prophet answered: "'Ali (as) is from me and I am from him". (We both have been brought into existence from the same (one) nature.)

The Battle of Khandaq

During the ten years, in which the Prophet was living in Medina, the Muslims received much harm from the idolaters of Mecca. The enemy did not let them rest in peace of mind as they had to endure many troubles and difficulties, because they were involved in more than seventy wars big or small at all times.

In the fifth year of Hijrah an army of ten thousand warriors set out towards Medina. The commander of this strong army was Abu–Sufyan, who had grudge against Muhammad. He had a family feud with him. Prophet, after consultation with his companions, was determined on digging a ditch around Medina to hold back the enemy.

Amr ibn Abd-Widd, whose heroic fame was trumpeted throughout Arabia, in concert with four other fighters, leaped on the hither side of the moat by horse. Amr, exclaiming in a bad state of anger, challenged loudly.

The Muslims were too much frightened when this fearless hero appeared in the field. Nobody was ready to fight him. Amr said: "Where is that paradise you desire to go to and take pleasure forever? I am seeking after a man, who can manage me".

There was no any answer except by 'Ali (as), who proclaimed his readiness. "Be seated 'Ali, he is Amr". The Prophet said and turned his face towards his companions saying: "Who is ready to get us rid of this wicked man".

As often as Amr challenged, 'Ali (as) was in readiness to face him. At last he obtained permission from the Prophet and was as happy to fight the enemy as a prisoner getting released from jail.

'Ali (as), at the age of 25, faced the robust hero of Arabia, who was an old hand in fighting. He was awkwardly despised by Amr. But Amr did not know that this young fellow might be more courageous than him.

Amr, at first, was sympathetic for 'Ali, who had come to meet death at the beginning of his life as he thought. He said to him: "You are too young to combat me. Who are you?" "I am 'Ali ibn Abu-Talib." He replied.

As soon as Amr heard this name he became a little shocked and with disappointment said: "Your father was my close friend and I dislike shedding blood of a young man like you. It would be better if one of your uncles came to the field".

'Ali (as) said: "Leave off the silly talks. I regard it as a duty to kill you for the sake of Allah." He added: "As I know, you grant one of the three requests of your opposite combatant in the battlefield. Now you

grant one of my three wishes. Firstly leave off idolatry and come to be a Muslim."

Amr replied: "I will never believe in Muhammad. What is the next request?"

'Ali (as) said: "Change your mind and desist from fighting or come down from your horse because I am on foot."

Amr said: "It will be disgraceful for my family if the people say that Amr is frightened by an inexperienced young man." He dismounted and rushed towards 'Ali (as) with a drawn sword. 'Ali (as) covered his head with a shield. The stroke was so strong that the shield was torn and his blessed head got a little hurt.

'Ali (as) struck Amr's thigh and the illustrious hero fell down on the ground.

When the battlefield was cleared of dusts, the Muslims became so delighted when they saw 'Ali (as) sitting on the chest of Amr and was going to cut off his head from the body.

Amr, at his last gasp, made his will that his valuable cloths and weapons not to be taken up.

'Ali acceded to his request and said: "It is too easy for me to forget it."

Then those four men who had escorted Amr ran away to pass over the ditch. One of them, when trying to escape, fell down into the ditch. The Muslims began to stone him but he bade defiance to a man to fight him.

'Ali (as) came into the ditch and killed him with one stroke of his sword.

Some Sunni historians mentioned that the Prophet had said: "The value of 'Ali's stroke, before God, on the day of the ditch is more than the obedience of the two world's creatures (the angels and the human beings)."

Amr, who was the only hope of the idolaters of Quraysh, was unexpectedly killed and consequently they were seized with deep fright. Abu–Sufyan was surprised how to help the situation. At the same time a bad storm arose and he decided to go back to Mecca. He delivered a short speech and following the whole army left the place.

This battle was also called the battle of al-Ahzab (the parties) because many groups of the Jews and the nomads of about Mecca and Medina had taken part in this war.

Although the Jews had signed previously a defensive contract to guard Medina against dangers, they, as always, had broken their promises and used to send arms to Mecca secretly. They were regularly in treaty with the idolaters; therefore the Muslims could not find peace of mind. Muhammad (S) decided to bring them down to their knees and eventually declared the war against them in the year 7 A.H.

The Jews were afraid of the Islam's progress because they were blinded by prejudice and it also was

contrary to their great interests.

There was a habitable and fortified place at a distance of 86 Km from Medina named Khaybar. The Jews cultivated the lands around the forts.

The Muslims, headed by the Prophet, got at Khaybar and encamped opposite to the forts. When the Jews knew the matter they ran away into the forts to prepare for the war.

There was a fortified castle, named Qamus, where all the Jews gathered into it.

The Muslims were kept on waiting for three weeks to open the fort but they succeeded in nothing.

Abu–Bakr and 'Umar started their fight but they were defeated7 by the Jews.

At-Tabari, a Sunni historian, had recorded that when 'Umar came back from the field he frightened the Muslims of the bravery of Marhab the commander of the Jews.

The Prophet said: "Tomorrow I will give the banner to a man, who loves God and His messenger and God and His messenger love him too."8

On the next day the Prophet sought after 'Ali (as), who was suffering from a sore-eye. The Prophet prayed Allah so that Imam 'Ali's eyes might be recovered. Imam 'Ali became well immediately. At last the banner was given to him and he set out for the war.

Marhab was the bravest of all the fighters among the Jews. He was well-known for his valor. 'Ali (as) paced towards the forts and, suddenly the big gate of Qamus was opened and a few combatants came out.

Harith, the brother of Marhab, suddenly cried a terrific cry that the companions of 'Ali (as) went back a little, but 'Ali (as) stood against him. They fought each other and finally Harith was killed by 'Ali's sword.

Now 'Ali (as) faced Marhab. And as it was at those days Marhab began to recite some epic verses.

He said: "As long as Khaybar remembers that I am an experienced man in the war and those, who encounter me, will be stained by their own blood."

'Ali (as), in reply to him, said: "I am a man, whose name is Haydar (that is to say: a lion that attacks repeatedly and will never escape from the hunting– ground)."

Marhab turned about with his horse to run away because he had heard his Jewish rabbi saying that he would be killed by a man named Haydar.

But he came back towards 'Ali (as) talking with himself: "There are many "Haydars" in the world. It is not certain that this is the very one."

Anyhow he was furious because of his brother's death and he wanted to revenge upon 'Ali (as) but 'Ali (as) killed him by a sudden push. The Jews fled away into the fort and closed the door from inside. At last 'Ali went towards the door and pulled at it by all of his might and threw it aside.

In this manner he opened the way for his men to rush into the fort. All castles were opened and many of the Jews were captured. The godly men and the great leaders treated the powerless and defeated enemy kindly and dispensed them with vengeance.

The Prophet of Islam acceded the Jews' request when they asked him to let them remain in the place, provided that they became disarmed, and not to assist the idolaters of Mecca and to pay the half of their production to the Muslims.

There was a productive area near Khaybar called Fadak, about 140 km. far from Medina, where the Jews made a good living by farming. They were in ease and comfort.

The Prophet, intending to frustrate any scheme against Islam, sent a word to the dean of the area to be put under the protection of Islam against the invaders. On condition that he would not make any plot against the Muslims and that he would pay the half of the income of their fields to the Islamic government, the Prophet would guarantee the security of the area.

As the religious laws provided, the regions, which were conquered by military forces belonged to the Muslims in general as public purse, but the lands which were taken without expedition and bloodshed belonged to the Prophet himself and then to his rightful successors.

The Prophet might donate his properties to everyone he liked.

Some of the Muslim interpreters9 mentioned that when the verse:

"And give to the near of kin his due and to the needy and the wayfarer and do not squander wastefully" 10

Was revealed, the Prophet called for his daughter Fatima and gave her Fadak.

At a later period, she was dispossessed from it at the day of the first caliph Abu–Bakr for certain reasons of political purpose.11

Of course the object of the author's intent is not historiography, since this book is about a man of a high rank in Islam, whose deeds and words were governed by the Islamic principles and Qur'an and he also was attendant with the Prophet step by step since childhood, therefore I have to give the readers some passages of the Islamic history to depict his personality as far as possible.

The Battle of Thaat As-Salasil

In the eighth year A.H., a force of twelve thousand men united in a league to attack Medina at night. Their decision was only to kill the Prophet and his minister 'Ali. Some of the Muslim scholars were under impression that the Prophet was acquainted with the situation by revelation but in the meanwhile the plot was reported to him by some spies, who lived about Mecca.

The Prophet put the matter before the crowd in the mosque for discussion and then Abu–Bakr was ordered to fight against them with an army of four thousand strong warriors.

Abu-Bakr advanced with his men slowly until they came into view of the enemy. Now two hundred horsemen came before Abu-Bakr and said: "We have prepared for this war just to kill Muhammad or his cousin 'Ali. What do you mean by bringing this army?"

Abu-Bakr said: "I have been ordered to propose Islam to you and if you refuse it I will fight you."

They reviewed their army with its high power and ability and hereby Abu-Bakr was frightened and decided to go back to Medina.

The return of the army, in that bad state, depressed the Prophet deeply. Then 'Umar was appointed as commander. He also succeeded in nothing and came back in the same state as Abu–Bakr did.

At last 'Ali ibn Abu-Talib was called upon and after a short discussion with the Prophet he was ordered to face the enemy.

'Ali (as), on the contrary to the two previous commanders, carried his men through a short cut with all speed to go unexpectedly upon them. He used to move at night until he came into sight of the enemy.

Again two hundred knights came and asked him:

"Who are you?"

He replied: "My name is 'Ali, the son of Abu-Talib. I invite you to resign yourselves to Islam."

They said: "You are our aim. We will kill you and your men by all means. The fixed time for meeting will be tomorrow at noon."

'Ali (as) said: "What ails you, woe be to you. You threaten me with killing. I will fight you tomorrow at the time."

In the same evening, according to 'Ali's command, the Muslims fed their horses and prepared their defensive position to fight the obstinate enemy. When daybreak appeared, the Muslims offered the prayer with the leadership of 'Ali (as) and then they made a sudden attack upon the enemy while it was

still dark.

The rear guards had not yet entered into the field when a great number of the enemy was killed by the vanguard and many of them were bound with ropes and chains.

The captives with their cattle were carried to Medina. The Prophet, accompanied by the believers, went out of the city to meet 'Ali (as) and his honored army.

'Ali (as) arrived at Medina, amid acclamation of the crowd, with a great deal of spoils of war. The above tradition was quoted from the reliable sources of the Shia. It was somehow different from what the Sunni scholars had mentioned.

The residential quarters of the enemy were stony places that there were sparks arising when the horses' hooves hit the stones. The horses were gasping too.

This self-sacrifice was so worthy of praise that a surah was revealed from the Heaven about this feat and other devoted soldiers. The Holy Qur'an says:

"I swear by the runners breathing pan tingly, then those that produce fire striking, then those that make raids at morn, then thereby raise dust, then rush thereby upon an assembly. Most surely man is ungrateful to his Lord". (100:1–6).

Most of the commentators believed that this surah was revealed to praise 'Ali (as) .

The Battle of Mu'tah

There was somewhat a peaceful time all over Arabia at the beginning of the eighth year of Hijrah. Neither the Jews in the north nor the idolaters of Mecca caused any threat to the Muslims.

At the same time something happened that made the Prophet (S) dispatch a force towards the frontier countries of Syria.

The Prophet had sent to Damascus a man for preaching but before getting there he was killed by a frontier official. At the same time sixteen persons, who had gone there for the same purpose, were killed in that area. The place where they were killed in was called Mu'tah.

A host of three thousand men set out to Mu'tah to avenge the murder of the killed persons under the command of Ja'far the full brother of 'Ali (as).

The Prophet delivered a short speech in the camp. He said: "You are going to the same place where your brothers have been killed. You go ahead and invite them to believe in God. If they do not refuse you should dispense with the revenge, otherwise you fight them for the sake of Allah to punish God's enemies. But remember that you are not to disturb the monks and nuns, who live away from the social

life in monasteries. You are not to kill children, women and old men. Be careful not to ruin houses and farms".

The Syrian government was well-informed of the Muslim's bravery and self-sacrifice and also their success in the war against the Arab tribes.

In spite of the fact that these two armies (the Romans and the Muslims) were incomparable in equipment's and persons but the Muslims showed an extra sacrifice and took toll from the enemy.

Now some groups of Muslims left the battlefield for a farther place at midnight and decided to call out with the motto of "*la ilaha illa* (*A*)*llah*" (there is no any God but Allah). They hereby made the enemy think that an auxiliary force would come to help the Muslims and consequently the Syrians stopped attacking the Muslims for two days. This wise tactic helped them to seize the opportunity and to leave the field for Medina.

Although the Muslims did not get a good result in this battle, but the fame and reputation of Islam was trumpeted abroad and it opened a way for next publicities.

The Great Conquest of Mecca

In the same year the Prophet conquered Mecca by his good management without killing or bloodshed. Mecca was the place where Muhammad and his companions were badly harmed by the idolaters of Quraysh since the beginning of the Prophet Hood and it was a safe place for his enemies to plot against him for more than ten years. Now it became in the Prophet's control.

According to the agreement made before, neither the Muslims nor the idolaters should assist or interfere in the internal affairs of the confederate tribes of each other but they had helped their confederates against the Prophet's allies and consequently many of them were killed.

They asked the Prophet for help to avenge themselves upon the idolaters.

On the other hand the people of Quraysh had repented of their behavior because their acts were opposite to the agreement between them.

Therefore in order to restrain the Prophet's anger and to strengthen the previous relations, Abu–Sufyan, the chief of Quraysh, whose hostile behavior had troubled the Muslims more than ten years, made his mind to go towards Medina to apologize in the presence of the Prophet and meanwhile to give the Muslims a guarantee against any attack.

The Prophet (S) remained silent and did not show any response. Then Abu–Sufyan came out of the mosque and set out straight to Mecca.

Now the Prophet, with the intent of conquering, Mecca had to notify the Muslims of a public mobilization

and for this purpose he sent a word to them saying: "Every one, who has faith in God, has to arm himself secretly and to be ready for the war."

Thereafter many watchmen were put in some places to have control over the roads so that nobody could carry news to Mecca.

Four thousand well-armed men gathered in Medina and a force of six thousand men from different tribes joined them along the way.

The people of Mecca were quite unaware of such an army that was headed by the Prophet himself and was going to occupy there.

Now Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, who was so respected by Quraysh, had left Mecca towards Medina. It happened that he met the Prophet in the midway. He had to be in Mecca because would spy for the Prophet and thereafter he went along with the Prophet.

The Prophet led the Muslims forward until they became near Mecca. In order to frighten the people of Mecca the Prophet ordered his soldier to set fire to some firewood on the hills.

Abbas separated from the Prophet to seek after someone, who could alarm the people of Quraysh about the powerfulness and greatness of the Prophet's army and to report to them that submission would be the only remedy.

At the same time Abu–Sufyan was out of Mecca for inquiring into the circumstances of the town. Abbas recognized his voice when he was talking with another man. Abbas called him and said to him quietly: "There are ten thousand armed and armored persons escorting the Prophet. They are at call and ready to devote themselves heartily for the sake of Muhammad. Surely Quraysh is not able to stand against them. As you see many dangers impend upon your tribe. You would better go to declare the shahada before the Prophet now."

Abu-Sufyan accepted it reluctantly but he began to shudder with fear all this while. Abbas, in order to terrify him, took him through the crowd to see the greatness and the glory of the Prophet's army. Finally they were admitted to meet the Prophet. After some words between them Abu-Sufyan eventually submitted.

Hereupon the Prophet declared: "Whoever takes refuge in Kaabah or in Abu-Sufyan's house will be safe. Those, who lay down their arms and announce their impartiality, will be in safeguard by the Muslims."

Although Abu–Sufyan pretended that he was a Muslim, but in fact he had no faith in Islam. The Prophet made use of that to conquer Mecca without bloodshed because the idolaters of Quraysh would never take any decision independently without Abu–Sufyan's consultation.

At any rate he went on the errand to put up his perceptions for discussion with Quraysh. At first, they did not think that it was true and they reproached him. They insisted on standing against the Muslims but when they received the same news from the others, they submitted to the truth.

At last the Prophet (S) rode on his camel, surrounded by five thousands armed men, and arrived at Mecca with magnificence beyond description.

The people of Mecca had such weak morale that no one could resolve on standing against the Muslims.

Now the Muslims occupied the town, which was the center of polytheism and idolatry for a long time. The Prophet, after a short rest, proceeded on pilgrimage to the great mosque of Kaabah (al-Masjid al-Haram). He, at the first instance, broke up the idols one by one by his lance. 'Ali (as) helped him all the while. Some big idols were planted above the Kaabah. 'Ali (as) was ordered to stand up on the blessed shoulders of the Prophet to throw them down.

Certainly 'Ali was the only one, who won the honor of standing on the shoulders of the Prophet (S). Then the Prophet faced the people and said: "You did evil to me. You denied my mission. You brought me many troubles and forced me to leave my home for Medina. You very often did not let me be safe. You incited different tribes as well as the Jews to fight the Muslims and many of them were killed before my eyes".

Now those present people began to recall their offences. They were talking to themselves: "Certainly he will put us all to the sword or we may be jailed and our wives and children may be taken as captives."

They were immersed in such thoughts when suddenly the Prophet (S) broke the silence and said: "How do you think about me and what do you say now?"

The whole people, as one man, replied: "We think highly of you and we do not know anything except goodness and favor of you. You are our great and dear brother".

The Prophet, who was kind by nature, said: "Now I say just what my brother Josef (the prophet) said to his cruel brothers (as the Holy Qur'an says):

"He said: (There shall be) no reproof against you this day; Allah may forgive you, and He is the most Merciful of the merciful". 12

I already notify you to go on your living. Now all of you are free.

In order to beware that his relatives and kinsmen might misuse his position, the Prophet delivered a short speech among the members of his family. He condemned injustice and unjust discriminations and alluded to the necessity of spreading justice and equity among all the classes of people. He said: "O sons of Hashim, 13 I am the messenger of God to all human beings. No family relation has any effect on one's punishment on the Day of Resurrection. Everybody will be answerable for his own acts. Being of

The Prophet's Historical Speech In Kaabah

A great crowd of the people of Mecca and the new comers had been gathered in the mosque when the Prophet (S) determined on giving a lecture to show the people a glimpse of Islam.

At that time one of the greatest and rooted bigotry of the Arab society was self-glorification or being related to a well-known tribe such as Quraysh. The Prophet, in order to overthrow these bad traditions, said to the people: "O people, God wanted to remove haughtiness, selfishness and self-glorification among you by revealing Islam. Verily you were descended from Adam and Adam was created of mud. The best of you is that, who avoids sins."

This saying meant that the bases of superiority and personality were virtue and purity.

Then he added: "O people, being Arab is not the ground of personality and it is not an integral part of your nature but it is only a speaking language. It doesn't benefit you in the afterlife if you leave your duties. You will never attain your personal merit by self– glorification of being related to certain ancestors but by spreading equity and justice among mankind.

In order to spread equality between the blacks and the whites, the Prophet added: "In fact people are like the teeth of a comb. There is no superiority for the Arabs to the non– Arabs or for the whites to the blacks. The basis of supremacy is virtuousness. The whole human beings are identical with each other before God. The best one is that, who renounces disobeying God."

The Prophet thereby cancelled all formal distinctions and being proud of parentage. He said: "The whole human beings are descended from Adam and Adam had been created of mud by The Supreme creator."

The Battle of Hunayn

Now the most tribes of Arabia had turned Muslims except two tribes; Thaqeef and Hawazin. They were strong enough and had resided about Ta'if, a country place in the east and north east of Mecca. When they knew that the Muslims had conquered Mecca, they decided to attack it before the Prophet would declare war against them. The matter was reported to the Prophet (S) by the spies; therefore he set out towards them with a strong army of twelve thousand men.

Some other Arab families joined Thaqeef and Hawazin. They were about thirty thousand men accompanied by their households and cattle. They came to a wide area named Hunayn. The Muslims had to pass a narrow valley to get to Hunayn. The enemy came down from the rear mouth of the valley and hid themselves behind big stones and rocks in the slopes.

When the Muslims came in sight, the enemy attacked them by a shower of stones and arrows.

Consequently the Muslims were frightened. They escaped and left the Prophet alone.

Only a few ones; 'Ali (as), Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, ibn Harith, the Prophet's cousin, Al-Fadhl ibn Abbas and Abdullah ibn Mas'ud stood against the enemy before the Prophet (S). The historians mentioned that forty warriors had been killed by 'Ali(S).

A gigantic man, mounting on a red camel and trying from behind to send the Muslims into troubles, came to face 'Ali (as). 'Ali (as) at first cut off his camel's leg and then halved him into two by his sword.

The Prophet (S) and his uncle Abbas called repeatedly upon the runaways to come back to the field. They came back and forced the enemy to retreat and to run away towards Ta'if.

The Muslims gained great spoils; forty thousand sheep, twenty-four thousand camels, a good quantity of silverwares and six thousand persons as captives.

The Muslims chased the runaway enemy unto Ta'if but they had to waste a long time in order to conquer its strong fort. Hereon, they, according to the Prophet's command, went back to Medina for performing other essential affairs.

The Battle of Tabouk

When Islam appeared there were two great powers on this side of the earth; the Romans and the Persians.

The Roman soldiers were well experienced in the wars and at the same time, they had won the war against Iran. Syria and the eastern parts of the Mediterranean were the colonies of Rome, under the Byzantine rule. There was a fortress at the boundary between Syria and the land of Hijr named Tabouk, which the Prophet of Islam had come to conquer it.

The quick growth and the splendid conquests of the Muslims in Arabia had made the Emperor of Rome seek a remedy to stem the tide of Islam's progress. He was afraid especially of Muhammad's influence upon people. Therefore the Romans decided to harass the Muslims in order to be safe from their troubles. Such news was carried to Medina by some commercial caravans.

The Prophet sent someone to Mecca and about Medina to call every one, who had faith in God, to gather in Medina in order to be ready for the war. This invitation gained ready acceptance of the Muslims. About thirty thousand persons gathered to fight the enemy.

This expedition was very difficult for the Muslims because the weather was too hot and they had to go for a long distance through a torrid zone to Tabouk where the Romans encamped. It was also the time of harvest and they would have to harvest their farms' products.

There were some hypocrites among the Prophet's companions, who used to injure the Muslims by sabotage. They tried to discourage people with various excuses, like the hotness, the too far distance and the huge numbers of the enemy, but their attempt was in vain.

When they knew that the Prophet had decided to set out to the battlefield, they planned to rush upon his house in Medina during his absence. The Prophet (S) perceived their plan and determined to leave 'Ali (as) as his successor in Medina to safeguard his family. The Prophet got ready for the task of Tabouk.

The hypocrites were displeased with the stay of 'Ali (as) in Medina; therefore they began to spread false rumors such as that 'Ali was ordered to take part in this troublesome war but he refused because this war was really insupportable and that the Prophet (S) was displeased with him.

'Ali (as), in order to rebut this accusation, told the Prophet (S) of what they rumored and asked him to let him go to the war.

The Prophet said to 'Ali (as): "O my brother, go back to Medina because nobody else is well-qualified to keep Medina safe except I and you. You are to take care of my house during my absence." Then he added: "Are you not satisfied to be to me as Aaron was to Moses? But there will be no prophet after me."

This Prophet's word is also one of the main arguments of the Shia in proving the immediate succession of Imam 'Ali after the Prophet's death.

Finally the Prophet's men, with troubles beyond endurance, arrived at Tabouk. It was a surprise to them when they saw no enemy soldiers in and about Tabouk.

They thought that the enemy might go back or that the whole information that the Prophet was told of was false.

The Prophet (S) stopped there about twenty days and received no news about the enemy. At the same time he was in contact with the chieftains of various tribes and he made treaty with them, because they were mostly Christians and it was possible that the Romans would make use of them in the future.

The Prophet, after consulting with his companions, came back towards Medina.

Although some hypocrites resolved upon killing him on his way back by stampeding his camel in the slope of a valley, their plan was surfaced and the Prophet saved his life.

Although this expedition did not get any result but it made everyone understand that the power of Islam had got to an extent that the Muslims could fly to arms and defy the great powers like the Romans. Consequently many headstrong chiefs of the Arab tribes came near the Prophet and resigned themselves to God and believed in him.

On the other hand the Muslims proved by experience that they could resist difficulties when they would set out to conquer Syria in the future.

Declaration of Immunity For The Idolaters

At the end of the ninth year of Hijrah, Gabriel came down from the Heaven with some verses of the Holy Qur'an and hereby the Prophet was ordered to send someone to Mecca in order to inform the people of the purport of the verses, which had four orders to be declared.

The verses are:

- 1-"(This is a declaration of) immunity by Allah and His apostle towards those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement".
- 2-"So go about in the land for four months and know that you cannot weaken Allah and that Allah will bring disgrace to the unbelievers".
- 3-"And an announcement from Allah and His apostle to the people on the day of the greater pilgrimage that Allah and His apostle are free from liability to the idolaters; therefore if you repent, it will be better for you, and if you turn back, then know that you will not weaken Allah; and announce painful punishment to those, who disbelieve".
- 4-"Except those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement, then they have not failed you in anything and have not backed up any one against you, so fulfill their agreement to the end of their term; surely Allah loves those who are careful (to their duty)".
- 5- "So when the sacred months have passed away, then slay the idolaters wherever you find them and take them captives and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush, then if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, leave their way free to them, surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful".

The Charter was as follows:

- 1-It was forbidden for the idolaters to go nakedly around the Kaabah.
- 2–The idolaters would not have the right to enter into the sacred places.
- 3-No one of the idolaters would have the right to take part in the ceremonies of the greater Hajj.
- 4–The lives and the wealth of those, who have concluded the peace contract and have not broken their promises, would be protected until the end of the contract.

The Prophet sought after Abu-Bakr and gave him the verses of the Holy Qur'an enclosed with the

charter to announce them to the unbelievers of Mecca. He set out towards Mecca with forty persons. Then Gabriel came down and said to the Prophet: "O Muhammad, either you yourself or the nearest one to you of your family ought to perform this task."

The Holy Qur'an says:

"Nor does he (the Prophet) speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed, the Lord of Mighty Power has taught him". (53:3–5)

Imam 'Ali (as) was ordered by the Prophet to set out to Mecca to follow after Abu–Bakr in order to take the verses from him and that he (Imam 'Ali) himself should inform of the declaration on the day of the greater Hajj.

The task was fulfilled well by Imam 'Ali (as) in the place where many houses had lost one or two persons in the wars by his sword.

Many groups of the idolaters were directed to godliness by this declaration as the idolatry was rooted up all over Arabia before the end of the tenth year A.H.

The First Meeting With The Christians

There was a flourishing country between Arabia and Yemen named Najran where the Christians were living at that time. The Prophet of Islam sent a letter to them for preaching purposes like the letters that had been sent to the rulers of the adjoining countries formerly. The bishop of Najran named Abu Harithah put the matter for discussion before the great religionists.

A man of mind and intelligence named Shurahbeel in reply to the bishop said: "We have heard our religious leaders saying that someday the Prophethood would be transferred from Isaac's generation to the sons of Ishmael and we should not be surprised that Muhammad (S), who was one of descendants of Ishmael, might be the very Prophet, whom our fore great religionists had informed of. I propose that a mission of some wise men is to be sent to Medina to consider what Muhammad (S) claims. It seems to be reasonable."

The mission arrived at Medina and went straight to the mosque. The Prophet, contrary to his custom that was accessible to everyone, did not pay attention to them because they had dressed up in expensive cloths inlaid with gold.

They had golden rings and chains on their fingers and necks. They were directed to Imam 'Ali (as) to answer their questions. Imam 'Ali (as) advised them to change their clothes and to take off the golden ornaments and then they might have the honor of meeting the Prophet.

On the next day the Prophet welcomed them warmly and then they began their negotiation. The

argument was as the following:

The Prophet: I just summon you to monotheism and I want you to obey God and to put His commandments into practice.

The mission: If Islam invited people to godliness recently, it was a long time that we have worshipped God and His obedience was obligatory on us.

The Prophet: How do you obey the unique God whereas you pay homage to the cross and you pretend that God has begotten a son?

The mission: We worship Jesus as a God because he had restored dead persons to life and he had cured sick and paralytic people. He made some birds of mud and made them fly. He could do all these things.

The Prophet: No, it is not right. Jesus Christ was a sincere servant of God and he was put into the womb of Holy Mary. This miracle was done by the Divine will to make people believe in Him.

The mission: Since nobody had married his mother, hereon God would certainly be his father.

A Qur'anic verse was revealed at this moment;

"Surely the likeness of Issa (Jesus) is with Allah as the likeness of Adam; He created him from dust, then He said to him: Be, and he was". (3:59)

The Prophet: The situation of Holy Christ is similar to Adam, whom Allah has created him without parents. If non-existence of the father is the reason of Godhead, so Adam must be obeyed as God since long ago.

Anyhow this disputation did not come to a conclusion and they resolved that both sides should pray God that curse be upon the obstinate side.

At the same time the Prophet was inspired by a verse:

"But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say: Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our near people and your near people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars". (3:61)

The two parties made ready to determine the matter of praying for the curse of Allah to be on each other next day to show which party was right.

The heads of the Christians said to each other: "Before we face the Prophet let us see that if he comes with his companions and chief commanders of his army, surely he is a liar but if he brought his dear

relatives, he has confidence in God and he is really a truthful person in his claims because he is ready to take his nearest kinfolk towards mortality."

The Prophet of Islam selected four persons from his own family, who were the elects among all the Muslims; Fatima his honorable daughter as his woman, and her two sons Hasan and Hussein as his own sons, and her husband Imam 'Ali (as) as the nearest man to him.

Next day when the Christians saw the Prophet coming with his family, they were surprised at the full and were convinced that God would respond to his prayer.

At last the Christians did not agree to damn each other and it was decided that they were to pay a tribute to the Muslims in lieu of protecting their lives and wealth by the Islamic government from foreign aggressions.

Many of Islamic scholars mentioned the said tradition and concluded that God has created them both Muhammad (S) and 'Ali from one essence (nature).

The Last Prophet's Pilgrimage To Mecca

Hajj is a collective ritual that is fulfilled by the Muslims with the intent of achieving unity and accord among them.

This Islamic congress is effective on strengthening the relations among the Muslims to solve the difficulties by cooperation and helping each other to better their political economic relations. But, regretfully, nowadays the Muslims do not get the benefit of what the Holy Lawgiver willed for them. It is because of the negligence of some leaders of the Islamic countries.

At any rate, according to the Prophet's command, all the tribes of Arabia were informed that if they wished to take part in hajj with the Prophet they should gathered in Medina.

It was a didactic journey, neither military nor politico-economic. The Prophet gave his noteworthy lecture to the people when he arrived at Arafat (a sacred place in Mecca).

I think it is necessary to show the readers some passages of it because it indicates the rights and the duties of people towards each other. It is still new after fourteen centuries.

The Prophet said: "O people listen to me; you will never see me here again. Be careful not to trample upon other's rights. You have to regard the lives and the properties of people. You have not to pursue anybody for spite and vengeance. Killing and marauding, which occurred frequently before the advent of Islam must be forgotten forever. It is important for you to know that usury is an ill–gotten profit in Islam and the wealth which has been obtained by this way should be paid back to their owners. Surely the usurer will be punished hard on the Day of Resurrection."

Then he added: "You have to note that husbands have a prerogative upon their wives that should be considered by women and husbands ought to treat their wives kindly. Wives are a deposit from God near husbands. You have to administer justice among them and be true to your promise in regard to your wives.

You, men, have also the rights on your wives. They are not to receive any one in their houses without your permission. They must not commit any offence in the absence of their husbands. You, the husbands, have to provide for your wives safety and welfare if they turned back from the wrong way. You are hereby notified that all the queer habits and opinions of the pagan age are cancelled and I do warn you of their falseness."

Finally the rite of hajj came to an end and the Muslims learnt its formalities, in general and particular, at the presence of the Prophet. They determined on going back towards Medina.

The Story of Ghadir Khumm

The Prophet, on his way back, got at a place named Ghadir Khumm where the Arab tribes separated from each other to start off towards their dwellings.

At this time a verse was revealed to the Prophet saying:

"O Apostle, deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message, and Allah will protect you from the people; surely Allah will not guide the unbelieving people". (5:67)

The verse purported that the Prophet (S) had been charged with a great duty previously but he was afraid of people's mischief to reveal it.

The Prophet ordered that those, who had gotten ahead, to come back and those, who were late to hurry to the place.

When all the pilgrims gathered, the Prophet went up a pulpit, which was made of camels' saddles. After praising God he said: "Am I not closer to you than you to yourselves?" These saying indicated to the Holy Qur'anic verse:

"The Prophet is closer to the Believers than their own selves". (33:6).

The present people said: "Yes, you are."

Afterward the Prophet grabbed 'Ali (as) by the arm and said: "Whomsoever I am his guardian, here is 'Ali to be his guardian."

Then he prayed to God and said: "O Allah, be a supporter of whoever supports him ('Ali) and an enemy

of whoever opposes him". He added: "I and 'Ali have come into being from the same origin but the others have come from different origins."

Imam 'Ali (as) was hereby introduced as the Prophet's successor and all those present people, who were more than one hundred thousand, congratulated him and shook hands with him especially 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, rejoiced more than the others. He said to 'Ali: "`Well- done, well-done! You became my guardian and the guardian of every believing man and believing woman."

More than three hundred and fifty great Sunni scholars 14 mentioned this tradition. Some of them researched this subject in independent books.

When those formalities of allegiance were finished, a verse was revealed:

"This day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not, and fear Me. This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed. My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion". (5:3)

Some scholars thought that this verse was revealed when the hajj was all over in Mecca but some others 15 thought that it was revealed in Ghadir Khumm to show the willingness of God in appointing Imam 'Ali (as) as the leader of the believers after the Prophet.

According to the Shia opinion, the imamate (caliphate after the Prophet) is a divine rank and as the prophets were chosen among the best and wisest people, the imam also should be chosen in the same way among the innocent and pious men.

The caliph must be able to clarify the vague problems and could answer the scientific questions of religion, which were brought forth for discussion, without falling into error, because the caliphate was indeed an integral part of the prophet hood.

Therefore God knew better which one was well- qualified to the task.

The said tradition and the following short story are convincing evidences for the Shia to prove the immediate succession of Imam 'Ali (as) after the Prophet's death.

One day a beggar came into the mosque of Medina and asked for alms. He repeated his request several times but no one granted him anything. Imam 'Ali (as) stretched his finger out while he was kneeling in offering prayer so that the beggar would take Imam 'Ali's ring off his finger.

Just then a verse was revealed:

"Only Allah is your lord and His apostle and those who believe, those who keep up prayers and pay the poor-rate while they bow". 16 (5:55)

Now by taking into consideration this Qur'anic verse and the Prophet's clear and decisive words in

Ghadir Khumm, we knew that Imam 'Ali (as) was the rightful heir and legal successor of the Prophet (S).

Of course there are many other crucial evidences in this regard through the Holy Qur'an and the other reliable sources but this matter cannot be contained by this book and it needs an independent book by itself.

The Prophet Becomes III

After the battle of Tabouk, the Prophet always felt that there was a danger coming from the Roman Empire and that he was about to fight them; therefore he got ready for the war and ordered the Muslims; Muhajirun and Ansar, 17 to encamp out of Medina under the leadership of Usamah ibn Zayd.

Some of the great companions, like Abu–Bakr, 'Umar and Abu Ubaydah ibn al–Jarrah, were specially ordered to join the camp but the Prophet was suddenly attacked by fever and had to be confined to bed.

The commandership of Usamah was insupportable to some great companions because he was a young man of twenty years old but his prudence and wisdom was confirmed by the Prophet.

The social positions in Islam depended upon prudence and personal ingenuity and not on eldership and seniority.

In spite of the Prophet's insistence on them to set out to Syria they did not do. It seemed that some secret hands interfered to stop the movement of the army because as soon as they knew that the Prophet was bedridden, they all left the camp with the pretext of visiting him.

As it was said before that the Prophet did not present Imam 'Ali as his successor for fear of people's mischief until a verse to be revealed that God would guarantee his security.

He anticipated that some of his companions might put obstacles in the way of Imam 'Ali; hereon he ordered them strictly to set out towards Syria. But a few politicians would not obey him under various pretexts.

They even tried to make the Prophet change his mind with regard to Imam 'Ali (as). The future events would justify this matter.

One day when some of the believers gathered around his bed, the Prophet, after pondering, said to his companions: "Bring me an inkpot with a piece of paper to write you a decree. If you keep to it, you will never go astray after me at all."

'Umar, who became a caliph later on, said: "Illness has overcome him and he is just raving. The Holy Qur'an is sufficient to us." 18

Then a quarrel happened among the companions. Some of them said that it was necessary to bring a

piece of paper and an inkpot but the others, who were on 'Umar's side, refused.

It is too indecent to mention the words that were exchanged among them. It was enough that some bad words were heard by the Prophet that he turned his face away from his companions.

The Prophet, in order to put an end to this jangle, decided to go to the mosque to say to the people orally about the decree he ordered them to write.

He got at the mosque infirmly as he had leaned on the shoulders of Imam 'Ali (as) and his cousin al-Al-Fadhl ibn al-Abbas and his feet were dragging on the earth. The people were impatiently waiting for hearing his last words.

After praising God he said: "I leave two great and dear things among you; the Holy Qur'an and my family. If you keep to them, you will never go astray." 19

It was mentioned by al-Asqalani that the Prophet turned his face to his followers, who had formed a circle around his bed and said; "My death is coming soon and I just leave two profound things among you; the first is the Qur'an and the second is my family."

Then he raised 'Ali's hand and said: "'Ali (as) keeps to the Qur'an and the Qur'an will never be separated from him." (They are correlative with each other).

While the Prophet was sick he advised people to keep to prayers and recommended them to be fair dealing with the slaves and their rights. Then he added that his traditions and Sunnah should not be forgotten after him and the Muslims, when having problems and difficulties, should turn to his family.

Obeying his family was obligatory for the Muslims. Then he continued: "They (his family) are the wisest among all of you and be careful not to try to teach them anything. Know that 'Ali (as) will be my successor after my death."20

At last he sought after 'Ali (as) and whispered to him for a while and then he went to the better world while his blessed head was in 'Ali's lap.21

Later on Imam 'Ali (as) said: "The Prophet, at the last moments of his life, whispered and taught me one thousand chapters of science; each one of them contained one thousand chapters. The above mentioned matters indicated that Imam 'Ali (as) was well-qualified for the task of the caliphate.

The generalities of the Qur'an just explain precepts and religious jurisprudence in general and ordinary people cannot interpret them easily. The Prophet said: "Ali is the best and the wisest of you all and he is the best of you in judgment. Rejecting his sayings means rejecting my sayings. Refuting my sayings means denying God's precepts"22

The Disputes In The Saqeefah

Saqeefah23 was a big shed where the Ansar (the local citizens of Medina) would gather to discuss the public affairs and occasionally they would appoint chieftains of local families.

After the Prophet's death, the Ansar formed a meeting to discuss the subject of his successor.

Sa'd ibn Ubadah, who was one of the Prophet's great companions and an important man in his tribe, was nominated by his tribe the Khazraj.

There was another tribe in Medina named Aws. A state of war was between these two tribes since a long time ago. There was still a great enmity between them at this time.

The Aws naturally did not show any favor for this candidate and they opposed they Khazraj.

While they were arguing with each other, suddenly three men of Muhajirun; Abu-Bakr, 'Umar and Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah came into the Saqeefah.

At first 'Umar stood up to speak but Abu-Bakr prevented him and he himself said: "We, the Muhajirun, believed in Muhammad and worshipped God before all of you. We are Muhammad's friends and relatives; therefore these privileges and attributes are quite enough for us to take the reins of government."

Then a man from the Ansar, named Habbab, turned towards his family and said: "O people of Ansar, do not surrender to them. We, the Ansar, have also some other precedence over them. We are men of wealth, honor and a great tribe. We gave them shelter in our homes. Islam progressed by our sword. You should stick to your right severely. One emir is to be from us and one is to be from them."

'Umar stood up and said: "It is not possible to have two rulers in the same time. By Allah, the Arabs will not be contented to have a ruler from you, the Ansar, whereas the Prophet (S) is not from your family; therefore the caliph must be from his own family. Whoever opposes us, will do wrong and will commit a sin, which leads to perdition."

Habbab stood up again and repeated the same words as before but he was scolded by 'Umar severely.

Then Abu Ubaydah stood up and said; "You, the Ansar, helped and supported us in different ways and now we expect that you do not change your behavior." But the Ansar did not accord to the Muhajirun.

The situation was going to an end in the interest of the Ansar, but suddenly Basheer, one of the Khazraj, stood up and said: "Although we reinforced Islam and supported you, Muhajirun, but our purpose was obeying Allah and His apostle. It does not make us put obstacles in the way of the caliphate.

Muhammad (S) was from Quraysh. Quraysh has the right to get this position and Quraysh suffices for it."

When Basheer finished his speech, the dispute reached a high point among the Ansar. The Muhajirun took advantage of this tumult and seized the opportunity. 'Umar and Abu Ubaydah ran towards Abu–Bakr and paid homage to him as caliph, and then Basheer al–Ansari and his family resigned themselves to Abu–Bakr. In this way Abu–Bakr became the caliph after the Prophet (S).

Surprising it is! The Muhajirun, because of their precedence in Islam and worshipping God and their kinship with the Prophet as they pretended, disqualified the Ansar but they did not talk about Imam 'Ali (as), who was the true successor for the same reasons. He was the first man, who believed in Muhammad, the first one, who offered prayer behind the Prophet and him, on the contrary to the other Prophet's companions, had never worshipped idols.24

It was surprising indeed when the Ansar were beaten in the debate of kinship with the Prophet and submitted to the Muhajirun whereas Abu-Bakr related to the Prophet through his seventh great grandfather and 'Umar related to the Prophet through his ninth great grandfather but they ignored Imam 'Ali (as), who was so closer to the Prophet that he was a full- blood cousin.

Imam 'Ali (as) Stays At Home

It was said beforehand that many great men of Mecca, especially those who had grudge against Muhammad (S) obstinately, were killed in the battle of Badr by the sword of Imam 'Ali (as) and that there were a few houses that did not lose a relative by 'Ali's sword; therefore they were not so pleased with him.

On the other hand, many notable companions of the Prophet (S) were jealous of him because of his great valor for Islam, especially because that he was highly esteemed by the Prophet. Therefore these reasons made him stay at home.

Abu-Sufyan was the leader of the commercial caravans of Quraysh before the advent of Islam. He carried on trade between Mecca and Syria. After the battle of Badr he was the commander of all the expeditions that moved towards Medina fighting against Islam.

Finally, in order to save his life, he became a Muslim before the Prophet when Mecca was going to be conquered by the Muslims. He was too much proud and obstinate and he would look down on everybody.

He was out of Medina when the Prophet died and as soon as he knew that the Muslims paid homage to Abu–Bakr, he became furious and went, having a proposal, to meet Abbas, the Prophet an 'Ali's uncle. He said to him: "The people have entrusted the caliphate to Taym (Abu– Bakr's family) neglectfully and they have deprived the Hashemites (the Prophet's family) of their right and then 'Umar, this hot–tempered of Adiy ('Umar's family) will rule over us. Let us go to 'Ali and ask him to come out and get his legal right."

They came to Imam 'Ali (as). Abu–Sufyan said to him: "Give me your hand to pay homage to you and if anyone disagrees, I will fill all the streets of Medina with cavalrymen."

This was the best opportunity for Imam 'Ali (as) if he was greedy for the authority (on the contrary to 'Umar's saying that 'Ali was greedy for the caliphate) or if he would have liked to submit to his own whim, when Abu–Sufyan, a man of power with the support of his crowding tribe, he would have agreed with him. But Imam 'Ali (as) did not accede to Abu–Sufyan's request because:

- 1. His proposal was not based on religious feelings and what had made him to offer this proposition was only partisanship for his family and tribe. He was, by nature, a wicked man and Imam 'Ali (as) knew him well.
- 2. In this present situation if Medina became the center of a civil war and the place of a dispute for the caliphate, then most people, very likely, would apostatize and consequently the name of Islam would be forgotten forever.
- 3. The dissent which arose between the Ansar and the Muhajirun concerning the caliphate was an occasion for the hypocrites to abolish Islam by mischief and tale bearing.

Therefore Imam 'Ali (as) preferred to wait for a good opportunity when the circumstances would become suitable. For this reason he did not give his hand to receive homage and Abu–Sufyan was reasoned into compliance.

The silence and renouncement of Imam 'Ali indicated his wise policy to prevent dissent and apostasy among the Muslims.

Recently some of Egyptian writers 25 have stated an opinion that, undoubtedly, Imam 'Ali had preference over all of the other companions from all points of view and they have added that: "If Imam 'Ali (as) had assumed the rein of government immediately after the Prophet (S), the fate of the Muslims would have been much better than what it is today."

Mahmood Al-Aqqad wrote in his book Abqariyyatul Imam: "Although the virtuousness, purity, science and merits of Imam 'Ali (as) was superior to all other companions, the Prophet (S) did not present him clearly as his successor and he granted the authority to the Muslims to choose the caliph."

But al-Aqqad ignored that 'Umar received the caliphate by the will of Abu- Bakr and 'Umar himself vested this authority with a committee of six persons.

The Islamic scholar, Dr. Kiali Halabi, in his letter to al-Ameeni, the author of al-Ghadir, said: "The history of Arabia is nothing except the history of Islam. The Arabs have neglected their duty to compose and teach their history (Islamic history) because what is taught under the name of Islamic history is neither scientific nor free from partiality and it is full of private motives.

That, which had been written by the historians at the time of the Umayyads and the Abbasids, was not free from showing partial views and most of it had deviated from the truth, because of material interests or for fear of being suppressed by the authority.

Moreover, the modern critics are not able to unveil the facts and the real causes of the events and to discover the historical connections among them, whereas the aim and the required result of history is to discover such causes and connections.

The world of Islam is always in need of the scientific study of history in order that the Muslims may know what events were behind the great victories achieved at the first part of the Islamic history and what motives moved them.

The Muslims have to know what services the Muslim *walis* had rendered to the Islamic civilization or what blows they had inflicted upon it. Before all we should know what happenings made the Muslims dissent after the Prophet's death and which party was right in this discord.

What happened to make the Hashemites be deprived of their right? What was the effect of Imam 'Ali's seclusion and satisfaction of educating the Muslims only?

When these questions are clarified then what is to be done to achieve the union of the Muslims and to achieve the scientific and politico-economic improvement in the Islamic countries and to make use of this improvement?

Consequently the new generation can clear up what is dark and vague on the pages of the books history and then to follow the example of the policy and behavior of Imam 'Ali (as), the prime example of humanity, and of his dear sons and followers.

I think that it is necessary for the Islamic scholars to fulfill this duty. The book al-Ghadir is one of those books that have cleared up the dark corners and the ambiguous sentences of the previous careless writers.

It is too regretful that many of the previous historians have turned the historical facts upside down and that they have led the contemporary youths astray in connection with the truths. The new generation should know that the honorable Apostle of Islam had definitely presented Imam 'Ali (as) as his successor and executor of his will, but his companions forgot it and disregarded the Prophet's orders.

If they had submitted to his command, the fate of the Islamic world would have been more ordered than what it is now and that the Muslims would have never been involved in dissent and that their unity and consensus would protect them against calamities. Muhammad, the great educator of mankind, wanted successors having efficiency and power of understanding and having courage and prudence.

He wanted such men, who were able to be moderate between worldliness and religiousness with the same spirit as the Prophet had. They should direct the people to the right path of the Qur'an and their

conduct must be as that of peacemakers.

The guardian of the Prophet must be a man, who would never forget rightfulness and the way of God when judging; a man, who would never be feeble when walking in the right way and in achieving justice whether towards his relatives or the others, a man, who-at the time of failure or prevalence-would be masterful against the oppressors and very kind to the helpless, a man, who would be able to decide upon any subject according to wisdom and rightfulness and to be far away from his own desires.

But regretfully, it must be said that the Arabs missed the only historical opportunity they had and they did opposite to the Prophet's will; therefore Islam's losses were great and beyond description.

Islam, at the beginning of its growth, missed all creative power because of disputes and fights, whereas the Muslims could conquer the entire world during a half of the first century of Islam's inception if they had not struggled against each other.

Now it is necessary for the Islamic scholars to unveil the historical facts and to define the causes of the events and after coming to a reasonable conclusion, they must show the unaware Muslims the deeds, the conduct and the speeches of Imam 'Ali(S), the best example of humanity. They have to state properly the life and quardianship of the Prophet's successor and cousin.

Which story is more pleasant than the biography of a man, who lived for the divinity and for spreading the religion of God and who did his best to direct his fellow men to the right path and in the meantime he did not refuse to guide the men of authority (the caliphs Abu–Bakr and 'Umar) sincerely.

His manly qualities and morals should be emphasized because he was the prime example of Mohammedanism. God had granted him science, ability of interpreting the divine laws and eloquence. He was really the sword of the Prophet against the enemies. He was a man of iron, whose stability and firmness would not become shaky by greed or threat.

He is the Imam, whom we are bound to love and follow. The Holy Qur'an says:

"Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives". (42:23)

God had purified Imam 'Ali and his dear sons of every sin.

Nowadays, the world of Islam is seriously in need of knowing the characteristics of this great personage to be taken as a guide and an example. The Muslims have to know that the peerless qualities and spiritual particulars of Imam 'Ali (as) are the best stimulus for the youths all over the Islamic countries to solve their problems and corruptions.

It is the duty of the Islamic scholars to imitate the writer of al-Ghadir to purify history of the blemishes those previous historians stained it with and to show the glorious life of the Prophet's successor."

The Caliphate of Abu-Bakr

Abu-Bakr was one of the Prophet's great companions. He was the prophet's pal in the cave at the night of emigration. He controlled all the affairs of the state as it was mentioned before. Some of the great companions, who were about nine persons, remonstrated against but he did not heed.26

On the next day, nineteen persons made a protest against him in the mosque but he had no any evidence from the Prophet to go upon.27

It is to be noted that Abu-Bakr decided to deprive Fatima, the holy daughter of the Prophet, of her property of Fadak.28 Fadak was donated to Fatima by her father when a Qur'anic verse was revealed.

The Holy Qur'an says:

"Whatever Allah has restored to His Apostle from them, you did not press forward against it any horse or a riding camel, but Allah gives authority to His Apostle against whom he pleases, and Allah has power over all things. Whatever Allah has restored to His Apostle from the people of the towns, it is for Allah and for the Apostle and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarers, so that it may not be a thing taken by turns among the rich of you ..." (59:6–7)

After the revelation of this verse, the Prophet donated Fadak to Fatima.29

The caliphate of Abu-Bakr lasted for two years and four months. Syria was conquered by the Muslims at his days.

The Caliphate of 'Umar

'Umar, according to the will of Abu-Bakr, dressed himself with the caliphate. He was a severe man. He would put the religious punishments into practice carefully and he had, personally, a careful control over the state affairs.

No one of his officers dared to misappropriate funds in his administrative charge or to make use of their positions unlawfully because he was too strict with the expenses of *Bayt al–Mal* (public treasury).

The Islamic conquests began to expand on all sides and consequently spoils and wealth were brought to Medina. The caliph used to keep the companions in Medina not to let them be affected by bad habits.

He always opposed bringing books from the conquered countries. He said: "These books are surplus to our requirements while the Qur'an is with us." He ordered to burn those books.

But Imam 'Ali (as) often said to his followers: "Bring knowledge home even if it is in remote places."

I just quote a wise saying of Imam 'Ali (as) from Nahj al-Balaghah where he says: "It is odd to the character of a liberal man to flatter or to be envious of the others except in searching for knowledge."

Of course these two ideas of the two caliphs are so contrary to each other.

Although the people were kept away from Imam 'Ali's teachings and attainments but he was often asked for giving legal advices by the caliphs, in order to put the state affairs in good order or to correct their judgments about the religious laws.30

When Khuzestan (the southern part of Iran) was conquered by the Muslims, the *wali* named Hormozan and his slave Abu–Lu'lu' were brought to Medina as captives.

'Umar donated the slave to al-Mugheerah, who was a versed politician among the Arabs and he was close to the rulers. Abu Lu'lu', as a functionary, was not paid his wages by his master. He complained to the caliph 'Umar about it but the caliph did not pay any attention to him. He pleaded with justice repeatedly over and again but 'Umar did not take it seriously.

It reminds of a saying of Imam 'Ali (as), who often said to his followers: "You have to pay the laborer his wages before his sweat dries." He also said: "Receive people humbly. Be kind and pitiful to them. Deal with them cheerfully and respectfully."

At any rate Abu Lu'lu' did not receive a convincing reply. Then he determined on avenging himself on the caliph and finally 'Umar was wounded by his dagger in the mosque and that fatal wound made him die.

When 'Umar knew that his end was coming soon, he formed a council and appointed six persons; 'Ali ibn Abu-Talib, Abd-al-Rahmaan ibn Awf, Talhah ibn Abdullah, Al-Zubayr ibn al-Awwam, Sa'd ibn Abu-Waqqas, Uthman ibn Affan as the main members and his own son as a substitute member.

At the caliph's command, these six had to elect one of themselves as the caliph during three days after his death.

In the meantime he stated his opinion about each one of the members. He about Imam 'Ali (as): "Although 'Ali is eager for the caliphate but I know that he is the only one, who can manage it in the right way."

In spite of this confession, the members of the committee did not give their votes to Imam 'Ali and held the position because all of the members were Uthman's relatives except Al–Zubayr.

Anyone could understand it guessing that Imam 'Ali (as) was with minority and Uthman would eventually the successor of 'Umar. In briefly speaking that Abd-al- Rahmaan was given the right by the majority to choose the caliph between two persons, 'Ali (as) and Uthman. He said to 'Ali (as): "I pay homage to you on the condition that you will follow the book of Allah (the Qur'an), the Sunnah of the Prophet and the

policy of the two previous caliphs Abu-Bakr and 'Umar.

Imam 'Ali (as) replied: "I will follow the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (S) but I act according to my own judgments.

The proposal was repeated thrice and the answer was the same. Then Abd-al-Rahmaan turned to Uthman and asked him if he would accept the condition. Uthman agreed to follow the terms the condition and they paid homage to him.

Now it is important to know why the members of the committee ignored the Prophet's statements concerning 'Ali (as) again.

The Prophet said: "Ali is the wisest and superior to all of you. He is the best judge among all."31

When Imam 'Ali saw his right being suppressed in this way, he said: "This is not the first time you wrong me, but patience is my only way. I swear by Allah that you have not paid homage to him (Uthman) but you expect of him to give you the caliphate later on when he is about to leave."

The Politico-Economic State Of The Muslims At The Days Of The Caliphs

At the time of the Prophet, the Muslims were inspired with feelings of liberty and freedom by canceling partisanship and racial feelings. The Holy Qur'an addressed the Prophet by saying:

"Say: I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your god is one God". (18:110).

Imam 'Ali (as) said: "Ruling over you means suffering the heaviest burden on my shoulders."

The Prophet of Islam had implanted in the minds of the nomads of Arabia the concept of unification and equality that, later on, the caliph 'Umar traveled to Jerusalem by his only camel and if he rode the camel for a distance, he mounted his slave in the next distance and he went on foot.

Many of those principles, which arose from theism and equity, were observed during the time of Abu–Bakr and 'Umar. They protected and followed these customs because the Prophet's advices passed mouth to mouth by people and virtue and piety were still the cause of superiority and greatness.

At the same time the Islamic victories began to expand and finally the wide government of Islam was established at the last part of 'Umar's caliphate and consequently valuable spoils and many riches were brought to Medina from every side.

'Umar would not permit the great companions to go away from the center of the government for fear that it would be possible for them to make money and go back to their bad habits.

The first caliph (Abu-Bakr), in his will, commanded 'Umar: "Watch over the companions not to be concerned with money or position, otherwise disputes and struggles will rise among them and consequently the common people will be divided into many groups fanatically and in this case the public power will be weak."

'Umar always tried to keep the companions separate from the worldly ties. Abu–Bakr said to Abd–al–Rahmaan ibn Awf (a very rich influential man): "Now you have received wealth so much that you have got used to silk clothes and some of you are not content with sleeping on woolen stuff."

But as soon as Uthman attained his aim he ignored these regulations. As a result of his weakness and infirmity of will, many personages and great companions became wealthy as he himself had one hundred and fifty thousand dinars and one million dirhams besides the other properties when he was killed.

He even broke his promises with regard to the proposed conditions of the consultative committee. His actions were contrary to the policy of the Prophet and the two previous caliphs. Al-Hakam ibn al-Aass, who had been banished from Medina by the Prophet and the two previous caliphs had not allowed him to come back, was allowed by Uthman to come back.

Uthman's daughters got married to Marwan and Harith, the sons of al-Hakam. Uthman paid them a lot of money from the treasury (Bayt al-Mal). Al-Waleed ibn Aqaba, an infamous and slanderous man and had been cursed by the Qur'an, was sent to Kufa as the *wali*. His misdeed and disgrace reached an extent that he led the Morning Prayer in four rak'as32 instead of two while he was drunk.

Also other major cities were ruled by his relatives who were of no principles. 33 The people were displeased with Uthman's officers because they were indifferent to the religious matters and they often did what they liked without fearing any punishment from the government.

Consequently a new class of people appeared whose aim was to heap up wealth that required oppressing the weak, and violating the people's rights. Deposing and posting *walis* depended upon the basis of whim and desires. Anyone of good and peaceful people, who complained or criticized, would receive a harsh reaction from the *walis*. Corruptions were the order of the day.

On the other hand, the hostile behavior of Uthman towards some of the great companions like Abu–Tharr, Ammar ibn Yasir and Abdullah ibn Mas'ud had roused a wave of grief and anger among the Muslims.

Abu-Tharr was the third or the fourth person, who became a Muslim whereupon the idolaters of Quraysh tortured him with different kinds of tortures but he remained faithful to God.

The Prophet (S) said: "Among all people Abu-Tharr is like Christ, son of Mary, in self-denial and piety."

The Prophet also said: "No one under the sky is more truthful than Abu-Tharr."

Abu-Tharr left Medina for Syria where Mu'awiyah was the *wali* since the age of the second caliph 'Umar. Mu'awiyah was a clever man. He had become strong during twenty years of rule.

During Uthman's reign he was trying to get the caliphate for himself by all means, whereas he would never think that it was possible at the days of 'Umar's caliphate. He was gifted with wit and he knew well how to quiet those, who were opposing his aim. He used to loosen the strings of the purse for the worldly persons to make them collaborate with him.

Abu-Tharr was the partisan of Imam 'Ali (as) and he acquainted the people with the greatness of the members of the Prophet's family and guided them to the rightful path. He often criticized Mu'awiyah and Uthman openly. He mentioned their making money and the other wrongful activities.

He could not help speaking out and his critical words against the unjust discrimination and the outrages against justice encouraged the poor to ask for their lost rights.

Mu'awiyah knew that if he gave Abu-Tharr the opportunity, the foundation of his state would collapse. He determined to untie this knot by satisfying his need with a bag full of gold coins.

Abu-Tharr, this generous man, divided the coins among the needy whereas he himself was in need badly.

Finally Mu'awiyah reported Abu-Tharr's doings to Uthman and got permission to send him towards Medina by an unsaddled camel with a hot-tempered slave. When he got to Medina his thighs were badly wounded and injured.

Abu-Tharr would speak harshly to Uthman in Medina too criticizing his conducts. Uthman, who could not endure criticism, exiled this dear and good old man to an arid and lifeless place named al-Rabathah. It was his birthplace. Abu-Tharr, finally, died in an intolerable remote place after suffering too much.

In the meanwhile two other companions of high rank were beaten hard by Uthman's slaves because of their remonstration against his bad treatment.

The people of the big cities of Kufa, Egypt and Basra gathered in Medina to protest against the offending rulers to plead for justice. Their aim was just to improve their situations but regretfully it led to killing and bloodshed. If their complaints had been heard in time, such unexpected events would not have happened.

They had requested Uthman to replace some of his officers. Some of the great companions had given Ammar ibn Yasir a letter so that Ammar would notify the caliph of the truth. When he saw Uthman at his doorway and gave him the letter, he at first received an abrupt answer and then he was mercilessly beaten and injured seriously by Uthman's slaves that caused hernia to him.

The Caliphate of Uthman

It was concluded according to the Islamic history that Uthman was a man of feeble will and credulous. His counselor Marwan, who was disrespectable and mean among the Muslims, used his undue influence upon the caliph. Time and again he promised the people to improve their affairs and time and again he broke his promise.

Consequently the people gathered before his house and repeated their demands.

When he saw the matter became so serious he asked Imam 'Ali (as) imploringly to quiet the people and to find a suitable way for rescuing him. At the same time he authorized Imam 'Ali to bring the mater to an end by negotiating with the people.

The Egyptians insisted on Uthman to appoint Muhammad ibn Abu-Bakr instead of ibn Abu Sarh, the *wali* of Egypt. Imam 'Ali (as) put their lawful demand before Uthman. Uthman accepted but asked for a three- day deadline to manage it. For the other cities, more time was necessary until the caliph's decision would reach there.

Imam 'Ali (as) came back and talked to the Egyptians. They agreed to get back on the condition that their demands should be carried out and Muhammad ibn Abu-Bakr should become the *wali* after deposing ibn Abu Sarh.

Uthman, by the mediation of Imam 'Ali, accepted this without any hesitation. The Egyptians dispersed when Imam 'Ali (as) accepted the responsibility for doing that. Then some of them went to Egypt with Muhammad ibn Abu–Bakr and some went to stay in a valley near Medina for a while.

On the next day Marwan said to Uthman: "It is alright now. The Egyptians have left. In order to stop people to come from the other cities, you have to issue a decree saying that there was some misunderstanding but when the Egyptians knew that whatever they had heard was wrong, the whole matter ended and they were satisfied and left here for Egypt. In this way the people of the other cities will not come here and they will be quiet at their places."

Uthman did not want to tell such a lie but Marwan persisted in that until he accepted. Then he went straight to the Prophet's mosque. As soon as he expressed his thought, the people began to shout at Uthman: "Fear Allah! What is this lie? You have to repent."

At last he had to repent. He turned to Kaabah and repented groaningly and went back to his house.

Imam 'Ali (as), in order to make these uprisings subside, advised Uthman to repent of his past misdeeds before people in the mosque again, otherwise if the next day some other people came, Uthman would again cling to Imam 'Ali's neck to rescue him from them.

Therefore Uthman made repentance in the mosque and swore to be more adequate in the future. He promised the people that when their representatives met him, he would solve their problems and would satisfy their demands as soon as possible.

When he got back home, Marwan wanted to say something but Uthman's wife interfered and said to Marwan: "For the sake of God; keep quiet! You will cause him to be killed for such sayings."

Marwan said with fury: "You have no right to interfere in these matters. You are the daughter of that man, who did not know how to perform his ablution till the end of his life."

She said: "You are wrong ..."

The dispute became more serious between them but Uthman stopped them and asked Marwan: "What did you want to say?" He said; "What was that you said in the mosque and what repentance you made? In my opinion, committing a sin is much better than making repentance by force. The result of this notification is the crowding of people before your house. Now go forward and perform their demands."

Uthman said: "I am not able to deal with the people. Now you go and fulfill their demands. Marwan came out and spoke out: "Why have you gathered here? Do you want to attack or to plunder? You know you cannot take the authority from our hands and no one can defeat us. Take your black faces away from here. Allah may damn you."

When the people saw this double-dealing, they got angry and went to meet Imam 'Ali (as) and explained to him the whole story. Imam 'Ali went straight to Uthman's house and said to him angrily: "Good heavens! Why did you misbehave towards the Muslims? You broke your promise for the sake of a faithless man (Marwan) and lost all your wit. At least you should respect your own promise. You know that Marwan will throw you in such a deep hell that you will never be able to come out form it. He has ridden on you and pulled you to wherever he wished. I shall neither interfere in your affairs nor tell the people anything."

Na'ila (Uthman's wife) confirmed Imam 'Ali's words and asked her husband to follow Imam 'Ali's advices. She said: "Neither you nor your counselor can restore the bad state." Then Uthman sought after Ameeral–Mu'mineen (Imam 'Ali) but he refused to meet him. Uthman himself went to Imam 'Ali's. He expressed his loneliness and helplessness and asked him for help again.

Imam 'Ali (as) said: "So many times you made promises in the mosque before the people to perform their demands but you broke your promises and when people came to you, they did not receive attention; moreover that your men insulted them. How can I trust in your words in the future? Therefore do not expect anything from me. The ways are clear before you. You can choose the one you like to deal with the people."

This was the result of Uthman's repentance. Now let's see what happened on the other side.

When the Egyptians caravan reached the coast of the Red Sea, they saw a camel rider crossing with all speed. As he instilled doubts into their minds, they stopped him and asked who he was. He said that he was the slave of Uthman.

They enquired where he was going to. He said that he was going to Egypt. They enquired what his aim was of this journey. He said that he was to meet the *wali* of Egypt. The people said that the *wali* of Egypt was with them. (According to Uthman's promise it was decided that Muhammad ibn Abu–Bakr would be instead of ibn Abu Sarh). The slave was enquired if any letter was with him. He denied.

They decided to search his clothes but they found nothing with him. They wanted to leave him alone but someone said: "Search his flask on the back of the camel."

They found a lead pipe in the water skin. There was a letter enclosed in the pipe. The caliph Uthman had commanded the *wali* ibn Abu Sarh as the following: "When Muhammad and his companions get to you, from among them kill so and so and arrest so and so and put so and so in jail. You are reinstated in your position."

It was a surprise to them. They looked at one another in astonishment. They returned to Medina immediately and put the letter before the Prophet's companions. Whoever heard about this event was filled with wonder because it was a great surprise.

This conduct disgusted every one against Uthman. Thereupon some of the companions accompanied by this people went to meet Uthman to ask him whose seal was stamped on the letter.

He answered that it was his own seal. They asked who had written the letter. He said it was his clerk's handwriting. They enquired whose slave was that man. He replied that he was his. They asked whose camel it was with the slave.

He answered that the camel belonged to the government. He was enquired who had sent it. He said he did not know. They said: "Everything is yours. How do you not know who has sent the letter? You would better leave the caliphate off until another man comes to manage it."

He said: "I will never put off the dress of the caliphate, which Allah has put on me. I will make repentance again." They said: "Do not talk about repentance. Your repentance had already been considered as nothing since that day when Marwan talked on behalf of you at your door. Now we are not going to be cheated by these bluffs. You have to leave the caliphate and if your men stand in our way we will keep them away and if they prepare for a war we will fight too.

If you regard all the Muslims equally and if you are going to administer justice, then hand Marwan over to us to ask him by whose power and support he wanted to bring about the killing of many Muslims by writing this letter." But Uthman refused to submit Marwan to them. The three–day deadline was finished but everything was as it had been before.

When the people saw the result of the repentance, they surged and spread over the streets of Medina and finally surrounded Uthman's house from every side.

During these days one of the Prophet's companions went to Uthman's house and shouted: "O Uthman, give up this caliphate and for the sake of Allah save the Muslims from any bloodshed." Suddenly one of Uthman's men aimed at him with an arrow and killed him. This action goaded the people into fury. They shouted: "The killer must be handed over to us."

Uthman said: "It is not possible to hand over anyone, who supports me." Then the people, furiously, set fire to Uthman's house and tried to enter into the house but Uthman's men confronted the people and kept them away from the door.

At last the people entered into the house of Uthman from adjacent houses drawing their swords.

Those who were guarding the house ran away and those who were defending Uthman were killed with him.

Let it not remain unsaid that Mu'awiyah, the *wali* of Syria, was previously ordered by Uthman to help him during the days of the siege but he rejected his order pretending that he would not interfere in the affairs of the Prophet's companions. He did not pay attention to Uthman's order because he himself, heart and soul, intended to take the reins of the caliphate.

I had to explain the events of Uthman's end in details because, later on, Talhah, Al–Zubayr, (the two members of the consultative committee, which was formed by 'Umar to select Uthman for the caliphate) and Mu'awiyah in particular accused Imam 'Ali of Uthman's bloodshed. Consequently they raised many disturbances and created civil wars that their bad results have still remained among the Muslims until today.

If Uthman had heeded the advices of Imam 'Ali (as) or at least he had handed Marwan over to the people, he would never have been killed. But it was the fate otherwise.

The Caliphate of Imam 'Ali (as)

Now the Muslims laid their heads together to select a competent person who could run the caliphate in the right path and could restore their lost rights.

They thought of Imam 'Ali (as), whose conduct was very reasonable during this long period since the Prophet's death.

In the end they came to a conclusion that nobody else was well qualified for that task except 'Ali ibn Abu-Talib. They rushed towards his house to pay homage to him as he had said in one of his speeches: "They leapt upon me as camels leaping upon each other going to drink water ... in a way that I thought

they would kill me or would kill another one before me."

Imam 'Ali said to them: "Leave me alone and look for another one. It is important for you to know that the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah will guide my actions and I will never turn back from the right path in order to satisfy the interests of some certain groups or to assure someone's worldly wishes. Therefore, you cannot tolerate my evenhanded policies and judgments. I will be as counselor for you better than to be a chief. Do not urge me to be the caliph."

The people began to cry and shout loudly. They said: "O Ameer-al-Mu'mineen (the master of believers) do you not see what complicated problems the Muslims are facing? Do you not see that Islam is going to collapse?"

But Imam 'Ali refused to accept the offer because he knew that people would like to play with divine caliphate as a means to gain their worldly desires and that it was impossible to restore the present circumstances as they were at the Prophet's time.

When the people insisted on him importunately, Imam 'Ali (as) delivered a speech to clear away all the excuses they might cling to. He said: "If you want me for your worldly desires, leave me alone and choose another one who may realize your wishes. I will not give up the principles of Islam (equity, reverence for the law, human rights and the like) to secure neither my authority nor the interests of the others. With regard to the subject of the rights and privileges enjoyed by every one, I do not care for the influential people because all the peoples are equal before God. If you have decided to pay homage to me, think it over and over because after the homage if you protest against me or put obstructions in my way, I will force you to come back to the right path. Bear in mind these conditions, and then you can reach your heart's desires."

Of course the previous ruling class and the rich, especially Talhah and Al–Zubayr, would not be content with the caliphate of Imam 'Ali (as) but the glory and the greatness of the revolution made them keep silent. Since they (Talhah and Al–Zubayr) were appointed as members of the council established by 'Umar to select the caliph after his death, they considered themselves as Imam 'Ali's equivalents, but they had to pay homage to him unwillingly.

Next day Imam 'Ali (as) said in his speech regarding the government's plan: "The public are hereby notified that a decree will be issued against those who have made money in unlawful ways and their monies will be requisitioned. The offenders will be soon prosecuted ..."

Those, who had misappropriated certain things from the public treasury, were irritated when they heard Imam 'Ali's speech and felt sorry for paying the homage.

Imam 'Ali believed that all classes of people, whether Arab or non-Arab, black-skinned or white-skinned, were equal to each other before the law. He would never want a minority to act according to what they liked and to heap what they took from the majority by force. He would never be content with a

minority to be offensive against the majority of helpless and miserable people, who groaned under injustice with no rescue.

Imam 'Ali (as) said: "Achieve equality among yourselves and do not discriminate against one another because hearts are always ready to make mischief and dispute among you." He also said: "I cannot tolerate such injustice that a group of people, under the pretense of noble descent and lineage, takes the products of common people's labor and then scorn them."

When the ceremonies of the homage were finished, Talhah and Al–Zubayr, contrary to their expectation, were not invited by Imam 'Ali (as) to co–operate in the affairs of the state. They determined on going to meet him and request the rule of Kufa and Basra. As Soon as they came into the caliphate house, Imam 'Ali (as), who was busy with official works, suddenly blew out the candle and lighted another one at once. When they asked about the reason, he replied: "The first candle belongs to Bayt al–Mal (public treasury) and I was busy with the caliphate affairs and since you have come here for a private business, so I lighted my own candle." They looked at each other and left hopelessly.

Many politicians, long ago, criticized Imam 'Ali (as) by saying that it was not expedient to rouse the great influential companions by his decisions. Furthermore they said that why he did not humored the previous *walis* that caused them to make troubles for him. Was it not tactful for him to wait until he overcame the state affairs and then to change the situation according to his desired plan?

These objections are not acceptable because the Shia believe that Imam 'Ali (as) was the representative of God and His Apostle on the earth and he was not of those who told people lies and deceived them to secure their own power.

As a matter of fact, the polity of the divine religions is not comparable to the other systems of rule.

Islam is based on humanity, equity, justice and other good qualities. Its main purpose is to direct people to monotheism and godliness. The Imamate is an infallible position. Consequently Imam 'Ali (as) would be responsible to God if he himself or one of his officers offended against the law. His natural morality and his religious duty would require him to ensure the enforcement of the divine law; therefore he always would speak out what was rightful and he would not care whether people were pleased or displeased.

Those who had misused certain things from Bayt al-Mal at the days of Uthman expected that Imam 'Ali (as) would give them free rein in the state affairs or, at least, he would counsel with them about the general decisions.

Imam 'Ali (as) was well-known as a practical man and people respected him so highly. However, a few of them hated his righteousness as he himself had said: "How do those, whom my justice is annoying, endure injustice?"

On the other hand there was a dispute between Imam 'Ali (as) and A'ishah, the Prophet's wife, because of some misunderstanding. She always had a grudge against him.

She previously used to excite the people against Uthman because she was sure that Al–Zubayr, her sister's husband, or Talhah, her cousin, would be the successor of Uthman; therefore she often said the people: "Kill this old hyena! God may kill him. He has become apostate indeed." 34 When she knew that the people had paid homage to Imam 'Ali (as), she decided to defy.

In order to carry out her intention, she left Medina for Mecca to stay there in order to incite people against Imam 'Ali. She would say pityingly: "Uthman was oppressively killed and I would take vengeance on his killer. O people, rise and help me!"

On hearing this, Talhah and Al–Zubayr went to meet Imam 'Ali (as) to take leave of him to go to Mecca under the pretence of pilgrimage. Imam 'Ali (as) said: "I am sure that you have plots against me, but I do not bother you as long as you have not disturbed the public peace." They really wanted to take part in the plot, which was developed against Imam 'Ali (as) by A`ishah.

In spite of the fact that Imam 'Ali knew their designs, he did not restrain them because in Imam 'Ali's opinion it was not allowable to arrest one, who had just designed to commit a crime but had not put it in practice yet because one might repent before committing the crime.

Have you ever heard that a commander ignores a probable danger for the sake of the law?

History often mentions that as soon as any ruler gets a hint of a plot against himself, he will immediately get rid of those who have hatched the plot either by killing or imprisoning them.

But Imam 'Ali said to them: "You are free to go wherever you wish but be careful not to disturb the public peace." The Holy Qur'an says:

"There is no compulsion in religion; truly the right way has become clearly distinct from error ..." (2:256).

Hereon Imam 'Ali (as) gave the Muslims the maximum freedom to the extent that they would not encroach on the others' freedom.

All the companions and the ex-walis had paid homage to Imam 'Ali (as) except Mu'awiyah, the wali of Syria, Abdullah ibn 'Umar, the son of the second caliph, and Sa'd ibn Abu Waqqass. The last two persons were good for nothing but Mu'awiyah was a sagacious man, who was in no way bound by morality and he did not heed the religious laws. He always had enmity towards Imam and his utmost desire was to attain the position of caliphate.

When he took over Kufa at during the time of Imam Hasan, he said to the people: "I have not come here to correct your religious problems. I have come to rule over you and to manage you." He became very

powerful during twenty years of rule and especially at the reign of Uthman.

Imam 'Ali (as), in conformity to religious standards, decided to depose Mu'awiyah. Someone said to him: "It is not wise to discharge Mu'awiyah so soon. It requires careful handling. Wait a bit until your rule gets strong then you do what you like?"

Imam 'Ali replied: "This doesn't conform to my belief because I will be responsible to God if Mu'awiyah offends against law and deprives people of their rights during my ruling. I will be answerable on the Day of Resurrection."

Now let us see what was going to take place in Mecca. Some of the rich and ex-officers believed A'ishah's pretenses. They came to an agreement to incite the people of Iraq against Imam 'Ali (as) especially the people of Basra because their tribes were living there and they might be of some help.

At last an army of three thousands men, whose expenses were paid by the previous *walis*, marched towards Basra.

When A'ishah was about to leave Mecca, she went to meet Ummu-Salamah (another wife of the Prophet) asking her to accompany her in this journey.

Ummu-Salamah was a good and kind woman. She tried to remind A'ishah of some of the Prophet's sayings about Imam 'Ali (as). She said to her: "One day, if you remember, the Prophet and I came into your room and at the same time 'Ali (as) came in and whispered with the Prophet for a long time. You wanted to interrupt him and said to 'Ali: "It is my turn today to be with the Prophet after nine days. Now you came here to turn his attention from me to some other things."

I saw that the Prophet's face reddened with anger and he said: "Be quiet A'ishah! By God, whoever displeases 'Ali and bears him a grudge, is not one of the believers." Then you came back feeling sorry."

A'ishah said: "Yes, I remember.'

Ummu-Salamah added: "Do you remember that one day you were washing the blessed head of the Prophet (S) and I was cooking Hiss (a kind of Arabian soup), suddenly the Prophet raised his head and said: "I wish I knew at which of you the dogs of Haw'ab35 would bark.

She certainly will be damned on the Day of Resurrection." Then I said: "I seek refuge in God and His Apostle if I would be that one." Then the Prophet pointed to you and said: "Beware if you would be that one."

A'ishah said: "Yes, I remember."

Ummu-Salamah said: "I remind you again that one day I and you were with the Prophet (S) in a trip when Abu-Bakr and 'Umar joined us to rest under a tree while 'Ali (as) was busy mending the Prophet's

shoes. They said to the Prophet (S): "May we ask you about who will be your successor and to whom we will resort after you?" The Prophet replied: "I know who he is and I show the evidence of his dignity and prudence, but if I inform you of his name, you will keep off him as the Israelites when they kept off Aaron." Then I asked the Prophet: "Who would be our Imam after you?" He said: "It is that man who is mending my shoes." Then I and you ourselves saw that 'Ali was patching the shoes."

A'ishah said; "Yes, I remember."

Ummu-Salamah said: "If it was so then why are you instigating people to revolt against 'Ali (as) under the pretext of avenging Uthman's blood?" She said: "I want to reform the Muslims' affairs."36

As the Prophet had said, A'ishah on her way to Basra got at a place where some dogs barked at her. It reminded her of the Prophet's admonition. She asked her camel driver about the name of that place. When she knew that it was Haw'ab and that she was the one, whom the Prophet had talked about, she refused to proceed further.

Talhah and Al-Zubayr gave a perjured witness that the place is not Haw'ab and they brought fifty persons to witness falsely that it was not Haw'ab.

Finally she determined to proceed forward to Basra. It was a surprise to the people when they saw her riding a camel to the battlefield.

The Holy Qur'an, addressing the Prophet's wives, says:

"And stay in your houses and do not display your finery like the displaying of the ignorance of yore" (33:33).

She, in this manner, had missed her stateliness and honor.

When they arrived at the gate of Basra, Uthman ibn Hunayf, the *wali*, came out with his men and stopped in their way being ready for the war. They took the field and before long some were killed from both sides. A'ishah intervened and stopped the fighting. They came to an agreement that the actual situation would remain as it was until Imam 'Ali (as) arrived at Basra.

But after less than forty-eight hours they made a nightly attack on the *wali* of Basra and killed forty innocent men of his. Uthman was badly beaten and his beard was plucked. Then they looted the public treasury and the grain stores and they also killed twenty guards.

A noble man of Basra named Hakim ibn Jabalah met the chiefs of the invaders trying to convince them to stop the attack but the war raged between them and at last Hakim and Seventy persons of his companions were killed.

When Imam 'Ali (as) knew about the march to Basra he, accompanied by five hundred of the Prophet's

companions, left Medina for Basra.

When he got at Thi–Qar, a place between Kufa and Basra, he sent his dear son Imam Hasan and Ammar ibn Yasir to Kufa to call the people for the war. Although Abu Musa, the *wali*, Opposed and created many difficulties for dispatching the forces, seven thousand fighters joined Imam 'Ali's army. Some other soldiers under various standards united with Imam 'Ali before he reached the field near Basra.

There were many great companions, many youths of the Hashemites and Imam 'Ali's sons; Imam Hasan, Imam Hussein and Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyah among the army.

Imam 'Ali (as) dismounted from his horse and offered a four rak'as prayer and then he prostrated himself on the ground. He was heard praying for his enemy and saying: "O God, the Sustainer of the earth, grant us their good and protect us from their evil!"

At first he ordered that no one of his men should attack the enemy before they made an attack on them. Then he, unarmed, came forward and called Talhah and Al–Zubayr to witness when saying: "Both of you and A'ishah know that I am free from the guilt of Uthman's blood and I would never say what you used to say about him. Did I force you to pay homage or you did willingly?"

Al-Zubayr was affected by these words but Talhah got angry and began to growl.

A young man got permission to go before the enemy with a copy of the Qur'an but he was killed by an arrow. Thus they declared war.

Ammar ibn Yasir, the great Prophet's companion, went to warn them of the consequences of the war but they were impervious to his arguments and he also was answered by arrows.

Imam 'Ali (s) did not allow his men to attack the enemy yet. He believed in negotiation between the both parties before beginning the war. He thought it was the only way to solve the quarrels; therefore his men were not allowed to start the war before the enemy.

The opposite army went on sending arrows like the rain. Some brave combatants of Imam 'Ali's men were killed.

Imam 'Ali came in front of the enemy without wearing armor and called out: "Where is Al–Zubayr?" When Al–Zubayr saw Ameer–al–Mu'mineen unarmed, he came out and stood before him. Imam 'Ali said: "O Al–Zubayr, do you remember one day when the Prophet said to you that you would fight against me and that your side would be wrong?"

Al-Zubayr replied: "Yes, he had said so."

Then Imam 'Ali (as) asked him: "Why have you come then into the battlefield?" He replied: "I have

forgotten what the Prophet had said. I would not have come here if I had recalled it." Imam 'Ali (as) said: "It is well that now you recall it." He said: "Yes." After saying this, he went straight to A'ishah and after a short conversation he turned the reins of his horse and left the field.

When Imam 'Ali (as) returned to his army, he noticed that the enemy has attacked the right and left flanks of his army. He said: "Now the excuse is null." He called for his son Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah and said to him: "Attack the enemy now." But the shower of the enemy's arrows made him stop.

Imam 'Ali (as) Shouted: "Risk yourself and go ahead through the arrows and spears." But he hesitated to attack because of a storm of arrows coming from the enemy. Imam 'Ali (as) said to him: "Why do not you go ahead." He said: "Father, I do not find a way to proceed through these showering arrows."

When Imam 'Ali (as) saw this irresolution of his son Muhammad, he took the sword and the banner from him and made such an attack upon the enemy that disturbance and fright covered their ranks. Whichever side he attacked, it became clear. Heads and bodies were falling under the hooves of the horses. Then he returned and said to his son: "You must fight like this." Muhammad took his sword and attacked the enemy with a group of Ansar. They left heaps of dead bodies on the field."

On the other side of battlefield the men were sacrificing their lives around the camel (of A'ishah) devotedly in spite of the falling heads and bodies one over the other.

Imam 'Ali (as) ordered his men by saying: "Cut off the camel's leg. It is a devil." Then he made a severe attack again and finally cries of "peace" were heard here and there.

As soon as the camel fell down, the enemy ran away towards the desert and leaving A'ishah alone in the heat of the fight. But thousands of fighters were killed for the sake of holding the rein of the camel.

A'ishah was escorted by her brother Muhammad ibn Abu–Bakr to the house of Safiyya bint37 Harith in Basra and then she was sent to Medina respectfully.

This war began at an afternoon and finished in the same evening. One thousand and seventy men were killed from Imam 'Ali's army of twenty-two thousand persons, whereas seventeen thousand persons were killed from the enemy out of thirty thousands.

When Imam 'Ali captivated A'ishah, instead of reproaching her, he was kind enough to her. He also overcame his most revengeful and obstinate enemies like Marwan, Abdullah ibn Al–Zubayr and others in this battle but they were forgiven permitted to go wherever they like.

In the same way the idolaters of Quraysh tribe were formerly forgiven when the Prophet (S) had conquered Mecca.

During his praying for the killed men, Imam 'Ali was heard praying for the enemy: "O God, if they fought

against me unknowingly or with intention of setting up the rightness and justice, they were innocent (I hope them to be remitted)."

Throughout the history's memory, no commander would ever act so generously when he won a victory. Imam 'Ali's generosity and clemency were much more than to be counted.

He wrote in his famous epistle to Malik al-Ashtar, the *wali* of Egypt: "People are usually subjected to weakness and they may do wrong things on purpose or by mistake. You should forgive them if you would like to be forgiven by God. Do not regret your forgiving someone and do not be pleased when punishing someone."

Deposal of Mu'awiyah

Neglecting the other troubles, the ruling of Mu'awiyah in Syria was the most complicated matter that Imam 'Ali (as) confronted at the beginning of his caliphate.

When Syria was conquered by the Muslims, Yazid, the elder brother of Mu'awiyah, was appointed as the *wali* by Abu–Bakr and then Mu'awiyah took it over at the reign of 'Umar. Therefore the Umayyads (Mu'awiyah's family) had ruled over Syria for twenty– four years before the caliphate of Imam 'Ali (as).

This time was quite long enough for a clever and sagacious man like Mu'awiyah to prepare the first steps for ruling as a caliph over the Muslims and he succeeded to do it at last.

Mu'awiyah, by nature, had a great skill to put down his opponents' claims and he knew their hopes and wishes well.

On the other hand, Syria was the richest country among the other Islamic territories and Mu'awiyah, who was careless about how to spend the public monies, could weather every difficulty easily. Those, who wanted to impose themselves upon people, gathered in Syria and did their best to form the foundation of his rule.

Some critics criticized Imam 'Ali (as) and thought that he was unable to handle the state affairs and did not know how to manage the task. But they did not know that there was a great difference between the religious government and the other kinds of governments.

The difference was that according to the religious laws, dishonesty, deception and even white lies were not acceptable. In this respect Imam 'Ali (as) could not agree with Mu'awiyah, who was indifferent to the religious matters. Furthermore he had refused to pay homage to Imam 'Ali (as) in spite of the fact that all the Muslims and the great companions of the Prophet had submitted to him willingly.

At any rate a few letters were exchanged between Imam 'Ali and Mu'awiyah but regretfully Mu'awiyah was impervious to Imam 'Ali's advices. Finally the battle of Siffeen took place.

The Battle of Siffeen

Mu'awiyah made preparations for the war and set off towards Imam 'Ali's area with forty thousand soldiers. They got at a place called Siffeen between Syria and Iraq. Mu'awiyah arrived there earlier than Imam 'Ali (as) and occupied the bank of the river. He closed the way to the watering place that no one else could get water except his followers.

Imam 'Ali's army reached the place and they were badly thirsty. They found that there was no any drinking place for them to get water. The enemy controlled the water carefully that getting water was not possible easily.

Imam 'Ali (as) sent word to Mu'awiyah but he refused to open the way to the watering place. Imam 'Ali (as) was obliged to say to his men: "Get up and get water by sword." Those thirsty soldiers attacked the guards, dispersed them away and occupied the watering place.

Now the Iraqis wanted to pay the Syrians in their own coin but Imam 'Ali (as) did not want to requite evil with evil and said: "Do not prevent anyone from getting water." Hence every one could take water freely.

Then Imam 'Ali (as) sent some persons to warn Mu'awiyah of the consequences of the war and to reason with him the homage. Some other groups also acted as intermediary to prevent bloodshed but Mu'awiyah used every excuse to declare the war.

He pretended that he would not let Uthman's blood be lost. He had hung the bloodstained shirt of Uthman on the pulpit of the great mosque of Damascus, around which thousands of Syrians used to weep for Uthman's innocence and then they had sworn to avenge his blood.

Since Mu'awiyah had accused Imam 'Ali of Uthman's murder, the Syrians were in favor of Mu'awiyah to fight against the Iragis.

Mu'awiyah was really an autocrat in Syria since the reign of the second caliph 'Umar and he would never submit to Imam 'Ali (as) to lose the position. Hereon he involved the Muslims in a war that its bad effect has still remained till the present time.

At last the battle raged and Imam 'Ali's army of ninety thousand soldiers confronted the Syrian army of one hundred thousand soldiers. During the first week some fighters of both parties came forward day after day and fought each other. Some of both sides were killed. In this manner the battle became more widespread and bloodshed increased.

In the eighth day ibn Abbas (the Prophet's cousin) and Malik al-Ashtar, the two courageous men, attacked the enemy's right and left flanks that Mu'awiyah's forces had to retreat from the field several times.

In the ninth day Imam 'Ali (as) himself came forward with his men and made such an attack that the whole battlefield rocked and the enemy's rows broke off under storms of arrows and spears. Imam 'Ali came and stood where Mu'awiyah could be seen. Imam 'Ali challenged him saying: "Come towards me. Let the winner of the fight be the ruler."

Although Amr ibn al-Aas, Mu'awiyah's counselor, encouraged Mu'awiyah but he began to go back.

The historians mentioned that Imam 'Ali (as) had showed such bravery in Siffeen, that you seldom see it's like in the history. Everywhere he appeared, the enemy's lines were confused and they scattered before his sword like ants and locusts. No one dared to face him unless he was killed in the first rush. Therefore he occasionally changed his dress and horse.

Suddenly, in the thick of the fight, a man leaped forward and assaulted Imam 'Ali (as), who evaded the danger. Then Imam 'Ali hit the man upon his back with his sword. The man was split into two halves. The people thought that Imam 'Ali's hit had missed the man but when his horse jumped two separated halves fell down on the ground. The enemy knew later that he was Imam 'Ali (as) in disguise.

Some days passed in this manner and the Iraqi army had the advantage over the enemy many times because of the continuous and break-neck attacks. At the night of al-Hareer38 when the successive rushes of Imam 'Ali's men reached the highest point and continued till the morning, the killed were more than thirty thousand ones.

In the tenth day Malik al-Ashtar and Ibn Abbas again assaulted the enemy severely and their men showed a high spirit of sacrifice. The spirit of the Syrians was broken and signs of defeat appeared among them.

While the battle was still raging the, enemy found that winning a victory by sword was impossible. Amr ibn al-Aass, who was prone to mischief and was famed for shrewdness, planned to play a trick.

He suggested to Mu'awiyah by saying: "Let us raise some copies of the Qur'an on the spears and then the armies of the two sides are to be called to make the Qur'an as arbitrator. This act will create separation among them. Consequently many soldiers will stop fighting and many others will like to keep on it. The result will be to our privilege because, in this way, we can put off the war for a while to get rid of this distress.

Some pages of the Holy Qur'an were raised on the spears and consequently the form of the war was changed.

When Imam 'Ali (as) saw that the Holy Qur'an had become the device of their trickery, he said: "Be careful and do not be deceived. They invented this trickery just to get rid of defeat. They are neither interested in the Holy Qur'an nor connected with the religion. We are fighting against them to follow the Holy Qur'an's principles. Keep on the war to obtain the victory over the dying enemy."

But unfortunately a large number of his army began to shout and cry. They said to Imam 'Ali: "We prefer the verdict of the Qur'an and if you do not respond to the call of Qur'an, we will deal with you as we did with Uthman. You have to stop the war at once."

Imam 'Ali (as) did his best to make them understand the trick but they were impervious to his arguments. They had forgotten the Prophet's saying: "Ali is always with the Qur'an and the Qur'an is with 'Ali. They will never separate until they come to me at Kawthar River (a river in paradise)."39

The battle still raged but they made Imam 'Ali (as) send a word to Malik al-Ashtar 40 asking him to come back from the field. When Malik received the order, he was surprised.

He said: "This is not the time to leave the battle. Tell Imam 'Ali (as) to wait a little until I come back with the tidings of victory." The message was delivered to Imam 'Ali (as) but many soldiers shouted and urged upon him that Malik must come back as soon as possible. The messenger came back to Malik and said: "They are all in chaos. If Imam 'Ali's life is dear to you, go back to him at once."

Malik was obliged to go back to Imam 'Ali (as). After scolding the rebellious soldiers he said: "According to the homage you paid to him, obeying him would be obligatory for you." But regretfully they paid no attention to his saying.

Then it was agreed that each party should nominate an arbitrator to decide the matter of the caliphate according to the Holy Qur'an. Amr ibn al-Aass was nominated by Mu'awiyah's followers and Abu Musa al-Ash'ari was chosen by Imam 'Ali's followers as arbitrators. Imam 'Ali (as) had in mind to appoint ibn Abbas or Malik al-Ashtar as his agent but army did not listen to him and they stuck to Abu Musa.

Some spies of Mu'awiyah were in rapport with a few heads of Imam 'Ali's army. They used to aggravate the condition.

The historians mentioned that Abu Musa was a stupid man and that he had not shown confidence and trust in Imam 'Ali (as). He even prevented the people from joining Imam 'Ali's army.

When the rebels insisted on that Abu Musa should be the arbitrator, Imam 'Ali (as) said: "Now you do not listen to me. Well, choose your own way! It is not far when you will bite your fingers regretting your misdeed."

Finally Abu Musa and Amr were chosen as arbiters. They put their heads together and decided to depose Mu'awiyah and 'Ali (as) from the seat of the caliphate and then to let the people choose an adequate person for that rule. They were to announce their decision to the people.

After some formalities, Amr said to Abu Musa: "It is impolite that I precede you. You are older than me. You announce first." Abu Musa became proud after this flattery and came before the crowed and saying: "We both determined on deposing Mu'awiyah and 'Ali ibn Abu–Talib and hereupon the Muslims have the right to choose a caliph as they like."

Then it was Amr's turn. He said: "O people, you heard just now that Abu Musa deposed 'Ali (as) from his position and I approve it. But there is no reason that makes me depose Mu'awiyah so I appoint him as the caliph."

As soon as Amr ended his words, the Muslims made a protest against the verdict of the arbitrators but no attention was paid to their protest.

Abu Musa cried hoarsely and said to Amr: "You deceived me. You are like a dog. If you attack it, it will bark and if you leave it alone, it will bark." Amr said to him: "You are like the ass, which bears books."

However Amr's trick firmed the authority of Mu'awiyah to some extent more than before.

The simple-minded people, who forced Imam 'Ali to accept the arbitration, thought highly of the two arbitrators and thought that their verdict would be according to the Holy Qur'an but they had not paid attention to the Holy Qur'an, whereas some verses of the Holy Qur'an had praised Imam 'Ali and had urged the Muslims to follow him. The Holy Qur'an says:

"O you, who believe! Be careful of (your duty to) Allah and be with the true ones" (9:119).

Many of the great Sunni commentators mentioned that "the true ones" were Muhammad (S) and 'Ali (as) and "be with them" meant that the Muslims should follow them.41

The arbitrators had forgotten the Prophet's words: "'Ali (as) is the wisest, the best judge and the most superior to all of you. Opposing his sayings and judgments is opposing me and opposing me is opposing Allah and that is blasphemy."42

Could this short sketch of arbitration be a guide to the Muslims or the Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah in order not to be trapped by the enemy's tricks and not to go after the worldly transient desires?

It is much regrettable that some authorities make use of deceitful devices to exploit the poor nations unfairly under the name of humanism.

Imam 'Ali (as) believed that both science and religion should be adopted to serve the human beings. He said: "Allah has not made it obligatory for the ignorant to learn until He has made it obligatory for the learned to teach." He also said: "Whoever trades and does not know the rules of religion, will fall in usury."

The Battle of Nahrawan

After appointing the arbitrators, the people, who insisted on Imam 'Ali (as) to accept arbitration, began to say that it was heresy to appoint someone as arbitrator except Allah. The Holy Qur'an says:

"The judgment is only Allah's; He relates the truth and He is the best of deciders" 43

And since Imam 'Ali (as) had accepted the arbitration then he turned heretic. Of course they have distorted the meaning of the verse and hereby they caused the simple-minded people to separate from Imam 'Ali's army.

When Imam 'Ali knew the conspiracies, he sent some of the great companions towards them and then he himself went to their camp and finally they dispersed after hearing convincing evidences.

When they arrived at Kufa they began to tell a lie again that Imam 'Ali (as) had broken the agreement of arbitration and that he was going to fight against the Syrians once again.

Imam 'Ali (as) refuted their allegation and hereupon these people rebelled against him. They encamped in a place named Nahrawan near Baghdad. These people were called (Khawarij) the Kharijites.

When Imam 'Ali (as) heard the verdict of the two arbitrators, he wrote to the Kharijites that the verdict was according to the arbitrators' own wishes and not according to the Holy Qur'an. He said that he had not accepted it; therefore he had decided to fight the Syrians and that the Kharijites should support him this jihad.

They replied: "Since you had accepted the arbitration, you turned heretic. If you confess your fault and repent, we will think over the matter and then we will inform you of what we will do." This letter indicated their insisting on rebellion.

Imam 'Ali (as) had formerly prepared and equipped an army to march towards Syria, but his men expressed their desire to deal with the Kharijites first because they had killed the *wali* of Nahrawan and his maid, who was pregnant, and they also had butchered three other innocent women. Another man, who was sent for investigation, was killed too.

Consequently Imam 'Ali (as) turned towards Nahrawan and sent the Kharijites a word that the murderers of the *wali* and the killed women should be handed over to him to be punished. They replied: "We altogether killed them."

Imam 'Ali (as), as usual, did not want to begin the war; therefore he sent a man with a word of peace to them. As a result of this meeting, many groups separated from the Kharijites and joined Imam 'Ali's army. Those, who remained, were four thousand persons. They did not care for killing or being killed.

Imam 'Ali prevented his men from beginning any attack but they put their arrows in the bows and drew out their swords from the sheaths. In this critical situation Imam 'Ali (as) warned the Kharijites that the war would be hard for them, but they were so enthusiastic that they rushed suddenly against Imam 'Ali's men and caused a bloody fight.

As Imam 'Ali (as) had foreseen formerly, they all were killed except nine persons, who fled away to save their lives. Only eight persons of Imam 'Ali's army were martyred.

Surprising it was! Who had suffered from oppression more than Imam 'Ali (as)? Those who encouraged people to kill Uthman, after killing him, they accused Imam 'Ali of being the guilty and tried their best to avenge.

Those, who insisted on him to stretch his hand to pay homage, broke their homage and waged the battles of al–Jamal (the camel) and Nahrawan.

They even threatened him with death if he would not accept the arbitration and when he accepted it, he was charged with heresy and then they wanted him to repent. Above all, he was the first man in Islam, whose certain right was usurped by political collusions.

At the same time Mu'awiyah decided to extend his domain; therefore he sent his armies to different cities of Imam 'Ali's domination. He, hereby, created disorder and confusion so that Imam 'Ali (as) could find no peace of mind. He sent many groups of marauders and killers to put down the opposition and to obtain homage by force.

The Prophet (S) had said to Imam 'Ali before: "After me you will fight against the perfidious (those who fought in the battle of al-Jamal), the oppressors (Mu'awiyah's followers) and the apostates (the Kharijites)."

Muhammad, the great educator, trained the people of that time so that they could make the civilized world of those submit to them days within half a century because they could control their personal desires easily by virtue and abstinence.

As a result of the social and moral education, those people never thought of achieving their own aims. They just thought of the benefit of the ummah. Really, the successive victories of the Muslims at the first age of the Islamic state were due to their principles and morals.

At the days of Abu–Bakr and 'Umar these principles were still protected but at the reign of Uthman, the people did not pay much attention to those principles. On the other hand, the Muslims obtained victory over many countries and consequently they gained a lot of goods and spoils which led them to laze in luxury.

They practiced the luxurious and splendid life of the Romans and the Persians and made the new generation understand that no one could live at ease without riches. Hereupon the policy of the Islamic caliphate was changed into monarchy and tyranny.

This atmosphere was quite favorable for a man like Mu'awiyah, who was ambitious and wanted to found a hereditary sultanate instead of the Islamic caliphate. But Imam 'Ali (as) wanted to restore the Prophet's Sunnah and the simplicity of the life during the time of the two caliphs; Abu–Bakr and 'Umar and this made him face troubles that at least he was martyred.

The people gathered in Syria to firm Mu'awiyah's rule.

The historians mentioned that Imam Hasan, the elder son of Imam 'Ali (as), who defended the religion, declared the war against Mu'awiyah. In the thick of the battle, some commandants of Imam Hasan's army received a bribe from Mu'awiyah. They left Imam Hasan and joined Mu'awiyah.

Imam Hasan, facing many difficulties, was obliged to come to terms with Mu'awiyah. Contrary to the agreement, Mu'awiyah decided to appoint his son Yazid as his successor. Yazid was dissolute and ignominious.

He was a mass of sins and faults. Mu'awiyah poisoned Imam Hasan to clear clearing the way for his son. Finally he managed to appoint Yazid by force or by bribing the oppositionists when necessary.

The brave rising of Imam Hussein, the other son of Imam 'Ali(S), which had a regretful consequence, was also the result of immorality spread among the people and the loss of the favorable atmosphere of the divine caliphate. It showed that people would prefer material concerns to principles.44

Since Imam Hussein (S) was the greatest fighter against tyranny, I deem it my duty to remind the readers briefly how he sacrificed himself for defeating injustice and oppression.

The death of Mu'awiyah, all the Muslims, willy-nilly, paid homage to Yazid except four persons. Imam Hussein was one of them.

The people of Kufa invited Imam Hussein to reform the bad political and social situations and to guide them to the right path. They sent him more than twenty–five thousand letters inviting him to set out towards Kufa.

In the meanwhile he was offended by the *wali* of Medina to force him to pay homage to Yazid but he left Medina for Mecca at night with his household. The Umayyads pursued their adversary even in Mecca. They intended to remove this obstacle by killing Imam Hussein. Imam Hussein, because of the reverence of Kaabah and that he did not want any bloodshed to be committed inside it, left Mecca towards Kufa.

He confronted a host of one thousand soldiers on the way to Kufa. The commander of them asked Imam Hussein to pay homage to Yazid; otherwise he would not be allowed to enter the city. He refused the proposal and then he had to pitch tents in a torrid place named Karbala.

The *wali* of Kufa dispatched an army of thirty thousand persons to Karbala within four days to surround Imam Hussein and his household. They occupied the watering places in order to force Imam Hussein to surrender when suffering thirst. They were so hard–hearted that they did not pay any attention for the children's crying because of thirst.

There were one thousand persons with Imam Hussein when he got at Karbala. He told them that they had the option to leave or to stay, because he would be killed in that journey. They left him in groups and only seventy-two persons, including his sons, brothers and nephews accompanied by their wives

and children, remained to support him. Every one of those devoted men made a short speech showing his sincerity.

At any rate they all were terribly thirsty. The worse of it was that the enemy did not have any pity even for the suckling babies and the old persons. It was three days that water was not found in the tents and the all were terribly thirsty especially the children.

Next day early in the morning, the enemy put arrows in the bows and shot at Imam Hussein's tents. They hereby declared the war.

Some of Imam Hussein's companions were martyred in this attack. The companions then began, one by one, to attack the enemy and each one killed a good few of the enemy.

Then it was Imam Hussein's turn to sacrifice himself. It was the sacrifice that made the world think with great respect and admiration of this nonesuch hero.

Try to think about a man, who was thirsty, tired and faced many terrible difficulties since early in the morning till the noon. He mounted and dismounted his horse many times to bring the dead bodies of the martyrs to the tents and exactly at this critical moment the enemy proposed again that he had no option but to be killed or pay homage to Yazid.

Imam Hussein said: "That bastard (ibn Ziyad, the *wali* of Kufa) made me choose one of two things, the death or the shame of submission. I will never prefer living with ignobility to being killed for the sake of God. Martyrdom is an honor in our family."

Then he came towards the women's tents to say goodbye for the last time. They surrounded him and mourned over his forlornness and loneliness. He heartened them with soft words and said to them that they should be patient with calamities. Then he set to the battlefield.

According to the traditions of fighting in those days, it was man to man challenge. When Imam Hussein killed many of their brave heroes, no one else dared to fight him alone.

The enemy altogether made assaults. Imam Hussein beat them constantly. When they saw that they were not a match for him, they began to shoot at him with showers of arrows and spears.

Thurayh ibn Shurayk struck his right shoulder with a sword. A poisoned arrow hit his heart and then he fell down on the ground.

The enemy began to rush towards the women's tents. Imam Hussein shouted at them loudly: "If you have no faith, be at least freemen in this world according to your tribal traditions." They returned and martyred him.

There is an article, written by an English learned woman under the title of "Three Martyrs". She says

briefly: "In the history there were three praiseworthy men, who sacrificed themselves for exalting the word of "rightness" and for spreading justice and liberty among the people. They excelled all the other devotees in the world. The first one was Socrates, the philosopher of ancient Greece. The second one was Jesus Christ and the third was Imam Hussein, the son of Imam 'Ali (as) and the Prophet's grandson from his daughter."

She added: "If you study their lives deeply, you will know that Imam Hussein's devotion is more important than the first two persons. He was forced to emigrate and was involved in many difficulties. His companions were killed, while being thirsty, before his eyes. He himself was put to death tragically, while he knew that his wives and children would be taken as captives to Kufa."

That was a summary of the sad story of the greatest fighter, who fought against tyranny and autocracy and who denied himself before all the pleasures and he did not want to submit to abjectness and debasement.

Let us return to the main subject.

After the process of the arbitration, Mu'awiyah began to attack various places of Imam 'Ali's domination. He spread killing and marauding all around and caused fear for the people of the far quarters of Kufa.

Imam 'Ali (as) summoned the people to chase the enemy but the people did not respond to him. It seemed that the people were unwilling to fight. He encouraged them again to take part in the war at least for protecting their country.

At last a force of four thousands, headed by Hijr ibn Adiy, rose to chase the enemy. There was a short encounter between the two parties but the enemy ran away.

A few days before his martyrdom, Imam 'Ali summoned the commanders and after scolding them for their idleness and listlessness, he said: "I have decided to fight against Mu'awiyah. If no one comes to help me, I will go to Siffeen with my own relatives only."

They knew that he would practice what he said. Hereon they collected the people and said: "It will be disgraceful for us, if he is killed alone."

In order to avoid this public disgrace, forty thousand persons flew to their arms and got ready for the battle. They promised to fight against Mu'awiyah to the bitter end, but unfortunately the criminal hand of ibn Muljim ended the life of the great leader of the believers.

It was to be regretted too much that his life failed him to reach his goal. When his beard was colored with his head's blood, he said: "I swear by the god of Kaabah that I won."

Yes, he was troubled with a train of events that he could do nothing but to grieve.

Although many people were fascinated by his high characteristics, some others, who had heaped monies during the reign of Uthman, could not endure his justice. They often caused seditions and plotted to overthrow his government.

On the other hand, Imam 'Ali couldn't be indifferent to the misdeeds of his officers or to the expenditure of the public money for private motives and political purposes. And, above all, he had to resist his relatives' unlawful desires lest they would weaken the pillars of the religion.

Some critics criticized Imam 'Ali and said that it would be much better if he did not accept the caliphate after Uthman in order not to be involved in so many difficulties or at least he should have resigned his post and had left the people alone especially when the spies misguided the people to wrong him in Siffeen.

They ignored that the Muslims themselves rushed towards him and begged him insistently to stretch his hand in order to pay homage to him as the caliph.

The people knew well that he was that fair man, who would never ignore the interests of the Muslims for the sake of his own interests.

Furthermore, according to the divine law when there were enough numbers ready to support the right, then the religious leaders had to rise to get back the lost rights of the oppressed ones from oppressors.

He said: "By Allah, who split grains to grow and created all the creatures, unless the people had not paid homage to me and unless Allah had not put the ulema under obligation that they had not to be silent in front of the oppressors and had not to be away from supporting the oppressed, I would have slackened the reins of the caliphate and I would have done what I had done the first day after the Prophet's death"

In another part of the same sermon he said: "The crowd of people leapt upon me as thirsty Camels when leaping upon each other at the watering place. They wanted to pay homage to me importunately. They crowded around me from every side in a way that Hasan and Hussein were about to be crushed under feet."

On the other hand, if Mu'awiyah ruled over an army like the Iraqis, he would have become involved in many troubles, as he himself said to his friends: "I am ruling upon such stupid people, who obey me blindly, but Imam 'Ali's followers strive hard for the sake of the religious matters and they think over the problems diligently and sometimes they dispute with Imam 'Ali (as). Consequently there is no secrecy about the state affairs. Imam 'Ali discloses all the affairs before people but I conceal my affairs. This is the secret of my success."

Imam 'Ali (s) said: "Mu'awiyah is not more intelligent than me. He flatters and cheats."

^{1.} Refer to Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal's Musnad vol.1 p.p.111,159,333, ath-Tha'labi's Tafseer, al-Khawarizmi's Manaqib, Nooruddeen as-Sabbagh al-Maliki in his book al- Fusool al-Muhimma p.p.14, Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani in his book Hilyatul

Awliya' and many others.

- 2. Abu Ishaq ath-Tha'labi, Fadhil an-Nayshaboori, al-Fakhr ar-Razi, Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti, Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani, al-Khawarizmi, Muhammad ibn Yousuf al-Ganji, Imam Muhammad al-Ghazali and many others.
- 3. Refer to al-Bukhari's Sahih, vol.3 p.p.54, Muslim's Sahih, vol.2 p.p.236–237, Ahmad's Musnad, vol.1 p.p.98,118–119, Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti's Tareekh al-Khulafa', al-Mas'oodi's Murooj ath-Thahab,vol.2 p.p.49 and Abu Abdullah an-Nayshaboori in his Mustadrak, vol.3 p.p.9.
- 4. Refer to Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah by ibn Abul Hadeed, vol.3 p.p.276, al-Fusool al-Muhimma by Nooruddeen al-Maliki p.p.43 and as-Seera al-Halabiyya by al-Halabi, vol.3 p.p.123.
- 5. Refer to Ahmad's Musnad, Ibnul Maghazili's Manaqib, Muwaffaq ibn Ahmad's Manaqib, at-Tarmithi's Sahih, ibn Maja's Sunan p.p.92, Muhammad ibn Yousuf al-Ganji in his book Kifayatut Talib and many others.
- <u>6.</u> Al-Hakim an-Nayshaboori in his Mustadrak, vol.3 p.p.32, al-Mas'oodi in his Murooj ath-Thahab and at-Tabari in his Tareekh.
- 7. Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani in his book Hilyatul Awliya', vol.1 p.p.62, Muhammad ibn Talhah ash-Shafi'ei in his book Matalib as-Su'al p.p.4, Muhammad ibn Yousuf ash-Shafi'ei in his book Kifayatut Talib chap.14, al-Bukhari in his Sahih p.p.100 and ibnul Hajjaj in his Sahih, vol.2 p.p.324.
- 8. Ahmad's Musnad, ibn Maja's Sunan, Muhammad ibn Yousuf al-Ganji in his Kifayatut Talib chap. 14, Sheikh Sulayman al-Balkhi al-Hanafi in his book Yanabee'ul Mawadda chap. 6 and ibn Hajar in his Issaba, vol. 2 p.p. 508.
- 9. Refer to Ath-T ha'labi's Kashful Bayan, Jalaluddeen as Sayooti's Tafseer, vol.4 p. p. 177 (ad-Durr al-Manthoor), Abul Qassim al-Hasaqani's Tareekh, ibn Katheer's Tareekh, Sheikh Sulayman al-Balkhi's Yanabee'ul Mawadda and ibn Mar dwayh's Tafs eer.
- 10. Qur'an 17:26.
- 11. 'Ali ibn Burhanuddeen ash-Shafi'ei in his book as-Seera al- Halabiyya, vol.3 p.p.391, ibn Abul Hadeed in his Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, Yaqoot al-Hamawi in his Mu'jam ul Buldan and as-Samhoodi in Tareekh al-Medina.
- 12. The Holy Qur an 12:92.
- 13. It was the great grandfather of the Prophet (S).
- 14. Al-Fakhr ar-Razi in his book Mafateeh al-Ghayb, ath- Tha'labi in his Kashful Bayan, Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti in his ad-Durr al-Manthoor, Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani in his Hilyatul Awliya', Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his Musnad, ibnul Maghazili in his Manaqib, at-Tabari in his al-Wilaya, Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Koofi (ibn Oqda) in his al-Wilaya, ibn Haddad al-Hasakani in his al-Wilaya and many others.
- 15. Abul qassim al-Hasakani in his book Shawahid at-Tanzeel, sibt ibn aj -Jawzi in his Khawass al-Umm a and Abu Sa'eed as- Sajistani in his al-Wilaya.
- 16. Al-Fakhr ar-Razi in his Tafseer, vol.3 p.p.431, Abu Ishaq ath-Tha'labi in his Kashful Bayan, az-Zamakhshari in his Kashshaf, vol.1 p.p.422, at-Tabari in his Tafseer vol.6 p.p. 186, ibn Abu Shayba al-Koofi in his Tafseer, an-Nassa'ie in his Sahih, Muhammad ibn Yousuf al-Ganji ash-Shafi'ei in his Kifayatut Talib, ibn as-Sabbagh al-Maliki in his al- Fussool al-Muhimma p.p. 123 and many others.
- <u>17.</u> Muhajirun: the first Muslims, who emigrated from Mecca to Medina at the beginning of the Islamic mission. Ansar: the people of Medina, who believed in the Prophet and assisted him and his companions.
- 18. Refer to al-Bukhari's Sahih, vol. 12 p.p. 178, Muslim ibn al- Hajjaj's book al-Wassiyya, Ahmad's Musnad, vol. 1 p.p. 122, Imam al-Ghazaly in his Sirrul Aalameen, ibn H ajar in his Sawa'iq and many others.
- 19. Refer to Muslim's Sahih, vol.7 p.p. 122, at-Tarmithi's Sunan, vol.2 p.p.307, an-Nassa'ie's Khassa'iss, Ahmad's Musnad, vol.1,3,4,5 p.p. 14, 26, 59, 182 and m any others Sunni scholars.
- 20. Refer to al-Bayhaqi's Manaqib, al-Khawar izm i's Manaq ib and ibnul Maghazili's Manaq ib.
- 21. Refer to al-Hak im an-Nayshaboori's Manaq ib vol.3 p.p. 139, Ahmad ibn Hanbal's Musnad vol.3 and Abu N a'eem al-Isfahani's H ilyatul awliya'.
- 22. Refer to Ahmad's Musnad, al-Khawarizmi's Manaqib and sayyid 'Ali al-Hamadani's Mawaddatul Qurba.
- 23. Saqeefah means ashed.
- 24. It was mentioned by Abul Qassim al-Hasakani, Ahmad in his Musnad, al-Khawarizmi in his Manaqib, Sulayman al-Balkhi al-Hanafi in his Yanabee'ul Mawadda chap. 12, ibn Abul Hadeed in Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, p.p. 375-377,388, an-

Nassa'ei, Abu Na'eem al-Isfahani, ath-Tha'labi, ibnul Maghazili and many other Sunni scholars in their books.

- 25. Abdul Fattah Maqsood and Ala'uddeen Kar aka, the professors of al-Azhar University, as it was published in Sa'd Magazine and al-Ahram Newspaper.
- 26. Refer to al-Fakhr ar-razi in his Tafseer, Jalaluddeen as- Sayooti in his Tareekh al-Kulafa', ibn Abul Hadeed in Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah, at-Tabari in Tareekh al-Islam, Muhammad Khawand Shah in his Rawdhatus Safa, ibn Abdul Birr in al-Istee'ab, Muslim, al-Bukhari, al-Asqalani and al-Balathiri.
- 27. Ibid.
- 28. It was a village near Medina, which the Prophet had donated to his daughter Fatima.
- 29. Refer to ath-Tha'labi's Kashful Bayan, Jalaluddeen as-Sayooti's Tafseer, vol.4, ibn Katheer's Tareekh, al-Balkhi's Yanabee'ul Mawadda, al-Hakim al-Hasakani's Tareekh, ibn Mar dwayh's Tafseer and al-Muttaq i al-Hindi's Kanzul Ummal.
- <u>30.</u> Refer to Fadhlullah Roozbahan's Abtal al-Battil, ibn Haj ar al-Asqalani's Tahtheeb at-Tahtheeb, ibn H ajar al-Makki's Sawa'iq p.p.78, as-Sayooti's Tareekh al-Khulafa' p.p.66, Noor uddeen as-Sabbagh al-Malik i's al-Fussool al-Muhimma p.p. 18, Ahmad ibn Hanbal's Musnad and Fadha'il and it was mentioned by many other Sunni scholars.
- 31. Refer to Ahmad's Musnad, al-Khawarizmi's Manaqib, Meer sayyid 'Ali Hamadani's Mawaddatul Qurba and Abu Bakr al- Bayhaqi's Sunan.
- 32. Rak'a is a section of the prayer.
- 33. Murooj ath-Thahab, vol. 1 p.p. 435.
- <u>34.</u> Refer to Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah by ibn Abi'l-Hadeed, vol. 2 p.p.77, Akhbar az-Zaman by al-Mas'oodi, Khawass al-Umma by Sibt ibn aj -Jawzi and m any other Sunni historians.
- 35. A place near Basra.
- 36. Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah by ibn Abul Hadeed.
- 37. "Bint" means the daughter of and "ibn" means the son of.
- <u>38.</u> Hareer is an Arabic word. It means "to howl" and "to whine". The fallen and wounded soldiers were howling in that livelong night.
- 39. Refer to ibn Mardwayh's Manaqib, al-Haythami's Majma'a, vol.1 p.p.236, al-Hakim's Mustadrak, vol.3 p.p.134 and al-Fakhr ar-Razi's Tafseer, vol.1 p.p.111.
- <u>40.</u> Malik was a very close companion of Imam 'Ali because of his sincerity and steadfastness in faith. Imam 'Ali showed great confidence and trust in him. He was Imam 'Ali's right hand in all the difficulties. In addition to his bravery, he had a great ability to organize and to administer the state affairs. Suffice it to say that Imam 'Ali had said about Malik: "He was to me as I was to the prophet."
- 41. Ath-Tha'labi in his book Kashful Bayan, Jalaluddeen as- Sayooti in his ad-Durr al-Mathoor, Abu Na'eem al-Is fahani in his H ilyatul Awliya', Sheik h Sulayman al-Hanafi in his yanabee'ul Mawada and Muhamad ibn Yous uf al-Ganji in his Kifayatut Taib.
- 42. Refer to Amad's Musnad, al-Khawar izm i's Manaqib, Mir Said ibn 'Ali H amadani's Mawaddat al-Qur ba and Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqi's Sunan.
- 43. Qur'an 6:57.
- <u>44.</u> Nowadays the same condition is prevailing all over the world. The racial discrimination has caused many vagrancies and miseries among the peoples of the world. All these aroused from the unprincipled conducts that became far from morals. Hence many small countries fall victims to the political whims of the great countries.

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