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Chapter 3: Impressions Of His Character

Imam Abu' Muhammad al-Ridha', peace be on him, is famous for his outstanding merits and talents. He has dominated the minds of religious scholars throughout generations and times, and they have expressed their own beautiful laudation and glorification regarding his own character. The following are some of them:

1. Imam al-Ka'zim

Imam al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, praised his son Imam al-Ridha' and preferred him to the great Sayyids from among his sons. He ordered them to serve him and to refer to him in the affairs of their religion. Concerning him, he said to them: "This is your brother 'Ali b. Musa', who is the scholar of the Household of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his Household. Question him about your beliefs and memorize what he says to you, for I heard my father Ja'far say: 'The scholar of the Household of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his Household, is in your loins. Would that I met him, for he is the namesake of (Imam 'Ali), the Commander of the faithful.'1"

Imam al-Ka'zim announced that his great son would be the scholar of the Household of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his Household. This was the greatest medal which he gave to him, for the family of Muhammad were the origin of knowledge and wisdom in Islam; and the Imam (al-Ridha') was their master in this noble quality. We will mention some other words reported from Imam al-Ka'zim regarding the qualities of his son.

2. Al-Ma'mu'n

Al-Ma'mu'n, the 'Abbasid King, announced the excellence and exalted position of Imam al-Ridha', on several occasions of which are following:

A. He said to al-Fadal b. SAhl and his brother: "I do not know anyone more meritorious (*afdal*) than this man (i.e. 'Ali b. Musa') on the face of earth.2" According to this statement of al-Ma'mu'n, the Imam

was the most learned and meritorious of the scholars in the world in all sciences and knowledge.

B. He praised Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, in the letter which he sent to the 'Abba'sids who were displeased with him when he intended to entrust the office of the caliphate to the Imam. The letter says: "Al-Ma'mu'n did not pledge allegiance to him (i.e. Imam al-Ridha') but discerning of his affair, knowing that none on the face of earth is clearer than him in merit, more manifest than him in chastity, more pious than him in piety, more ascetic than him in renouncing the world, freer than him in soul, more pleasing than him to the special associates and the general populace, and firmer than him in Divine essence. The pledge of allegiance to him confirms with the good pleasure of the Lord-3"

These words specify some of the exalted qualities which were in the Imam, peace be on him, and which distinguished him from the rest of the people. They are as follows:

- 1. The Imam was the most clear of the people in merit and knowledge.
- 2. He was the most chaste of the people on the face of earth.
- 3. He was the most ascetic of the people in renouncing the pleasures and embellishment of life.
- 4. He was the most generous of the people towards the deprived.
- 5. The special associates and the general populace acknowledged that he was the most meritorious person, and that none had qualities similar to those of him.
- 6. He was the firmest of the people in Divine essence, for he did not fear the blame of a blamer regarding Allah.
- 7. The pledge of allegiance of al-Ma'mu'n to him confirmed with the good pleasure of Allah, the Blessed and Exalted.
- 8. In the document in which he pledged allegiance to Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, al-Ma'mu'n has said: "His (al-Ma'mu'n's) choosing 'Ali b. Musa' b. Ja'far b. Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib was after asking Allah for the best and exerting himself in accomplishing His right toward His servants and His earth concerning the two houses in general (i.e., the 'Abba'sid House and the 'Alawide Family, may Allah increase it in honor). That is because he (al-Ma'mu'n) has seen his (the Imam's) brilliant excellence, his plain knowledge, his manifest piety, his pure asceticism, his renouncing the world, and his being safe from the people. It has become clear for him that reports, tongues, and words have unanimously agreed upon him. Besides, he is still know his excellence when young and adult, so he has appointed him as his successor after him.4"

These words praise the noble qualities which distinguished Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, from the rest of the 'Alawide and the 'Abba'sid family. These qualities are as follows:

- 1. Brilliant excellence and plain knowledge.
- 2. Refraining from what Allah, the Exalted, prohibited.
- 3. He never wronged anyone, for he was the source of good and mercy for mankind.
- 4. Renouncing the world.
- 5. The Muslims agreed unanimously on him.

Al-Ma'mu'n realized these exalted qualities of the Imam, and it was they which urged him to appoint the Imam as his successor, just as he has said in the above mentioned statement.

3. Ibra'him Bin al-'Abba's al-Sawli

(Ibra'him b. al-'Abba's al-Sawli), a creative writer and famous poet, has said: "I have never seen nor have I heard that anyone is more meritorious than Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha'. Do not believe him who claims that he has seen the like of him in his excellence.5"

The Imam was the model of outstanding merits and talents. There was none like him in his time, for he was among the pillars of thought and virtue in the world of Islam.

4. Abu' al-Salt al-Harawi

Abu' al-Salt, 'Abd al-Sala'm al-Harawi, who was among the great figures of his time, has said: "I have never seen anyone more learned than 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha'. When a (religious) scholar sees him, he bears witness for him just as I do. Al-Ma'mu'n gathered for him a number of the scholars of religions, the jurists of Islamic law, and the theologians. However, he (al-Ridha') overcame them, to the extent that they acknowledged his excellence over them.6"

These words give an account of the great scientific abilities of the Imam, peace be on him, for he was the most knowledgeable and meritorious of the people of his time. This can clearly be seen in the debates which al-Ma'mu'n held in his palace in order to test the Imam. Al-Ma'mu'n had gathered the scholars of the countries and cities, and they tested the Imam with the most difficult questions; yet he answered them skillfully. So the scholars admired him, confessed their feebleness before him, and acknowledged his excellence over them.

5. Al-Raja" Bin Abu' al-Dhha'k

Al-Raja" Bin Abu' al-Dhha'k, a military commander, has said: "By Allah, I have never seen anyone more devout to Allah than him, praised Allah throughout his times more than he did, and feared Allah, the Great and Almighty, more than he did.7"

These words show the spiritual side in the Imam's character, for he was the most religious of all the people; he praised Allah and feared Him more than they did.

6. Al-Shaykh al-Mufid

The leader of the Shi'a, Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Nu'ma'n al-'Ukkburi al-Baghda'di, better known as al-Shaykh al-Mufid, has said: "The Imam who undertook (the office) (*qa''im*) after Abu' al-Hasan Musa' b. Ja'far, peace be on them, was his son Abu' al-Hasan 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', peace be on them, because of his merit over all his brothers and the members of his House (*Ahl Baytihi*), because of the knowledge, forbearance and pity which he showed, and which the Shi'a (*kha'sa*) and the non-Shi'a (*'a'mma*) agreed on with regard to him and recognized him for.8"

Al-Shaykh al-Mufid has mentioned some qualities which distinguished Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, from the rest of his brothers and the members of his House. These noble qualities and peculiarities are as follows:

- 1. Knowledge.
- 2. Forbearance.
- 3. Piety

7. Al-Wa'qidi

Al-Wa'qidi has said: "'Ali (al-Ridha') heard the *hadith* from his father, his uncles, and others. He was trustworthy and gave religious precepts in the Mosque of Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, at the age of more than twenty. He belonged to the eighth class of the next generation from among the members of the House (*Ahl al-Bayt*).9"

Al-Wa'qidi has mentioned two of the Imam's qualities which are as follows:

- 1. Trustworthiness.
- 2. His giving religious decisions at the age of over twenty.

8. Jama'l al-Din

Jama'l al-Din Ahmed b. 'Ali, a genealogist, better known as b. 'Anba, has said: "Imam al-Ridha' was given the *kunya* of Abu' al-Hasan. None of the Ta'libiyyin of his time was like him. Al-Ma'mu'n pledged allegiance to him, minted dirhams and dinars in his name, and ordered his name to be mentioned on the pulpits. 10"

Al-Sayyid Jama'l al-Din has mentioned that none was like the Imam in his time; he was unique in his time due to his talents and geniuses.

9. Yousif b. Taghri Bardi

Jama'l al-Din Abu' al-Maha'sin Yousif b. Taghri has said: "Imam Abu' al-Hasan al-Ha'shimi, al-'Alawi, al-Husayni was a learned Imam. He was the chief of the Ha'shimites of his time and was the greatest of them. Al-Ma'mu'n magnified him, honored him, yielded to him and extremely mentioned him, to the extent that he made him his successor.11"

These words shed light on some qualities of the personality of the Imam, peace be on him, which are: He was learned. He was the chief of the Ha'shimites and was the greatest of them. As he had a great character, al-Ma'mu'n appointed him as his successor.

10. Ibn Ma'ja

Ibn Ma'ja has said: "He (Imam al-Ridha') was the chief of the Ha'shimites. Al-Ma'mu'n magnified and honored him. He designated him as his successor and took the Pledge of allegiance to him (from the people).12"

Ibn Ma'ja highlights one of the Imam's qualities, which is that he was the chief of the Ha'shimites. Of course, the Imam was the master of the people of his time, for the Ha'shimites were the master of the people because of their good manners, their exalted ethics, and their excellent behavior.

11. Ibn Hajar

Ibn Hajar has said: "Al-Ridha' was among the men of knowledge and merits; he had noble lineage. 13"

12. Al-Ya'fi'i

Al-Ya'fi'i has said: "The great, magnified Imam, the descendant of the noble Sayyids, 'Ali b. Mu'sa al-Ridha', was one of the twelve Imams, the possessors of the laudable deeds; the Imami Shi'a have followed them and adopted their doctrine. 14"

Imam al–Ridha', peace be on him, was the most brilliant star in the world of Islam. He was among the Imams of the members of the House (*Ahl al–Bayt*), peace be on them, who enlightened intellectual life and strengthened the pillars of truth and justice on earth. The Shi'ites proudly follow them, and adopt their traditions on religious precepts. They follow them not because of bigotry or blind imitation; rather, it is incumbent on them to follow them because of the definite arguments and decisive proofs. For example, the Holy Qur'an has made it obligatory on men to show love for them; (Allah) has purified them from uncleanness and deviation from the right path; the Prophet has regarded them as ships of

deliverance and security for mankind and associated them with the Firm Revelation (the Qur'an). If religious proofs permitted the Shi'ites to follow other than their doctrine, they would do.

13. 'Amir al-Ta"i

'Amir al–Ta"i has commented on the book entitled *Sahifat Ahl al–Bayt*, peace be on them, which is one of Imam al–Ridha"s works, saying: "'Ali b. Mu'sa al–Ridha', the Imam of the Allah–fearing and model of the grandsons of the Master of messengers related to us... 15"

Imam al-Ridha' was the chief of the Allah-fearing and Imam of worshippers. In the previous chapters we mentioned examples of his acts of worship and his reverential fear, which are evidence for what al-Ta"i has mentioned.

14. One of the Imams

One of the Imams has said: "'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha"s deeds are laudable. His excellence and outstanding merits are like successive phalanxes. Showing friendship toward him is praiseworthy from beginning to end. His qualities are wonderful. His mastership and nobility became high out of honor.

"As for the glory of his fathers, it is more famous than luminous lamp and more shining than the round side of the sun. As for his ethics, his characteristics, his qualities, his signs, and his marks, they are excellent in pride and sufficient in high degree! He walked on the path which he inherited from his forefathers, and the children inherited (this path) from him. They are equal, like the teeth of a comb, in good, noble origin. So I magnify this family, who is high in rank and exalted in position. He was as high as heaven in nobility and was higher than the bright stars in position and place. He had perfect qualities, so he is not excluded from them. 16"

These words are arranged. They contain rhymed prose. They display that the writer showed love to the Imams, peace be on them. May Allah accept their intercession with Him for the writer.

15. Ha'shim Ma'ru'f

'Alla'm, late al-Sayyid Ha'shim Ma'ru'f al-Husayni has said: "Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, was distinguished by wonderful noble moral traits which helped him attract both Shi'a (*kha'sa*) and non-Shi'a' (*'a'mma*). He took these ethics from the essence of the Message with which he was entrusted, and which he safeguarded and inherited. 17"

This statement reports one of the qualities of the Imam, peace be on him, which is his exalted morals. It is worth mentioning that his morals were similar to those of his grandfather, the greatest Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, who was the master of all prophets.

16. AL-Dhahabi

AL-Dhahabi has said: "He (al-Ridha') is Imam Abu' al-Hasan b. Musa' al-Ka'zim b. Ja'far al-Sa'diq b. Muhammad al-Ba'qir b. 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin b. al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib al-Ha'shimi al-'Alawi. He was the master of the Ha'shimites of his time; he was the most clement and noblest of them. Al-Ma'mu'n honored him, yielded to him, and magnified him to the extent that he appointed him as his successor. 18"

Al-Dhahabi, known for showing enmity toward the *Ahl al-Bayt* (peace be on them), has acknowledged the outstanding merits of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him.

17. Mahmu'd Bin Wihayb

Mahmu'd Bin Wihayb al-Baghda'di has said: "He (al-Ridha'), may Allah be pleased with him, had numerous miracles, so he was the unique of his time. 19"

Imam al-Ridha' was the unique of his time because of his abundant knowledge, his reverential fear, his piety, his clemency, and his munificence. None was like him in excellence and talents.

18. 'Arif Tha'mir

'Arif Tha'mir has said: He (Imam al-Ridha') is regarded as one of the Imams who played a great role on the arena of the Islamic events in his time.20"

During the short period of his undertaking the office of regency, Imam al-Ridha' could manifest the origin values of Islamic policy, for he ordered al-Ma'mu'n to establish justice and fairness among the people, prevented him from wasting the properties of the state and from other matters which we will mention in the chapters of this book, and which support al-Sayyid 'Arif Tha'mir's statement concerning the Imam and his fathers, who played a great role on the arena of the Islamic events of his time.

19. Muhammad Bin Sha'kir al-Kutubi

Muhammad Bin Sha'kir al-Kutubi has said: "He (Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him) is one of the twelve Imams. He was the master of the Ha'shimites of his time."

20. 'Abd al-'Al

'Abd al-'Al al-Sa'idi has said: "He (Imam al-Ridha'), peace be on him, had abundant knowledge and piety. Abu' Nu'a's was asked: 'Why have you left praising 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha' while he has all (good) qualities?' He replied: 'I cannot praise the Imam whose father Gabriel served. By Allah, I have left praising him in order to magnify him. The like of me can say nothing concerning the like of him.21"

The Imam had outstanding qualities which none can count. For example, he had abundant knowledge and piety which distinguished him from the rest of the people.

21. Yousif al-Nabaha'ni

Yousif al-Nabaha'ni has said: "'Ali b. Musa' al-Ka'zim b. Ja'far al-Sa'diq, peace be on them, was one of the great Imams, the lamps of the community from among the Household of the Prophet, the origin of knowledge, gnosticism, and generosity. He had a great position and famous reputation. He had many miracles of which are that he foretold that he would die of eating (poisoned) grapes and pomegranates. The matter happened just as he had predicted.22"

The Imam, peace be on him, was a brilliant branch of the Prophetic family through whom Allah exalted the Arabs and the Muslims, in addition to his clear lineage, so he was among the pillars of excellence and honor. He had famous miracles, just as al-Nabaha'ni has said in the above-mentioned statement.

22. 'Abd al-Qa'dir Ahmed

'Abd al-Qa'dir Ahmed al-Yousif has said: "The history of the Imam is full of great qualities (such as) abundant knowledge, inherited infallibility, and unique holiness like that of the infallible Imams who descended from his loins. He was the great figure of guidance during his time; he was the model of reverential fear, piety, clemency, and ethics. What could I possibly say concerning the life of one of Allah's testamentary trustees? What could my pen possibly write concerning introducing him?

"Is mentioning his name not full introduction? His name is part of Allah's light, which guides him who seeks sanctuary from it toward the rightist way leading to public righteousness.

"The Imam devoted his own life to exalting the position of the Muslims. All his deeds issued from the thought of faith leading to the righteousness of the people and the good pleasure of the Lord of the worlds.23"

The history of the Imam is full of outstanding merits such as knowledge, reverential fear, piety, clemency, and high moral standards. The Imam is the model of all man's values; none has qualities like those of him except the Sayyids from among his fathers and children. Therefore, man has the right to boast of such qualities of the Imam.

23. Yousif Bin Oghla'

Yousif Bin Oghla', Sibt b. al-Jawzi, has said: "'Ali b. Musa', better known as al-Ridha' (consent), was munificent, just, worshipful, and ascetic. Were it had not been for his fear of al-Ma'mu'n, he would not have responded to regency.24"

All noble traits such as, munificence, justice, worship, and asceticism gathered in the personality of Imam Abu' Muhammad al-Ridha', peace be on him. Accordingly, he has occupied the top of honor and glory in the world of Islam.

24. Al-Zargali

Khayr al-Din al-Zargali has said: "'Ali b. Musa' al-Ka'zim b. Ja'far al-Sa'diq, whose nickname is al-Ridha', is the eighth Imam of the Imami (Shi'a) and was among the great and meritorious Sayyids from among the members of the House, *Ahl al-Bayt*.25"

25. Muhammad Jawa'd Fadl Allah

'Alla'ma Muhammad Jawa'd Fadl Allah has said: "Imam al-Ridha' is one of the bases of Islamic thought and among its starting points full of knowledge. The secrets of the Message and the keys of its treasures reached him after (the death) of his father Imam Musa' b. Ja'far. So his knowledge was part of the Message and his giving was part of its grace.

"He is one of the twelve Imams from among the members of the House, *Ahl al-Bayt*, who enriched Islamic thought with various kinds of knowledge such as dictating to their students or answering him who questioned them or debating with the great scholars of other religions.26"

Imam al-Ridha' is one of the treasures of Islam; among the brilliant fruits of the great Prophet, may Allah bless him and his Household; and one of his blessings which embraced all languages on earth. Through him Allah has enriched Islamic thought, and made clear the purpose. He has made him an eminent figure on His earth in ordered to guide the perplexed and those who go astray.

26. Ahmed al-Khazraji

Ahmed al-Khazraji has said: "'Ali b. Musa' b. Ja'far b. Muhammad b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn b. 'Ali b. Abu' Ta'lib, al-Ha'shimi, Abu' al-Hasan al-Ridha', narrated on the authority of his father. 'Abd al-Sala'm b. Sa'lih and a group (of narrators) reported several copies (of books) on his authority. He was the master of the Ha'shimites. Al-Ma'mu'n magnified and respected him, entrusted the caliphate to him, and took the pledge of allegiance (from the people) to him. He (al-Ridha') died of poison at Tu's.27"

Al-Khazraji indicates that some students of Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, reported many books on his authority. It is certain that the books concern the rules of Islamic law, manners and norms of Islam. Al-Khazraji also shows that the Imam died of poison; I (i.e. the author) also believe that al-Ma'mu'n gave him poison to drink in order to get rid of him, for he saw that all the Muslims magnified and honored him. We will mention this matter in the chapters that follow.

27. One of those who show love for him

One of those who showed love for the Imam and admired him has said: "The importance of 'Ali al-Ridha' b. Musa' al-Ka'zim b. Ja'far al-Sa'diq, peace be on them, surpassed the *Ahl al-Bayt;* his position raised him among them; and his proof manifested, so the Caliph al-Ma'mu'n loved him, made him a partner in his caliphate, entrusted the affairs of his kingdom to him, and married his daughter to him before the witnesses. His (al-Ridha's) excellences were high; his qualities were outstanding; his honorable soul was Ha'shimite; and his noble origin was prophetic. His miracles are more than to be counted and more famous than to be mentioned.28"

28. Al-Shabra'wi

Al-Shabra'wi has said: "He (Imam al-Ridha'), may Allah be pleased with him, was generous, great, dignified, and respected. His father Musa' al-Ka'zim showed abundant love toward him. He gave to him the country estate which he bought for thirty thousand dinars.29"

Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim, peace be on him, was very loyal to his son Imam (al-Ridha'). He preferred him to the rest of his children, entrusted with him the office of the Imamate, and gave to him this country estate. Imam Musa' al-Ka'zim showed love for his son not because of his feelings and desires; rather, he loved his son because he felt that he was one of the bases of Islam and of the testamentary trustees of the greatest Prophet, as it has been mentioned in the authentic traditions.

29. Abu' Nu'a's

Abu' Nu'a's, a famous poet, praised and lauded Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. He composed poetry concerning him two times, which are as follows:

1. The poets who coincided with the Imam composed poetry concerning him and lauded him except Abu' Nu'a's. The people criticized Abu' Nu'a's for this attitude30, and he composed these wonderful poetry lines:

It is said to me: You are the most unique of all the people in the techniques of famous statement.

You have a style of essential words,

which produces pearl in the hands of him who has it.

So why have you left praising the qualities of Ibn Mu'sa?'

I have said: I cannot find the right way to praise the Imam

whose father Gabriel served!

The people have memorized these poetry lines and regarded them as part of the wonderful Arab poetry, for these lines suit their feelings, their admiration, and their magnification toward the Imams of the *AhI al–Bayt*, peace be on them. It is worth mentioning that al–Dhahabi, known for harboring malice against the *AhI al–Bayt*, has commented on the last line, saying: "I (i.e. al–Dhahabi) say: 'It is not permissible to say that Gabriel was the retainer of his (al–Ridha"s) father. There is something missing in the text, and the Ra'fidites (the Shi'a) have forged a lie against 'Ali al–Ridha'.31"

The members of the House, *Ahl al–Bayt*, peace be on them, have great position with Allah, for they had stood the good test for His sake to the extent that their limbs were cut off, and they were liable to indescribable persecutions. They had adopted such a brave attitude in order to raise high the world of Allah's religion and to spread justice among men, but al–Dhahabi and his errant companions had not understood this attitude of the Imams.

2. Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, went out mounting an active mule. Abu' Nu'a's came nearer to him, greeted him, and said to him: "O Son of Allah' Messenger, I have composed some poetry lines concerning you. I want you to hear them from me."

"Recite them," the Imam demanded.

Abu' Nu'a's recited them, saying:

They (the Ahl al-Bayt) are purified, and their garments are pure.

Blessings are called down upon them whenever they are mentioned.

He who is not an 'Alawide when we ascribe him,

then he had no object of pride in the bygone times.

These people are the *Ahl al–Bayt* who have the knowledge of the Book and what the suras have mentioned.32

These poetry lines are part of the most splendid poetry. Abu' Nu'a's has quoted the first hemistich from the Holy Qur'an, for Allah, the Exalted, has said: "Verily Allah intends to keep off from you every kind of uncleanness and to purify you, people of the House, with a thorough purification." Allah purified them from deviation, kept off from them every kind of uncleanness, and made them a model of His servants, that the perplexed may follow them.

Imam al-Ridha' admired these poetry lines and said to Abu' Nu'a's: "You have brought us some (poetry) lines which none had composed before you."

Then the Imam turned to his retainer and asked him: "How much money do you have?"

"Three hundred dinars," replied the retainer.

"Give them to Abu' Nu'a's," the Imam commanded.

When Abu' Nu'a's had gone home, the Imam said to his retainer: "Perhaps, Abu' Nu'a's regards this money as little, so send him the mule.33"

30. Di'bil al-Khaza"i

Di'bil al-Khaza''i abundantly lauded and elegized Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. The following are some of his poetry lines concerning him:

Ibn Musa' (al-Ridha') along with exalted qualities have departed;

Noble knowledge has followed him;

Both guidance and religion have followed him just as intimate friend does.34

The meaning of these poetry lines is that Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, had all kinds of honor and excellent traits, so knowledge and religion followed him. He was distinguished by these noble qualities, which were part of his nature.

31. Al-Sa'hib Bin 'Abba'd

Al-Sa'hib Bin A'bba'd adored Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, so he has greeted him in these poetry lines:

O you who intend to go and visit Tu's,

land of purity and sanctification,

recite my greetings to al-Ridha' and stop by

the most honorable grave of the best buried one.

By Allah! By Allah! This is an oath which has issued

from a sincere one who is clinging to friendship!

Verily, if I possessed my own need,

I would resided at Tu's, the inhabited.

Verily, it is the place of the martyr wrapped in

righteousness, famous for exaltedness and praise.

Then al-Sa'hib b. 'Abba'd has said:

O son of the Prophet through whom Allah broke

the backs of the arrogant tyrants!

O son of the testamentary trustee who was the most

meritorious of powerful men, attained perfect pride and

naturally accompanied glory!35

In another short poem, he has said:

O visitor who early got up, ran, and walked like lightning

when it flashes, recite my greetings to my master al-Ridha',

who is at Tu's, the grandson of the chosen Prophet, son of

al- Murtada', the testamentary trustee, who attained firm

exaltedness and built white glory!

Say to him: (These greetings) are from a loyal one

who regards friendship as obligatory!36

32. Ibn al-Hajja'j

Ibn al-Hajja'j composed abundant poetry concerning praising Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him. These two lines are part of it:

O son of him from whom noble deeds are reported,

and exalted morals are taken!

O he who has given the name of al-Ridha', 'Ali b. Mu'sa,

may Allah be pleased with his father and him!37

33. 'Abd Allah Bin al-Muba'rak

Praising the Imam', 'Abd Allah Bin al-Muba'rak composed this poetry line:

This is 'Ali (al-Ridha'); he leads guidance and

34. Al-Sawli

Concerning lauding the Imam, al-Sawli has said:

'Ali (al-Ridha'), the magnified, is the best of the people

in soul, father, family, and grandfathers.

Takktum has brought him to us for knowledge, and

clemency. He is the eighth Imam who will deliver

the proof of Allah.39

35. Ibn Hamma'd

Lauding Imam al-Ridha', peace be on him, the poet Ibn Hamma'd has said:

My yearning has driven it (my soul) to Tu's and to him

whom Tu's has embraced.

At that place is al-Ridha', who is a precious scholar and

learned man; the Ocean of knowledge and wisdom when

compared (with men); and light of Allah which none can

extinguish.40

36. Al-Arbali

Praising the Imam in a poem and yearning for visiting his grave, 'Ali b. 'Isa' al-Arbali has said:

O diligent rider, stop the camels when arrive in the land of Tu's!

Do not be afraid of their being tired, and leave hitting

them during stopping and taking a rest.

Kiss the ground when you see the earth of the Shrine of

the best of mankind, 'Ali b. Musa'.

Recite to him my greetings, which are like the perfume of musk, (and say to him that these greetings are) from Ali b. Isa.

Say: That precious place receives the peace of Allah every time.

The one who remembers Allah is still reciting glorification and hallowing in the house.

(It is) the house of honor. The one who goes straight to it will continue sending his hopes and the camels to it.

(It is) the house of glory. Praise and laudation is still devoted to it.

What could I possibly say in praising the people whose

glory Allah has established with an establishment?

What could I possibly say in praising the people whose

name Allah has sanctified with a sanctification?

They are the guides of mankind. They are the most

generous of all people.

Their origins and souls are noble.

When a drought occurred, they gave generously like rain.

When a vague error became dark, they appear like suns.

They gave honor to horses, pulpits, and camels when they

ascended them.

They are the people whose love removes worries, and

whose qualities make clear the pages.

They are noble in birth, good in origin, pure in ancestry,

and meritorious in root.

No friend became unhappy through them when he made

friends with them.

I supported them with my praising them when I did not

join the army.

They have filled my heart with friendship and hope, and I have filled the pages with my praising them.

So you realize that I am obedient to them and showing love toward them, and that to other than them I am disobedient and obstinate.

O 'Ali al-Ridha', I send you affection leaving the heart hot out of love.

(You are) my faith; my faith is in you; and in my heart, for you, there is love leaving passion and steadfastness.

I do not think that the malady (of my own heart) recovers through other than you; nor is the wound (of my own heart) cured with other than you.

I wish I could visit your lofty shrine and kissed your sociable land.

If it is difficult for me to visit you in wakefulness, then you visit me in sleep and quench my thirst (for visiting you).

- 1. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 107. A'ya'n al-Shi'a 4/Q2/100. Al-Biha'r.
- 2. A'ya'n al-Shi'a 4/Q2/133.
- 3. Al-Biha'r, vol. 12, p. 133.
- 4. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 125. Al-Biha'r, vol. 12, p. 44.
- 5. Kashf al-Ghumma.
- 6. A'ya'n al-Shi'a 4/Q2/99-100.
- 7. Biha'r al-Anwa'r.
- 8. Al-Mufid, al-Irsha'd, p. 34.
- 9. Tadhkirat al-Khawa's, p. 361.
- 10. 'Umdat al-Ta'lib fi Ansa'b Al Abu' Ta'lib, p. 198.
- 11. Al-Nuju'm al-Za'hira, vol. 2, p. 74.
- 12. A'ya'n al-Shi'a 4/Q2/85. Khula'sat Tahdhib al-Kama'l, p. 278.

- 13. Tahdhib al-Tahdhib, vol. 7, p. 389.
- 14. Mir'a't al-Jina'n, vol. 2, p. 11.
- 15. A'ya'n al-Shi'a 4/Q2/188.
- 16. Al-Fusu'l al-Muhimma, p. 245.
- 17. Sirat al-A'imma al-Ithna' 'Ashar, vol. 2, p. 359.
- 18. Ta'rikh al-Isla'm, vol. 8, p. 34.
- 19. Jawa'hir al-Kala'm, p. 143.
- 20. 'Uyyu'n al-Tawa'rikh, vol. 3, p. 226.
- 21. Al-Mujaddidu'n fi al-Isla'm, p. 87.
- 22. Ja'mi' Kara'ma't al-Awliya", vol. 2, p. 156.
- 23. Al-Imam 'Ali al-Ridha' Wali 'Ahd al-Ma'mu'n, p. 1.
- 24. Mir'a't al-Zama'n, vol. 6, p. 41.
- 25. Al-A'la'm, vol. 5, p. 178.
- 26. Haya't al-Imam al-Ridha'.
- 27. Khula'sat Tahdhib al-Kama'l, p. 678.
- 28. Al-Itha'f bi Hub al-Ashra'f, p. 88.
- 29. Ibid.
- 30. Ibn Tolo'n has mentioned in his book al-A'imma al-Ithna' 'Ashar, pp. 98-99: "Abu' Nu'a's was blamed for leaving lauding the Imam (al-Ridha'), hence one of his companions said to him: 'I have never seen anyone more impudent than you. You have said something concerning wine, mountain, and singing, but you have said nothing concerning 'Ali b. Musa' al-Ridha', who is in your time.' He said: 'By Allah, I have left this to honor and magnify him. The like of me can say nothing concerning the like of him.' Then, after an hour, he composed these lines."
- 31. Ta'rikh al-Isla'm, vol. 8, p. 35.
- 32. Khula'sat al-Dhahab al-Masbu'k, p. 200.
- 33. Al-Itha'f bi Hub al-Ashra'f, p. 60. Nazhat al-Jalis, vol. 2, p. 105. Kashf al-Ghumma, vol. 3, p. 107.
- 34. Di'bil, Diva'n, p. 108.
- 35. 'Uyyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 1, p. 4.
- 36. Ibid., p. 6.
- 37. AL-Mana'qib, vol. 4, p. 343.
- 38. Ibid.
- 39. 'Uyyu'n Akhba'r al-Ridha', vol. 1, p. 15.
- 40. AL-Mana'qib, vol. 4, p. 350.

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