

The Righteous Caliphs According to the Shi`as

These are the Twelve Imams from the pure progeny of the Prophet arranged chronologically as follows:

- * The first is the Commander of the Faithful and the Imam of the pious, the leader of the elite, the master of Muslims and the religion's drone, Allah's victorious lion, Ali ibn Abu Talib, peace be upon him, the gate of knowledge who challenged the minds, dazzled the hearts, and enlightened the intellect, the man without whom the Messenger of Allah could not have been able to set the foundations of the creed.
- * Second is Imam Abu Muhammad al-Hasan ibn Ali, peace be upon him, Master of the Youths of Paradise, the fragrant flower of the Prophet in this nation, the ascetic worshipper of Allah, the faithful adviser.
- * Third is Imam Abu Abdullah al-Husayn ibn Ali, peace be upon him, the Master of the Youths of Paradise and the fragrant flower of the Prophet in this nation, the master of martyrs and the one who was slaughtered on Karbala and who sacrificed his all seeking to reform the nation of his grandfather.
- * Fourth is Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn Zaynul-Abidin, peace be upon him, the master of all those who prostrated to their Lord.
- * Fifth is Imam Muhammad ibn Ali al-Baqir, peace be upon him, who penetrated the knowledge of the early generations and the last.
- * Sixth is Imam Ja`far ibn Muhammad al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, the like of whom no eyes had ever seen nor anyone had ever heard nor any mind had ever realized with regard to the knowledge of *fiqh*; none was more learned, or better in deeds, than him.
- * Seventh is Imam Musa ibn Ja`far al-Kazim, peace be upon him, the descendant of the prophet, the substance of knowledge.
- * Eighth is Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Rida, peace be upon him, who was granted wisdom even as a child.
- * Ninth is Imam Muhammad ibn Ali al-Jawad, peace be upon him, the Imam of generosity and giving,

the Imam of excellent conduct.

* Tenth is Imam Ali ibn Muhammad al-Hadi, peace be upon him, the one who received Allah's favors, who was the lighthouse of guidance.

* Eleventh is Imam al-Hasan ibn Ali al-Askari, peace be upon him, the Imam of asceticism and piety.

* Twelfth is Imam Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Mahdi, peace be upon him, who will fill the world with justice and equity after being filled with inequity and oppression, and the son of Maryam, peace be upon him, will pray behind him, and Allah will complete through him His Light, and through him will the believers be very pleased.

These are the Imams of the Shi`as, all twelve of them; so, if one says "Imamite Shi`as" or "Ithna-Asheri Shi`as" or "Ja`fari Shi`as," it is all the same, and they will be the ones identified as such. None among all Islamic groups accepted their Imamate besides the Shi`as.

If we study the Qur'anic verses revealed in their honor and which explain their merits, lofty status, goodness of substance, purity of the soul, and true greatness, we will come across verses such as the one enjoining us to be good to the Prophet's kin, or the one referring to Allah purifying them, or the verse of Mubahala (a challenge to make *ibtihal* __supplication__ invoking the curse of Allah on the liars), or the verse identifying them as the ones obedient to their Lord, or the verse of blessing and praising them..., etc.

If we study the sacred *hadith*, we will find it enumerating their merits and elevating their status above all the rest among the nation, pointing out to their superiority of knowledge and infallibility. If we do all of that, we will most surely surrender to their Imamate and regard them as the nation's security against misguidance and its only means to guidance.

We will also find it quite clear that the Shi`as are the winners because they upheld the strong rope of Allah which is: loyalty to these Imams and upheld the niche which cannot be untied, which is loving them. They will have then boarded the ark of salvation. They achieved security against drowning, and safety from perdition.

It is for these reasons that we decide, being fully convinced and aware, that Imamite Shi`as are the true followers of the Sunnah of Muhammad.

***"Certainly you were heedless of it, but now We have removed your veil, so your sight today is sharp indeed."* (Holy Qur'an, 50:22)**

Surely Allah, the Great, has said the truth.

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