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Part 20

﴿الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ. أُوْلَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمْ الْمُهْتَدُونَ﴾

"Who, when a misfortune befalls them, say: Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall surely return. Those are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord, and those are the followers of the right course."1

The job of Ali was admonition

You are now so gloomy on the occasion of the anniversary of the assassination of Ali. O Shias and friends of Ali! As ordained in this Holy verse, may God's grace and mercy be on you who have gathered here for mourning Ali. In the beginning, let me say something to you about the aim and original object of Ali's deeds so that we may co-operate with him. Till the last day of his life, Ali used to give admonitions to all. He came to the market, to the shop of Mitham Tammar or at any other place and stand there holding the Holy Qur'an in his hand. He used to recite to all busy people,

﴿تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الأَرْضِ وَلا فَسَادًا وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

"(As for) that future abode, We assign it to those who have no desire to exalt themselves in the earth nor to make mischief and the good end is for those who guard (against evil)."2

O tradesman! Do not run after fame, do not try to make your things shining and blazing more and more than others in this passing world.

What I want to remind you is that the job of Ali was to give good advice to all. Let us also begin the mourning of Ali with some words of admonition given by Ali.

God and His Prophet recognized Ali

These are the words of the Holy Prophet, “O Ali! No one has recognized the (God) Truth except you and I. No one recognized me except you and God. No one has recognized you (properly) except God and me.”

Ali, due to the height and stature granted to him by God is such that no one has known it properly except Almighty Allah and His Messenger Muhammad. Others have known Ali according to their level of understanding and as per their capacity of measuring, not factually. All the wise and scholarly persons of the world have gauged the height and rank of Ali according to their own level of understanding. Here I also, to the extent of my humble knowledge am trying to explain, by the grace of God, to you. Let us hope that God will help us all to understand it by the blessing of Ali.

Literal name and original name, sign and word

Firstly all the components of the cosmos are the Names of God, not literal but original. For example, Rahman (Merciful) is the original name of Allah. Sign of every being indicates the effect of the original attribute of God. The verbal or literal name of anyone indicates a particular person. Suppose one has a son. The son is like his father in appearance and character etc. anyone who sees him says he is the son of so and so as he (the son) makes one remember his father. Thus the sun is the name and sign of his father. So ‘ayat’ means sign or a mark.

Name (Ism) means Sign (Ayat), which is spoken for remembering another person. This is his name. Word (Kalimah) is also the same, that which is hidden in the interior of a person. It is manifested in the body of that man. Sometimes an outward existence manifests an inner and unseen thing. It is called Word (Kalimah). Therefore words are Kalimat as they show the hidden earning.

All Creatures are Signs of God

Therefore all the things in the cosmos, all the particles in the universe, leaves of trees, drops of rain, grains of sand wherever you see there are God’s Names, signs and marks. All the particles of the world of creation are Kalimatullah (Word of Allah). How sweet are the words of Sadi:
Every leaf of the tree you look at tells you, “My Creator is Kind. He is all–powerful and all wise. (Persian couplet)

You see every tree has thousands and thousands of leaves. People pour a bucketful of water at the tree’s root. What a wonderful force that lifts up this water and no branch remains without it. In this wonderful water supply there is no difference between a branch which is near the root and which is far away at the top. One tree has a hundred thousand leaves. No leaf is left dry. What a wonderful supply system!

Every blade of grass that sprouts out of the earth says: He has no partner, Only One God. So if we say that all the particles of the cosmos are signs of God, which show us the signs of God's power and wisdom, we are not wrong and so also if we say that every particle is God's Name (Ismullah). Here, what is meant by Names is in the sense of original, nor verbal or literal. If all the oceans of the world become ink and all the trees turn into pens they will not be able to write the innumerable Names and Signs of the Only One God.

﴿وَلَوْ أَنَّ مَا فِي الأَرْضِ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ أَقْلامٌ وَالْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ سَبْعَةُ أَبْحُرٍ مَا نَفِدَتْ كَلِمَاتُ اللَّهِ﴾

"And were every tree that is in the earth (made into) pens and the sea (to supply it with ink), with seven more seas to increase it, the words of Allah would not come to an end;"[3]

How far away from us are these unending and innumerable spheres in space, about which scientists say that they are so far that their light has not yet reached us on earth. What a grand creation of Only One God! Their light has not reached us from the time they were created though the speed of light is three hundred thousand Kilometers per second. How far and distant they are from us that their light has not yet reached us? Who can enumerate the signs and marks of God's Might!

﴿قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي﴾

"Say: If the sea were ink for the words of my Lord, the sea would surely be consumed before the words of my Lord are exhausted,"[4]

Ali is the great Sign, a Perfect word and the Great Name of Allah

All the parts and components of the living universe and of the entire existence from earth to sky are Names of Allah. But God has a Great Name (Isme Azam), the original greatness, which is the greatest Signs, the highest of all His words. This great word is the Victorious Lion of Allah, Ali bin Abi Talib.

Now about the meaning of 'perfect' and great. Every rank (from the spiritual viewpoint) in the ranks of existence is hidden from the physical eye. But the capabilities of seeing through the inner eye are different. Almighty Allah has made His Might and Wisdom manifest through Ali in such a way that the creation recognizes God as He should be recognized, through the blessings of friendship with Ali. This friendship allows one to see the path leading to high heavens. See how many signs are there in Ali.

Birth in Ka'ba, Martyrdom in Mosque

The event of Ali's birth has been quite extraordinary in every way from beginning to end. God wants to introduce Ali's greatness to the world right from the time of his birth. Ali is not just a man like you. Fatima

binte Asad is about to deliver the child. She is holding the cover of Ka'ba on the loftiest part of the earth in the Holy mosque of Mecca. She prays to Allah.

The wall of Ka'ba splits. Many Sunni scholars also have testified this. Couplets in Arabic poetry also are sung about this in every age since then. Fatima binte Asad enters Ka'ba. Its door is closed in such a way that nobody can go inside. The opening of the wall remains sealed for three days and nights and then the wall splits again at the same place and Fatima binte Asad comes out.[5] In her hands is the newborn Asadullah (Lion of God) Ali bin Abi Talib. The blessed lady had been the guest of God for three days getting the food of Paradise. How pure and holy! Ali is born by the Will of God in the holiest place on the earth. The newborn also is the purest and holiest creation. God Himself names him Ali. Till Judgment Day whoever will hear the name of Ali, will realize and remember that he is from the unseen world.

Hands towards heavens even in infancy

Do you intend to know how is it in the high supernatural world? First look at Ali's birth. Then his mother puts him in diapers. She ties the hands of Ali in cloth. Then she looks at him and sees that Ali puts pressure on that cloth binding and tears it off. She brings another strong Egyptian cloth and binds Ali's hands and puts in him in a cradle. Ali again breaks that cloth apart. This happens seven times. Then Ali says, "O Mother! Leave my hands free." Ali's hand must be free so that he may raise them towards Almighty Allah.[6]

This raising of his hands from the cradle indicated that until his last moment Ali's hand will point only at Allah; to show that man is always in need of God's assistance. His hand should extend only towards God Almighty so that it may make God's Might manifest. God makes the humble hand most powerful and strong. You must have heard a number of times that it was the same hand of Ali which had pulled out the heavy gate of the fort of Khyber (so weighty that even forty men could not lift it). Ali pushes his hand into the huge gate and gives such a pressure that the whole fort shakes and the Mighty hands pulls out that heavy door and throws it away at a distance of forty Ziraa (one ziraa=104cms).[7]

Thereafter, when the Islamic army after winning the battle, wanted to return crossing over the ditch, Ali pulls that huge door again and places it over the moat for his army to pass over it. It is said that after that too the gate was narrow. So Ali made the passage easy by his hand.

Supernatural strength

Then there is the duel with Amr bin Abdu Faaras who was such a strong Arab that he could lift a young camel and use it as a shield. He had fought with a thousand men and won. Amr was so strong that Umar used to tell people not to approach him else they would be killed. There was no equal for him. The only person who confronted him on that day in battlefield was the King of Wilayat, the victorious Lion of God, Ali bin Abi Talib. This Amr having a forceful figure was riding on his horse. When his eye fell on Ali,

he asked, “Who are you?” Ali replied, “I am Ali Ibn Abi Talib.”

Amr had heard from some soothsayers in earlier days that his killer would be a person named Haider. He remembered that and became frightened. So he thought of doing something whereby Ali would go back. He began to frighten Ali by saying, “You are so young. The smell of mother’s milk is still in your mouth. How can you fight with me? It seems Muhammad has miscalculated matters and sent you to fight with me. How are you assured that I will not pierce this spear in your belly and hold you up on top of it between the earth and the sky!” He began to talk such nonsense.

Imam Ali told him, “Stop talking like this. It is also my desire that you should be killed by my hand. Let us see. I would like to put three options before you. I have heard that in every battle, you always put forth three proposals and accept one of them.” The haughty warrior replied, “Yes, I still do so.” Ali never initiated any fight. He never killed anyone before exhausting argument. So he told Amr, “My first proposal is that you become a Muslim.” That proud fellow replied, “It is never acceptable. For me, it is easier to lift the mountain of Abu Qubais on my head than say, “There is no God but Allah.’” Ali said, “The second proposal is that you return without fighting with us because finally, you will either be taken to Muhammad or be killed.” Amr replied, “It also cannot happen. I have vowed to fight with Muslims and revenge the battle of Badr.”

Ali said, “All right, then the third proposal is that since you are mounted and I am afoot, you also should get down so that both of us may be equal for a proper fight.” When Amr saw that there was no reply to this offer, he accepted it and stood on his feet in front of Ali. Then the cursed one initiated fighting by hitting Ali with his sword. It hurt Ali and blood came out from the place where Ibn Muljim had injured him finally. The Imam also swiftly gave a slash with his sword and Amr’s head rolled down. Some have written that, and this narration is more popular, according to which Ali, with his single strike, cut down both the legs of Amr and the fellow fell down like a huge mountain. Then Ali decapitated him and gave relief to Muslims from the fellow’s harm. The Holy Prophet said, “Ali’s sword stroke on the Day of the ditch is nobler and higher than the accumulated worship of men and jinns.” This event is noted widely.[8]

My point is about the nature of power. The strength, which in fact, is beyond human ability. Brave and courageous people of the world have a limit to their strength and power. There is no one who crossed such limits except Ali.

Pregnancy of a virgin girl and Amirul Momineen’s judgment

Once some people brought a girl. She, her father and brothers were all weeping in great grief. The father said, “O Amirul Momineen! She is my daughter. Great and high–ranking noble Arab men have sought her hand in marriage. But now a great tragedy is confronting us which makes us bow down our heads in shame. She has become pregnant though she is a chaste virgin. All of us are terribly confused. When we called a midwife, she said, ‘This girl is virgin and yet pregnant.’ We undertook this long journey so that the solver of all problems may solve our problem also.” In the mosque, Imam Ali asked them to put

up a curtain. Then he asked the midwife to examine the troubled girl. The midwife said, “What they say is true.” The girl also was questioned and she replied profusely weeping, “I have never been dishonest. I do not know how this happened and what kind of pregnancy this is!” Ali said, “Just wait. I will make it known.” Regarding this event, there are two narrations.

May be this occurred on two occasions. According to one, Ali said, “You know that there grows a vegetable like greenery which spreads over stagnant water (which is called Jall Qorbaaghah in Shiraz). Bring it here.” Then it was placed in a plate. Then Ali said, “Make this girl sit on it in a nude condition. Then whatever should come out would come out.” According to another narration, Ali asked the girl’s father, “Is ice available to you?” He replied, “Yes, O Master! Our mountains have a lot of ice on them.” Ali said, “Bring some of that ice.” They replied, “But that mountain is very far away from here.” Ali said, “This problem cannot be solved without ice.” Then he told the father, “Rest assured. God will make matters easy by His Might.” Ali extended his hand and brought ice from the Syrian mountains. He told them, “Put this ice in a plate and, behind the curtain, ask the girl to sit nude on it.” When this was done a living thing like a big worm came out from the womb of the girl. It weighted 75 mithqals (a mithqal = about 5 grams). Ali was informed of this who solved the problem saying, “Bring the girl here.” When she came he asked her, “Just recall if you had ever used stagnant water for cleaning your private parts?” She said, “Yes Sir, I had, on a number of occasions used such stagnant water near our residence.” Ali said, “Well, it was from that stagnant water that this leech entered your body, getting nourishment from your blood it grew so large.” All cried Allaho Akbar (God is the greatest).9

What I mean is the power or strength. Who in the world has an arm that reaches from Kufa to Syria? Is it possible except by the limitless power and might of the Knower of secrets Only One God? This is what I call the Sign of the Great Power of God, the Great Name of God (Isme Azam). The Great Name of God introduces us with the Greatest Nourisher of all nourishers (Rabbul Arbaab).

Ali’s strength was supernatural

Another point is that every powerful person derives his power from matter, not from any supernatural extraordinary source. People’s physical strength is obtained from food. Now they have begun to call it vitamins. Vitamins make the physical body strong. This strength is obtained from matter. But the power of Ali was from the supernatural source. What was Ali’s food? Suwaid bin Ghalfah says: Once I went to the residence of Amirul Momineen. He was about to dine. They brought the dinner spread. On one side was a vessel of yogurt and water. Ali took out a piece of dry bread.

The bread was so hard and dry that Ali had to apply force to break it. After making four pieces, Ali dripped that bread in yogurt water and ate. Seeing this, my heart burned. I thought of coming out and telling Ali’s relatives what kind of food Ali was eating! Ali had become old enough. He is sixty-six. Now this hard dried bread with yogurt water and that too so little? Add some olive oil to it so that it may soften to some extent. They replied, “The Master does not likes that. He seals his food bag so that no one may

interfere with it. He is happy only with such food."[10]

Ali could not be distinguished from common people

They have noted many things full of amazement. Once a Roman ambassador had come to Kufa. (Entertainment, care or protocol of such foreigners was in charge of Hasan al-Mujtaba). When the dinner-cloth was spread for the ambassador, he said in a gloomy mood, "I will not eat anything." "Why?" asked Hasan al-Mujtaba. The ambassador said, "Sir, I have seen a poor fellow whom now I remember. My heart is burning for him. I feel it difficult to eat anything. You please give this food to that poor man."

Hasan asked, "Who is that poor man and where is he?" The ambassador replied, "Last night I had been to the mosque. After completion of prayer, I saw an Arab who was about to break his fast (You can understand from this narration that Ali was such that the could not be distinguished from the general public). He opened his food package containing barley flour. He put a handful from it in his mouth. He also had a jug of water from which he drank. Talking with me he asked me to join him. I now feel that I cannot eat this nice food, which you have placed before me. You may please send this food to that poor man." Hasan wept somewhat loudly and said, "He is my father, Ali. He is the Amirul Momineen. He is the caliph of Muslims. This is his food."[11]

So Ali's strength is not from matter. It is the exhibition of the God's hidden power and might. It is the power of soul. This strength is extraordinary and supernatural. It is a Sign (Verse) of Allah. It is the Great Name (Isme Azam) of God. As we said, Ali, during the last days of his life took only three morsels as his evening meal and that too of only one item. Once they brought both milk and salt. He said, "One is enough." He used to say, "Since I am the caliph of Muslims, I must live like the poorest of them, without hurting others." Can it be ever said that this strength, courage, bravery and power is material?

He is a great sign of God so that people may understand the might of God. Through the strength of the Lion of God, all may recognize the hidden power and realize what God does. How is He (the Only One God) revolving this huge globe of earth! How He is preserving it hanging in the space and so also other innumerable celestial spheres. Look at the hidden might of God by looking at Ali. You will be able to know God.

Ali's knowledge, a manifestation of God's knowledge

Look at an example of Ali's knowledge. Recognize the hidden wisdom. Every knowledge or wisdom, which a man has, he has earned or received from another man like him. He himself also would have added something to it. But, anyhow, it is an earned knowledge. But Ali did not have any teacher except the messenger of God, Muhammad Mustafa the seal of the prophets. It was the knowledge granted by God and His Messenger. It was divine.

﴿فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا آتَيْنَاهُ رَحْمَةً مِنْ عِنْدِنَا وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِنْ لَدُنَّا عِلْمًا﴾

"Then they found one from among Our servants whom We had granted mercy from Us and whom We had taught knowledge from Ourselves."[12]

There was no school in the early days of Islam. Where was the knowledge acquired? How can it be compared with the knowledge of Ali! Can it be from the earned knowledge? Ali was repeatedly saying: Ask me before you lose me. Ask whatever you want from Ali. Ali faced no obscurity.

He never delivered confusing judgments. It anyone reads about the mind-boggling and extremely wonderful judgments given by Ali one is really astonished. I do not know from what angle should I tell you something about Ali's knowledge, from Arabic syntax which deals with the laws of word usage or finally, from his knowledge about oneness of God and his knowledge about the higher world and angels etc. I am telling you the solution of a riddle about distribution of camels. Some of you are aware and have learned arithmetic. See if you can solve such a problem!

Arbitration about distribution of camels

Three persons came to Ali and said, "O Ali! We have seventeen camels. We want to distribute them among the three of us in such a manner that there should be no fraction. The distribution should be such that one of us may get half and another one third and the third one ninth." Half of seventeen, say eight and a half. One-third means somewhat less than six. One-ninth (1/9) comes to be less than two!

This calculation is confusing. It means we should kill a camel, which is indeed a very difficult task. We do not require money also. What should be done? Kindly advise us. Ali, at once said, "Do you permit me to add one of my own camels to yours and then make the division?"

They said, "It is very kind of you." Ali said, "Go, and bring one camel from my yard." They brought it. Now the number became eighteen. Then the Imam said, "Now make division. Half of eighteen in nine, is it right? Now as you want half the stock, take nine and go." Then Ali told one of the remaining two, "You want one-third is it not?" He said, "Yes." Ali said, "One-third of eighteen is six. Take these six and proceed. Now you, the third gentleman! You want one-ninth. 1/9th of 18 = 2. So you also take two camels and go. Now what remained? The total of 9, 6 and 2 equal 17. No give me back my camel. That's all."

A Guest who paid eight dirhams

Two persons come to Ali and said, "O Master! One of us had five and the other three loaves. Then a guest joined and dined with us. While going, he paid us eight dirhams as price of what he had eaten and went away. While dividing this amount we developed a dispute. The one who had five loaves says: give me five dirhams and keep three dirhams for yourself as you had three loaves.

The one who had three loaves said, ‘Eight should be equally divided into two’”, that is both should take four dirhams. In the beginning, Imam Ali told man who had three loves, “Take three dirhams and go. It does not matter. Disputing and quarreling in this affair is not decent.” But that man insisted, “I do not accept this decision until you give me my right. I have a right to get four dirhams because the guest had given eight dirhams to be distributed between us two.”

Then Ali said, “If you insist on right then your right is not more than one dirham. So take one dirham as the remaining seven dirhams belong to the one who had five loaves.” The man continued to insist saying how can it be that though I had three loaves I should get only one dirham and the one who had five should get seven? The Imam said (summary): Though you had three loaves, you also ate and the one who had five loaves also ate. The one who had joined you also ate. So three persons ate eight loaves divided into three parts.

Every one of you ate eight portions out of the total 24 portions. In other words, if you like to understand, every one of you three persons ate two loaves plus two-third of a loaf. On this basis, the one who had three loaves ate two loaves and two-third of his loaves himself and the remaining 1/3rd of his loaf was eaten by that guest. The one who had five loaves also ate two loaves plus 2/3rd of a loaf from his five and left 2 and 1/3rd of his loaves for the newcomer. So in this way, if you want actual division, the one who had three loaves has given only 1/3rd loaf to the guest and the one who had five had given 2 plus 2/3rd of a loaf to the guest. So he should get eight dirhams and the one who had brought three loaves gets only one dirham.[13]

A peep into the higher world

Here I am hinting at Ali’s knowledge of the unseen. He said in a gathering, “Ask me, ask me, before you are deprived of me.” A man from the audience said, “O Ali! Where is angel Jibraeel now?” At once Ali gazed into the higher world and said, “You are angel Jibraeel.” He said, “I have looked into the whole universe from top to bottom and found that everything is in its place except Jibraeel. So you are Jibraeel.” When Ali uttered these words the one who had asked the question disappeared from the scene.[14]

For what are all these examples of power and strength? So that people may understand from these powers and strengths the attributes of God. O wise people! Everything is not material. Matter is not the cause. There is One Who creates the cause. Look at Ali and know him so that you know God. Be connected with Ali so that you will be connected with the secret of secrets. See how Ali makes you understand and be acquainted with the attributes of God and so that you may realize that it is beyond the power of any human being to possess contradictory attributes.

Forgiving despite having full powers

It is one of the perfect attributes of God that He is forbearing inspite of being all-powerful. Almighty Allah pardons the offenders while having full power to punish them. Ali made man realize this attribute of God. How can I tell you how much was Ali's pardon while having full power? He became victorious in the Battle of Jamal. Zubair and Talha were defeated. But what did Ali do after the victory? How kindly he behaved with his deadly enemies? First, he made a general announcement that all are safe and secure. No one is allowed to plunder war booty or rob anyone. When Zubair fled from the battle, Ali said that nobody should pursue him or anyone who runs away from the battlefield. They should be allowed to go.

As for forgiving the enemies, Ayesha had originally fanned the fires of war. Ali ordered that she should be given a respectable position. Without criticizing or reprimanding her he asked her, "It is better if you return to Medina. I am arranging for you safe and secure return with honor." Ali employed twelve Ashairi women to accompany Ayesha and also another forty ladies from the tribe of Abde Qais as her bodyguards.[15]

Ali pardoned Marwan Ibn Hakam, Abdullah bin Zubair, Saad bin Aas all of whom had fought him.[16] What do these examples show? They are samples of God's forgiveness and pardon. Anyone who looks at Ali's modesty, Ali's compassion, Ali's manliness, Ali's grace and concession will understand that such are God's dealings with His servants. God pardons however His servant errs and sins, while He is Omnipotent and all-powerful to annihilate the sinner within no time, but He shows forbearance, gives respite and forgives.

Kindness despite bravery

As for contradictory truthful virtues, once Ali, with all his strength, firmness, vigor, greatness was once passing through a town. He saw an old woman trying to lift a water skin on her shoulder but she was too weak to do so. Ali could not ignore it. He at once took the water skin from her and carried it on his own shoulders asking her house was, who was she and what was her condition. The old woman replied, "My husband was killed in the battle of Siffin and Ali also is not taking any care of us." Ali asked, "Have you children also?" She replied, "Yes, two orphans." Reaching her house Ali put down the water skin, went out and brought some flour and dates.

He knocked at that door. The woman asked from inside, "Who is it?" Ali replied, "The same Arab who carried your water skin. I have brought some flour for your children. Please open the door." Then Ali said, "Now, shall I bake the bread while you take care of the children or you will cook and I may attend to the children?" The lady said, "A mother can look after her children better." Ali said, "All right, then I will cook the food." He fired the furnace. When its flames went up Ali brought his face near that fire saying, "Taste the heat of fire so that you may never forget any orphan." While Ali was cooking, a lady neighbor arrived. She recognized Ali and shouted, "O woman! Woe unto you. Do you know who is in

your kitchen? Who is cooking for you? He is Amirul Momineen. He is the caliph of Muslims." The woman slapped her face and expressed shame. Ali told her, "I seek your pardon for reaching you late and for neglecting your orphaned children."[17]

My point is mercy or kindness, which is along with that bravery, vigor and courage! He is not able to look at a tear dropping from the eye of an orphan though his courage is unparalleled. Ali makes us know God. He said, "If we are not there God will not be properly recognized by people." Ali knows God, Ali knows Judgment Day, Ali knows the eternal reward and eternal punishment in the Hereafter. Had Ali not been there who would know how hard the Hereafter is? You see that Ali who is so much God-fearing, who is a mountain of good deeds, Ali whose single sword stroke is better than the worship of men and jinns.[18]

You hear that during a dark night, he holds his beard and becomes as restless as a man bitten by a snake and he says: Alas! The provision for my eternal journey is less, the path is long and the destination is far away and full of hardships. This shows that life after his death is very difficult. Do not say: I have done good deeds. Have you made more provision than Ali? Despite so many good deeds Ali weeps profusely and says: O My God! In view of this long journey I do not know over what should I weep, over the shortage of provision or over the length of the journey![19] I am empty handed and I have no deed, which can make me reach my destination. Saying such things he sometimes fainted. Such were the heart-rending words of Ali, which affected even a stonehearted man like Muawiyah. These words brought tears in his eyes though he was Ali's deadly enemy.

Muawiyah hears the events of Ali

After the passing away of Ali, once Muawiyah asked Zarar in his court to relate the events of Ali. Zarar said, "Please excuse me." Muawiyah said, "No, You must tell me about Ali's virtues and events as he has passed away from this world. You were always with Ali." Zarar said, "Ali was a far-sighted man, Ali always looked at the Hereafter.

Whenever he spoke, words of wisdom and knowledge came out from his tongue. He benefited everyone from his golden advice and admonitions. He always disliked the happiness and pleasures of this passing world. He liked dark nights to speak to his Lord in private. He always took food that was against his taste. He always preferred coarse clothes. No powerful man even dared to do injustice to anyone in the presence of Ali. No weak person found himself helpless in his presence. Everyone knew that Ali is the helper of the weak. It is also a fact that, by God!

It was the last part of a night. Stars had went towards west and it was about dawn when I saw that Ali was wailing like a snake-bitten person and weeping like a mother weeping over the corpse of her child. He was saying: O World! How will you be able to cheat me. How can you snatch the heart of Ali. You are so much low and mean that you can never attract Ali. What has Ali to do with the pleasures of this world, which are about to go away and which are unreal. Only those who know nothing about the

everlasting Hereafter like the worldly pleasures. Only a child-like heart can be lured by material worldly delights as it knows nothing about the higher world."[20]

Ali, who was knowing the facts and truth of everything, knew that Muawiyah and his like are childish people who run after lusts and passions. The wise people who look at the Hereafter follow Ali as they always look at the end of every affair. Following Ali, they run after God and Hereafter. They long for a thing, which is not perishable.

Ali also wept saying: Oh the shortage of provision and the length of the path and the hardships of the destination.

Tears rolled down the cheeks of Muawiyah (the accursed). You too may begin to weep. Muawiyah said again, "O Zarar! What about your feelings about Ali after his departure?" Zarar said, "My rest and comfort have vanished just like a man whose dear one dies on his own chest." Then he stood up and went away. Muawiyah look at Amr Aas and said, "Ali has gone away from this world. You heard what his friends says about him? If I also die, will you also say such words after me?" Amr Aas said, "O Muawiyah! One says what he sees. If we see things like Ali in you, we will also speak like that."[21]

Pleasure in this world, detainment in the Hereafter

I am speaking about the virtues and attributes of Ali. I am giving an introduction of Ali to you. O those who know and love Ali, see how much Ali is afraid of God's chastisement. You should fear and realize that the job is hard indeed. Look at the supplications and implorations of Ali. How afraid he is despite his piety and righteousness. How mindful he is about the accounting on Judgment Day! Once, at the time of dinner, milk and salt, both were put before him. He said: One of the two should be enough. One who lives in pleasure in this world, will have to give a lengthy account tomorrow on Judgment Day.[22] One will have to account for permissible things and suffer for impermissible things.
It thus shows that Ali was afraid of accounting for taking milk and salt both (though it is not impermissible)!

A child learns from the father's flight

O Shias of Ali! Let me give you an example. A two-year-old child does not know what a snake is. It has no knowledge. It plays even with a snake. It can do so as it does not recognize and does not know what a snake is; that it is poisonous. But, if the same child is with his father and sees the father running away from the snake, imitating the father, the child also flees. Before observing the father's attitude, the child was ready to play with the snake, but now, from his father's behavior, he realizes that snake is a dangerous thing, which had frightened his father.

O children of Ali! O sons of Ali! You and I do not know what Hell actually is. They speak about Hell and talk of the chastisement in the Hereafter. In our opinion it is a story. But when you look at Master Ali, you

see that the fear of these things makes Ali unconscious. Then how great is Judgment Day? Understand these things through Ali. Being terribly afraid, Ali says: O My Lord! What will I do tomorrow on the Day of Judgment! Supplications of Ali are being broadcast on radio also. Listen, read and remember. Know how Ali fears. How he is praying to God Almighty, in his dawn prayers and supplications: O God! Though I have sometimes followed my lust, have neglected You, did not care for Your like and dislike, was surrounded by passion and greed, now I am regretful.

You also, along with your spiritual father Ali come up. O children of Ali! See how much burning and pain Ali is experiencing. Know that these are facts. Be mindful and have such feelings in your hearts.

Everyone's sin in his own limit

The 'error' that Ali mentions is in his own place. You should not say that Ali was impeccable and so he never sinned. It is my and your sins that stoke fire for ourselves through great sins. The sin mentioned by Ali is shortage of attention, which he knows himself. You too look at your own condition and be attentive to your own sins. Say along with Ali:

O My Lord! My sins are overflowing. My heart has hardened. I am sin from top to bottom. If my sinning is more, Your Forgiveness is still greater. Who and what I am? I am nothing in comparison to Your Forgiveness and mercy.[23]

I was disrespectful to You for quite a long time
Now I have woken up from the sleep of my heart
Kindly rub out my disrespects, pardon my shortcomings
O the Pardoner! Do not catch hold of my sins
O Forgiver! Do not frown on me
I behaved in a mean manner
Kindly You be Merciful to me.
O the Kind One! O the Merciful One! O God of Ali! From our birth till today, whatever we have done against Your wish, by our tongue, eye, ear and all other organs of our body may kindly be forgiven along with Ali today. O God! Today, forgive all our sins. We also, today, in this gathering, which is held in the name of Ali, take a vow that we will, henceforth, not indulge in sins. We promise. Say: Kindly help me in fulfilling our promise.[24]

Last words of Amirul Momineen

(At his last moments) Ali stared with his eyes saying: "This is my brother, the Messenger of God, this is my uncle Hamzah, this is my brother Ja'far, these are the companions of the Holy Prophet.
He saluted all one by one, the Prophet, Ja'far, Hamzah. All those who pass away earlier, come to welcome the soul of the dying person who is dear to them. If the dying one is a good and faithful person, his righteous friends arrive and take him safely and happily to the everlasting abode. For welcoming Ali,

came Prophet, his companions and the holy angels.
Then Ali recited two verses from the Holy Qur'an,

﴿لِمِثْلِ هَذَا فَلْيَعْمَلْ الْعَامِلُونَ﴾

"For the like of this then let the workers work."[25]
And

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ﴾

"Surely, Allah is with those who guard (***against evil***) ***and those who do good*** (***to others***)***."***[26]

Everyone should work for his Hereafter. Now is the time for harvesting from Ali. Ali finished sowing. Now is the time to get its fruits. O my Shias! Work for this harvest till the Day of Judgment. In other words, do such deeds that, at the time of your death, you may see only pleasing scenes and blessings. Make friendship with such persons from the light of whose righteousness and spirituality you may benefit.

1. Surah Baqarah 2:156–157
2. Surah Qasas: 28:83
3. Surah Luqman 31:27
4. Surah Kahf 18:109
5. Safinatul Bihar, vol. 2, pg. 230.
6. Ghayatul Maram, Sayyid Hashim Bahraini
7. Safinatul Bihar, vol. 1, pg. 374
8. Biharul Anwar, vol. 9
9. Biharul Anwar, vol. 9
10. Biharul Anwar, vol. 9
11. Yanabiul Mawaddah, pg. 147, Ahqaqul Haqq, new print vol. 8, pg. 282
12. Surah Kahf 18:65
13. Biharul Anwar, vol. 9, pg. 486
14. Anwarun Nomaniyah, Sayyid Jazaeri
15. Biharul Anwar vol. 8, pg. 452
16. Biharul Anwar, vol. 8, pg. 452
17. Biharul Anwar, vol. 9
18. Biharul Anwar, vol. 9
19. Munajat of Imam Sajjad
20. Safinatul Bihar, vol. 1, pg. 572
21. Oddatutdai
22. Biharul Anwar, vol. 9
23. Munajat of Amirul Momineen
24. Sahifa Sajjadiya, Dua Tawbah 31
25. Surah Saffat 37:61
26. Surah Nahl 16:128

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