The Sufferings of Amirol Mo'minin, Ali ibn Abi Talib: Life and Martyrdom

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This text offers a brief insight into the challenges and sufferings of Imam Ali (as) before and after the passing of holy Prophet (saw), the battles he faces and during the time of the holy Imam's caliphate.
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

It had been so bitter and full of painful events, much more than the battles of Jamal and Siffeen. After that, Ameerul Mo'minin, Ali ibn abi Talib (a.s.) with his small group of followers returned to Kufa. When he entered the city, (or some say: the day after he returned), he went directly to the mosque of Kufa, and before the masses of people, he began his sermon by saying, "O people! It was I, who cut the roots of sedition and rebellion! Something that no one had been able to do, but I did it! Even though the waves of darkness turned to a great storm and its difficulty increased more and more. So, before losing me, ask me about whatsoever that you wish to know! I swear by Allah in Whose Hand my soul rests, that if you wish to ask me about everything that will happen in these days to come until the Resurrection Day, I will answer them all! Or ask me about some specific or unknown groups which shall direct hundreds of persons in the right path, or on the contrary, mislead them, alas! I will tell you who is their leader, where they will set up their camp and which one of them shall die..."

After the sermon, some people stood up and asked him some questions. Among the masses of people, there was a sad looking Jewish man. He listened patiently to the words of Imam Ali (a.s.) and he was most surprised about that strange pretension. He knew that this strange request was so important "ask me before losing me" that if somebody should happen to talk about it, he should be either a Prophet or a Prophet's successor. He was deeply drowned in his thoughts. He then went to his lonely room to think better. He was one of the great Jewish Rabbis; a famous man and a most wise Rabbi in the whole Arab Peninsula. A few days ago, he had arrived in disguise to Kufa, and had taken a room for himself in a small inn. He searched for a man with some specific characteristics and features that he had found in Moses' Torah and the Gospel of Jesus.

That day, when he saw Imam Ali (a.s.) for the first time, he felt that he had known this man for many years. When he heard the words of Imam Ali (a.s.), a strange impression came into his heart. People around him told him that Imam Ali (a.s.) was the fourth caliph of the Muslims. However, some other groups of men thought that he was the right caliph and the very first Imam and the successor of the last Prophet (S).

This Jewish man knew about Muhammad son of Abdullah as the holy Prophet of Islam. He had also had heard some great things about a brave man who had never turned his back to any war, and never escaped from any violent combat; a man who had always stood by the Prophet (S) and was known as his dearest "brother". He had heard about all the events that had happened after the advent of Islam. Nevertheless, up to now, he had never been able to see Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, or Ali ibn Abi Talib for that matter. Finally, he saw Ali (a.s.) that day and heard his words... even though for a short time, but it was still enough to heal the old wounds of his soul and answer all his complex and

unanswered questions, that which his thirsty heart and mind had formed helplessly for too long...

On the other hand, he could not accept easily that this man was the “one”; the same man that he had always called inside the labyrinth of his thoughts and heart, the “one” that he had prayed Allah to find and meet one day in the world. When he stood near one of the walls of Kufa and looked at the blue sky, he whispered to himself: “Maybe it is truly him that I had envisioned for so many years? How many nights did he steal from my sleep and substituted it with extraordinary dreams!”

On the other hand, he eagerly wanted to satisfy himself that he had found him finally! He said to himself: “It is not right! I should not accept those feelings and satisfy myself! My mind tells me something else. I should examine and test him more carefully. According to my calculations, he should answer correctly to all of my questions. When he shall answer me correctly and prove himself as a worthy man, then I will know for sure. I am one of the noble men of the Jewish tribes, and I know everything that is to know about the Torah and the Gospel of Jesus! If I die like an ignorant man, anybody who believes in me, in my own tribe, will die like me, and in the hereafter, I shall face a serious problem. I think it is better not to anticipate the events and put my faith on this man. I should be more patient and find a good occasion to ask him about all my unanswered questions. I think this is a good idea, and then my heart will accept the truth at last...”

For a moment, he felt the heat of the sun on his face. He did not know for how long he had been staying like that on that place, so he went to wash his face and hands.

People were scattered in the streets that were near the mosque here and there, but now they were all ready to perform their prayer. After a few minutes, there was nobody there. He drank some water and washed his face. He heard the voice of the muezzin reciting: “Allaho Akbar!” That unknown voice, affected his whole body and soul amazingly.

An unknown willingness and enthusiasm took him to the first row of prayers. He wanted to be sure about that.

The voice belonged to him... To Ali ibn Abi Talib. He stood in the back and gazed to his side, but he was afraid to go further. Many more thoughts and the sunlight made him tired, frustrated, so he returned near the pool, and immerged his head completely into the water.

After a few minutes, without thinking any further, he walked to the main gate of the mosque. Now, he visited the mosque of Kufa and knew that it was the best place for him to ask for his questions just among the common people. He came into the mosque.

A few days later, the Jewish man began going to the mosque and frequenting these men to find a suitable moment to ask his demands from Ali (a.s.). Each time without any appropriate result, he returned empty-handed to his hostel, because Ali (a.s.) did not come to the mosque, or he himself was not in a good mood; or he was not able to find a suitable time to offer his questions. Days and nights

passed and he was bothered with depression and a fatigue of mind.

That very night was very different from the previous nights. Since the beginning of the night, he felt a bizarre emotion in his heart. A strange feeling was forming inside his being, which made him impatient. He could not eat or drink, and the bird of his thoughts had flown away and the curtain of sleep was pulled away from his eyes.

He looked at the sky and stars all the night. He was waiting for the sun to rise in order to go to the mosque. Waiting was the only thing he could do! It was truly unbearable for him.

At the earliest moments of the new day, he got out and began walking in the street. A cool and smooth breeze was whispering into his ears, and touching lightly the skin of his face. He did not look at his left or right, for nobody was there.

He did not know what he was doing in the street. He did not know from which direction he should go toward the mosque. For a short time, he began thinking, but he could not concentrate his mind to remember anything, so he chose a path by chance, while drowned in his thoughts, until he saw the earthen walls of the mosque.

The sun was rising and the weather was getting hotter. In that season, the nights of Kufa were cool and the days were hot. He touched the walls of the mosque. It was still cool by the night's breeze. He chose to relax for a little while in the shade of the same wall, and so he sat there. He took his knees with his arms and embraced them thoughtfully, gazing at the blue sky of Kufa, which filled his eyes with its beauty and gave him a sense of calmness and serenity. He tried to collect his thoughts and give them some order. At the height of exasperation, he whispered to himself: "How tired I am! How my patience has come to its end! O, Allah! The All-Powerful! Help me!"

Without knowing the reason, he suddenly raised his head and gazed at the principal portal of the mosque. He tried in vain to concentrate his thoughts. Maybe his condition was due to his sleepless nights, his inward agitation, and the condition in which he saw himself for some time now. He did not know why he had come there to sit down on the ground. He could not find any reasonable explanation for his actions and behavior. He began to think about the recent days.

A smile appeared slowly on his face, and his eyes began to shine. He got up quickly and entered the mosque. He rested his arm on the entry door to look around. Some men were sitting on the ground. Some others were sitting under the shade, made of the palm frond, or were offering their prayers. Some others were leaning against the wall and taking a nap.

Doves were flying here and there, some others trying to quench their thirst from the water of the great basin situated in the middle of the court of the mosque.

He suddenly felt pain in his temples. He closed his eyes. It appeared to him that he was hearing a long

whistling in his head. He remembered this strange statement, “Ask me whatever you wish to ask from me, before it gets too late…”

He got this certainty that on that same day, he could fulfill his deepest wish and get near Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.). The day he had waited so long for its coming had finally come! And, suddenly, he knew the reason of his torment and inward excitement; it was because he was going to see that strange man once again! Then he could ask him all those bothering questions that were so important to him. He knew that he was nearing a great spiritual test, and he was very much worried and fearful about what were to happen to him! If per chance he could not receive his answers, then what would he do?! He already saw himself in great desperation with all doors of the world closed before him. He knew he was not allowed to advance too much in his desperation before his Creator. But what if he was to receive all his answers at last?

He was going to see all his desires fulfilled in this world… and what excellent end, was truly waiting for him!

He felt a new force inside him. Full of energy, he entered the mosque. He reached the eastern wall which was situated exactly in front of the principal door and sat down in the shade. Now, he only had to wait.

The sun then went high and the shade of the wall decreased. Under the shadow in front of the mosque, a group of men gathered and they began talking with each other. The Jewish man went to a column and sat down near it.

He asked a man nearby, “Will your lord come today?”

The man answered in affirmative.

From that moment on, a liquid fire flowed in his veins and he could not bear this agonizing waiting anymore! He could not keep himself serene and calm. He gathered his clothes and got up. He sat down once again for a while and again got up. He could not let himself stand up, because he would have lost his place otherwise. He needed his place most urgently, because it was very near to the pulpit of the Commander of the Believers. He needed to be there to be able to ask his questions, and to receive clear, precise, definite answers. He did not want to converse with the man who sat near him on his right. He only wanted to fly high to reach another spiritual realm.

Hot rays of the sun reached him under the palm-frond shade which protected the people from the blinding brightness of the morning sun.

He put his head against the wooden column when he suddenly heard a rumor. Suddenly, men got to their feet as if by a common accord. He did the same without knowing the reason. He turned his head and suddenly saw Ali ibn Abi Talib who was coming to ward them, very simply attired. A deep dignity

and an inner majesty enveloped all his persona. He had a sword on his side, and his clothes were very simple. He had put on sandals made of the fibers of palm trees.

The Jewish man, who could not endure this anymore, felt his knees tremble. He got pale and was forced to lean on the column that was behind him.

Ali passed among the men, sat down on the ground, and faced the public.

That day, the intimate friends of Ali were as follows; Asbagh ibn Nabatah, Komeyl ibn Ziyad, Meytham at–Tammar, and Habib ibn Mudhahir. They sat close to their master showing him great respect. A moment passed in silence, and then there were questions from the people all around. There were also men having come from other cities looking forward to receive answers to their theological questions, or concerning problems of their everyday life. Some others had come there to seek justice, and they really were stupefied by the fair judgment of Ali ibn abi Talib (a.s.).

The Jewish man was amazed. He looked for an instant at Ali (a.s.), and the next instant, at those men. He had not yet had an opportunity to ask his own questions. Then, he did not have the necessary courage for this. Time passed quickly, but he could not let that precious time to go by.

He moved himself a bit, and then collected his inward power to give himself the courage to stand up. With this act, he provoked the stupefaction of the men who were close to him. But then again, he did not know what kind of demand to make to Ali. It seemed to him that he had forgotten everything! With great difficulty, he dampened his lips, and with a trembling voice he said, “If you permit me, I wish to ask you some questions!”

The tone of his voice and his foreign accent made the men turn their heads towards him. Ali with a paternal look gazed at him and declared, “Offer your demands please!”

The man raised his head and fixed Ali’s face. He then lowered his eyes and looked at Ali’s feet. With a mixture of modesty and hesitation he announced, “… But no body can answer my questions except if they are answered by a Prophet or by the successor of a Prophet…”

Maybe he had said it, just to have a confirmation… Who knows?

Ali (a.s.), with an affectionate gaze, repeated with a celestial voice, “Offer your demands…come now! Ask whatever you want to know.” After this cordial tone, all the particles of the man’s being were enveloped by these two things; the voice of the Commander of the Believers and its warm vibration! They put an end to all his agitations and uncertainties. All the windows of his spirit and heart opened up suddenly, and he saw himself completely enveloped and braced by the waves of a sea of goodness and paternal kindness.

The Jewish man regained force and suddenly all his questions came forth to his tongue. He had control over his mind. It appeared to him most strange that he could feel this way, but he let this thought go

away, and he concentrated on the questions that he was going to ask from the Commander of the Believers.

He coughed and, with a great serenity that was new to him said, “I have read in the Torah that after the election of each Prophet, Allah the Almighty, by way of His Revelation, makes his Messenger choose a man among his intimates to be his successor and to maintain justice after his death. The Prophet then makes him swear that he might be able to put them in execution. I have also heard that Allah the Almighty, during the life of this Prophet and after his death, sends down all kinds of sufferings and calamities on his successor. Thus, I wanted to know that if they really have to endure trials during the Prophet’s lifetime and after his death, and what shall be their own ends ...?”

Imam Ali (a.s.) replied, “I swear by Him Who has opened the sea for the children of Israel and Who has revealed the Torah to Prophet Moses, that I shall answer all your questions! But if there shall be answers to which you will have to respond, will you do that?”

“Oh yes, I will!”

The men, who were there, saw themselves getting more stretched, because new comers had come into the mosque, and they were searching for some place near those, who were already there, to sit down.

Nobody had ever asked such a question. It appeared to them as a very good, refreshing novelty to them! In fact, there were even intimates of Ali ibn Abi Talib, who had never heard of such demands.

The Commander of the Believers got to his feet and sat on the pulpit. He began his speech by saying, “Allah the Almighty, during the Prophet’s lifetime, puts to trial the successor of this Prophet for seven times… To test in fact, his faith and obedience…Then after the death of this Prophet, Allah once again, puts this successor to trial for seven times to come to see how far his patience and submission will go, and when these torments and sufferings reach their end, Allah grants him the great honor of becoming a Martyr. Thus, he could join the Prophet and reach the absolute Bliss.”

The man said, “You have said that Allah grants them the great honor of becoming Martyrs. Thus, they could join the Prophets and reach the absolute Bliss. You have answered correctly, O Commander of the Believers! Now, can you tell me how many times have you ever been put on trial yourself by Allah the Almighty, either during Muhammad’s lifetime (S), or after his decease, and how shall your end be?”

Imam Ali (a.s.) got up calmly, came close to the man and said to him, “Come… get up, so that I could answer you in private.”

By the manner that Ali (a.s.) behaved, and by the answer he had given to him, he showed his desire to take him to some other place to be able to talk to him in private, and to make him some confidences without the presence of the others.

At this moment, some of Ali’s enemies, who had had a grudge against him, for such a long time,

objected with high cries and shouts and said, “O, Commander of the Believers! Take us with you!”

Ali (a.s.) replied, “I am afraid that you could not bear my words.”

“Why is it so?”

“Because of the many bad deeds that some of you have committed.”

Soon after, one of Imam Ali’s companions got up and with great modesty said, “O, Commander of the Believers! Favor us too! Tell us, your companions and those who wish you well, about these sufferings and calamities! I swear by Allah, that apart from you, we do not know another successor to our Prophet, and we are very well aware of this fact. We know perfectly that Allah, after Muhammad, will not send another Prophet. Thus, we confess that fact by obeying you. We know that it is a moral duty and a religious prescription, which is done after the obedience that we had offered to our great Prophet.”

After this humble request, Imam Ali (a.s.) sat on his pulpit. Those who had got up, sat down again, and all men were ready to listen to Imam Ali’s reply.

The Commander of the Believers, after praising Allah and thanking the Divine Blessings, turned to the Jewish man and said to him, “When the Prophet was alive, Allah put me on trial on seven occasions, but I do not want to appear proud or self-conceited. However, you shall see that in each occasion. I have always been absolutely obedient toward the Messenger of Allah (S).”

The Jewish man asked him respectfully, “May I ask on which occasions?”

Imam Ali (a.s.) recounted his sufferings and calamities in two parts, and each one was divided in seven stages. The first one was during the time in which the Prophet (S) lived, and the other part after the Prophet (S) had left for the better world. That is from the time in which there was a house near the Ka’aba, until that sad dawn when the mosque of Kufa became bloody and Ali (a.s.), before his soul was taken up to its Creator, sighed by saying, “I have won, by the Lord of Kaaba!”

When Allah the Almighty had sent down His Revelation to our Prophet, chosen him as His Messenger, and entrusted him with the Divine Mission, I was the youngest member of his family. In those days, I was always with the Messenger of Allah (S). I tried to satisfy him by doing everything well. One day, he invited the children of Abdul Muttalib, from the oldest to the youngest one to his house.

He testified to the Oneness of Allah, spoke of his Prophetic Mission, and invited them to accept his Divine Mission. All of them turned their backs to him and walked away ignoring his statements.

Other people did the same as his own family and tribe did to him. His family resisted to him. In fact, their hearts could not tolerate to accept his Mission and their minds could not analyze the meanings of the

Pure Monotheism. The confession of these beliefs was very difficult for them.

In this situation, I was the only one who accepted his invitation. Without no hesitation! I was so certain about my decision, that I joined him with all my heart and mind and felt no doubt whatsoever!

Anyway, three years passed and in these years, there was nobody on the earth who would accept the Prophetic Mission of Muhammad (peace be upon Him) except me and the daughter of khuwaylid (Khadijah). We were the only three ones who offered prayers to Allah, The Most Powerful.

[The narrator of this news, Jabir al-Jo'fi narrates that at that moment]: "Ali (peace be upon him), in front of the people, asked the men who were listening to him: 'Is it not true?' Everyone said, 'O commander of the believers! Yes, it is true!'

The Jewish man whispered to himself: Then it is the first sign.

O, our Jewish brother, the tribes of Quraysh were always thinking about how to kill the Prophet of Islam. To execute their devillish plan, they did everything, until one day they gathered in "Dar an-Nadwah; house of meeting" where Satan was also present there, as the one-eyed man of Thaqif (A'war Thaqif).

Satan expressed and revealed the hidden intentions. He persuaded the men of Quraysh to choose a young man from each tribe to attack and kill the Prophet (S) while sleeping. In this devilish plot, a group of men would kill the Prophet (S), and so the Hashimites [the members from the Bani Hâchim tribe] would not be able to avenge on all the Arab tribes. In this way, the Prophet's blood would have been shed in vain.

After they decided to do so, Gabriel came to see the Prophet Muhammad (S) and revealed to him about their plot. Gabriel also told him about the exact time and the night of the execution of the plot. He helped him leave Mecca and directed him to the cave of Hara' in the Thour Mountain.

The Prophet Muhammad (S) told me about this matter and asked me if I would sleep in his bed and sacrifice my life for him? I delightedly agreed to his order and I was very happy to do that.

This special and dangerous night had come and the Messenger of Allah (S) left Mecca. I slept in his bed. In the middle of the night, the men of Quraysh, broke into the Prophet's house, but when they opened the door of the Prophet's room, I got up from his bed and attacked them with my unsheathed sword. You all know how I defended myself. Is it not true?"

Everyone said, "Yes, It is true! You are the commander of the believers!" The Jewish man said to himself: 'This is the second sign.'

The two sons of Rabee'ah; Shaybah and Utbah, and Waleed Utbah's son were three courageous warriors of the tribe of Quraysh. They looked for equal opponents during the battle of Badr, but nobody was able or courageous enough to fight with them. At that time, the Prophet (S) sent me to them. I was the youngest among all the warriors in the Muslim army. By the assistance of Allah, I could kill Waleed and Shaybah, and I could capture many other unbelievers.

I faced many hardships during that battle and nobody in our troop faced the same hardships. Allah bestowed His Mercy on my cousin Ubaydah ibn Harith who fought alongside me. Is it not true?"

Everyone replied, "Oh yes! You are truly the Commander of the Believers!"

The Jewish man accepted the third sign in his heart and mind.

The year after, all the Arab tribes along with Quraysh gathered together and decided to be united to avenge their men who had been killed during the battle of Badr. They wanted to kill all the Muslims. Once again, Gabriel by the Will of Allah, came down and revealed to the Prophet (S) their satanic plot against him.

After that, the Prophet with his followers were waiting by the mountain of Uhud, when the polytheists of Qurasyh came and the battle began.

…In the beginning, the Muslims defeated the polytheists, but at last, the Muslims were defeated and many heroes from them were martyred.

On those perilous moments, some of our soldiers escaped from the battlefield and were scattered in different places. It was only I, who stood beside the Messenger of Allah with all my heart and soul. Some groups of the Muhajireen and the Ansar, who had escaped toward their homes, thought that the Prophet (S) and his companions had been killed in the battle. However, Allah the Almighty and all the wise men did not give them enough time and had gave them deadly blows! On that occasion, I received more than seventy wounds in my body! These are the scars caused in the past battles. I hope that Allah will reward me in the hereafter with the best of His reward.

Is not true what I have just said?"

"Yes, it is true, and you are truly the Commander of the Believers!"

The Jewish man accepted those sings that he knew well and his face turned slowly pale.

After the battle of Uhud, the Arab tribes became stronger and fiercer than before. They made a convention among them to collaborate in all the affairs and not to break their allegiance to each other, in

order to defeat and kill all the Muslims of Medina, and most of all kill the Prophet (S) and annihilate all the children of Abu Talib forever.

With this wicked decision, they set the fire of anger and grudge. They thought that their plan would bear fruit and they could kill all the residents of Medina. These miscreants had a great trust in their war plan.

Once again, Gabriel came down to tell the Prophet (S) about the plot. The Prophet (S) along with the Muhajireen (immigrants) and the Ansar (supporters) started to dig a trench around the city of Medina.

When Quraysh and the allies arrived at Medina, they did not know anything about the Muslims' ingenuity. When they came before the great trench around the city, they were not able to make a decision as to what they should do for that strange and complicated problem. They thought that they were much more powerful than Muslims were. Therefore, they were very angry about our astuteness.

On the other hand, the Messenger of Allah (S) invited them to embrace Islam and asked them gently to consider about their souls…, but it did not affect their cruel and heartless decision. It made them, in fact, even angrier. They insisted on their position against the believers.

On that day, their greatest warrior was a man named Amr ibn Abd Widd. He was one of the greatest and most famous swordsmen among the Arab tribes. When he came in the battlefield, he cried out loudly challenging the Muslims to combat with him. He was turning his spear around his head and for some moments, he was also turning his sword upon his head. However, nobody had enough courage to advance and fight with him except me. Every time the Messenger of Allah (S) asked Muslims, if one of them wanted to go to him, no one responded except me. On that critical moment, the Prophet (S) permitted me to go to the battlefield and fight with that great hero. Before I went into the battle field the Messenger of Allah (S) put his turban on my head and gave me his sword as benediction.

I advanced to fight with Amr, and the women of Medina began to cry for me, because they were certain that I would die. Allah the Almighty assisted me, and I could kill one of the most famous heroes of Arabia...! Before his death, he gave a very hard blow on my head. After that, Allah the Almighty gave us victory and added another defeat to the polytheists' defeats. Is it not true?"

Everybody said, "Yes, it is true, O, the Commander of the Believers!"

The wise Jewish man found the fifth sign irrefutable. The color of his face changed to white. He was looking at Imam Ali's face, but after this last sign, he began gazing at the floor.

I remember the day I was with the Messenger of Allah (S) when we entered the place where your brothers in religion (the Jews) lived. I mean the fortress of Khaybar. There were some Jews and warriors were all gathered there together. They had prepared a massive cavalry squadron. In their invincible fortress, they were ready for war.

During a fight, they came and invited us in. Every man from our troops, who went to fight, was killed there and then. After that, Muslims were incited to begin general fight. Everyone thought how to save himself. Some people looked at me saying, “O Abul Hassan, will you go on and save us?”

The Messenger of Allah (S) once again sent me towards the enemies. I killed everyone that fought me. Like an angry lion, I attacked the troops of the enemy, and defeated everyone obstructing my way.

The Jewish men felt the smell of defeat in the air, and escaped into their fortress. They closed the great gates behind them, but it was I, who plucked out the great gate of Khaybar and threw it far away! I began walking in the fortress by myself. I fought and killed every fighter standing against me. I defeated them all, but with Allah’s assistance. Is it not true?”

The all said, “Yes, it is true. You are truly the lord of the Muslims!”

The Jewish man had lost the color of his face. He was still gazing at the store ground in front of him. He was embarrassed for the bad deeds of his fellows in religion, but he was also aware of the sufferings of Ali (a.s.) in that war. Inside him, he praised Imam Ali (a.s.) more and more.

When the Messenger of Allah (S) along with his companions were going to conquer Mecca, he wanted once again to invite the inhabitants of that city to Islam. So he wrote a letter in which he asked them to refrain from cruelty and fighting, and just think of Allah and His Mercy. He gave them hope that Allah would forgive them if they repented. At the end of the letter, the Prophet (S) pointed out to them the Sura of Bara’ah (disavowal).

The Prophet (S) proposed the task of delivering the letter to the people around him and wanted someone to perform this duty, but all of them refused that dangerous mission. When the Prophet (S) found no responses, he chose Abu Bakr to carry out the task and announce the Sura of Bara’ah before the in habitants of Mecca. When Abu Bakr went on his way, the Archangel Gabriel came down saying to the Prophet (S), “O Muhammad! No one should do this mission except you, or a man from your family!” Then, the Messenger of Allah (S) called me and asked me to carry out and perform that diffiwlt mission. He asked me to go after Abu Bakr without any delay, and take that message from him, he said that I myself, should announce the Sura before the Meccans. I went to Mecca with the Sura, but what can I say about the people of Mecca? If they were free to do anything they wanted to do, they would have shown me their dark and deep hatred and grudges. They would have cut my body into pieces, and put each piece on the top of every mountain! As you know, they were ready to sacrifice their wives, children and wealth, to realize their wicked plots against me! However, I achieved my mission completely and delivered them the message of the Prophet (S). After that, some groups came and threatened me. Some people talked about appointing me in a high position in the city and giving me a lot of money. Some others showed their old enmity against me, but I just did what the Messenger of Allah (S) had asked me to do. Is it not true?”

All of them replied, “Yes it is true, O Commander of the Believers!”

Then Imam Ali (a.s.) looked at the Jewish man and said, “My Jewish brother! These are the seven instances of my sufferings before the death of the Messenger of Allah. We have not enough time to explain them completely and fully!”

The wise Jewish man looked at Imam Ali’s face for a while, and then some tears came in his eyes.

The instances of Imam Ali’s sufferings after the death of the Prophet (S):

1-Patience before of the Prophet’s death

First of all, do be aware that I was not accustomed to be so close to anyone but to the Messenger of Allah... He was the source of trust and tranquility for me, and he was the only one that I could feel myself close to him, for he had always been my guardian and tutor in my childhood. He always had me with him in those days. He always helped my family. He always relieved my sadness and loneliness. He used to provide my daily sustenance! When poverty attacked me, it was he who provided for my wife and children. However, these instances are nothing when compared to his assistance to me! These were my earthly needs. The Messenger of Allah (S) helped me a lot so that, step by step, I could finally achieve my knowledge of God.

It is obvious that the death of the Messenger of Allah (S) was a great calamity to me. A great calamity that was unbearable even for mountains! In that time, I saw that some members of my household were very restless, because that disaster was out of their capacity to bear.

They were desperate and impatient. They were not ready to hear or talk about anything else... But some of the family members of Abdul Muttalib asked them to be patient, and sympathized with my household in their weeping and mourning. At that time, I was very lonely and sad, but I had to persevere and be patient. I used to be silent and I obeyed the directions of the Prophet (S) left for me to execute them properly. In fact, it was I, who washed his holy body, enshrouded him, offered the prayer of death on him, and buried him at last...

From then on, I had to perform my daily prayers, never wore my aba anymore. I did that just when, until I completed the Book of Allah, and accomplished my pledges for that holy existence.

Be aware that none of these works did impede me from performing my obligations. I did not weep, nor did I moan, until I carried out the rights of Allah and his Prophet, and completed my sad mission. Know that for passing these stages in my life, I always remained patient. Is it not true?”

Everyone said, “Yes it is true, and you are truly the Commander of the Believers!”

The Jewish man cried a lot, and was sorry that he had not had the privilege to see the Prophet of Islam in person.

2-The Saqifa of Bani Sa'idah

2-The Saqifa of Bani Sa'idah 1

The Prophet (S) always supported me during his lifetime. He used to introduce me as his successor. In the last time when he appeared to the public, before a massive number of Muslims he introduced me as "Amirul Mo'minin: the commander of the believers", and he asked them to swear me their allegiance and to obey me thenceforth. He asked them to convey that important news to those who were absent on that fateful day.

People knew this fact well and knew that it was I, who had to explain the directions of the Messenger of Allah (S) to the others. I was the commander of his army in all the wars and journeys that we had accomplished together. Therefore, it was a faraway, ridiculous idea that some people wanted to start a fight against me concerning this matter. When the Prophet (S) was ill sometime before his departure to the better world, he directed me to prepare an army and join all the companions to this army under the leadership of Usama ibn Zeyd to fight the Romans.

The Prophet (S) did not want to see any disagreement between the two great tribes of al-Aus and al-Khazraj. He ordered that everybody should go to that war. However, everyone looked at me with anger and grudge, for in the past, I had killed their fathers, brothers, or other relatives in different wars.

Thus, the Prophet had dispatched some people from the Muhajireen, the Ansars, and those whose hearts were made to incline to Islam, but those who had remained near the couch of the Prophet (S) did not say anything, so as not to disturb the Prophet (S) and to prevent any disagreement and rebellion against the command of the Prophet (S).

In fact, the Prophet (S) was very serious about his directions concerning the Muslims to join Usama's army and obey him loyally, so that nobody might stand against his will openly.

When the Prophet (S) passed away, some of the commanders in Usama's army gave up their important positions and clearly disregarded the Prophet's orders. Usama remained lonely and helpless among his soldiers.

All these disobediences and revolts were just for one reason; to return to Medina and break the allegiance that the Prophet (S) had took from them as to my position as the Commander of the Believers.

They gathered in the Saqifa of bani Sa'idah, but did not consult with any of the children of Abdul Muttalib, mor asked me the permission to take off their allegiance paid to me. On that day, I was

preparing the Prophet's holy body to be buried, because this thing was much more important than their plots to me.

Oh, my Jewish brother! After the death of the Prophet (S) – and no one, ever since, had filled his empty place in my heart– there came a great suffering for me… Their conspiracy against me was a very painful betrayal! However, I was patient and did not lose my endurance. Is it not true?"

Everyone said, "Yes, it is true, and you are truly the Commander of the Believers!"

The Jewish man felt a pain in his heart, when once again, he heard about the sufferings of Ameerol Mo'minin.

3–The usurped Caliphate

"After the death of the Prophet, Abu Bakr became the caliph instead of me. Every time he saw me, he used to ask for my forgiveness for his oppression against me, and he used to blame his friend Umar, for having usurped my right, and broken their covenant with me. For all these matters, he always asked for my forgiveness.

I said to myself that one day, his reign would terminate and I would gain my true right, for Allah had chosen me for this position. Another thing was that Islam was in his first days, and I did not want to add another discord to the already existing discords and did not want to fight those who had usurped my true right and position, and start a war among my Muslim brothers.

In those days, my faithful and true companions were those who had a good intention in their hearts and were benevolent for the sake of Allah and his Prophet's satisfaction. They believed in the Holy Quran and they secretly invited me to take back my right from those who had usurped it. They were ready to sacrifice their lives for my right and keep their covenant, but I always invited them to be patient. I used to tell them: may Allah give back my lost right, without any destructive feud between the Muslims.

Others, on that chaotic period, were a group of people who believed strongly in Allah, the Prophet (S), the Holy Qur'an, and Islam, and covertly or openly, invited me to restore my true right. I found them to be true Muslims. They were ready to sacrifice their lives to prove their loyalty to me! But I always tried to make them be more patient. I thought that Allah would soon restore my unfairly usurped right without any fight.

On the other hand, after the death of the Prophet, many people fell into the trap of hesitation and they became greedy for the Caliphate. Each tribe wanted the new caliph to be from their own clan. One thing that was interesting was that they were against each other, but at the same time, they supported each other to keep ME away from the Caliphate! So when the first one (Abu Bakr) died, his friend Umar took over the responsibility of the Caliphate for himself and did exactly like the previous one, and did not give me back my true right.

Once again, the followers of Muhammad (peace be upon him) came to me and, – as you now know, some of them are already dead and some others are still alive – anyway these faithful people asked me to stand up against Umar, but I did not change my mind, and I kept my patience.

We were the family of the Messenger of Allah (S), but we lived in a house that had no roof and the doors were made of palm fronds. There was nothing on our mattress and no blanket to cover us in sleep…During prayers, we often had just one garment which was used by all the members of the family… How many days and nights we spent with hunger…!

Sometimes after a war, Allah the Almighty set aside some booty for us. Though the Messenger of Allah (S) knew of our hard condition, he gave our shares to affluent and rich men to make their hearts incline to Islam. I myself saw the sufferings of the Prophet (S) when he invited them to Islam, and I knew that I had a heavy responsibility to preserve the circle of Islam and not to break it in no way whatsoever!

On the other hand, if I did some kind of revengeful actions, and gathered some people to support me, I could gather some groups around me with no doubt and they would be ready to fight against our enemies, but that idea had two sides; perhaps some people might stop their support and would then join the opposite side, or some other people might be killed.

I knew that my deep affinity to the Prophet (peace be upon him) was like the kinship of Aaron to Moses, and I was really afraid that the punishment of Allah might befall on my people, like the punishment of Moses' people when they disobeyed Aaron. So I thought it would be better if I drank from the cup of sorrow, held my breath, and kept my patience, so that Allah would achieve His Will. On that occasion, my recompense would be more, and maybe a kind of forbearance would be considered as privilege for my people, and I knew that the Command of Allah is a determined decree.

I had a solid background from the past and was closest to the Prophet (S) in family relationship, and as his successor. Beyond other things, the Prophet (S) on the day of "Ghadir Khom" had expressed his strong wish about my being his successor, according to the Will of Allah. He invited the people to pledge their allegiance to me as the Commander of the believers after his death, and it was impossible for people to have any bad thought against me in their minds.

Aye… when the Prophet (S) died, the government of the Islamic lands was in his own house, not in the hands of others or in their houses! And his progeny were definitely more deserving for the position of the "Caliphate" or other rights than the others, because Allah the Almighty had created us pure and innocent from the very beginning. Is it not true?"

Everyone said, "Yes, it is true, and you are truly the Commander of the Believers!"

The Jewish man's heart was choked by emotions and was much paler than before.

4-The six men assembly of the Caliphate in (the year 24 After Hegira)

“As you know, after Abu Bakr, the one who had robbed and wore the cloak of Caliphate instead of me, consulted always with me in everything and always listened to me as to the many complex matters that he had to deal with.

No one can remember a day when he (Umar) did not ask from me. So I thought that finally I would get my right. Therefore, when Umar died unexpectedly, it seemed he had not had enough time to choose his successor, and I thought that I would gain my right of the Caliphate at last, and could do many reforms among the Umma of the Prophet (S). However, the plot changed. Before his death, Umar had chosen six persons and I was the sixth among them. The strange thing was that I did not have an equal right as the others. He had not considered all of my backgrounds, sacrifices, hereditary right, my kinship to the Messenger of Allah (S) and my being his brother, cousin and son-in-law! He himself knew that well, and I was definitely much better and suitable in all these things, than the others.

His son Abdullah was the head of this assembly. If one of us was tired or wanted to exit from the assembly, he (Abdullah) had the right to kill us immediately.

And you, my Jewish brother, have no idea how hard it was for me to be patient in that time...!

They consulted for some days and believed that each of them was more suitable for this position (the Caliphate). I was always silent. If one of them had a question, I just talked about the past events and my numerous assistance to Islam.

Ridiculously enough, all of them remembered all of my achievements and efforts. I just reminded them of these things, because the Prophet (S) had taken their covenants for my becoming the rightful Caliph and had insisted on my position after him before them all.

However, the sweet taste of authority, earthly wishes and power closed their eyes to these truths. The most important thing was that they wanted to restore their prominence of the past (the pre-Islamic age), and so they usurped my right once again.

I reminded them of the Day of Resurrection, and I wanted to do anything to stop their wrong doings, but all of them pretended to show their acceptance in front of me, whereas in fact, they wanted to choose themselves for the Caliphate, and they did not know that I would not accept that. On the other hand, they knew that I would do exactly according to the Book of Allah and the Sunna of the Prophet (S) and that my successor would be chosen by the Will of Allah and not by me.

In that chaotic time, one of these men listened to his corrupted mind and chose Uthman, because he thought that in the near future, Uthman would appoint him in a high position; therefore, he persuaded the

others to choose Uthman for this role… the one who was the least fit for that important position.

During the past, Uthman often had not participated in the wars (of Muslims), and everybody in the Arab peninsula believed that to participate in those wars was a distinct honor. Allah had bestowed many blessings on the Prophet (S) and his family, that Uthman had nothing to do with them… I am sure that the men, who had chosen him for this responsibility, regretted quickly what they had done only a few hours after their decision!

After a short time, the people who had appointed Uthman ibn Affan for the Caliphate, believed that he was a heretic. Uthman went to see some of his friends (from the Prophet's companions) and begged them to forgive him.

He said he was ready to resign because he wanted to redress his immorality.

Oh, my Jewish friend, that problem was very difficult and greater than the other problems, and I was at the point of overflowing the measure of my patience…! It is hard to describe those days, but like past situations, I did nothing, but keep silence and be patient.

Yes, after a few hours of Uthman's being chosen as the Caliph on that fatal day, the other members of the assembly came to see me. They wanted me to depose Uthman and assume this position. They swore before me to be under my command until their last breath, and support me until the day when Allah would return my true right to me.

Anyhow, my friend! Like the previous instances, and in relation with the former caliphs, I had no way but to remain silent, because I did not want to witness the death of my true friends and the true companions of our Prophet (S), whereas if I had called them to death, they would never have hesitated.

As you know well, death to me is like refreshing, cold water in a hot sunny day in the desert! Know that my uncle Hamza, my brother Ja'far and my cousin Ubaydah had made a covenant with Allah, and so my followers had died while keeping their promise. I was the only one who had remained alive, by the Will of Allah, that Allah had revealed this verse about us, (Of the believers are men who are true to the covenant which they made with Allah: so of them, is he who accomplished his vow, and of them is he who yet waits, and they have not changed in the least).2

Anyway, if I remained silent in front of ibn Affan and did nothing against him, I knew that his bad behavior and immorality would bring others to kill him too, and stop him from committing corruption… So, I cloistered myself and kept tolerant until that day I had predicted. I did not say anything against or for Uthman until he died.

Aye… They finally killed Uthman, and then they came to me trying to convince me to accept the responsibility of Caliphate (but they were not aware that on that critical situation, and in regard with that murder and knowing of their false intentions) I did not have any intention to accept the responsibility of

the Caliphate. I knew that they just wanted to follow their desires, so they would not find the fulfillment of their desires in me. I mean the worldly desires and pleasures. However, they accepted me as their new Caliph anymore. But after a while, when Talha and Zobayr could not find their desires with me, they started to walk in a path opposite to mine and created seditions between the people against me. Is it not true?"

Every one said, "Yes it is true, O Commander of the Believers!"

The Jewish man could do nothing but cry.

5-The Battle of Jamal

Those who had pledged their allegiance to me with their freewill (Talha and Zobayr) when they did not achieve their goals to be the governors over two great cities in Iraq, they began conspiring with Aa'isha against me. Even though they knew that after the Prophet (S), the one who had to have the responsibility of protecting that woman was only me and nobody else.

However, these two men forced Aa'isha to sit on a camel and cover the desert until they reached Haw'ab. After the dogs of Haw'ab had barked at Aa'isha, the signs of repentance appeared finally on their faces. They had pledged allegiance to me before the death of the Prophet and also after his death, but what a wicked deed they committed against me!

They came to Bassora and were united with the people who had small hands, long beards, slothful beliefs, and false deeds; those who were sailors or desert dwellers (the Egyptians)... That woman (Aa'isha) had called them from their cities, and they showed their naked blades and then they fell into the deep sea of war.

On that occasion, I had to choose one of the two ways opened before me; either to let them go away, but this made them continue their false path, and they would never return to the right path again, or to stand against them, and this way created a bad ending for them, one that I had not wanted for them.

Therefore, before the battle began, I reminded them of everything and told them about the harsh and hard punishment of Allah. I ended my argument and proposed them a way to come to peace with me and acknowledge their mistakes. I asked that woman to go back to her house, and I wanted from the people around her not to break their allegiance to me, and that Allah would be witness to all this.

O Allah, be the Witness of my deeds on those days!I did everything. I even talked privately to their leaders to persuade them not to start a war, and Zobayr accepted my words. I repeated my intention to the others, but they just showed me their enmity and foolishness.

When they insisted on the war, I had no way but to ride on my horse and the result of their deeds was nothing but defeat and violent death...

Yes, I had no way but to fight them. However, at the end of the battle, I forgave them and did not kill any one of them. Before the war, I could not have forgiven them, because I knew that they would kill innocent people and try to spread dissension allover the country… And I also did not want to accept the authority of that woman, because in many ways, such as in giving testimony and inheritances, the rights of man and woman are different, and choosing a woman as a governor was a wrong act that old nations like the Romans, or those who had lived in the lands of the Queen of Sheba (Saba), had once done wrongfully.

On the other hand, I had to stand for a battle that I did not like, neither its beginning nor its ending! I just let that woman gather troops and do everything she could, to destroy my army in a short time. However, it was not I, who had started the war. I myself did many things to stop the war. I delayed the moment of the battle, negotiated in many ways, and sent many ambassadors. I also offered them many suggestions that they even did not think about, and I even forgave them. They just wanted the war and nothing else, and I had to fight with them. Then, I did according to the will of Allah, and Allah the Almighty was the Witness over me. Is it not true?"

Every one said, "Yes, it is true, O Commander of the Believers!"

The Jewish man began to cry then, and at the same time, he remembered the war that the wife of Moses had waged against Joshua (the successor of Moses), so he was deeply sad for Ali.

6- The battle of Siffeen

The sixth stage was the battle against Mo'awiyya, the son of Hind who was called "the eater of livers", and finally to accept unwillingly the vote of the arbitrators. It was a battle with the one who was the enemy of Allah and His Prophet from the time of the Prophetic Mission until our victory in Mecca.

On that day of our triumph in Mecca against the polytheists, the Prophet (S) told me that Mo'awiyya and his father Abu Sofian had pledged allegiance to him three times.

In addition, the father of Mo'awiyya, Abu Sofian, at the beginning of the reign of Abu Bakr was the first one who saluted me with the epithet of "the Commander of the Believers", and he used to tell me that I should go and ask for my usurped right. He also used to say he was always at my command.

So it was very strange to Mo'awiyya, when he saw that Allah had finally restored to me my usurped right. He was so very angry that he was not going to be the fourth caliph! He went to Amr ibn Aas and told him that he would make him the governor of Egypt if he supported him. By the way, even one dirham more than his own measure was unlawful, and it was illegal for the one who had the responsibility of the Treasury of Muslims to give him more than his share.

Anyway, Mo'awiyya, with his followers, went to different cities and killed all the people who were against him and freed the others, who accepted his rule. So Mo'awiyya, with his broken oath, was trying to set

off rebellions in different places in our region. One day, the one-eyed man of Thaqif (Moghira ibn Sho'bah) came to me and said that we should appoint Mo'awiyya as the governor of the cities that Mo'awiyya had under his authority.

If I could have found a right excuse about that idea before our God, it would have been an interesting idea for my government and earthly wishes. But when I talked about that proposal with my closest companions and true followers, they also had the same opinion as mine, and they believed that I should not give him any authority whatsoever.

I truly hoped that a day would not come that Allah would see me in cooperation with the heretics and polytheists! Therefore, I sent a man from the tribe of Bajalah and at another time, another man from the tribe of Asha'irah to Mo'awiyya to complete my warnings to him. However, those two men preferred the earthly comfort that Mo'awiyya had offered to them and began serving him most humbly.

When I saw that Mo'awiyya had not respected the rights and commands of Allah, I went and consulted with those who had participated in the battle of Badr and in the Redhwan Homage whom Allah has been pleased with their deeds. I also consulted with true Muslims and all of them believed that we should fight Mo'awiyya and cut his hand from the authority of the Islamic State.

As you know my brother, after our final decision that was to war against Mo'awiyya, I once again sent some letters with many ambassadors to him. I thought that he might accept to walk in the right path and accept my Caliphate. However, on the other hand, he sent me many insulting letters, where he asked me to accept his insolent, offensive conditions that were against the commands of Allah, the Prophet (S), and the welfare of the Muslims nation (Umma).

One of his ridiculous conditions was that I should send him many of the closest companions of the Prophet (S), like Ammar ibn Yasir! I ask you: where can we find a man better than Ammar?! I swear by Allah the Almighty, that Ammar had always been close to the Messenger of Allah (S) and had always been beside Him.

Yes, Mo'awiyya in his foolish condition , wanted me to send many true companions of the Prophet (S) to him as a revengeful ransom for the blood of Uthman. And I swear by Allah, that none of these godly, faithful men had killed Uthman! Mo'awiyya and his tribe (the Bani Omayya) that Allah, in the holy Quran, has called them as "the cursed tree", had in fact committed that crime...

So when he finally understood that I would never accept his conditions, he gathered many cruel, people around him; brutal companions and bad company, and gave them a lot of money and precious gifts so as to obey his commands with closed eyes.

In contrast with that, we invited them all to Islam and asked them to obey the directions of the Holy Quran! We talked about the severe punishment of Allah, but all that did not affect them whatsoever. So we fought against them and prayed Allah to grant us the final victory.

During that battle, we had the banner of the Prophet (S) with which Allah had always demolished the oppressive forces with it, whereas Mo'awiyya had the banner which had belonged to his father and which, in all wars, had been raised against the Messenger of Allah (S) and Islam.

Yes! Death was so near to Mo'awiyya, and he really did not know what to do to save his life. He just sat on his horse so as to run away from the battle, but at the last moment, his wicked friend, Amr ibn Aas, proposed to their soldiers that each one should raise a copy of the Holy Qur'an on their spears and claimed falsely that it should be done as the Qur'an had commanded!

Amr told Mo'awiyya that the son of Abu Talib and his followers were very wise and strong. He said, "Before the war, they wanted you to do according to the Holy Quran, but they did not receive any response from you. But if you do it now, they will accept your offer."

When Mo'awiyya saw that he had no any way out, either in the war or for any escape, he ordered his army to raise the copies of the Qur'an on their spears, and he thought that the best thing was to claim that all should do exactly as the Holy Quran had said!

On that day, which was full of various incidents, all my soldiers accepted alas, the false invitation of Mo'awiyya and were deceived by his trick, except a small group of my true followers, who remained with me.

In fact, I insisted and told them repeatedly that it was only a trick by Mo'awiyya and Amr ibn Aas, and that they should not listen to their tricky claims. However, it was very odd that my own soldiers insisted on accepting their deception!

I myself heard that some of them said, "If Ali does not accept Mo'awiyya's offer, we shall have a bad end, just like Uthman. So we are forced to make Ali submit to Mo'awiyya..."

Allah be my Witness that I tried my best to persuade them to listen to my orders and let me do what was the best, but they continually rejected my orders. They did not even give me a short break to think...

I swear by Allah that I did not fear anything, but I was afraid for the lives of my two sons Hassan and Hussein. I was afraid that no one from the Prophet's progeny would remain alive, for they were the real treasures of his blood!

I was also afraid for the lives of Abdullah ibn Ja'far and Muhammad ibn Hanafiyya, for both of them were there because of me and they wanted to be always beside me.

Once again, I used my patience before their wrong choice. However, after we had put aside our arms, all of them began blaming me. They put aside the Holy Qur'an and suggested to choose either Mo'awiyya or me.

I myself never believed that such a thing would happen, and I did not want people to be against the Will

of Allah. It was a very wicked action, but what did I have to do then ? From among my foolish men and Mo'awiyya, neither of them accepted anything else.

When I wanted to choose one of my relatives such as (Abdullah) ibn Abbas or a man who had enough knowledge of Allah, the religion, the Prophet (S), and me to negotiate, someone that I could trust in, someone like Malik Ashtar, the son of Hind (Mo'awiyya) did not accept it… alas!

Mo'awiyya was full of arrogance, so he did not accept my words. The reason behind his pride was the help that my foolish soldiers had given him unknowingly. Anyway, when I saw that it was an awful judgment against me and against Islam, I prayed to Allah and let them go away with their wrongdoings.

They chose Abu Musa Ash'ari, who had been lured with many gifts by Amr himself, and when every one heard about it, the man did not know how to hide his disgraceful actions. Is it not true?"

Every one said, "Yes, it is true, O Commander of the Believers!"

The moaning of the Jewish man made the people around look at him strangely. He had read in the Holy Books of Moses (a.s.) about the Martyrdom of the last successor of the last Prophet, so he knew that according to the prophesies, that day was near...

7- The battle of Nahrawan

The Prophet (S) in the twenty-three years of his Mission, often told me that a day would come, when some of my companions, who fasted in the day and recited the Qur'an in the night Holy, would stand against me, and I would be in a war with them, because they would go out of the religion as an arrow penetrates and goes out of a game.

The Prophet (S) also told me that Thul Thodayyah would be with them, and that when I would defeat and kill them, I would fly to Paradise. We returned to Kufa and all of them, who had insisted on arbitration, then snubbed me and used to say, 'Very well, we were wrong, but why you Imam Ali? Why an Emir and great commander should listen to his soldiers and assistances? An Emir like you should have done whatever he thought was right. He should not have feared death! Now that you listened to our ideas, so you are a heretic and the killing of a heretic is lawful and permissible!'

All of them united and left my army. They cried out loudly that there was no command but the command of Allah! Some of them went to Nokhaylah, and some others went to Haroura. A third group went to the riverside of Tigris. They wanted to go to the east as quickly as possible. Whenever they saw a Muslim before them, first they put him to trial, and if that Muslim had opinions like theirs, they would do nothing to him, but if he had an opposite thought, they would kill him with all his family right away.

At first, I started to invite the two first groups toward Allah and the Holy Qur'an, but they did not accept my invitation, and they just wanted to fight against me and nothing else mattered to them.

When I understood that their problem would never be solved except by the sword, I did what Allah willed. If I did not do that, they would have caused a great problem to Islam, but Allah had prepared a different destiny for them.

Then, I wrote a letter to the third group, and I sent many messengers who were all great and wise men from among my companions. However, that group like the two previous ones, ignored me and my messengers, and insisted on fighting us.

They continued to kill innocent Muslims who were against them. Therefore, I closed the way to the Tigris and once again, I sent many messengers to invite them to us. One day, I sent this man, and another day that man, but I had no way except to kill them.

Thus, O my Jewish brother, I killed all of their four thousand men, but only ten men from them remained alive. I searched among the dead and found the body of Thul Thodayyah, about whom the Prophet (S) had told me before. I showed his body to everyone. Is it not true?"

They all said, "Yes, it is true, O Commander of the Believers."

At that moment, Imam Ali (a.s.) looked at the Jewish man's face and said, "I talked about the fourteen instances, and now there remains just another event that will happen in the near future."

When Imam Ali finished his words, all of his companions began crying. The Jewish man, while crying, said, "Please, tell us about the last one!" With the great sorrow that he felt inside him, he was not able to move from his place. Imam Ali (a.s.) touched his beard and said, "In the last event, this beard will be dyed by my own blood…"

When the masses of people heard Imam Ali's word, they began to moan and cry, and their cries of sorrow spread everywhere in the mosque of Kufa.

It was the turn of the Jew to do as his promise and complete a allegiance and to realize his wish that was inside him for so many years. Yes! After the Imam finished his talk, the Jew went and kissed the holy hand of Imam Ali (a.s.) and embraced Islam. He lived in Kufa until the day when Imam Ali (a.s.) was killed by Abdurrahman ibn Moljam (Allah's curse be on him) in the year 40 AH.

When the people arrested ibn Moljam, they delivered him to Imam Hassan ibn Ali (a.s.), where there were masses of people around him. The Jew came to that place, and while crying, he thought to himself that It was the hardest day in his life. He said to Imam Hassan (a.s.), "O son of Muhammad! Kill this man, and I hope that Allah will curse him with a terrible Punishment! In the Holy Books of Moses, I had read that the crime of this man is much greater than the sin of the son of Adam (Cain) who had murdered his brother Abel, and his sin is greater than the crime of the people of Aad who had killed the Camel of the Prophet Salih (a.s.)…!".

So what a lucky man the Jew was! He lived with his good deeds, while there were many Muslims who

were Muslim only by name, but in their lives, they lived and behaved just like infidels and unlike what Allah and His Messenger (S) had wanted.

It has been mentioned in a tradition, that once a man from Bassora came to Imam Sajjad (a.s.) and asked him, “Why your grandfather (Imam Ali) killed the Muslims?” Imam Sajjad (a.s.) began to cry painfully, and then he wiped his tears with his hand and said, “O, you my Basri brother! I swear by Allah that Ali (a.s.) never killed a true Muslim or an innocent one! He fought against some people, who had the name of "Muslims" only upon themselves, but in their hearts, they were the enemies of Allah and the Muslims. When they found people like themselves, they united with them against true Muslims. The true companions and followers of the progeny of Muhammad know that the people of (the battle of) Jamal, Siffeen, and Nahrawan were cursed by the Messenger of Allah (S). So curse be on one who fabricates lies against Allah, and His Messenger!”

In Imam Ali’s speech to the Jew, he addressed as “Jewish brother”. The statement in Arabic is “Akhal Yahud” which means: “brother of the Jews” which may mean “O Jew!”

An old man stood up and said, “but your grandfather Ali ibn Abi Talib had said about them, “our "brothers" oppressed us!”

Imam Sajjad (a.s.) replied, “Did you not read this verse in the Qur’an where Allah says, (and to (the people of) Aad (we sent) their brother Hud)?[3 In this situation, the people of Aad are like the brothers that Imam Ali (a.s.) had talked about. We saw that Allah the Almighty had assisted the Prophet Hud (a.s.) and his followers, but demolished the people of Aad with a furious storm.”

Thus, it is not true to think that when Imam Ali (a.s.) said to the Jew: “my Jewish brother”, he meant that he was his brother in religion.

However, there is a point of view more reliable. It is that: Imam Ali (a.s.) had knowledge of every thing about the past, present, and the future. Thus, he knew very well that this Jewish man, later on, would embrace the religion of Islam. The interesting fact is that Imam Ali (a.s.) since the beginning of his discourse with the Jew, considered him his “brother in religion”, because he well knew that the Jew would soon become Muslim.

Alhamdolillahe Rabbel Alamin
Farid Muhammadi
Tehran, Ramadan 19th 1428
October 1st 2007
Mehr 9th 1386

1. . Saqifa means “shade”. The Saqifa of Bani Sa’idah was a very famous place where people used to meet and to discuss their important affairs and matters of the time.
2. . Qur'an, 33:23.
3. : Qur'an, 7:65.

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