



THE SUFFERINGS OF IMAM ALI A.S.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَلِيَّ اللَّهِ
أَنْتَ أَوَّلُ مَظْلُومٍ
وَ أَوَّلُ مَنْ غُصِبَ حَقُّهُ

Salutation upon you, O the Vicegerent of Allah,
you are the foremost of those who are oppressed,
and the foremost of those, whose right was usurped.¹

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¹ Mafatih al Jinan, 5th Ziyarat of Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)

Imam Ali (a.s.) Complained to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)²

قَالَ ابْنَ أُمَّ إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ اسْتَضَعُّوْنِي وَكَادُوا يَقْتُلُونِي

**"O son of my mother, indeed the people oppressed me
and were about to kill me."³**

² Behar al-Anwaar, Vol. 28, page 220

³ Surah Aaraaf (7) : Verse 150,

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) Informed Imam Ali (a.s.)

“Oh Ali, no doubt, after me you will face a lot of harshness from Quraysh, in such a manner that they will overpower you and harass you. If you find helpers to fight, then with those who obey you, fight with those who oppose you. If you cannot find helpers, then have patience and restrain your hands and do not let yourself be destroyed.”⁴

⁴ Kitab Sulaim bin Qais, Tradition 1

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Introduction

Generally, whenever we mention and remember Hazrat Imam Ali (a.s.) in our gatherings, we mention his merits, his bravery, his generosity, his knowledge, his forgiving nature, his love for children, etc but seldom do we remember him for the troubles that he went through, for the loneliness that he faced, for the sufferings that befell on him, how he was forsaken, how he lived heartbroken, for the taunts that he faced, for the hatred and jealousy that he faced from the followers of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

No doubt that Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) is the possessor of the highest merits and perfections after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) but sadly, the other aspect is also equally true, that he is the most oppressed, the most troubled, the most heart-broken and aggrieved of all the Imams (a.s.).

Imam Ali (a.s.) is the oppressed one in the true sense, rather he is the greatest amongst those who have been oppressed. This is because he is the greatest and loftiest of all after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Just as it is true that none recognize the stature of Imam Ali (a.s.) except Allah, The Almighty and Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), similarly, no one knows the extent of sufferings of Imam Ali (a.s.) except Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Imam Naqi (a.s.) has saluted Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) in these words,

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا وَليَّ اللَّهِ أَنْتَ أَوَّلُ مَظْلُومٍ

“Salutations be upon you, the Vicegerent of Allah, you are the foremost of مظلوم”

When we look up the meaning of مظلوم in English, we find words such as, aggrieved, maltreated, oppressed, wronged, unjustly treated, injured, prejudiced and victim of injustice.

Sadly, all these meanings of مظلوم are true for Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), for he was maltreated by the people, wronged by those who knew his merits and excellences, oppressed by those who owed their very existence to him, deeply aggrieved from the passing away of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) till his own martyrdom, who suffered one injustice after another, one oppression after another, while there was not a friend with him to hear the pain of his heart or to console him. No one whom he could trust while going through this agony. Not an intimate one to wipe away his tears. He was the first victim of Islam, like Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) himself said to him, *O Ali, you are the oppressed one after me, woe be to whoever oppresses you.*⁵

It is therefore not odd, that he used to lean into the well and complain of the pain and sorrows of his heart.

This short treatise is a compilation of incidents which highlight this aspect of his personality, that is, the loneliness of Imam Ali (a.s.) and the sufferings of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) from different aspects.

⁵ Uyoon e Akhbar e Reza (a.s.), Vol. 1, Chp 38, Hadith 58, pg 303

Preface

Generally, it is believed that the sufferings of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) commenced after the martyrdom of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and after his passing away from this world. But, if we look through the pages of history, we will see that no doubt the sufferings of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) intensified after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) but his sorrows, sufferings and the prejudice of the people for him started soon after the proclamation of the Prophethood⁶ of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and continued till the final days of his blessed life in this mortal world.

We have divided this discussion on his sufferings into six sections. The troubles which he faced:

1. During the Life of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).
2. Immediately after the martyrdom of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).
3. During the period of three caliphs.
4. During the period of his own caliphate.
5. General or common instances of his sufferings.
6. Few sermons and traditions from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) himself, describing his own tribulations and sufferings.

⁶ Be'sat

The Sufferings of Imam Ali (a.s.)

Section One :: During the Lifetime of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a)

Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), the possessor of unparalleled merits, virtues and qualities, was belittled, envied and troubled during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) himself. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) extolled the virtues of Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) all his life, while this made the believers happy, there were many hypocrites and disbelievers who got jealous of him and his closeness to the Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.) and jealous of his closeness to Allah, the Almighty.

This jealousy increased in their hearts each passing day and converted from jealousy to hatred for Hazrat Imam Ali (a.s.). There are numerous incidents from the lives of the companions of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his wives which indicate towards this jealousy. We present here few such incidents.

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) warned his nation to not be jealous of Imam Ali (a.s.) or be inimical to him even during the severe ailment just before passing away from this transient world. Below is an extract from a lengthy tradition quoted in Hayat al Quloob by Allamah Majlisi narrating from Imam Mohammed Baqir (a.s.) and Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) that,

“when the time of the death of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) approached and his illness took a serious turn, the Prophet called for Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and Abbas. The house of the Prophet was crowded by the Companions of the Prophet, and Emigrants and Helpers.

... Then the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said, O sons of Hashim and O sons of Abdul Muttalib, and O Muslims, do not be inimical to Ali and do not disregard his commands or you shall go astray.

Do not feel jealous of him, and do not become aloof from him and be inclined to others, or you will become deniers.”⁷

We quote below few incidents during the blessed lifetime of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) where companions exhibited their jealousy for Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and incidents of sufferings of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) soon after proclamation of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Sufferings after Be’sat of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) himself narrates, in a tradition that after the proclamation of Prophethood of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), initially none believed in Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) except him and Janabe Khadija (s.a.), others cut off associating with Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), rejected him and confronted him. They abandoned and argued with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), while Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was the only one who rushed to him, accepted him and believed in him.

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) always used to accompany and be with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), and whenever the Quraish troubled the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Imam Ali (a.s.) also bore the sufferings along with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Allama Majlisi narrates in Hayat al Quloob, one day the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was walking through Mecca accompanied by his cousin, Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s.). Abu Lahab, the Prophet’s uncle was throwing stones from the back and shouting.

The stones they threw at Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) also hit Ali (a.s.).

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) asked Imam Ali (a.s.), tell me, how many wounds are caused in your body due the stones they threw on us? Imam Ali (a.s.) said: I

⁷ Hayat al Quloob, pg 912, English, Chp 63 – “Bequests of the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) and incidents that occurred at the time of his (s.a.w.a.) death”.

suffered four wounds yesterday. The Prophet said: You've got four and I got six!

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was approximately thirteen years of age at that time.

And this hitting of stones continued till the night of migration, when again stones were hurled at Imam Ali (a.s.) by Quraish, when Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was sleeping on the bed of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Jealousy of Amr Aas for Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)

This incident not only highlights that the jealousy of Amr Aas and few other companions of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) for the Hazrat Imam Ali (a.s.), but also shows how they never intended that Hazrat Imam Ali (a.s.) should succeed in the tasks and duties assigned to him by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). They were always ready to ridicule, rebuke and criticise Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). Indeed, a person needs to have a very heavy heart so as to deal with such behaviour almost on a daily basis.

Shaykh Mufeed has narrated with regards to the expedition of Zatul Salasil that one day a desert Arab came to the Prophet and reported that a party of Arabs had gathered in Ramal Valley and made an agreement to attack Medina. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) collected the Muslims and told them that a party of disbelievers has plotted to attack them and they must be prepared to defend themselves. Ashab Suffa volunteered in sincerity. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) drew lots from the eighty persons and appointed Abu Bakr as their chief and gave him the standard, instructing him to punish the Bani Sulaym. Idolaters had appointed watches on mountain peaks. Since Abu Bakr travelled by the highway he was at once detected and they armed themselves. When he reached the heavily wooded and rocky land and the infidels lived in a valley that was difficult to enter. When he attempted to enter it, the disbelievers came out and slain many Muslims. At last he had to return unsuccessful from there.

Then the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) gave the standard to Umar and sent him on the same expedition. He also followed the usual route and was soon detected by the disbeliever who hid beneath the trees and rocks. When he stepped into their valley, they came out and drove him away.

When he also returned unsuccessful; the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was extremely aggrieved. Amr Aas said: "O Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.), please send me as the result of a battle depends on trickery, perhaps I can overcome them through my cunning." He was also sent, and he also followed the usual road and he also returned defeated. According to another report, Khalid bin Walid was sent instead of Amr. Thus, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was aggrieved for many days and he continued to condemn them.

Then he called Imam Ali (a.s.) and gave him the Islamic standard and said: O Lord, now I have appointed one who is a fighter and he never flees from the battle. O Lord, You know that I am Your Messenger. So, help him for the sake of my sanctity and make him victorious. According to another report, Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) came to Lady Fatima (s.a.) and asked for his special headwear and she asked where he was being sent to by her father. "Ramal Valley," said the Imam. Lady Fatima (s.a.) was worried for the difficult expedition.

Meanwhile the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) arrived and asked her why she was crying. He asked: "Do you think that your husband will be killed? Insha Allah it will not be so." Imam Ali (a.s.) said: "Do you not want me to be killed and be rewarded with Paradise?"

Thus, he set out for the expedition and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) accompanied him upto Masjid Ahzab. Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was astride a red horse and had a Yemeni sheet over his shoulders. He held the Khati spear aloft. The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) prayed for their success and returned and also sent Abu Bakr, Umar, Amr Aas or Khalid bin Walid with him. Imam Ali (a.s.) took the Iraq route leaving the usual highway. Companions thought that he was heading somewhere else. Ameerul

Momineen (a.s.) took them through a secret route. They travelled during the nights and hid themselves in mountain passes during daytime.

Amr Aas saw that the Imam was following an appropriate procedure which was sure to yield victory, so he was overcome with jealousy. He told Umar, Abu Bakr and other men that Ali is ignorant of these paths, while we are experts of this terrain, "which is infested by wild beasts, which are more dangerous for our forces, so you must stop him from taking this route." People reported this talk to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) who said: "One who obeys Allah and His Prophet should follow me and one who intends to oppose Allah and His Prophet may go by any road he likes. All fell silent and followed the Imam. They passed mountain passes during the nights and concealed themselves during the day.

The Almighty Allah made the wild beasts obedient to the Imam and they did not harm the Muslims. Till the Imam reached upto the enemy territory. Ali (a.s.) told his men to tie up the snouts of the horses so that they may not make noises. So Muslims were stopped and he proceeded. When Umar saw that victory was near, he said: "There are many wolves, lions and wild beasts in this valley. Ask Ali to permit us to scale the mountain face."

Abu Bakr tried to discuss the matter with Imam Ali (a.s.) but he paid no attention to him. Umar said: "Why should we kill ourselves? Come, let us climb up from this valley. Muslims said: "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) ordered us to obey Ali. We will not disobey him and follow your ideas. This went on till the morning.

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) launched a surprise attack and killed the men, took their women and children as prisoners. Tied their remaining men in chains and ropes; that is why this battle is known as the Battle of Zatul Salasil. The field of battle was five marches from Medina. That same morning, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) came out and prayed the Morning Prayer with the people. In the first rakat he recited Surah Adiyat. He said: "It is a chapter just revealed on me and the Almighty Allah has informed me that Ali has overcome the

enemies,” and he explained the jealousy of Amr Aas as jealousy to him. And Qunud is in the meaning of Husud and that is the love of world which was very strong in one who feared the animals. And in another report instead of Amr, Khalid bin Walid is mentioned. And according to the report of Ali bin Ibrahim the one who is jealous is a denier of bounty and they are Abu Bakr, Umar and Amr Aas who said that there are many wild beasts and they should take the usual road.

Thus, Shaykh Mufeed has narrated that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) informed the companions about the victory of Imam Ali (a.s.) and with them came out to welcome them outside Medina. Companions stood in two rows. When Imam Ali (a.s.) looked at the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), he jumped from his mount and ran to meet the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) and kissed the feet and stirrups of the Prophet.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said: “Ali, get mounted as Allah and His Messenger are pleased with you.” Imam Ali (a.s.) was moved to tears and they returned happily from there. War booty was distributed among Muslims. The Prophet asked some of the army what they had observed in their chief during the expedition. They replied, “We saw nothing bad in him, but his conduct was strange in one particular way; in every prayer we performed with him, he recited the Surah: Say, God is one God; the eternal God, he begets not, neither is he begotten: and there is not any one like unto Him.”

The Prophet inquired of Ali for what reason he did this. He said it was because he had a very great affection for that chapter: “and Allah loves you with a like warmth,” replied the Prophet. “Verily, were it not that I fear a community of my followers will say of you, what the Christians affirm of Isa, I would this day declare some things in your praise, so that you would pass

no company that would not gather the dust on which you tread, for the blessing it confers.”⁸

The First Enmity Expressed for Imam Ali (a.s.)

On the night of migration, after Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) made Hazrat Imam Ali (a.s.) sleep on his bed and left for Medina, Abu Bakr accosted the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and joined him (s.a.w.a.) without being asked to do so. They left Mecca together and as is famously known that they were in the cave together where the later even cried due to the fear of the Quraysh.

But historians narrate, that although he was with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) left from Mecca and even when he (s.a.w.a.) was in the cave, but this companion was not with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) when he entered Medina!

He actually reached the vicinity of Medina and as per few narrations entered Medina before Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). The reason for this is explained by Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s.) in the below narration.

Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s.) explains, that when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was waiting for Imam Ali (a.s.) at Quba, Abu Bakr wanted to go ahead and not wait for Imam Ali (a.s.). Hence, he was angry that the Prophet waited for Imam Ali (a.s.) before entering Medina, and conceived great jealousy for him. This was the first enmity that was expressed against Ali (a.s.) and this was the first opposition to the Prophet that he expressed. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) remained in Quba waiting for Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). So, he left the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) and came to Medina.⁹

⁸ Hayat al-Quloob, Vol. 2, pg 612

⁹ Hayat al-Quloob, Vol. 2, pg 458

This incident and other such incidents highlight the jealousy which the hypocrites, amongst the companions harboured for Hazrat Imam Ali (a.s.).

The same incident is narrated thus as well, at the time of Prophet's migration from Mecca to Yathrib and their halt at Quba; at that time:

“Abu Bakr insisted that they enter Medina as soon as possible but the Prophet said: I will not enter Medina unless my brother, I mean, the son of my mother, Ali and my daughter Fatima (s.a.) come and join me. So, he went alone to Medina in Ali's jealousy.”¹⁰

Historical sources mention that:

“The Prophet stayed in Quba for fifteen days until Ali arrived.

He told the Prophet: Ali may not come for a month! People of Medina are waiting for you!

The Prophet said: No, it is not so. He will come soon. I too shall not move unless my cousin, my brother, the dearest one among my family and one who risked his life to save me, comes.

This answer of the Prophet pained him. He left the Prophet at Quba and went to one of his friends' house in Sunha locality in Quba.”

Hatred of the Wives of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) for Imam Ali (a.s.)

If we study the life of Ayesha and her behaviour with Hazrat Imam Ali (a.s), we will find a strange and surprising thing. There is no explanation for it except her envy and enmity to the household of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

¹⁰ Dr. Ali Akbar Hasani: Tarikh Tahlili wa Siyasi Islam, Vol. 1, Pg. 179

History has recorded her incomparable hatred and malice towards Imam Ali (a.s.). She reached the point where she was not even able to mention his name, not able to stand the sight of him.

Imam Ahmad reports that Abu Bakr once came to the Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.a.), and sought permission to enter. Before he went in, he heard A'isha's voice raised, saying to the Prophet (P): "By Allah! I surely know that Ali is dearer to you than me and my father", she repeated this twice or three times."¹¹

Her hatred for Imam Ali (a.s.) was so much that she always tried to distance him from the Prophet (P) whenever she could find the means to do so. The Mu'tazili Ibn Abi al-Hadid, in his commentary on the Nahj al-Balagha said the Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.a.) beckoned to Ali to come close. He came close until he sat between him and 'A'isha, and he and the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) were clung together. She said to him:

"Can you not find a seat for this one except [on] my thigh?"

He also narrated that one day the Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.a.) was walking with Imam Ali (a.s.) and the conversation became prolonged. She approached as she was walking from behind until she came between them saying: "What is it between you two that you are taking so long?" Upon this the Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.a.) became angry.¹²

It is also reported that she once came upon the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) whilst he was conversing quietly with Imam Ali (a.s.). She screamed and said: "What is it with you and me, O son of Abu Talib? I have [just] one day with the Prophet of Allah (P)." Thereupon the Prophet (P) became angry.

How often did she anger the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) with her conduct, which arose due to her intense jealousy and furious nature and her offensive words?

¹¹ Musnad Ahmad Hanbal, Vol. 4, page 275

¹² Sharh Ibn Abil Hadeed, Vol. 9, page 195

Would the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) be pleased with any believing man or woman whose heart was filled with hatred and malice towards his cousin, the leader of his progeny, he of whom he said: "He loves Allah and His Prophet, and Allah and His Prophet love him?" He also said about him: "Whoever loves Ali has loved me and whoever hates Ali has hated me."¹³

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), himself describes her jealousy for him in these words,

As regarding a certain woman, she is in the grip of womanly views and malice is boiling in her bosom like the furnace of the blacksmith. If she were called upon to deal with others as she is dealing with me, she will not have done it.¹⁴

Hadith e Tayr – Tradition of the Roasted Bird

The most beloved to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was Imam Ali (a.s.). He (s.a.w.a.) preferred Imam Ali (a.s.) over all his other companions, loved him more than his other companions and he (s.a.w.a.) himself preferred to be in the company of Imam Ali (a.s) and not his other companions. The companions observed and knew of his (s.a.w.a.)'s affection for Imam Ali (a.s.) but still disregarded Imam Ali (a.s.) in the lifetime of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) himself.

Ibne Maghazali Shafei has narrated this tradition through thirty channels. Among them is that Anas bin Malik used to say: A roasted bird was brought to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) as gift; when it was placed before him, he said: O Allah, send the most beloved person to me, so that he may share this bird with me. I said to myself: O Allah, be it a person from Ansar, but Ali (a.s.)

¹³ Mustadrak al-Hakim, Vol. 3, page 130, who mentions that this tradition is authentic as set by the two standards of Bukhari and Muslim.

¹⁴ Nahjul Balagha, Sermon No. 155

arrived and knocked softly. I asked: Who is that? He replied: Ali. I said the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is busy. He went away.

When I went to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), he again said: O Allah, bring the most beloved person to me so that he may share this bird with me.

Again, I said to my mind: O Allah, be it a person from Ansar, but again Ali (a.s.) arrived and knocked at the door. I asked: Who is that? He replied: Ali. I said: The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is busy. He went away again. When I came to the Prophet, he repeated the same request.

Then Ali came again and knocked the door hard. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said thrice: Open the door. When I opened the door and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) saw him, he said thrice: Come.

Ali (a.s.) sat down and the two gentlemen consumed that bird.

According to another report, Ibne Hanbal has narrated from Anas that when Imam Ali (a.s.) entered, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) asked: Why are you late? I prayed to the Almighty Allah three times to send to me His most beloved creature to share this bird with me; if you had not come the third time also, I would have prayed to Allah naming you to bring you to me.

Imam Ali (a.s.) said: O Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.), I came three times and every time Anas turned me away. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) asked Anas to explain his action. He said: I wanted it to be someone from my community. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said: Everyone favours his own community.

According to another report, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) asked:
Is there anyone among the Ansar more excellent than Ali?¹⁵

Jealously Shown on the Day of Ghadeer

The jealousy of the companions for Imam Ali (a.s.) knew no bounds on the Day of Ghadeer, when in the heat of Arabia they were stopped by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) on the command of Allah, the Almighty to officially announce the Mastership of Imam Ali (a.s.) in front of a big gathering of companions. In the light of the exegesis (tafsir) of the holy Ahle Bait (a.s.), we present three verses revealed on the Day of Ghadeer, which have captured the jealousy of companions for Imam Ali (a.s.).

Verse 1 - Surah Tauba (9) : Verse 74

يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ
وَهُمْ مِمَّا لَمْ يَنَالُوا

“They swear by Allah that they did not say [anything against the Prophet] while they had said the word of disbelief and disbelieved after their [pretense of] Islam and planned that which they were not to attain.”

Surah Tauba (9) : Verse 74

Hazrat Imam Jafar Sadiq (a.s.) says, when the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) stood on the day of Ghadeer with Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), there were with him seven people from the Munafeqeen, they were, Fulaan and Fulaan, Abdul Rehman bin Auf, Saad ibn Abi Waqqas, Abu Ubaida, Abu Huzaifa, and Mogaira. The third said, did you look at his eyes, they were as if eyes of a Majnoon – meaning the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) at the time when he stood up and said, my Lord told me, then when he stood up he said, who

¹⁵ Haqqul Yaqeen, pg 243, English – Section Three: Love of Imam Ali (a.s.) for Allah

is having more authority on you than yourselves. They said, Allah and His messenger. He (s.a.w.a.) said – O Allah, bear witness, that of whomsoever I am master, Ali is his master. Then they greeted him with (the title) Ameerul Momineen. Then Gibrael (a.s.) descended and made him Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) aware of their conversation. Then he (s.a.w.a.) called them and asked them, then they denied and swore. Then Allah, the Almighty descended the above verse.¹⁶

Verse 2 – Surah Qalam (68) : Verses 1 – 6

ن وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُونَ (1) مَا أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُونٍ (2) وَإِنَّ لَكَ لَأَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُونٍ (3) وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ (4)
فَسْتَبْصِرْ وَيُبَصِّرُونَ (5) بِأَيِّكُمْ الْمَفْتُونُ (6)

Noon. I swear by the pen and what the angels write. By the grace of your Lord you are not mad. And most surely you shall have a reward never to be cut off. And most surely you conform (yourself) to sublime morality. So you shall see, and they (too) shall see. Which of you is afflicted with madness.

Surah Qalam (68) – Verses 1 to 6

It is narrated in Tafseer e Furat al Kufi from Hazrat Imam Sadiq (a.s.), when the Wilayat of Ali (a.s.) was revealed, Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) stood in front of the people and said, “Of whomsoever I am Master, Ali (a.s.) is his master”. Then a man said, most certainly he is captivated (fascinated) by this youth (referring to Ali (a.s.)). Then Allah revealed this verse, “Noon. I swear by the pen and what the angels write. By the grace of your Lord you are not mad. And most surely you shall have a reward never to be cut off. And most surely you conform

(yourself) to sublime morality. So you shall see, and they (too) shall see. Which of you is afflicted with madness.”¹⁷

Verse 3 – Surah Ma’arij (70) : Verse 1

سَأَلَ سَائِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ

One demanding, demanded the chastisement which must befall

Surah Ma’arij (70) : Verse 1

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) concerning the above verse, when Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) announced the Wilayat of Hazrat Ameerul Momineen, Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.), Haris bin Noman, went upto the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and said,

O Messenger of Allah, you invited us to say, La ilaha illal Allah, then we did that. Then you invited us to testify that you are His Messenger. Then indeed we did that. Then you told us to recite namaz, we recited namaz. Then you asked us to fast and we fasted, then you asked us to perform Hajj, then we performed Hajj. Then, (now) you tell us Of whomsoever I am master, Ali (a.s.) is his master. O Allah! Love him who loves him and bear enmity with him who bears enmity with him. Then, is this from you or from the side of Allah? Then he (s.a.w.a.) told him, from Allah. Then he (Haaris) said, O Allah! If what the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is saying is true then throw a stone upon me from the sky! Then Allah threw a stone on his head and then he fell down and died and the above verse was revealed. ¹⁸

17 Tafseer e Furat e Kufi, Page 495

18 Al Burhaan fi Tafsir al Quran, Vol. 5, Page 484

Jealousy During the Last Days of the Life of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.), Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) and Umme Salma, Ayesha, etc narrate that in the last stage of the Prophet's illness Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) had gone out for some work, when the Prophet said: "Call my helper, my friend and my brother." Then the two wives called for their fathers. When they arrived and the Prophet saw them, he covered his head and face with a cloth. The two went away. Then the Prophet removed the cloth from his face and again said: "Call my friend, my beloved and my brother." Then the two wives called their respective fathers. When they arrived, the Prophet turned away from them or concealed his face. They said: "Not us, he has called for Ali." Lady Fatima (s.a.) summoned Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). When he arrived, the Prophet embraced him and placed his holy mouth to his blessed ear and covered his face with his cloth and spoke to him in private for a long time till perspiration dripped from their faces.

Hypocrites and Imam Ali (a.s.)

The below is extract from the book Hayat al Quloob - Vol. 2, which again highlights the enmity and hatred for Imam Ali (a.s.) in the hearts of prominent companions of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Now that Ansari asked Huzaifa: The hypocrites, and Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah agreed to join because they were from Quraish, but why did they admit Salim? He was neither from the Quraish nor from the Muhajireen or Ansar. He was a freed slave of an Ansari lady. Huzaifa said: Due to the jealousy of hypocrites, they wished that Ali should not get the Caliphate. They were inimical to Ali (a.s.) because the Imam has slain their infidel relatives on the path of religion and his slashing sword had hurt their beings, so they wanted to take revenge from him. Since they considered Salim also in support of this, they admitted him. Ansari asked Huzaifa to relate to him the matter of the

written document executed by the hypocrites. Huzaifa said that it was reported to him by Asma binte Umais as she was the wife of Abu Bakr at that time. She says that the rebellious group met at her husband's house and Asma heard them. She got to their conspiracy till they reached consensus and ordered Saeed bin Aas Amawi to put it all in writing and he followed their instructions. The text was as follows:

Text of the Document

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

The nobles of Muhajireen and Ansar, whom the Almighty Allah had praised in His Book through His Messenger have reached consensus after much consideration that this document is prepared with much love and regard of Muslims so that the generations that come in the future may follow this document. The Lord of the worlds, sent Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) with His mercy and chose him for His message and sent him to all humanity. So the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) conveyed the message and propagated the laws sent by Allah. He also made it obligatory on us to remain steadfast on all those matters. So much so that he completed our religion, obligated the duties and fixed the practices. Then the Almighty Allah raised the status of the Prophet and then summoned him to the heavens. This was without the Prophet having appointed anyone as his Caliph, leaving the choice to the people so that they may appoint one they trust. Indeed it is obligatory on Muslims to follow the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) as he deserves to be followed. Thus the Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Quran:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ
الْآخِرَ

“Certainly you have in the Apostle of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the latter day.”

Indeed the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) did not appoint anyone as his Caliph so that this successorship should not remain in one family; it should not become a dynastic rule whereas the other Muslims are deprived of it. And that the affluent ones may rotate it among themselves. So that any claimant of Caliphate may not be able to say that this post will remain in his descendants till Judgment Day.

After the death of one Caliph, it is obligatory on Muslims that their elders must come together and discuss this matter and appoint as Caliph one they find eligible. After that if anyone claims that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has appointed him as the Caliph and had issued text in support of his Caliphate, his claim is invalid and his statement is false as known by the companions of the Prophet. In this way he has opposed the ranks of Muslims and if anyone claims that the successorship of the Prophet is inherited, it is an absurd statement because the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has said: We the group of prophets, do not leave any inheritance. Whatever we leave is Sadaqah. If anyone claims that Caliphate is restricted to only one man and no one is eligible for it, because Caliphate is the successorship of the Prophet; hence such a one is a liar, because the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has said: My companions are like stars, you will gain salvation if you follow any of them. If anyone claims that he is deserving for Caliphate and Imamate due to his relationship to the Prophet and it is for him and after him his sons as one son inherits his father in every age, and no one else can get that inheritance. This will continue till the earth and whatever is in it reaches to the Almighty Allah as inheritance and is destroyed. Therefore, caliphate is not for one who makes such statement and neither is it there for his sons even if he is closely related to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Because the Lord of the Worlds says that all are obliged to obey His commands.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ
لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

“O you men! surely We have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty).”

And the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) has said that the refuge of Muslims is one who gives refuge to the lowest of the Muslims and all of them are like a hand for one who is not from them and they remain united against their common enemy. Such a person brings faith in Allah and His Book and accepts the practice of the Prophet, such a person is on the Straight Path is inclined to the truth and he has chosen the right path.

And one who detests the character of Muslims and their appointment of Caliph has opposed the truth and the Book of Allah and has gone out of the Muslim community. Therefore, he must be eliminated. Because eliminating would be in the interest of the community. Indeed, the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) has said: Kill the one who divides my community when they have united. And kill the one who separates from the opinion of the Ummah, whoever he may be. Indeed, congregation is a blessing and living in disunity brings divine chastisement.

My Ummah can never have consensus on deviation and wrong path. Indeed, all the people of the Ummah are like a single hand because no one separates from the Muslim community except one who becomes aloof to them and who harbors malice to them and helps their enemy against them. The Almighty Allah and the Prophet have legalized the elimination of such a person. This document was written by Saeed bin Aas in the month of Mohurrum in the tenth year of Hijra with the consensus of a group of people, whose names are mentioned at the end of the document. And praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and may Allah bless our Chief, Muhammad and his family.

The Document is buried in Kaaba

After that the document was entrusted to Abu Ubaidah to bury it in Kaaba, and it remained there till the Caliphate of the second caliph.

This tradition and the text of the document clearly shows the jealousy which they harboured for Imam Ali (a.s.) and how they were continuously plotting against Imam Ali (a.s.).

Constant Taunting of the Hypocrites

Imam Ali (a.s.) says, that one day I passed from Sakhki, so he said to me, "The example of Mohammed (s.a.w.a.) is just like the tree of dates which is planted in a dirty place."

So I came to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) and told this to him.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) became very angry and came to the pulpit. The Ansar got frightened and came armed when they saw how angry the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) was.

He (s.a.w.a.) said: "What has happened to those communities that people hurt me in connection with my relatives although they have heard their merits and the virtues that Allah has given them all, and those things in which Allah has specialized them is that that He has kept all evil away from them and particularly Allah has declared them pure".

"And you people have heard what I have told concerning him who is the best and most virtuous in my Ahlul Bayt in those things that Allah has declared specially for him. He has blessed him with reputation and virtues in a manner that he is the first one in Islam and his difficulties in Islam are too many, and he is my relative".

“He is from me in such a manner like Haroon was to Musa and then you think that I am, in my Ahlul Bayt, like a tree of dates that grows in a dirty place”?¹⁹

The hypocrites could not directly exhibit their jealousy and animosity for Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and therefore taunted Imam Ali (a.s.) and Bani Hashim, as is apparent from the above narration.

Section Two :: Immediately after Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

Although the hypocrites harboured jealousy for Imam Ali (a.s.) during the life of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), they could not exhibit it openly or show enmity to Imam Ali (a.s.) in front of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). As a result, the flames of hatred which were burning in their hearts for a long time, grew leaps and bounds and after the passing away of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) they got a chance to openly exhibit their hatred for the best of creations after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

As we will see, in only a few days, after the passing away of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Hazrat Imam Ali (a.s.) witnessed many heart-breaking incidents immediately one after the other. He (a.s.) in his own words was already heart broken, lonely, sad due to the passing away of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and all incidents after that only intensified his sufferings.

The Heartbroken Not Offered Condolence

There existed a special bond, love and relationship between Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). It would be natural for Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to love Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) since Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was his brother (cousin) and later also became his son in-law. But the love of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) for Imam Ali (a.s.) was beyond the love for a brother or for a son in-law. Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was to

¹⁹ Kitab Sulaim bin Qais, Tradition No. 14

be the successor of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and furthermore both were from the same *Noor*.

Imam Ali (a.s.) describes the mutual love and affection between him and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in the below words.

“In this world I had no one to associate with, be friends with, trust, rely upon or make any pledges with amongst the Muslims, but the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was my only shelter. He fostered me since my childhood and supported me in my adulthood. He (s.a.w.a.) did not let me grow up like an orphan. He (s.a.w.a.) alleviated my worries; made me needless of working to seek my share of daily bread; prevented me from engaging in business by providing for my family and me. These were only his worldly aids to me. However, my spiritual gains and benefits from him through which I attained high ranks near the Honorable the Exalted God are much greater than this.

When the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) died I became so sad that I do not suppose all the mountains could withstand. All the members of my household became very impatient. They had lost their control. They could not tolerate this heavy burden of grief because it had made them impatient and put them out of their minds.

They neither understood anything nor demanded anything. They could neither hear or speak. Other people were all influenced by this horrible situation. Some expressed condolences and sympathized with us, while others were impatient and mourned for us. I was the only one who did not lose my patience. I controlled myself and carried out the orders of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). I lifted his body; performed the ritual ablutions (*wuzu*) for the dead; performed the embalmment;

shrouded the corpse; performed the prayer for the deceased; placed his body in the grave; and compiled the Quran and God's decrees regarding the people. A lot of weeping, heart-aching mourning and the greatness of the calamity could not prevent me from performing my duty. I fulfilled my duties towards the Honorable the Exalted God and the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and completely performed whatever he (s.a.w.a.) had ordered me to do. I was patient and I persevered.²⁰

Such was the severity of grief of Ameerul Momineen (a.s) after the passing away of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), but as history as recorded, he was alone in this grief, none except a handful of loyal followers were with Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) to share his grief or to console him or to soothe his aching heart.

And then, as described by Hazrat Imam Mahdi (a.s.) in Dua e Nudba, the complete nation came together, joined hands in oppressing Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), the people insisted on detesting him and agreed unanimously on rupturing their relations with him and moving away from his descendants, except for a few who fulfilled their duty of observing their rights (towards him).²¹

With the passing away of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a), a sea of calamities befell upon Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), his right was snatched, his wife, the leader of the women of Paradise was mercilessly injured as a result of which she also passed away from this world shortly. Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) himself was belittled, tortured, falsified, rejected, oppressed, he was secluded and isolated from the society to such an extent that the Muslims even stopped saluting him or even worse, they stopped replying to his salutations!

We present here few instances of the oppressions on Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) immediately after the passing away of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). We

²⁰ Al-Khisaal, Vol. 2, pg 412, Persian

²¹ Extract from Dua e Nudba

should remember while reading these, that Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was already heart broken and in severe grief due to the loss of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) and each of these incidents immediately one by one would have aggrieved him more and injured his broken heart even more!

Saqifa – Right of Successorship Snatched

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) for more than twenty years, right from the day *Dawat e Zul Ashira* till his last breath, time and again introduced Imam Ali (a.s.) as his rightful successor and instructed the Muslim nation to pay obeisance to Imam Ali (a.s.) after him.

The fact that Allah, the Almighty had chosen Imam Ali (a.s.) as the successor of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was declared by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and known to the Muslims. On the Day of Ghadeer, more than one hundred thousand Muslims had even pledged their allegiance to Imam Ali (a.s.) on the instructions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

The right to successorship of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) undoubtedly belonged to Imam Ali (a.s.). But unfortunately, this right of successorship was snatched from him, when Muslims gathered together at Saqifa to choose the successor of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

It was at Saqifa that his right to successorship was first snatched.

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had already apprised Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) about the hatred in the heart of the Muslim nation with regards to him and said to him,

“O Ali! You are the oppressed one after me. Woe be to whoever oppresses you! Blessed be whoever follows you and does not prefer anyone else over you. O Ali! You are the one with whom others will fight with after me. Woe be to whoever fights against you and blessed be whoever fights along with you. O Ali! You are the one who will speak using my words and will talk using my tongue. Woe be to whoever rejects your words and

blessed be whoever accepts your words. O Ali! You are the Master of this nation after me. You are their Divine Leader. You are their Caliph. Whoever leaves you will leave me on the Resurrection Day. Whoever stays with you will stay with me on the Resurrection Day. O Ali! You are the first man who believed in and acknowledged me. You are the first man who assisted me in my affairs and fought along with me against my enemies. You are the first man who prayed with me in the days when the people were ignorant.”²²

Copy of Holy Quran Rejected

As per the will of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) busied himself in compiling the Holy Quran for the benefit of Muslims. But again, rather unfortunately his compilation of the Holy Quran was rejected by the caliph.

When Hazrat Ali (a.s.) saw their treachery and disloyalty, he remained inside his house and started compiling the Quran, and did not come out of his house until the whole Quran was compiled. At that time verses were written in wood, skin and pieces.

After he had collected all the verses and wrote with his own hands in the manner the verses were revealed, with their meanings, and wrote those verses that were revealed to replace previous verses, and also the verses that were those on which action was no longer required, then Abu Bakr sent people to his house to come out and pay allegiance to him. He (Ali) sent a message saying that he was busy and he had taken an oath that except for prayers he will not wear a cloak until he has collected and compiled the Quran. So, for a few days they kept quiet. Ali (a.s.) compiled and completed the whole Quran in one piece of cloth and came to people when they were with Abu Bakr in Masjide Nabawi. He very loudly said: “O people, since the passing away of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), I was busy giving him the ritual

²² Uyoon e Akhbar e Reza (a.s.), Vol. 1, Chp 38

bath, and compiling the Quran, until it has been collected in one piece of cloth. There is not any verse that Allah has revealed which is not in this compilation, and there is not a single verse that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) did not make me read, and there is no verse of which the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) did not tell me the meaning.” Then Ali (a.s.) said to those people: “So that you do not tell me surely we were heedless of this (Surah Araf 172)” Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) said to them: “So that on the Day of Judgment you do not say that I did not call you to help me and did not remind you of my right, and I did not call you to the Book of Allah from beginning to end.” Umar said: “You are calling us to you, but the Quran that we have is sufficient for us.” Then Hazrat Ali (a.s.) went home.

Going from Door to Door

When the right of successorship was snatched from Ameerul Momineen (a.s), he along with his virtuous wife, the beloved daughter of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his two children, the leaders of the youth of Paradise, went door to door in Medina, to remind the Muslims about the right of Imam Ali (a.s.) and the Ahlul Bayt.

These unparalleled exalted personalities, whose reverence extended up to the seven heavens and even beyond, were compelled to go to the houses of ordinary Muslims to ask for their right, isn't this itself not enough to make someone grievous.

It is narrated in Kitab Sulaym bin Qays,

Salman said: “When it was night, Hazrat Ali (a.s.) made Lady Fatimah (a.s.) ride and took hands of his sons Hasan and Husain (a.s.) and went to each and every house of those Muhajireen and Ansar who were of Badr, and reminded them of his rights called them to help him. But except 4 people nobody came forward to help. He asked the helpers to shave their heads and in the morning go to him with their weapons ready to help and pay allegiance to death. In the morning except 4, no one kept their promise.”

So I (Sulaym) asked: “Who were those 4?”

Salman replied: “Myself, Abu Dhar, Miqdad and Zubayr. Then on the second night Hazrat Ali (a.s.) returned to all those who did not come and reminded them to fulfill their promise. They all said they would turn up the next morning but except us no one turned up. On the third night Hazrat Ali (a.s.) went again and again on the third day except us no one turned up.

When Hazrat Ali (a.s.) saw their treachery and disloyalty, he remained inside his house and started compiling the Quran, and did not come out of his house until the whole Quran was compiled. At that time verses were written in wood, skin and pieces.²³

The best creation after Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the one who was created from the same *noor* as that of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the distributor of Paradise and Hell, the distributor of Haуз e Kausar was compelled to go door to door to the house of Muhajireen and Ansar in itself is loneliness of Ali (a.s.).

The enemies of Ahle Bait (a.s.) even scoffed Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) later for this.

It is narrated by Ibn Abil Hadeed that that Mu’awiyah, while scoffing at Ali (a.s.), told him, “I cannot help to forget the days when you seated your wife upon a ride, while clasping the hands of your Hasan and Husain, and that day people had sworn allegiance to Abu Bakr. You went in pursuit of the people of Badr and the former Muslims and invited them towards yourself. You, alongwith your wife and sons, requested them to assist one another in defending your rights and told the men to come and take allegiance at the

²³ Kitab Sulaym bin Qays, Tradition No. 2

hands of the defender of the Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.a.), but none, except four or five, accepted your call...”²⁴

The Burning Door

Perhaps the greatest suffering or calamity which befell on Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) would be witnessing the gathering of the Muslims with fire at his door. And the most painful sight would undoubtedly be the one, when the accursed forced open the burning door, while Janabe Fatima Zahra (s.a.) was behind it, which resulted in the breaking of her ribs, miscarriage of her child, and which eventually resulted in her martyrdom. She lived for only seventy-five or ninety days after the passing away of her beloved father – the Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.). But she cried so much in these few days, that she is enumerated amongst the most crying ones along with Hazrat Adam (a.s.), Hazrat Yaqoob (a.s.) and Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s.). Needless to say, Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) witnessed her grief everyday till her passing away sorrowful, sad, aggrieved and wounded from this world. We cannot even imagine how heart broken, lonely and hurt this would have made Ameerul Momineen (a.s.).

Rope Tied to Neck

Muslims would have perished long back had Allah, the Almighty not given them victory in the battles of Badr, Uhod, Khandaq, Khaiber and others through the hands of Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.). These Muslims who owed their very existence to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) became so dissolute that they put a rope around the neck of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), the strong rope of Allah was arrested like a criminal!

²⁴ Sibt Ibn Jawzi, “Tazkiratul Khawas” Pg 13-14; Shaikh Sulayman Hanafi Qanduzi, “Yanabiul Mawaddah”, Chap 9 & 17; Ibn Jareer Tabari, “Tareekh al Umam wal Muluk”; Tahawi, “Mushkilal Asar”

Snatching Away of Fadak

Fadak, the garden which was gifted to Janabe Zahra (s.a.) by Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to Janabe Zahra (s.a.) was also usurped from her.

Janabe Sulaym narrates in this regard,

“And he and his companion took away the Fadak, when it was in control of Janabe Fatimah (s.a.) and during the time of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) she ate the food from it. So, he asked an evidence from her when it was in her hand. Neither did they accept her to be true nor Umme Ayman, although he surely knew, like we know, that it was in her hand. It was not right for him to ask her to produce evidence that was in her hand, and it was not right for him to accuse her. Then people thought of him as good, praised him and said that he did that because he had fear of Allah and this is his merit”.²⁵

Letter of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) to the caliph on usurpation of Fadak

It is quoted in Al Ehtijaj of Shaikh Tabarsi that when Imam Ali (a.s.) was informed that Abu Bakr had snatched away Fadak from Fatemah (s.a.) and that he had thrown out her labourers from there, he (a.s.) wrote a pounding letter to him as follows : Steer through the waves of mischief by boats of deliverance, put off the crowns of pride and turn away from the conceit of egoistic men.

You should turn alone towards the fountainhead of grace and light. You have taken for yourself the inheritance left by the ‘Pure Souls’, then come out from the circle of ignorance, negligence and perplexity. It is as if I see with my eyes that you, similar to a blindfolded Camel, are circumambulation around destruction and walking in bewilderment and distress.

By Allah! If I had been ordered, I would have blown your heads off similar to ripping of the ready harvest with a sharp iron sickle. And I would sever the

²⁵ Kitab Sulaym bin Qais, pg 77

heads of your brave ones with such ferocity, that your eyes would be wounded and each one of you would be frightful and perplexed. I am the one who has scattered the abundant crowd (of enemies), and have destroyed armies. I could strike at your group and your customs, I was busy in the battlefield fighting (the enemies), while you had retired in your homes. Just yesterday I was busy in serving the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and all of you were aware of all my deeds and acknowledged my status. I swear by the life of my father!

You never did consent that Prophethood and Caliphate would both be combined in our family. You have still not forgotten the envy of the battles of Badr and Uhud. By Allah! If we reveal to you what Almighty Allah (s.w.t.) has decreed regarding you, certainly the bones of your ribs would enter your bodies similar to the points of the compass. If I speak out, they would call me greedy towards power, but if I keep quiet they would say that Ali bin Abi Talib is afraid of death.

Alas ! Alas ! I am more desirous of death than an infant is with the breast of its mother. I am the one who has made the enemies taste death and have greeted death with open arms in the battlefield. I do not have the slightest fear or terror of death. I am the one who has turned away the flags of the enemies in pitch-black darkness of the nights. I am the one who warded off blockade and sorrow for the sake of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). And I am authorized to tell you what Allah (s.w.t.) has revealed regarding you and I know it, then you will tremble like ropes in deep wells and would wander in the desert in bewilderment. But I forbore and have lead a simple and easy life, so that I may meet the Lord of the Universe with hands empty of the pleasures of life and heart vacant of darkness. Then know that the reality of this world of yours is similar to the cloud that hangs in the air and looks wide and thick upon the heads of men, then it (suddenly) disappears and scatters away. Then very soon will the dust set from in front of your eyes and you shall witness the results of your evil deeds.

Then you shall reap the bitter seeds of poison & perdition that you have sown. Then know that Allah (s.w.t.) is the Best Judge and His beloved Prophet (s.a.w.a.) shall be your greatest enemy, while the ground of Qiyamah will be your place of return.

Allah (s.w.t.) will keep you away from His Mercy and engulf you in His severe wrath. And peace will be unto him who follows the guidance”²⁶.

No Reply to his Salutations

In the sermon of Ghadeer, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) warned the Muslim nation that they should not be jealous or envious of Hazrat Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) lest their actions be nullified.

Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said on the Day of Ghadeer,

مَعَاشِرَ النَّاسِ، إِنَّ إِبْلِيسَ أَخْرَجَ آدَمَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ بِالْحَسَدِ، فَلَا تَحْسُدُوهُ فَتَحْبِطَ
أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَتَزِلَّ أَقْدَامُكُمْ، فَإِنَّ آدَمَ أُهْبِطَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ بِخَطِيئَةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَهُوَ صَفْوَةُ اللَّهِ
عَزَّوَجَلَّ، وَكَيْفَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ وَ مِنْكُمْ أَعْدَاءُ اللَّهِ

O people! Iblis caused Adam to be dismissed from the garden through envy; so, do not envy him (Imam Ali (a.s.)) lest your deeds should be voided and lest your feet should slip away, for Adam was sent down to earth after having committed only one sin, and he was among the elite of Allah's creation. How, then, will be your case, and you being who you are, and among you are enemies of Allah?

Inspite of this and other such exhortations of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) the Muslims after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) became envious of the holy household of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to the extent that they even

²⁶ Surah Taha : Verse 47

stopped saying salutations to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). Not only this if Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) saluted them, they did not even reply to him.

The one about whom Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said,

Whoever desires he sees the awe of Israfeel, position of Mikayeel, splendour of Jibrael, peace of Adam, goodness of Nuh (a.s.), grief of Yaqoob (a.s.), beauty of Yusuf (a.s.), munajaat of Musa (a.s.), patience of Ayyub (a.s.), abstinence of Yahya (a.s.), traditions of Isa (a.s.), piety of Yunus (a.s.), appearance and habits of Mohammed (s.a.w.a.), then he should see towards Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.), then surely in him are seventy characteristics from the characteristics of Prophets (a.s.) which Allah has gathered in him and has not gathered them in anyone except him.

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), the possessor of perfect characteristics of the Prophets (a.s.), it was the duty of the nation to cling on to him and gather around him and seek counsel, advice, guidance and knowledge from him, but instead this great personality was not spoken to, isolated in the society, the people confined him to his home.

Witnessing the sufferings of Janabe Zahra (s.a.)

We will never be able to understand or imagine the condition of the heart of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) with which he witnessed the sorrows and sufferings of his wife – the beloved daughter of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and chief of the ladies of Paradise.

How he endured her being falsified, how she returned home dejected when Fadak was denied to her, how he would have endured her wails of pain due to the broken ribs and lashes of the oppressor, with which heart he would have listened of the complains of the people of Medina that they are not able to sleep due to her crying, wailing and mourning, how with a dejected and sorrowful heart he would have created the house of sorrows for her, we will

never be able to understand the sorrow, gloom and loneliness of the heart of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) while witnessing the sufferings of Janabe Zahra (s.a.)!

The most valiant man of the Arabs, the ferocious lion of Allah was exhibiting the pinnacle of patience only for the sake of the religion of Allah and the promise he made to the Prophet of Islam (s.a.w.a.).

It was not that Janabe Zahra (s.a.) was unaware of the condition of the heart of her beloved husband. She was weeping incessantly at her deathbed, when Imam Ali (a.s.) asked her, "Why do you weep"? And she said caringly, "I weep upon the sufferings that would befall you after my death". Imam (a.s.) calmed her by saying, "Do not weep. I swear by Allah (s.w.t.), that if these calamities befall me in the way of Allah (s.w.t.), I consider them to be minute & naught".

Only Allah, the Almighty and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.) know the extent of loneliness of Ali (a.s.) in these last days of Janabe Zahra (s.a.)

Death of Janabe Zahra (s.a.)

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) himself described the strong bond and love that he had for the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) and his loneliness and grief when he departed from this world. Fatema Zahra (s.a.) was a part of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), indeed he would have had similar bond and affection for her as well, just as he had for the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.). His grief, sorrow and loneliness would have intensified again when the chief of the women of Paradise breathed her last! The already broken heart of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) would have shattered even more.

Our salutations to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and his broken heart. May the Almighty burn those who oppressed him, left him and were a cause of his loneliness in the deepest pits of Hell till eternity.

Burial of Janabe Zahra (s.a.)²⁷

In the darkness of the jet-black night, when eyes were asleep and voices were silent, a Heavenly procession left Ali's (a.s.) house while carrying the Messenger of Allah's daughter to her final abode.

This was on the night of the third (3rd) of Jamadi al-Thani (the second), 11 A.H.

The heart-breaking procession moved towards an unknown location followed by a small number of devoted ones. They were Ali (a.s.), Hasan (a.s.), Husayn (a.s.), Zainab and Um Kulthum. Abu Dharr, Ammar, Miqdad, and Salman were following them.

Where are the thousands who inhabited Medina?! One asks, and the answer came: Fatima az-Zahra (sa) requested that they may not be present at her funeral!!

The family and their friends hurry to bury Fatima az-Zahra (sa). Then they rushed back to their own homes so that no one would know where Fatima az-Zahra (sa) was buried!

In such a matter, the first star from Ahlul-Bayt set after the sun (the Prophet (S)), and left everyone with the only light of Imamate!!

While burying Janabe Zahra (s.a.), Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) described the pain in his heart to the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.a.) in the below words,

"O Prophet of Allah, peace be upon you from me and from your daughter who has come to you and who has hastened to meet you. O Prophet of Allah! My patience about your chosen (daughter) has been exhausted and my power of endurance has weakened, except that I have ground for consolation in having endured the great hardship and heart-rending event of

²⁷ Extract from the book, Fatima The Gracious

your separation. I laid you down in your grave while your last breath had passed (when your head) `Verily we are Allah's and verily unto Him shall we return (2:56) between my neck, and the chest.

Now, the trust has been returned and what had been given has been taken back. My grief knows no bounds, and my nights will remain sleepless till Allah chooses for me the house in which you are now residing. Certainly, your daughter would apprise you of the joining together of your Ummah (people) for oppressing her. You ask her in detail and get all the news about the position. This happened when a long time had not elapsed, and your remembrance had not disappeared. My salaam be on you both, the salaam of a grief stricken not of a disgusted or a hateful person; for if I go away, it is not because I am weary (of you); and if I stay, it is not due to lack of belief in what Allah has promised the endurers."

Section Three :: During the Caliphate of the First 3 Caliphs

Lonely and Without Supporters

After the passing away of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) the nation came together to oppose Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), to usurp his rights, to oppress and seclude him from society, except a handful who clung on to the strong rope of Allah, who fulfilled their covenant given to Allah, the Almighty and His Messenger (s.a.w.a.). But they were only few.

Narrations from Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) where he complains about lack of supporters.

Narration 1 – Imam Ali (a.s.) Wishes for One Hundred Supporters

Amr bin Humaq told Imam Ali (a.s) that, "I have not come to you in pursuit of wealth or prestige of this world, but have come to you for you are the cousin of the Prophet and best among all men and the husband of Fatemah (s.a.), the mistress of women, and the father of the Prophet's immortal Progeny, and your share is more than any other Emigrant (Muhajir) or Helper (Ansar). By Allah! If you command me to shift the mountains from their place and pull out the water from the deep seas, I shall obey you until death overtakes me. I will always strike your enemies with the sword in my hand and shall assist your friends and may Allah elevate your position and grant you victory. Even then I do not believe that I may have accomplished what is due towards you." Imam Ali (a.s) prayed for him thus: "O Allah! Illuminate his heart and guide him towards the Right Path. I wish there were a hundred similar to you among my Shi'ah."²⁸

Narration 2 – Complains Not Having Forty Supporters

It is narrated in the book Kitab Sulaym bin Qais that,

Janabe Salman said: "When Imam Ali (a.s.) was taken to Abu Bakr and he was saying: "By God, if I had my sword in my hand, then you would see that you would have never reached this stage. By God, I do not consider myself bad in doing jihad with you. If I had even forty people then I would disperse your community. May God curse that community who paid allegiance to me and then became disloyal."

Narration 3 – Did Not Have Even Thirty Supporters

Sheikh Kulaini narrates a from Abu Haysam bin Teehan that one day Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) recited a sermon in Medina where he described the treachery that he faced and the benefits that people would have received if they accepted him as the rightful successor of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Abu Haysam says that that after ending this sermon Imam Ali (a.s.) came out

²⁸ Nafasul Mahmoom narrating from Al-Ikhtesaas

of the Masjid and walked a little distance in the desert where he saw approximately thirty sheep that had taken shelter in the pen.

Seeing this, he said, "By Allah! If I had along with me men who were true supporters of Allah, the Mighty, the Sublime, and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.), equalling the number of these Sheep, I would certainly have deposed this son of the one who eats flies, from his authority".

We quote the complete narration below for the benefit of the readers.

Abu Haysam bin Teehan that he said, that one day Ameerul Mo'meneen Ali (a.s.) recited this sermon in Madinah for the people. First he praised and glorified Allah (s.w.t.) and said, "Beware! I swear upon Allah (s.w.t.) Who split open the seed and created men. If you had obtained the knowledge and excellence from the mine (i.e. the original place), and drank the water when it was pure and agreeable, reserved righteousness from its original place, paved the way through the illuminated path, and traversed righteousness from its own path; the path of salvation would be manifest upon you, while the signs of righteousness would be apparent and the customs of Islam would be illuminated for you.

Then you would have enjoyed the blessings of Allah (s.w.t.) abundantly, and not a single family from among you Muslims would have fallen victim to indigence and oppression and even the protected disbelievers would be in peace. But you traversed the path of the tyrants while your world turned dark even though it was vast, while the doors of knowledge and excellence closed upon your faces, then you spoke in conformity to the whims of yourselves. You created discord in your Religion and gave verdict in the Religion of Allah (s.w.t.) without knowing anything.

Then you obeyed the astray ones who misled you and you betrayed the 'Masters of Righteousness' and they too left you to your own selves. You dawned under the influences of your whims, then when you face a problem, you asked the 'People of the Zikr' and when we give you our verdict regarding

it, you say : Knowledge is but here, but then what is the use of this confession to your state, when you do not follow them in practice, rather you oppose them and leave their orders behind your backs. Be quite! Soon you shall reap what you have sown and shall witness the punishment of your deeds.

I swear by Allah (s.w.t.) Who split open the seed and created man, you very well know that I am your Master and Guide and I am the one whose obedience has been assigned. I am the Erudite among you under whose light the Right Path can be paved. While I am the Vicegerent of your Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the Chosen one of your Lord, the tongue of your light, the one cognizant of your affairs. Then very soon the wrath of Allah (s.w.t.) shall descend upon you regarding what you have been promised as it descended upon the people before you. Very soon shall Allah (s.w.t.) ask you regarding your Imam and you shall arise along with your Imam and return to your Lord. I swear by Allah (s.w.t.) ! If I had along with me such quantity of men equalling the men of Taloot²⁹ or similar to the combatants of Badr, and they in turn would be your enemies, I would strike at you with the sword along with them until I would have returned you towards righteousness and truth, and this striking is better for shutting down the path of infidelity & hypocrisy and would be more effective than leniency and moderateness. O Allah! Judge between us with Righteousness and You are the Best Judge”.

Abu Haysam says that after ending this sermon Imam Ali (a.s.) came out of the Masjid and walked a little distance in the desert where he saw approximately thirty sheep that had taken shelter in the pen.

Seeing this, he said, “By Allah! If I had along with me men who were true supporters of Allah, the Mighty, the Sublime, and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.),

²⁹ Taloot (Saul) was a virtuous man among the Bani Israeel who was appointed by Prophet Ashmaweel (Samuel) to fight Jaloot (Goliath) who had captured all the land on the shore of the Mediterranean including Palestine and Egypt. At the conclusion of this battle Taloot won, and this has been referred to in Surah al Baqarah of the Holy Qu’ran. And because of the reference of Taloot in the above sermon, this sermon is also referred to as ‘Khutba al Talootiyah’.

equalling the number of these Sheep, I would certainly have deposed this son of the one who eats flies, from his authority”.

Narration 4 – Few Narrations on the Number of His Supporters

Janabe Salman (a.r.) narrates that Imam Ali (a.s) once mentioned, “Except four, after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) everyone has become an apostate”.³⁰

In another tradition Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) said, Except four, from all the people, nobody accepted what I said - Salman, Abu Dhar, Miqdad and Zubayr.³¹

There are few other narrations which mention the names of esteemed companions like Ammar ibn Yasir, Buraydah Aslami, Janabe Bilal, among others who remained loyal to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and believed in him as the rightful successor of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

All in all, the true followers and loyal supporters of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) were very few, which one could count on their fingertips.

His Knowledge Not Benefited From

The people left the door of knowledge and source of guidance and choose to wilder around in the darkness of ignorance and disbelief.

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) himself says,

I used to go to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) everyday – once in the morning and once at night and he used to see me alone and wherever he went I used to go with him. The companions of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) know that he did not do that with anyone else except me, and sometimes this used to happen in my house The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) used to come to me and when I used to go to him at some place,

³⁰ Kitab Sulaym bin Qais, Tradition 4

³¹ Kitab sulaym bin Qais, Tradition 12

he used to meet me alone, and asked his women to go and there was nobody except him and myself and when he used to come to my house to meet me alone, then neither Fatimah nor my children went away.

When I used to question him, he would answer me and when I was silent or my questions finished, he would himself start. There is no verse of Quran that was revealed that he did not make me recite and write, and I used to write with my own hands, and he used to pray to Allah that I understand it and remember it.

In another narration, Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) says to Janabe Zahra (s.a.),

He (Imam Ali (a.s.)) has knowledge about Allah's Book and my Sunnah and there is no one in my Ummah, except your husband, who knows absolutely all my knowledge because Allah has given me such a knowledge that except myself and him no one else knows. He (Allah) has not given this knowledge to Angels of messengers- He has given the knowledge only to me. He commanded me to give that knowledge to Hazrat Ali (a.s.) so I did that.

Then there is no one in my Ummah who has all my knowledge. Understanding and Jurisprudence except Ali. O Fatimah you are his wife, his two sons Hasan and Husayn are my grandchildren and they are also the chosen ones of my Ummah. Only Ali is the one to do the command to do good and forbid evil. Allah the Exalted and Praised has bestowed him with knowledge of wisdom, and the final decision.

In another narration, Imam Ali (a.s.) complains,

Ali (a.s.) said: "The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) during his illness privately gave me key to one thousand doors of knowledge with which one thousand doors open, and if the Ummah

had, from the day the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) passed away, followed me and obeyed me, then it would have got subsistence from up and from beneath its feet till the Day of Judgment with satisfaction.

Islam faced a great dangers after the passing away of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the new Muslims had many questions concerning Islam and its laws and the self-established caliphs and successors of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) were so ignorant that they were not aware of basic Islamic Laws like purification. Let alone being capable of embarking on any intellectual discussions concerning religion, its fundamentals, the Holy Quran or its exegesis.

Scholars of other religions and communities were constantly probing the Muslims on various topics to establish the truthfulness of the religion of Islam and the Messengership of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

The real mine and inheritor of the knowledge of Divine Sciences was sidelined and not accessible. Yet, for safeguarding the interest of Islam and establishing its truthfulness Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) came forward on many occasions.

We are narrating below one such incident, which highlights the dearth of knowledge of the self-proclaimed successors of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and also, the helplessness of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.).

Incident of Jasleeq

One of the literary works of Salman Farsi is his famous book "Archbishop Jasleeq and Amir al-Momineen Ali (A.S). Jasleeq is a Greek word, meaning Archbishop. This book contains the discussion of Amir al-Momineen Ali (A.S) with the Roman Archbishop which was recorded by Salman Farsi.

Allamah Davood Ilhami quotes the below narration from this book.

Janabe Salman writes, the great danger Islam faced after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (SAWA) was that Islam's light would have been extinguished forever if Ali (A.S) was not present at that time. The Roman emperor got the news of passing away of the Holy Prophet (SAWA) and he thought that the Holy Prophet of Islam (SAWA), contrary to the previous prophets had not appointed his successor and left it to the people.

Had the Prophet (SAWA) nominated a successor, Muslims would not have faced problems, so the emperor of Rome doubted the truthfulness of Islam and formed a committee of Christian priests and sent a group of one hundred intellectuals under the supervision of the archbishop Jasleeq to Madinah to discuss the truthfulness of Muslim's religious beliefs.

Some historians have narrated that this group had a short stop at Baytul Moqaddas on their way to Madinah. They talked to the Jewish intellectuals about the purpose of their journey. So about the same number of Jews accompanied them to Madinah.

This intellectual group entered Madinah on Friday and soon they asked for the Holy Prophet's successor. When this group of 200 people entered Madinah it caused much noise, so a great number of Muslims also entered the Holy Prophet's mosque, they met Abu Bakr and some other Muslims there.

Salman says: I too was there. It was a great gathering with awe-inspiring silence. The archbishop broke the silence and addressed the Muslims, "Let us see your Prophet's successor, I and my companions are here to investigate your religion. If we found it right, then we will accept your religion otherwise we will go back". Omar bin Khattab who was sitting next to Abu Bakr, pointed at him, saying: "This man is our leader and master after the Holy Prophet (SAWA)".

The archbishop Jasleeq turned to Abu Bakr and asked: “Are you the prophet’s successor?”

Abu Bakr said: “No, I’m not”.

The archbishop asked: What are you then?

Before Abu Bakr could answer, Omar said: “This man is the caliph after the Holy Prophet”.

The archbishop asked: “Are you that learned and self-sufficient caliph who on basis of his knowledge is able to satisfy all people in needs”.

Abu Bakr: “No, I’m not that caliph”.

The archbishop asked: “If so, what is this position you have been chosen for and consider yourself as the successor of Muhammad (SAWA)? In our books we have read that this position is specifically appropriate for God’s chosen prophets and it does not suit anyone else who is not divine. The Almighty God nominated Adam as His caliph on earth; and told David that I have nominated you as my caliph on earth. Has Muhammad (SAWA) given you this position?”

Abu Bakr replied: “No, but his disciples and friends agreed with my caliphate”.

The archbishop remarked: “So you are the people’s caliph and not the caliph of the Prophet, as you have clearly stated that you were not nominated by the Prophet. Of course, it is against the Prophet’s Sunnah or way and no prophet ever passed away without announcing his successor; it seems that you have turned away from the traditions of all prophets and annulled Muhammad’s prophethood.

Salman was listening to the conversation between the archbishop and Abu Bakr carefully. At this moment, the archbishop turned to his companions and said: “It seem that Muhammad (SAWA) was not a Divine prophet from God

but he was a ruler who ruled the Arabs with power and pressure because if he were a prophet, he would have definitely nominated someone to succeed him as all prophets have done!”

Salman says that the archbishop was extremely irritated and told Abu Bakr: “You old man! You have confessed that the prophet hasn’t nominated you as his successor but you were chosen by the people. Now I ask you if God follows people’s will, why did He send so many prophets to them? Actually you have denied the mission of all the prophets and you have practically affirmed that you do not need a divine prophet thus you have falsified God and accused your own prophet. Therefore, I find it necessary to talk to you people to know whether you have done this on basis of faith and truth or due to ignorance, infidelity and carnal aspirations?”

On hearing the archbishop’s arguments, the caliph was drowned in thoughts and the signs of helplessness and distress were apparent in his face. The archbishop finding himself victorious frequently shouted: “You old man! Answer my question!”

Silence like spell of death had overshadowed the caliph and all the Muslims present there. They were all quiet as if their lips were sealed. The archbishop addressing his companions, said: the religion of these people is not based on right. They all agreed with him. He then continued: “Are you ready for some more questions?”

Abu Bakr replied:” yes, you may ask”.

He said: ”Tell me who am I and what is my position near God? And who are you and what is your position near God?”

Abu Bakr said: "I feel I am a true believer but I do not know my position near God. In my view you are an infidel but I don’t know about your position near God.”

The archbishop: “But in my opinion, you have ruined your faith with infidelity and you do not know your position. You don’t really know whether you are supporting truth or falsehood? But I believe in God after denial and infidelity and I am completely satisfied about my position. But unknowingly, you have yourself given witness about my salvation and your own ruin and straying. Then the archbishop turned to his companions and said: My friends are happy because this person has announced your salvation. Yes, you old man! Tell me if you are a true believer and me an infidel, where is your place in paradise and where is my place in the hell?”

Abu Bakr asked the people sitting next to him to help him answer the priest but unfortunately they were silent. Therefore very quietly in a shaking voice and terrified he replied: “I don’t know about your and my place in heaven or hell!”

The archbishop said: How did you dare to announce yourself as Muhammad’s successor when you are not learned enough to answer people’s needs but you are in need of others’ knowledge. Don’t you have anyone more learned than you among Muslims?

If your prophet was sent by God, he wouldn’t have ruined his promise with God but would have definitely kept his promise like other prophets, who nominated their successors.

If among Muslims anyone is wiser than you, then your religion could be right, but if he were like you, unable to answer me and devoid of any signs from the prophet then you have cheated these people, because the ignorant has no right to be a leader.

Salman felt Islam is in danger.

Salman writes: “When I saw this painful scene, I felt Islam is in danger. I stood up and rushed like lightning towards the house of Ali (a.s.). I knocked the door, Ali (a.s.) came out and saw my fright and enquired about the cause of my awe.

I told him Islam is in danger “why are you sitting here? Muhammad’s religion is ruined. Muslims have lost their dignity. Then I described everything that had happened.”

Ali (A.S) who is the nation’s hope and the people’s rescuer and has always solved the problems of the Islamic world, moved towards the Masjid un-Nabi (SAWA) immediately and sat on the ground next to the Holy Prophet’s grave and said: “O Christian! Ask me whatever questions you have. I will answer all questions.

The Archbishop told him the reason for his visit was to find out the successor of the Prophet of Islam and said they have introduced this man (pointing to Abu Bakr) as the Prophet’s successor, but unfortunately I found him quite ignorant, so I am doubtful about the truthfulness of Islam.

Ali (A.S) addressing the Archbishop Jasleeq and his companions said: “I am the successor of the Prophet of Islam and the interpreter of Quran. I know Islam thoroughly and I know its firm and ambiguous aayat, its superseding and superseded aayaat. I have the knowledge for guidance of all people.

Now ask me whatever you wish about the future up to the Doomsday. O the Christian Sage! Besides the aayat of the Qur’an, I have knowledge about the Bible as well as the Torah. The Holy Prophet (SAWA) has removed the curtains and familiarized me with all knowledge. I am the Prophet’s brother, cousin, and son-in-law. I and my descendants are the inheritors of his knowledge and we are like Noah’s ark whoever gets on it survives but whoever denies to mount it drowns and is devoured by stormy waves.

I and my descendants are like ‘Hitta’ for Israelites (See 2:158). For our prophet I am like Harun for Moses, with this difference that after him no other prophet will be sent. O the Christian Sage!

“Anyone who has love for me is a true believer and anyone who has enmity with me is an infidel”. On hearing these wise words, the archbishop was delighted and turned to his companions and said:

“I swear by God! This is the person who speaks with knowledge. I hope we have arrived at our goal and will find the religion for which we set out together.

Then he turned to Ali (a.s.) and asked: “O the learned intellectual! Tell me where is my and your place near God?”

Ali (A.S) answered: “I am a true believer, due to God’s blessings and grace, but you are an infidel because you have violated your pledge with Him.

The archbishop asked: “where is your place in the heaven and mine in the hell?”

Ali (a.s.): “I haven’t entered heaven or hell to know mine or your place but it is mentioned in the Qur’an, concerning the good and bad people’s place in the hereafter, it is said in this book that God has promised different ranks and stages of paradise to His prophet and He has said that infidels and sinful criminals will be sent to the hell which has seven doors and each one will enter through a door.

The archbishop told his companions: “Friends, our wish is fulfilled and we have found what we were searching for. O great intellectual! Tell me if the Throne (Arsh) carries God or God carries the Throne?”

Ali (A.S): If you hear the right answer, will you embrace Islam?

The archbishop said: “yes, by God! If you answer my questions correctly, I and all my companions will accept Islam.”

Ali (a.s.) replied: God carries the Throne (Arsh) and the skies. He has stated in the Qur’an that God the Almighty prevents the skies and the earth from clashing against each other.

The archbishop: O the great wise man! Tell me where is God the Almighty?

Ali (a.s.): "Above and beneath, in the North, South, West, and East and He is dominant over all creatures. He encloses everyone everywhere and this ayat of the Qur'an is a witness to my words:

"There is no secret talk among three but God is their fourth, nor among five but He is their sixth. God is with them (even if) less than that or more and wherever they may be. Then on the Day of Judgment, He will inform them about what they have done."(Mujadalah: 7)

The archbishop: "I swear by God! His words are perfectly true he speaks with divine grace, exactly like Jesus (A.S), prophets and their heirs by the grace of God.

O the wise intellectual! Let me know whether Paradise is in this world or in the Hereafter and truly where are these worlds situated?

Imam Ali (A.S) answered: " This world is in the Hereafter and the Hereafter has enclosed or surrounded this world. The Hereafter is the place of comfort for life. There a human being resembles a person in sleep while his soul is on excursion. Our body dies but our soul is eternally alive.

God says: The abode of the Hereafter is indeed life, if you comprehend.(Annkabut:64).

Then the archbishop Jasleeq asked: "O great intellectual! Your Quran states: The entire earth will be in His fist on the Day of Resurrection and skies will be folded or scrolled in His right hand. (Zumar: 67)

So when the earth is under full dominance of God and the skies are folded by Him, where would Heaven and Hell exist?"

Ali (A.S) asked for a paper and ink and wrote "Heaven and Hell" on it and folded the paper and gave it to Jasleeq and asked: "Haven't I folded the paper?"

They all answered: "Yes, you did."

Ali (a.s.) asked: "Unfold it" and they did.

Ali (a.s.) asked: Has the writing disappeared or vanished?

They replied: "No".

Ali (a.s.) said: As the writing "heaven and hell" has not vanished, heaven and hell themselves won't disappear when God folds the skies.

The archbishop: "You the great intellectual! It is stated in your Qur'an 'Kulla Shayin Halikun illa wajjah' "All things shall perish except God." What does it mean and what is its reason?

Imam Ali (a.s.) asked a Muslim to get some logs of wood and to kindle them with fire. The Imam asked the archbishop to tell him the direction of the fire.

The archbishop Jasleeq replied: "you can assume it to be in any direction."

Ali (a.s.) answered: It is God's creation and you cannot assume its direction or face. How could you recognize the nature of God when eyes cannot see Him and mind cannot imagine Him. (laysa kamithlihi shay wa huwa Samiun Haleem) "There is nothing like God and He is All Hearing and Forbearing."

The archbishop was deeply influenced by Ali's discussion and strong logic behind his words and said: You the true successor of the prophet! Have answered all my questions and I am guided through you.

The Roman Archbishop Jasleeq accepted Islam and became a Muslim.

He then turned to his companions and said: "Oh my friends! We have finally found the person we were in search of and reached our goal. We should all follow Ali to be blissful, Here and in the Hereafter".

Actually, the archbishop's confirmation was considered really important by Salman who had the experience of church and Christian teachings. He actually knew the rank of an archbishop and how his conversion to Islam would affect the Christian world?

The archbishop and all his companions became Muslims and entered Islam through its gateway Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) the prophet's successor.

So, Muslims were full of happiness and Ali's face gleamed with joy. Ali (a.s.) humbly stated with pleasure: "I praise God the Almighty, who illuminated his finalized religion and helped Muslims prevail in the discussion."

Abu Bakr and his disciples were also happy on seeing this scene when Ali (a.s.) wiped off all misery and humiliation from their faces and saved Islam from the danger of extinction forever.

The Muslims said: "Abul Hasan! May God, the Almighty reward you."

Salman Farsi who has written this event so precisely says: when the newly converted Roman Muslims wanted to leave Madinah, they all visited Ali's house to bid him farewell.

Ali (a.s.) sat next to them.

The Roman archbishop, who had embraced Islam, said: O the prophet's successor! , the people who have usurped the caliphate are like Israelites, who destroyed everything intentionally and deserve hell! The archbishop then said we frankly ask you to decide for us whether we should return to our cities, or stay here and fight for your right.

After a long discussion, Ali (a.s.) said: "It's better you return to your cities. Our late prophet (SA) has asked me to be patient as it is more important to protect true Islam. Whoever accompanies me at the proper time to fight will be praised and whoever dies before the warfare may be considered as a victim of tyranny."

Tears dropped from Ali's eyes when the Roman Muslims left for their cities, weeping over Ali's helplessness.

His Lovers were Persecuted

The fact is that no terror is known to have encompassed the group of children of any prophet, of any Imam, of the king of any period whether pious or profligate like the terror which encompassed the offspring of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be on him.

Nor were any so much subjected to being killed, to being pursued from their houses and lands, and to being terrorised as the offspring and sons of the Commander of the Faithful were subjected to. The different kinds of severity meted out to them did not occur for any other group of people. They were killed by murderous treachery, by treason and by deception.

It was done to most of them during their lifetimes as an example. They were tormented by hunger and thirst until their lives were taken by death. This required them to scatter throughout the land and to become separated from their houses, their families and their countries.

(It required) their family background to be kept secret from the majority of the people. The fear surrounding them extended to keeping themselves hidden from those who loved them in addition to their enemies. Their flight extended from their lands to the furthest east and west, to places which lacked civilisation and where the majority of the people were without knowledge of them.

They avoided bringing such people close to them and mixing with them, out of fear for their own lives and their offsprings' from the tyrants of those times. All of these are the reasons which should bring about the disruption of their organisation, the pulling out of their roots, and the paucity of their numbers. Yet they, despite everything we have described, are the most numerous offspring of any one of the prophets, the righteous men and the friends (of Allāh). Indeed they are more numerous than the offspring of anyone else among the people.

They have extended across the lands through their great number and have become more numerous than the offspring of most men. They have done this despite their marriages within their (family circles) to the exclusion of those outside them and by limiting them to those possessing their own genealogies of the nearer members of the relations. In that the normal practice has been transcended as we have explained. It is proof of the illustrious sign concerning the Commander of the Faithful, peace be on him, as we have already described and explained.

There is a long list of followers and lovers of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) who were imprisoned, tortured, persecuted and killed by the caliphs and the subsequent tyrants after them. They committed no other crime except that of loving and following Ameerul Momineen (a.s.).

Below are few companions and esteemed personalities who were persecuted and killed for being ardent followers of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.).

- Janabe Abu Zar
- Janabe Misam al-Tammar
- Janabe Malik e Ashtar
- Janabe Mohammed bin Abi Bakr
- Janabe Amr ibn Humaq al Khuzai
- Janabe Hujr ibn Adi

Cursed from Pulpit

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was cursed from the pulpit for many years.

Mu`awiyah was the leader of the oppressive gang. He stood in enmity against the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.), fought him, cursed him from Muslims' pulpits and ordered people to do likewise.

Marwan had been among the wickedest figures of the Umayyads throughout whose term as Medina governor cursed Imam Ali (a.s.) as well as the Hashimites.³²

It is narrated in Kitab al Irshad,

The report is well-known and widespread on the authority of al-Sha'bī that he used to say: "I (i.e. al-Sha'bī) used to hear the preachers of the Umayyads curse the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, peace be on him, on their pulpits." He would raise his finger to the sky and (go on): "I used to hear them praising their ancestors on their pulpits as if they could reveal their corpses."

The tyrannical governors would flog anyone who mentioned any good of him. Indeed, their heads were cut off for doing that and exposed to the people to make them disassociate themselves from him. The normal course (of events) followed this pattern for it to become accepted that no good should be mentioned of him in any way much less his outstanding merits be mentioned, his qualities be reported and proof of his rights be set out.

Insulting and cursing Imam Ali (a.s.) was prolonged as a tradition until it was ceased in 'Umar 'Abd al-Aziz's time.

Mu'awiya himself stressed that it must be spread to the extent that the offspring mature with this slogan, the youths grow old and no one narrates his excellence.

Mu'awiya was extremely bound to curse Imam Ali (a.s.) at the conclusion of his sermons. He even compelled Imam's disciples to go up the pulpit and curse him. Any agent of Mu'awiya who did not abide by the tradition of cursing was deposed and replaced right away. He had enticed people into

³² History of Caliphs, Vol. 2, Ansariyan Publications

daring not to name their babies Imam Ali (a.s) but call them Mu'awiya instead.

He had announced that if anyone narrated the excellences of Imam Ali (a.s.), he would never warrant his security. Subsequently all preachers expressed their disgust for Imam Ali (a.s.) and cursed him.

Killers of Janabe Zahra (s.a.) Were Respected

Qunfuz was accorded respect by the second caliph. On one such occasion when he was taking back a part of wealth from his governors, the caliph exempted Qunfuz from it.

It is narrated in Kitab Sulaim bin Qais, tradition no 14, that Abbas asked Imam Ali (a.s.), What do you think, why did he stop Qunfuz from returning the wealth like he asked all other governors to return the wealth?

Imam Ali (a.s.) looked at the people around him, then his eyes filled with tears and he replied, "in gratitude of that striking, that he hit Janabe Fatima (s.a.) with his whip. Until she passed away, the effect of hitting was like a boil on her hand."

Section Four :: During His Own Apparent Caliphate

Although after the killing of the third caliph the people flocked to the door of Imam Ali (a.s.) and paid their allegiance to him, yet they did not submit truly to him and on many occasions opposed or tried to oppose his commands and instructions.

The Nation Not Obedient To Him

When His Eminence wanted to dismiss Qadi Shurai from his post of judge, people of Kufa approached and pleaded him not to dismiss him because Umar had appointed him.

They said: We paid allegiance to you in the condition that you will not change anything that Abu Bakr and Umar had done.

When Imam Ali (a.s.) prohibited his soldiers from reciting Tarawih in the month of Ramazan, they did not obey him. Imam Ali (a.s.) himself said concerning this,

“Some of my soldiers who had fought under my command cried and shouted that the tradition of Umar is being changed. Ali is prohibiting us from Taraveeh! So I feared that they might revolt in the camp”.³³

In this same narration, Imam Ali (a.s.) also narrated his helplessness in the below words,

“By God, the Imams before me have done such big actions in which they have intentionally opposed the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) so if I prepare people to leave them (actions) and remove things from that place, and bring them to how it used to be during the time of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), then my army would separate from me until no one will remain in my army apart from myself and my these few Shias who know my merits and Imamah through Allah’s Book and the Tradition of His Prophet, not through anything else.”³⁴

His Own Army Not Submitting To Him

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) reprimanded his army for not submitting to his order in the below words,

“How strange! How strange! By Allah! My heart sinks to see the unity of these people in their wrong-doings and your dispersion from the right. May woe and grief befall you. You have become

³³ Al-Kafi, Vol. 8, page 63

³⁴ Al-Kafi, Vol. 8, page 59

the target at which arrows are shot. You are being killed and you do not kill. You are being attacked but you do not attack. Allah is being disobeyed and you remain agreeable to it. When I ask you to move against them in the summer you say it is hot weather, spare us until the heat subsides from us. When I order you to march in winter you say it is severely cold; give us time until the cold clears from us. These are just excuses of evading heat or cold because if you run away from heat and cold, you would be, by Allah, running away (in a greater degree) from the sword (war).”

He (a.s.) continues, “I wish I had not seen you nor known you. By Allah, this acquaintance has brought about shame and resulted in repentance. May Allah fight you! You have filled my heart with puss and loaded my bosom with rage. You made me drink mouthful after mouthful of grief. You shattered my counsel by disobeying and leaving me so much so that Quraish started saying that the son of Abu Talib is brave but does not know (tactics of) war. Allah bless them! Is anyone of them more fierce in war and more older in it than I am? I rose for it although yet within my twenties and here I am, have crossed over sixty, but one who is not obeyed can have no opinion.”³⁵

It is narrated in Kitab Sulaim bin Qays, that Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) complained about his army in the below words,

“... then he (a.s.) turned his face to those people who were his Ahlulbayt and his Shias, and said: “By God, the Imams before me have done such big actions in which they have intentionally opposed the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) so if I prepare people to leave them (actions) and remove things from that place, and bring them to how it used to be during the time of the Holy

³⁵ Nahjul Balagha, Sermon No. 27

Prophet (s.a.w.a.), then my army would separate from me until no one will remain in my army apart from myself and my these few Shias who know my merits and Imamah through Allah's Book and the Tradition of His Prophet, not through anything else."

"Do you see that if I order that Makame Ibrahim (a.s.) is brought to that place where the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had kept it and Fadak is returned to the inheritors of Fatimah (a.s.) and bring the Saa and Mudd back to the weight that it was during the time of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and give those lands to the inheritors like the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had done and if I demolished the mosque and gave the house of Ja'afar ibn Abi Talib back to his inheritors and change the decisions that the ones before me made oppressingly and return the land of Khyber that was divided, and if I destroy the register of gifts and start giving in the manner that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) used to give, and if I do not let it wonder around the rich ones and imprison the children of Bani Taghlab and order people not to pray in congregation in Rhamadan except for obligatory prayers, then some people who are in the army, and with me fight, will speak loudly "Oh Ahle Islam." and say "You have changed the Sunnah of Umar and have stopped us from praying for the pleasure of Allah during Ramadhan" , until I am scared some people from the army will start violent demonstrations."

Objection to Economic Justice of Imam Ali (a.s.)

One of the problems that Imam Ali (a.s.) faced was to follow economic justice. Umar set the criteria as per the Islamic records of people and tribal shape. Those of the companions who had embraced Islam sooner than others shared more. The same condition kept on during Uthman as well. He began his generosity leading to greater rich-poor distance in the community. All this property includes the fifth of booties and tributes that were annually

received and came from the conquered territories belonging to all people. When Imam came to power, he raised equal sharing of this property. His reason rested upon what the Prophet(s) had done.

Imam Ali (a.s.) in one of his speeches mentioned,

“...But in this world, anyone who accepts call of God and His Messenger(s) and becomes a Muslim and pray before Qibla, he will benefit from all rights and Islamic rules. You are servants of God, Imam added, and property is Allah’s that will equally be divided among you”.

When Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) distributed the share equally amongst the Muslims, there were many who objected to him. Amongst them was Zubair, who said,

“This is our reward? We acted in this way for him! ... he today puts people over us whom we were over.”

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) in response to companions who objected to his method and referred to ‘Umar’s manner said, “Does obeying the Prophet’s tradition stand first or that of ‘Umar’s.”

Serious disapproval of this manner induced some companions of Imam to go to Imam to ask him to prefer Arab and Quraysh noblemen than and non-Arabs.

He (a.s.) rejected them and said, “Are you telling me that I gain victory through cruelty.”

Later, Ibn Abbas wrote to Imam Hasan (a.s.), “People left your father alone and went to Muawiya because he equally shared the property among them and they never endured this act of your father.

Fighting Three Battles in Four Years

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was compelled to fight three big battles in the short duration of four odd years of his apparent caliphate.

Needless to say, preparing for these three battles, mobilizing the resources, diverting one's resources and energy towards these battles were an impediment towards other important tasks such as reformation of the society and bringing out the society from the moral decay which it was in.

People Did Not Recognize His Position

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was the standard of guidance, door of knowledge, the Divinely elected representative of Allah, the Almighty on earth. Yet, there were only a few who actually recognized his position and merits and the majority was averse to it.

Imam Baqir (a.s.) says concerning this, when Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was in Iraq, battling with his enemies, he had few companions around him. Imam Baqir (a.s.) says, that amongst those who were with him, there were not even fifty people, who recognized him as was his right to be recognized or had recognition of the right of his Imamah.³⁶

One of the esteemed companions and ardent follower of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) draws our attention to this fact that he (a.s.) was the one whose value, worth and rank remained hidden from the people.

It is narrated in Irshaad al Quloob, Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) came out from Masjid e Kufa in the night. More than one fourth of the night had passed and with him was Kumail bin Zayd. And he was from the best of his Shias and his lovers then they were on the street when he passed away from a door of a man who was reciting the Holy Quran, and he recited the verse

³⁶ Behar al-Anwaar, Vol. 42, page 152

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَانِتٌ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِداً وَ قَائِماً يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَ يَرْجُوا
 رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا
 يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

“is he who worships devotedly during the hour in the night prostrating himself or standing (in adoration) who takes heed of the Hereafter and places his hope in the Mercy of his Lord like who does not say “are those equal those who know wand those who do not know? It is those who are endowed with understanding that receive admonition”.

He recited the above verse in a sorrowful tone. Kumail was pleased by this recitation and got awed by it.

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) said to Kumail – do not be astonished by his chanting, surely, he is from people of fire.

Then a lot of time passed (after this incident), till it reached the time of Khawarij and they fought Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) turned towards Kumail bin Ziyad while he was standing near him and the sword in the hand of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was dripping blood, and the severed heads of those disbelievers and transgressors were spread on the ground. Then he raised one of the heads from the heads scattered there on the tip of his sword, and he (a.s.) said, O Kumayl,

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَانِتٌ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِداً وَ قَائِماً

Is he not that person who was reciting the Holy Quran that night and you got awed by his condition?

Then Janabe Kumail (a.s.) fell to feet of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), kissed his feet, sought forgiveness from Allah and saluted Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) thus

صَلَّى عَلَى مَجْهُولِ الْقَدْرِ

“Peace be upon the one, whose value is hidden”.

His Martyrdom³⁷

The last Ramadan of the life of Imam Ali (a.s.) had restlessness in it as was apparent from the behaviour of the Imam (a.s.). This month was different from all the months of Ramadan of previous years. It was clearly felt by the family members of Imam (a.s.).

During this Ramadan month he used to conclude his fast at one of his children’s house. Every night he used to be the guest of one of them. He ate at Imam Hasan’s (a.s.) house one night and then Imam Husain’s (a.s.) house on the next and then Lady Zainab’s(s.a.) house and so on. But he ate very little.³⁸

The Imam’s children used to become sad on this condition of Imam. They used to cry out of sadness. Once, one of them asked: “O father! Why do you eat so less?” The Imam replied: “I want to meet the Almighty Allah with an empty stomach.”³⁹ (His children used to understand that His Eminence, Ali was waiting). Sometimes he used to look at the sky and say: “My beloved one, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has informed me and what he had told me is absolutely true. He cannot be wrong. The time is near.”

³⁷ Excerpts from the book Maqatal-e-Mutahhar and Kitab al-Irshad

³⁸ Muntahai al-Amaal, Vol. 1, Pg. 329

³⁹ Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 42, Pg. 224

On 13th of the month, he stated something, which increased the trouble. It was Friday and the Imam was delivering a sermon.

During the sermon he asked Imam Husain (a.s.): “Son, how many days are left in this month?”

He replied: “Seventeen days are left, father.”

Imam Ali (a.s.) said: “Yes, very soon my beard will be dyed with my blood. The time for this beard to be dyed with blood is near.”

Imam Ali’s (a.s.) Dream on the Eve of Attack

He visited the house of his younger daughter, Umme Kulsum, on the eve of the nineteenth. The signs of awaiting were more apparent in him as compared to the previous nights. When everybody retired for the night, the Imam went to his prayer-mat and began to pray.

Imam Ali (a.s.) was on his prayer-mat and it was not yet dawn. Imam Hasan (a.s.) arrived and sat down near him. Either it was because of restlessness or it was his usual habit.

He told Imam Hasan (a.s.): “I was sitting when I dozed for some moments. I saw the Prophet of Allah appear before me, and I said. ‘Your Ummah has made me cry tears of blood.’ Really, it is strange that people opposed His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) and did not walk on the path shown by him. People had troubled him no end.

Even a mountain does not have the power to bear so many calamities as he did. To whom can Ali (a.s.) tell about his sufferings? When he saw the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in his dream, Imam Ali (a.s.) opened his heart to him and said: “O Messenger of Allah! Your Ummah has troubled me a lot. Tell me, what I should do about it?” Then he told Imam Hasan (a.s.): “Father’s dearest! Your grandfather ordered me, ‘O Ali! Curse this Ummah’ And in the dream I said, ‘O Lord! Take me from this world at the soonest and appoint

over them in my place someone who is worse than me.”⁴⁰ You can estimate the trouble and restlessness from this statement.

The Commander of the faithful (a.s.), spent that night awake and he frequently went out and looked up to the sky, saying: "By God, I have not lied nor have I been lied to. It is the night which I was promised."

When dawn rose, he put on his waistcloth and went out saying: Stiffen your breast for death. Indeed, death will meet you. Do not show grief at death when it arrives in your valley.

The Ducks Protest

When the Imam started to set out for the mosque, the ducks began to quack loudly. Imam said: ""Leave them, they are those who wail (for my death)."

Imam Ali's Last Call for Prayer (Azaan)

Imam used to call out the *Azaan* of the Morning Prayer. Dawn was approaching when the Imam went to the place of *Azaan* and recited it. After that he bid farewell to whiteness of dawn and said: "O whiteness of dawn! Have you ever witnessed a day when Ali (a.s.) was sleeping when you appeared in the sky since the time Ali has opened his eyes?" It means that it has not happen prior to this but now the eyes of Ali were going to be closed forever. After returning from the place of *Azaan*. the Imam recited the following couplets:

"Make way for the believer warrior fighting in the way of Allah. He is a believer who follows the divine commandments. And steps into the battlefield of martyrdom willingly One who does not worship anyone except God and enjoins people to offer Prayer regularly.

Abdur Rahman Ibne Muljim and his evil companions were awaiting the arrival of Imam Ali (a.s.) impatiently. Their plan was not known to anyone except Quttam and Ashath bin Qais, who had a wicked mentality

⁴⁰ Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 42, Pg. 226

and was conniving with Muawiyah as he disliked the equitable behaviour of Imam Ali (a.s.).

Ashath came running to Ibne Muljim and said: "Very little time is left before daylight. If it is light you will be disgraced. So, finish this job as early as possible."

Hujr bin Adi, who was a close companion of Imam Ali (a.s.) overheard the conversation and sensed that they had a dangerous plan. Hujr had returned a little while ago after completing an official chore and his horse was outside the mosque. It seems that he wanted to report this to the Commander of the Faithful.

When Hujr heard the words of Ashath, he rushed to Imam Ali (a.s.) to caution him of the danger. However, he reached the house of Imam Ali (a.s.) only to find that the latter has gone to the mosque from another route.

Ibn Muljam al-Muradi, may God curse him, killed him at the mosque of Kufa, which he had come out to in order to wake the people for the dawn prayer on the night of the nineteenth of the month of Ramadan. He had been lying in wait for him from the beginning of the night. When he (the Commander of the faithful) passed by him while the latter was hiding his design by feigning sleep amid a group of people who were asleep, he (Ibn Muljam) sprang out and struck him on the top of his head with his sword which was poisoned.

Upon entering the mosque, Imam Ali (a.s.) called out: "O people! The Prayer! The Prayer!" He had walked a few steps towards the prayer-mat after reciting the *Azaan* when two swords flashed in the darkness and the people were shocked to hear the shouts of: *Al-Hukmu Lillaah Ya Aliyyu laa lak*. The first blow was given by Shabib bin Bajura, the accursed one, but the sword hit the wall and it was unsuccessful. The second blow was given by Ibne Muljim, which hit the holy head of Imam Ali (a.s.).

When Ibne Muljim, the accursed one hit Imam Ali Ibne Abi Talib (a.s.) on his head with the sword, a slash was made in the skull till his eyebrows.

As per another narration, that on the night of 19th of Mahe Ramazan, Ibn Muljim spent the night in Masjid e Kufa and with him were Shabib bin Bajura and Wardaan bin Mujalid to help him in the assassination of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). Then after reciting the *Azaan*, Imam Ali (a.s.) came down from the place of reciting the *Azaan* and it was his practice that he would awaken those who were sleeping in the mosque. He did the same thing, till we woke up the accursed who was feigning to sleep on his face. Then Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) proceeded towards the prayer niche and stood there for reciting prayers. When Ibn Muljim saw this, he got up, came walking and stood behind the pillar where the Imam was praying and waited till the Imam recited the first unit (Rakat), performed bowing (Ruku), the first prostration (sajdah) and then raised his head. That is when the accursed removed his sword, swung it and hit the blessed and noble head of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). The sword struck the Imam exactly at the same place where Amr ibn Abdawud had hit him in the battle of Khandaq. The strike extent was from the top of his blessed head up to the place of prostration.⁴¹

Abdur Rahman, Shabib and Wardan tried to run away. Wardan had not come forward in this attack and was not recognized. As soon as Shabib tried to run away, a companion of His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) caught him and snatched the sword from his hands. He threw Shabib on the ground and mounted his chest with the intention of killing him. However, when he saw people coming towards them, he feared that they might mistake him to be the real killer. Hence, he climbed down from his chest. Shabib ran away and hid himself in a house.

When Shabib's cousin came to know that he was involved in the martyrdom of Imam Ali (a.s.), he went to his house and killed him with his sword.

⁴¹ Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 42, page 281

Abdur Rahman Ibne Muljim was caught by the people and brought to the mosque with his hands tied behind him. The people were so enraged that they would have lynched him.

Lady Zainab (s.a.), Lady Umme Kulsum (s.a.) and other family members were awake and restless. Their hearts were beating fast with anxiety because they didn't know what catastrophe would occur before the darkness of this night disappears. Suddenly a voice caught the attention of everyone:

“By Allah, the pillars of guidance have been demolished. By Allah, signs of piety have been erased. The strong rope of truth is broken. The cousin of Mustafa is martyred. The successor of the chosen prophet of Allah is martyred. Ali al-Murtaza is martyred. The worst person from the formers and the latter has martyred him.”

The Doctor of Kufa Examines Ali (a.s.)

Imam Ali (a.s.) was brought to his house from the mosque after being attacked. He was made to lie on a bed. An Arab named Athir bin Amr who had studied medicine in Jundi Shahpur was practicing in Kufa. He was brought to treat The Commander of the Faithful. He began diagnosing the Imam's condition. He understood that the poison had already entered the veins of Imam (a.s.) and said that no treatment would be effective. So, he told him: “O Commander of the Faithful! If you want to make a will, do it now.”

Janabe Umme Kulsum (s.a.) speaks to Ibne Muljim

When Lady Umme Kulthum came to know about this accursed one from first to last, she told him hatefully: “What wrong did my father do to you? Why did you attack him?” Then she said, “God willing, my father will be well, and you will have to suffer deprivation and failure.”

At this, the accursed one told her: “Do not hope that your father will get well, because I bought this sword for one thousand dirhams and spent one thousand dirhams more to smear it with poison. I have smeared it with such a poison, that this sword is enough to kill the entire population of Kufa.”

The Deteriorating Health of Imam (a.s.)

Imam was on his deathbed. His health was, deteriorating with the passage of time. The poison had spread to his entire body. His companions were aggrieved. All of them had surrounded him and were crying. However, the Imam was calm and was smiling patiently. Expressing his joy at the turn of these events he said: "By Allah, whatever has happened to me is certainly not disliked by me because it was my old wish to get martyred in the way of Allah. What can be better for me than getting martyred while in worship...?"

Imam Ali (a.s.)'s Last Narration to Asbagh bin Nubata

Asbagh bin Nubata says: When Ibn Muljim hit the fatal blow to Amirul Mo'mineen, Ali b. Abi Talib, peace be upon him, we passed by him in the morning, myself and al-Harith and Swaid b. Ghafilah and other friends. We stopped at the door and just as we heard the weeping, we wept also. So al-Hasan b. Ali, peace be upon him, came to us and said: "Amirul Mo'mineen requests you to return to your homes." So, all except myself, departed. Again, there was intense wailing from inside the house, and I wept also. Hasan, peace be upon him, came out again and said: "Did I not ask you to leave?" I said: "By Allah, O son of the Prophet of Allah, my heart does not allow me to go, and my feet refuse to carry me, till I see Amirul Mo'mineen, may Allah bless him."

He said: Then he (i.e. al-Hasan) paused and entered. And soon after, he came out allowing me to enter. As I entered, I saw Amirul Mo'mineen sitting with support, with a yellow headband tied round his head, drained of blood and his face pale. I could not discern which one was more yellow, his face or the headband. So, I fell over him, kissed him and kept on crying. He said: "Do not cry, O Asbagh, for it is my way to Paradise." So, I said to him: "May I be your ransom, I know very well that you are proceeding to Paradise. I weep because I will terribly miss you."

O Amirul Mo'mineen! May I be your ransom, please narrate to me a tradition which you heard from the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, for I fear that I might never chance to hear from you anything after this day." He

said: "Yes, O Asbagh. Once the Prophet, peace be upon him and his progeny, called me and said: 'O Ali, go to my mosque, climb the pulpit and summon the people to gather before you.

Then, after praising Allah, Most High, and lauding Him, and invoking abundant blessing upon me, say: 'O People! I am a messenger from the messenger of Allah to you. And he says: Curse from Allah, His honoured angels and His Prophets, and from me befall him who attributes himself to anyone other than his father, or who acts against his masters, or who unjustly usurps the right of his employee (or a person he has hired for work).' So I went to his mosque, climbed upon the pulpit, when the Quraish and others present in the mosque saw me, they drew closer to me. I praised Allah and glorified him, invoked abundant blessings upon the Prophet and then said: "O people! I am a messenger from the messenger of Allah, to you. And he says to you: 'Curse from Allah, His honoured angels and His Prophets and from me befall him who attributes himself to anyone other than his father, or who acts against his masters, or who unjustly usurps the right of his employee (or a person he has hired for work)."

He said: No one from the people spoke anything, except Umar b. al-Khattab, who said: "O Abul Hasan, you have indeed conveyed, but you have come up with a statement which is not clear." I said: "I will convey your response to the Prophet." So I returned and informed the Prophet. He said: Go back to my mosque, climb my pulpit, praise and glorify Allah and invoke His blessings upon me and then say: "O people! We do not come to you with anything unless we have its explanation. So be it known, I am the father, and I am your master, and I am the one employed (by Allah) for you."

The Light Extinguishes

During his last moments, when the spectacle of death was before him and people surrounded his bed, the effects of poison had spread in his entire body. Sometimes he writhed in pain and sometimes lost consciousness. Whenever he used to regain consciousness, pearls of advices full of wisdom came out from him.

He was struck on 19th Ramadan a few minutes after dawn and his soul departed at midnight of 21st Ramadan.

Imam Ali (a.s.) was martyred in a city like Kufa where all people except the Khawarij of Nahrawan wanted to attend his funeral and mourn for him. People had no information of Imam Ali's (a.s.) martyrdom till the morning of the twenty-first of Ramadan because he passed away after midnight.

Imam Ali's (a.s.) sons, Imams Hasan (a.s.) and Husain (a.s.), Muhammad bin Hanafyyah and Hazrat Abbas (a.s.) and some of his close companions who numbered six or seven performed his funeral bath, shrouded him and buried him secretly at the place as willed by Imam Ali (a.s.). He was taken to the place where he is buried today in the darkness of the night and no one was informed about this.

According to traditions, it is the place where some of the great prophets are buried. The place of Imam's grave was kept confidential and no one was informed about it.

Next day, the people came to know that Ali (a.s.) was buried the previous night. When they asked about the place of his burial, they were told that it was not necessary for them to know it. It is also mentioned in some books that Imam Hasan (a.s.) prepared a bier and sent it to Medina so that the people may believe that Ali's (a.s.) bier has been sent to Medina for burial.

Section Five :: Other Aspects of his Sufferings

In this section we mention few other aspects of his sufferings, some of which are existing even today.

His Merits and Virtues are Doubted

Even today, Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) is lonely and in suffering, and at times, at the hands of his own followers who doubt his virtues and reduce his

merits, citing reasons that one is not able to comprehend them through intellect.

Whereas, Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) has himself said,

إِيَّاكُمْ وَالْعُلُوَّ فِينَا قُولُوا إِنَّا عبيدٌ مَرْبُوبُونَ وَ قُولُوا فِي فَضْلِنَا مَا
شِئْتُمْ

“I warn you with regards to excessiveness concerning us. Say, we are the servants (of Allah) and are sustained (by Him) and (bearing this in mind) say whatever you desire in our excellence.”⁴²

His Followers are Oppressed

Around the world there are incidents that his followers and Shias are persecuted, tortured and killed even today. The only reason, love of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) in their hearts.

His Enemies are Accorded Respect

Every now and then, there are incidents where we see his enemies, those who left no stone unturned to torture him and debase him are accorded respect and their names are taken with great fervour.

His Shias are not Following him

Today, we are not attached to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) and the holy Ahle Bait (a.s.) as we should be. We are unaware of his teachings, his advices, his traditions. Indeed, the claim of love of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) should be manifested from our actions. If we are not aware of his teachings and as a result of which not following him or adhering to his words, then indeed it will be a cause of sorrow for Ameerul Momineen (a.s.).

⁴² Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 25, pg 271

Mark of His Grave was Hidden for Years

One aspect of the sufferings of Imam Ali (a.s.) is that his grave was hidden and unmarked for almost one hundred years. This itself shows the malice and hatred that people had for Ameerul Momineen (a.s.). The so-called followers of Islam in those days, did not consider him as a Muslim and there was a fear that his grave would be exhumed by these who harboured immense hatred and jealousy for Ameerul Momineen (a.s.).

The grave of the greatest and most exalted man on earth after the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was unmarked and confidential for almost a century.

Section Six :: His Sufferings In His Own Words

On numerous occasions Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) narrated his own sufferings and the treatment that was meted out to him by others. Below are few such instances, where Ameerul Momieen (a.s.) has described his tribulations and sufferings himself.

Examinations in the Life of Prophet (s) and after His Passing Away

Sheikh e Sadooq narrates the below tradition in Khisaal on the authority of Jabir al-Jo'afy, on the authority of Abi Ja'far al-Baqir (s.a.w.a.), "The head of the Jews came to Ali ibn Abi Talib (s.a.w.a.) when he (s.a.w.a.) returned from the Nahravan Battle. Ali (a.s.) was sitting in the Kufa Mosque. He said, 'O Commander of the Faithful! I wish to ask you several questions regarding things which only the Prophets or their Trustees would know.' The Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! Ask whatever you want to ask.'

The Jew said, 'We have seen in our religious books that whenever the Honorable the Exalted God appoints someone as a Prophet (s.a.w.a.), He

orders him to choose a member of His Household as his Trustee to be in charge of the affairs of his nation after him.

God tests the Prophets' (s.a.w.a.) Trustees during their life, and also tests the Trustees (s.a.w.a.) after the death of the Prophets (s.a.w.a.). Tell me that how many times are the Trustees tested during the Prophets' (s.a.w.a.) lifetimes, and how many times are they tested after their death. If the Trustees do well in these testes, what will be their end?'

Ali (a.s.) said, 'I swear by the right of God who split the sea for the Israelites and sent the Torah to Moses (s.a.w.a.)! Will you confirm the truth if I say it?' The Jew replied, 'Yes; I will.'

Again Ali (a.s.) said, 'I swear by the right of God who split the sea for the Israelites and sent the Torah to Moses (s.a.w.a.)! Will you submit to Islam if I tell the truth?' Again the Jew replied, 'Yes; I will.'

Then Ali (a.s.) said, 'Indeed the Honorable the Exalted God would test the Trustees of the Prophets on seven occasions during the lifetimes of the Prophets in order to see their obedience. Then if God is pleased with their obedience, God will advise the Prophets to establish their Trustees as their friends during their lifetimes, and as their Trustees after their demise. God will make it necessary for all the nations who follow the Prophet to obey his Trustee as they obeyed the Prophet. Then God would test the Trustees on seven occasions after the demise of the Prophet in order to test their perseverance and tolerance. Then when God is satisfied with them, they will have a prosperous ending and will join the Prophets. Indeed they will attain perfect prosperity.'

The head of the Jews said, 'O Commander of the Faithful! You are right! Please tell me how many times did God test you during the lifetime of Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and how many times will God test you after his death? What will be your ending?'

Ali (a.s.) extended his hand; took the Jew's hand and said, 'O Jewish brother! Please let's go so that I may inform you about this subject.' A group of Ali (a.s.)'s companions ran ahead and said, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Please let us be with him and hear the answer.'

The Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'I am afraid you cannot tolerate to hear this.' They said, 'O Commander of the Faithful (s.a.w.a.)! Why?' He (s.a.w.a.) replied, 'Since I have seen and heard a lot about you.'

Then Malik Ashtar stepped forward and said, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Please also inform us of the subject. I swear to God that we believe that there is no Trustee on the Earth for the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) but you. We believe that God will not send a Prophet after our Prophet. It is incumbent upon us to obey you and obeying you is connected to obeying our Prophet (s.a.w.a.)' Ali (a.s.) accepted Malik Ashtar's request.

Then Ali (a.s.) sat down facing the Jew and said, 'O Jewish brother! Indeed the Honorable the Exalted God tested me on seven occasions during the lifetime of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). I say this without praising myself. God found me obeying God's blessing.' The Jew said, 'O Commander of the Faithful! On what occasions did God test you?'

Seven Examinations in the Life of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

First Examination – After Be'sat of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

The Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'The first occasion was when the Honorable the Exalted God sent down revelations to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and appointed him as the Prophet. As the youngest man in the house, I was with him and served him by doing whatever he ordered me to do. He (s.a.w.a.) proposed to all the small and old men of the Abdul Mutalib household to submit to Islam by bearing testimony that 'There is no god but God' and that 'He (s.a.w.a.) is the Prophet of God'. They all rejected this subject and confronted him. They cut off associating with him. They turned away from and abandoned him. Other people also abandoned him and argued with him. They considered what had been suggested to them too

great, since they could not tolerate it and their minds could not understand it. I was the only man who rushed to accept him through my belief and let no doubt in my heart. We had this belief for three years. No one except the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), me and Khadijah - the daughter of Khuwaylid⁴⁴ existed on the Earth who prayed and testified to the Prophethood.'

Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?' They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.' Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother!

Second Examination – Night of Migration

And about the second occasion I should say that the Quraysh always plotted and tried to find ways to kill the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Finally their decision was to take part in a consultation session in one of the homes with the presence of the damned

Satan who had participated there looking like a one-eyed man from the Al-Saqaf. They collectively voted that each sect of the Quraysh should dispatch one man as their representative. Each one should take a sword and collectively attack the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and kill him. They thought that this way each of the sects of the Quraysh would support its representative and not surrender him to be punished and thus Muhammad's blood would be shed without any punishment for it.

Then Gabriel (s.a.w.a.) descended down to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and informed him of the plot of the Quraysh and the night they plan to attack and the hour of their attack. Gabriel ordered the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to leave his house at that time and go and hide in a cave. God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.) called me in and told me the news. He (s.a.w.a.) ordered me to sleep in his bed and risk my life for him. I immediately accepted this and was happy to be killed instead of him (s.a.w.a.). The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) went away and I slept in his bed and encountered the men of the Quraysh who thought they were going to kill the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). They entered the house and I

unsheathed my sword when I faced them in the house I was in, and fought them as God and the people know.'

Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?' They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Third Examination – Battle of Badr

Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! And about the third occasion I should say that the two sons of Rabia and the son of Ataba were from the strongest men of the Quraysh. They entered the battlefield during the Battle of Badr and challenged us, but no one from the Quraysh was able to face them. God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.) sent me and two of my friends - may God be pleased with them - to fight with them.

I was the youngest of them and the least experienced one in fighting. However, the Honorable the Exalted God had Valid (Ibn Ataba) and Shayba (Ibn Rabia) killed by my hand. Moreover, I killed and captured many more of the strong men of the Quraysh. Many more than any of the other fighters were killed or captured on that day. However, my cousin Ubayda ibn Harith was martyred on that day.'

Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?' They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Fourth Examination – Battle of Uhud

Then, the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! And about the fourth occasion I should say that all the people of Mecca set out to attack us. They even used all the Arab and Quraysh tribes under their influence in this attack in order to avenge for their losses in the Battle of Badr. Gabriel descended upon the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and informed him about this issue. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) set out and set up his army in the valley that is in front of the mountain of Uhud. The polytheists carried out a surprise attack against us. Many Muslims were martyred and the rest fled. I remained with the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) while the Emigrants (Muhajerin) and their Helpers (Ansar) returned to their homes in Medina. They all said that the

Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and all his companions were killed. Then the Honorable the Exalted God did not let the polytheists to success. I suffered from more than seventy injuries several of which can be seen.’ Then he pushed his cloak aside, touched his injuries and said, ‘What I did on that day is to be rewarded by the Honorable the Exalted God - if He wills.’

Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, ‘Was it not so?’ They replied, ‘O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.’

Fifth Examination – Battle of Ahzaab

Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, ‘O Jewish brother! And about the fifth occasion I should say that the people of the Quraysh tribe and the Arabs gathered together and a covenant was established between them not to stop fighting us until they kill the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and all the Muslims of the household of Abdul Mutalib.

Then they came with all their weapons and armaments and laid siege to Medina. They were sure they would win. Gabriel descended to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and informed him (s.a.w.a.). The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) dug a trench around himself and those of the Emigrants (Muhajerin) and their Helpers (Ansar) who were with us. The Quraysh tribe moved forward, and settled down around the trench and surrounded us. They considered themselves to be strong and considered us to be weak. Thus, they were roaming all around. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) invited them to the Honorable the Exalted God’s religion and beseeched their ties of kinship, but they did not listen and refused his invitation. The Prophet’s invitation of them to Islam made them more vicious.

On that day the strong man of the Arabs was Amr ibn ‘Abd Wudd who kept yelling like a drunk camel and challenging someone to fight with him. He showed off his spears and sword but no one dared go fight him. God’s Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had me stand up, wrapped his turban around my head, and handed me this sword.’ (At this time Ali (a.s.) touched his sword).

‘Then I set out to fight with him.

All the women in Medina were crying since they were worried about me getting killed in fighting with Amr ibn 'Abd Wudd. However, the Honorable the Exalted God had him killed by my hands. The Arabs who considered no one but him to be a strong man hit me on the head with this blow!' (And Ali (a.s.) pointed to his head). 'God had all the Arabs and the Quraysh run away due to the blow delivered to me.'

Then, Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?' They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Sixth Examination – Battle of Khaybar

Then, the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! And about the sixth occasion I should say that I accompanied God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in an attack against your brethren in the oasis of Khaybar and other strong men from the Quraysh tribe. There appeared a lot of men on horses and on foot with perfect armaments against us just like a mountain. They possessed strong forts and were superior to us both in terms of military power and their number. Each one of them attacked us and challenged someone to go fight him. All my companions who went to fight with them were killed. Gradually the war became heated; the eyes became like bowls filled up with blood and everyone thought for himself.

Some of my companions looked at others and said, 'O Abal-Hassan! O Abal-Hassan! Move!' Then God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.) dispatched me to the front of their fort.

I killed everyone who came out. I tore up all the strong men who showed up to demonstrate their physical strength. I attacked them just like a lion. Then they hid in the fort. I broke down the gate of the fort and entered the fort by myself. I killed every man who showed up, and captured every woman until I conquered the fort. There was no one but God there to assist me.' Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?' They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Seventh Examination – Conveying Surah Bara’at to Meccans

Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, ‘O Jewish brother! And about the seventh occasion I should say that when God’s Prophet (s.a.w.a.) decided to conquer Mecca, he (s.a.w.a.) did not wish to leave any excuses for them. Therefore, he (s.a.w.a.) wrote them a letter in which he (s.a.w.a.) invited them towards God just as he (s.a.w.a.) had done on the very first day. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) admonished them and frightened them about God’s torture. He (s.a.w.a.) gave them the glad tiding of becoming forgiven and assured them of having hope for God’s forgiveness.

He (s.a.w.a.) wrote the Blessed Quranic Chapter of Bara’at (Declaration of Immunity) for them to be read for them at the end of the letter. He (s.a.w.a.) suggested to his Companions to take the letter. Everybody refrained from doing so until someone accepted. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) sent the letter with him. Then Gabriel descended and said, ‘O Muhammad! Either you or one of the members of your household should deliver this letter.’ Then God’s Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had me deliver the letter. Therefore, I went to Mecca. You all know the people of Mecca well. Each one of them was willing to spend all his wealth, family and life to tear me up into pieces and place each part of me on top of a different mountain. I delivered the letter of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to them and read it for them. Everybody answered me by threatening me and giving me up in the air promises. All the men and the women were suspicious of me and expressed their hatred and animosity. However, I persisted as you all well know.’ Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, ‘Was it not so?’ They replied, ‘O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.’

Then the Commander of the Faithful Ali (a.s.) said, ‘O Jewish brother! These were the seven occasions on which the Honorable the Exalted God tested me during the lifetime of His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and found me obedient on every occasion due to the honor which He had granted me. No one else is like me in this respect. I could praise myself for this but the Honorable the Exalted God has admonished the people against this.’

Then the Jew said, 'O Commander of the Faithful! You are right! I swear by God that the Honorable the Exalted God has made you superior because you are a relative of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). God has made you prosperous because of being his brother and has credited you a position in relation to him just like that of Aaron to Moses (s.a.w.a.).

He has also honoured you by examining you on these horrifying occasions which you mentioned on which you superseded all the other Muslims. None of the Muslims was like you on these frightening occasions in which you have participated, and you were the most virtuous one in those frightening occasions in which you participated. None of the Muslims is like you. Anyone who has seen you with the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) during his lifetime or has looked at you after the death of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) has this same belief.

Seven Examinations After the Passing Away of Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

O Commander of the Faithful! Now please tell me how you were tested after the demise of God's Prophet and how you were patient and persevered. We more or less know the answer and can report it, but want to hear it from yourself as we heard those related to the lifetime of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).'

Then the Commander of the Faithful Ali (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! Indeed God tested me on seven occasions after the demise of His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and found me obedient and persevering on every occasion due to the honor which He had granted me.

First Examination – Heart Broken after the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

O Jewish brother! About the first occasion I should say that in this world I had no one to associate with, be friends with, trust, rely upon or make any pledges with amongst the Muslims, but the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was my only shelter. He fostered me since my childhood and supported me in my adulthood. He (s.a.w.a.) did not let me grow up like an orphan. He (s.a.w.a.) alleviated my worries; made me needless of working to seek my share of daily bread; prevented me from engaging in business by providing for my family and me. These were only his worldly aids to me.

However, my spiritual gains and benefits from him through which I attained high ranks near the Honorable the Exalted God are much greater than this. When the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) died I became so sad that I do not suppose all the mountains could withstand. All the members of my household became very impatient. They had lost their control. They could not tolerate this heavy burden of grief because it had made them impatient and put them out of their minds. They neither understood anything nor demanded anything. They could neither hear or speak. Other people were all influenced by this horrible situation.

Some expressed condolences and sympathized with us, while others were impatient and mourned for us. I was the only one who did not lose my patience. I controlled myself and carried out the orders of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

I lifted his body; performed the ritual ablutions (wuzu) for the dead; performed the embalment; shrouded the corpse; performed the prayer for the deceased; placed his body in the grave; and compiled the Quran and God's decrees regarding the people. A lot of weeping, heart-aching mourning and the greatness of the calamity could not prevent me from performing my duty. I fulfilled my duties towards the Honorable the Exalted God and the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and completely performed whatever he (s.a.w.a.) had ordered me to do. I was patient and I persevered.'

Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?' They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Second Examination – Abandoned by the People

Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! And about the second occasion I should say that God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.) established me as his Trustee during his lifetime. He (s.a.w.a.) had all the people who were present pledge allegiance to me so that they would listen to and obey my orders. He (s.a.w.a.) instructed all who were present there to declare this to all who were absent. It was always me who informed all others of his

commands while I was with the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). It was always me who was the head of those who accompanied me when we travelled. I never considered anyone to be more deserving than me for anything during the lifetime of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and after his demise.

When God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.) became ill which finally resulted in his demise, he (s.a.w.a.) ordered that an army be dispatched out of Medina under the command of Usamah ibn Zayd. He (s.a.w.a.) dispatched anyone from the Quraysh; Aws and Khazraj etc. whom he thought might break their pledge of allegiance to me; anyone who might be hostile with me since I had killed their father, son, brother or a relative of theirs; the Emigrants (Muhajerin) and the Helpers (Ansar) and anyone with a weak belief along with Usamah Ibn Zayd. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) only kept a small group of sincere believers with him so that no one may say something out of hatred to me or hinder me from the Caliphate after the demise of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

The last thing which the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) said regarding the management of his nation's affairs was that the army of Usamah should be dispatched to war and no one under his command should disobey his orders. He (s.a.w.a.) stressed this.

However, once the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) passed away, the very same men under whom the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had dispatched with Usamah left their posts; abandoned him; opposed the orders given by God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.); and ignored all the recommendations of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) about accompanying and helping Usamah's army. They abandoned him and retreated to Medina to break their pledge of allegiance to me which they had made with the Prophet (s.a.w.a.); break their pledge with the Honorable the Exalted God and the Prophet (s.a.w.a.); and yell out in order to choose a leader for themselves without the participation or involvement of any of the members of the household of Abdul Motalib. Their main goal was to break their pledge of allegiance which they had made to me. They were doing this while I was busy with the burial rites and rituals for the Prophet of God

(s.a.w.a.) and could not do anything else since attending to the Prophet's corpse was more important than anything else.

O Jewish brother! This act of the people abandoning me at this hard time burnt my heart the most. I was patient although I was mourning and had suffered from the great calamity of the loss of God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.) who was the only one I could trust besides God. I persevered on this occasion which happened immediately after the previous one.'

Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?'

They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Third Examination – Right of Caliphate Snatched from Him

Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! And about the third occasion I should say that the one who sat in the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) place was a fair man who came to see me everyday and apologized saying that he was ashamed that he had broken his allegiance to me, and had usurped my right.

He respected me and asked for forgiveness. Based on this, I thought to myself that my God-given rights would be returned to me after him in a pleasant way.

I thought that I should not wage a war in the new Islamic society that is still suffering from the remains of the ignorance of the past. I thought I should not argue so as to have some side with me and others oppose me, since then the quarrel may turn into a battle. A group of the special companions of the Prophet whom I knew well and are sincere believers in God, the Quran and the religion associated with me, invited me to claim my right in public and private. They were ready to sacrifice their lives so as to help me and honour their pledge of allegiance to me. I advised them to be calm and patient and that God may give back my due rights without any fighting or blood-shed. Many people started to doubt the religion after the demise of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), and many worthless greedy individuals were after the power to

rule as the Caliph. Each tribe vociferously announced that the Caliph should be someone chosen from amongst them. What they all implied was that the affairs of the state must be in the hands of someone other than me.

When the first Caliph (who is Abu Bakr) was about to die, he entrusted the affairs to his friend to be in charge after him. This was another hardship that pursued the previous one and usurped my God-given right to the position of Caliphate for the second time.

Again, some of the companions of the Prophet which are either dead or alive now gathered around me and repeated their concerns about my Caliphate. Again, I invited them to patience and calmness so that the Islamic society may be protected, and the society which the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had formed with a lot of hardship not become disunited. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had established the Islamic society with a genuine policy. He (s.a.w.a.) had been easy-going at sometimes, and stern at other times.

He (s.a.w.a.) forgave sometimes and unsheathed his sword at other times. The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) was very sympathetic with the people. He (s.a.w.a.) fed them and pleased them just as soon as they approached Islam and were about to run away from it. He gave them clothing, carpets and beds even though we ourselves as the members of the household lived in homes without roofs and doors. The walls of our homes were made of date palm branches and leaves. We neither had any carpets or any blankets. Several of us shared one dress and took turns to pray with it. We remained hungry around the clock.

The Prophet (s.a.w.a.) even gave away the one-fifth levy that was our God-ordained rightful share to others and assisted the wealthy and materialist Arabs with it. I had to maintain the society which had been formed with this much hardship and could not lead it into the verge of separation and dispute. If I uprose and invited the people to help me, they had only one of two choices. They would either obey me and fight the opponents on my behalf and get killed, or abandoned me and become unbelievers for committing the

sin of disobeying me. They all knew that their position relative to me is like the position of the people of Moses as opponents of Aaron. They knew that they would suffer a similar catastrophe like that which the people of Moses suffered due to their disobedience of Aaron. I thought that just being sorry and patient would increase my reward near the Honorable God until God ordains what He wills '...And the command of Allah is a decree determined.' This would also be easier for the Islamic society which I described for you.

O Jewish brother! It would have been right for me not to have paid attention to these points and demanded my rights. All the companions of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) including those who have now passed away and those who are present here acknowledge that my power is more than others; my tribe is nobler than all the other tribes; my followers are loftier and more obedient than others; the motivation of my followers to support me is higher and their nobilities and background are more outstanding as others as me myself have a good background of association with the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), closeness to the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), and I am the Trustee of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

Moreover, I deserve to be in charge of the position of the Caliphate due to the explicit will of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and the pledge of allegiance which they had made to me. When the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) passed away, the rule of the affairs was in the hands of his family - not their hands or that of their families. The members of the household of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) which had been purified by God deserved more to run the affairs of the state than others. They possessed all the necessary characteristics for the position of the Caliphate.'

Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?'

They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Fourth Examination – Period of Caliphs

Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! And about the fourth occasion I should say that the one was put in charge after Abu

Bakr consulted with me from the beginning to the end of everything he wanted to do and issued all decrees according to my opinion. He always sought my opinion regarding tough issues and acted accordingly.

My companions and I do not know of anyone else whose counsel he seeks. No one but me was eager to become the Caliph after him. When he was attacked and about to die without any previous illnesses, I had no doubts that I was going to regain my right of Caliphate without any problems; that the future would be as I wished it to be; and that God would bring about a good future. However, he named six persons as candidates for the position of the Caliphate at the end, and I was named as the last one. He did not even consider me to be equal to them. He did not remember the fact that I was the Prophet's relative and Trustee. He did not even remember that I was the Prophet's groom. None of the candidates had the brilliant background and good service to Islam as I had. He let us consult amongst ourselves and chose one as the future Caliph with the majority vote. He ordered his son to cut off our necks if we disobeyed him or failed to choose one from amongst ourselves as the future Caliph.

O Jewish brother! This was bitter enough for me! This group of candidates tried as hard as they could to deliver lectures and lobby on their own behalf while they could. I remained silent until they asked my opinion. I then presented my background and explained to them what they clearly knew. I proved my rightfulness and their unrightfulness for them.

I reminded them of the Prophet's will and their pledge of allegiance to me. However, their love for getting into office; ordering the people around; their attachment to this world; and following in the footsteps of the previous Caliphs led them to demand an undue right for themselves. Whenever I had a chance to be alone with any of them I reminded them of the Reckoning on the Resurrection Day, and frightened them of the result of their unjust demand. They would agree with me on the condition that I turn the Caliphate position over to them after myself. They knew well that I could not do so and

act against the Quran and the decree of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), and turn over to them what God had withheld from them.

Then one of the radical persons in the council made a radical move, took the affairs out of my hands, and turned the position of the Caliphate over to Uthman, although he never matched any of the members of the council since he was a wealthy and materialist person. He never paid any attention to the people's noble character and religious beliefs. He ignored all spiritual noble characteristics for which God had honored the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his Holy Household. I do not even think that the very same members of the council who appointed Uthman to the position of the Caliphate became sorry for their choice before the night of that very same day, and started to blame one another. No long time passed before they who had empowered the dictator denounced and abandoned him.

Uthman got worried. He went to his supporters and his other companions and asked that they accept his resignation. He expressed his sorrow and repentance. O Jewish brother! This was even a harder calamity than the previous ones! I hoped it had never happened. I was under so much pressure for this event that it cannot be described in words. However, I had no choice but to be patient! On the very same day of pledging allegiance to Uthman, the members of the council came to me and apologized for having opposed me. They asked me to revolt against Uthman and put him out of office. They all pledged allegiance to me and promised that they would sacrifice their lives to achieve this end. However, I put things off whenever they came by and had them attend to something else. For example, once I asked them to go shave their heads before we revolt. At another time I asked them to arrange for a private meeting in such and such place. This way I kept them busy and divulged their secrets.'

O Jewish brother! I swear to God that the very same considerations which had prevented me from doing anything in the past were again obstacles which hindered me.

I realized that isolation and patience is a more appropriate approach for me. It was better for me to maintain my supporters who agree with me than to revolt and have them get killed, although they were all ready to sacrifice their lives. I was even more ready to die since as those who are absent and those who are present all know that to me death is just like a sip of cold water in the mouth on a very hot day.

My uncle Hamzih, my brother Ja'far, my cousin Ubaydah and I have made a pledge to God and His Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and will honor it. Some of my companions went so far as to sacrifice their lives in this way. I was held back due to God's will. The Honorable the Exalted God revealed the following verse about us, 'Among the Believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah. of them some have completed their vow (to the extreme), and some (still) wait: but they have never changed (their determination) in the least:' I swear by God that I am the one referred to in this verse as the one who still waits.

O Jewish brother! I have not abandoned my pledge! The reason why I was silent in front of Uthman and did not do anything is that he is going to be punished by his own baseness and untrustworthiness which I found in him and this would draw the people from near and afar to want to dismiss and kill him. I just stayed on the side and waited until this happened. I neither said 'yes' nor did I say 'no.'

Then the nation rushed to the door of my house. God knows that I hated the Caliphate, since I knew that the very same people who insist in making me the Caliph are used to collecting worldly goods and having fun. Although they well knew that I would be hard on them and not fulfill their greediness, they had gotten used to rushing in doing things and could not be soothed. They hurriedly chose me by insisting a lot but when they realized that they could not gain anything from me they started to oppose and criticize me.'

Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?'

They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Fifth Examination – Battle of Jamal

Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! And about the fifth occasion I should say that when the ones who pledged allegiance to me realized that I would not fulfil their personal aims, they rebelled against me with the help of that woman (i.e. Ayesha). They placed her on the back of a camel and turned her around in the frightening deserts and wide valleys even though I was in charge of her as the Trustee of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). The dogs at Huab barked at her and she felt sorry, yet she followed a group of people who had pledged allegiance to me both at the time of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and later on, and continued opposing me until she entered upon the people of Basra whose hands were short, their beards were long, their intellectual capacity was low, and their thoughts were corrupt.

These people were light-headed desert dwellers. This woman took control of these unwise people and they unsheathed their swords, threw their spears and arrows without any knowledge. I had two problems with them. If I did nothing in response to them, they would not follow the intellect and put their rebellion and corruption aside. If I fought with them, then there would be a lot of blood shedding which I never wanted. I was both apologetic to them and gave an ultimatum by threatening them. I suggested to that woman to go home. I also suggested to the group who had brought her to honor their pledge of allegiance to me and not to break their covenant with the Honorable the Exalted God.

I offered them as much as I had the power to. I even talked to some of them. He returned. I talked with others in the same way but their ignorance, rebellion and deviation became even more than before. I fought with them since they insisted on that. I defeated them in the war and they became sorry. Many of them were killed on the battlefield. I fought them since I had no other choice. Had I postponed fighting, they would have done things which would have prevented me from forgiving them as I did after the war.

If I had not blocked them I would have been disloyal to myself and the nation and would have become a partner in the sins which they had decided to commit as follows:

1- They had planned to extend their rebellion in the surroundings of the Islamic country to whatever extent they could and do acts of corruption.

2- They had planned to kill and shed the blood of the citizens.

3- They had planned to subject the rules of Islam and the laws of justice according to the opinions of a low-minded and unintelligent women and follow the old Roman nation; Yemen and destroyed nations of the past in this respect. Had I hesitated to fight, I would have ultimately been forced to fight with them and would also be ashamed of the evil deeds and crimes which that woman and her troops would have committed. Still I did not start the battle without hesitation. First, I gave them an ultimatum and postponed the war as much as possible. I was calm. I negotiated with them several times. I even sent several mediators to them. I made them several offers which were to their benefit. However, they turned me down on every occasion. They made me helpless, forced me to start a war, and end the issue as God willed. Given all that was done before the war they had been given enough ultimatum.'

Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?' They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Sixth Examination – Battle of Siffeen and the Treachery Thereafter

Then the Commander of the Faithful Ali (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! And about the sixth occasion I should say that it was the arbitration council and the Battle with the son of the liver-eater Hind (Muaviyah). This man had been an enemy of God, His Prophet (s.a.w.a.), and the believers from the day on which God appointed Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) to Prophethood until the city of Mecca was conquered by the force of the Muslims' swords.

Muaviyah and his father Abu Sufyan had pledged allegiance to me on that very same day and on three other occasions. His father was the first person who greeted me using the title of 'the Commander of the Faithful.' He was the one who constantly encouraged me to fight for my due rights and renewed his pledge of allegiance to me every time he met me.

The strangest of all is that when Muawiyah realized that the Blessed the Sublime God had returned my right to me and had strengthened my position, he lost all hopes of becoming the fourth Caliph and ruling in our government. He turned to the disobedient Amr al-As and was generous with him so that he accepted his invitation. Amr became his fan when Muawiyah entrusted the governorship of Egypt to him, although it is forbidden for him to use even one Dirham of the taxes collected from Egypt as it was so for Muawiyah to give him any more than his own share. Then he rebelled and acted oppressively in the Islamic country. He was kind to anyone who swore allegiance to him and fended away anyone who opposed him.

He joined the perfidious party (Nakiseen) in an attack against Islamic territories and looted the east, the west, the north and the south. I received the news and the reports of their deeds until the one-eyed Saqafy (Al-Muqayrih) proposed that I make peace with Muawiyah and appoint him to the governorship of the territories that were under his control. This opinion was a good one in terms of politics, but I could not bring any excuses for doing this in God's presence and could not take responsibility for Muawiyah's acts of oppression. I thought about this proposal and consulted with reliable people who were God-fearing and followed the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). They had the same opinion as I did regarding the son of the liver-eater lady. May God not bring the day on which I use any of the oppressors as my aids.

I once dispatched Jarir al-Bajaly and dispatched Abu Musa al-Ash'ari to him on another occasion. They both followed their worldly desires, their temptations, pleased him and were disloyal to me. I realized that they were not act according to God's command and they were becoming more and more deviated and corrupt as time passed. I consulted with a group of the

chosen companions of the Prophet from the Badriyeen who were honored by God and had participated in the pledge of allegiance at Rezvan and other noble Muslims. They unanimously agreed that we go to war with him and not let him take charge of the affairs of the Muslims.

My companions and I set out to fight with him. We wrote him letters from every way-station. I sent him many representatives and invited him to put aside his corruption and join me and the other Muslims. He answered me with haughty letters; wished unsuitable wishes; and set conditions which were not acceptable by God, the Prophet and the Muslims.

In one of his letters he made it a condition that we should surrender a group of the Prophet's best companions to him including Ammar Yasir so that he could hang them in retaliation for the blood of Uthman. Where can you find someone like Ammar? I swear by God that he was always the sixth person present whenever five of us gathered around the Prophet (s.a.w.a.). He was also the fourth person present whenever four of us gathered around the Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

He wanted to retaliate for the blood of Uthman even though he, his colleagues and his damned family who were branches of the Cursed Tree as mentioned in the Holy Quran⁵⁷ made the people rebel against Uthman and caused him to be killed. He attacked me since I did not accept his unreasonable conditions and he was proud of his rebellion. He gathered a group of the Homayr tribes who had neither any intellect nor any insight in religion around himself and led them astray so as to follow him. He fooled them with worldly possessions and attracted them to himself.

We set the Honorable the Exalted God as the judge and set out to fight him in order to stop him. We fought with him after giving him an ultimatum, so that he may have no excuses left. God made us victorious over His enemies and ours as usual.

We were holding the flag of God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.) under which God had always killed the followers of Satan, but Muawiyah was holding the flag of his father under which his father had fought with God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

He was about to die with no way out. He rode his horse, saw that his flag had fallen down and felt hopeless. He sought the help of Amr al-As. Amr al-As advised him to bring out many copies of the Quran, place them on top of their spears and to ask for the arbitration of the Quran. He told Muawiyah that since the son of Abu Talib, his followers and the rest of the

Household of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) are religious and had invited you to arbitration of the Quran in the beginning, they would accept its arbitration from you at the end.

Muawiyah accepted the idea proposed by Amr al-As since he was helpless and had no way out of war and getting killed. He placed many copies of the Quran on the spears and had them held up thinking that he was inviting the people to abide by the Quran. I had lost many of my good friends and sincere companions. The rest of the people were inclined to accept the Quran's arbitration and stop the war. They thought that since the son of the liver-eater Hind (Muawiyah) is adhering to the rules of the Quran, he would honor them. They welcomed his call and all accepted his suggestion.

I announced to them that this was a deception which Muawiyah had plotted using Amr al-As and that they would not adhere to it. However, they did not believe me and did not obey my orders. They insisted on accepting his suggestion. Whether I liked it or not, things became so bad that some of them said that we should kill Ali just like Uthman or turn him and his family over to Muawiyah if he doesn't accept Muawiyah's suggestion.

God knows best that I did my best and tried as hard as I could to convince them to follow me, but they would not obey me. I even asked them to give me a little time - as much as milking a camel or running a horse so that I may complete the work. However, they did not accept it except for this man

(while Ali (a.s.) was pointing to Malik al-Ashtar), his followers, and a group of my own household. I swear by God that what hindered me from following my own idea was my fear of these two being killed (while Ali (a.s.) was pointing to Al-Hassan (s.a.w.a.) and Al-Hussein (s.a.w.a.) with his hand), and the cessation of the lineage of God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.). It was also due to my fear of these two being killed (while Ali (a.s.) was pointing to Abdullah ibn Ja'far and Muhammad ibn Hanifeh - may God be pleased with them - with his hand), since I knew that they were only endangered because of me. Therefore, I was forced to accept God's destiny and accept the demands of the people. Once the battle was stopped and the swords were no longer pointed at them, they demanded that they themselves be the arbiters instead of the Quran. They took over the rules of the Quran and put its decrees aside. I never considered anyone to be able to arbitrate on behalf of God's religion since man's arbitration in God's religion is undoubtedly wrong. However, the people did not accept anything but arbitration.

I wanted to have a knowledgeable person from my household or some of the other tribes who was wise, reliable and religious to arbitrate on my behalf. The son of Hind disagreed with whomever I named. He did not accept any of my rightful proposals. He oppressed us through my own companions. When they insisted and wanted to force me to accept the arbitration, I sought refuge in the Honorable the Exalted God and left this up to themselves. Then they chose a man who was deceived by Amr As, and the world got filled with the shame of this act. They themselves became sorry about it.'

Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?'

They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Seventh Examination – Battle of Naharwan

Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! And about the seventh I should tell you that in his will to me, God's Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had informed me that I would fight with a tribe of my own companions near the end of my life, although they fast during the days, worship God at night

and read the Quran but have put aside the religion by arguing and fighting with me just like an arrow which flies from a bow. Zul-Sadiyyeh is going to be amongst them. I will have a prosperous end after killing them. When I returned after the arbitration, some of the people started to blame each other as to why the Battle of Siffin ended by arbitration.

They found themselves no solution but to except to criticize the leader and said, 'Our leader should not have obeyed our wrong opinion. Since he was certain about our fault, he must kill either himself or those who were faulty. Since he obeyed us, he has become an unbeliever. Therefore, it is lawful for us to kill him and shed his blood now.' They united concerning this issue, left my army rapidly and yelled 'There is no arbiter but God!'

Then they divided up. One group of them stayed in Nakhileh while a second group went to Hurura. Yet a third group of them went to the east beyond the Dijla river. They tired every Muslim they ran into by forcing him to deny me. If he argued with them, they would let him go. Otherwise they killed him. I went to see the first and the second groups and invited them to obey the Honorable the Exalted God, accept the truth and to return towards God. They did not accept anything but fighting with swords and they were not content with anything else. Since I found no other solution, I surrendered the first two groups to God's decree. Therefore, I killed them. O Jewish Brother! I am so sorry about them. Had they not chosen this destructive route they would have not been killed. Then imagine how strong a castle could have been formed for Islam. However, God willed no other end but this unpleasant one for them. Then I wrote a letter to the third group and sent several delegates. The delegates were chosen ones. They were all God-fearing and ascetic. However, it was of no use. They did nothing but follow what the other two groups did. They hurriedly killed the Muslims who did not agree with them and continuously killed good people. I attacked them myself and blocked off the Euphrates river from their access.

Again, I sent trustworthy delegates and advisors to them and made all attempts to accept their apologies by means of those men (while Ali (a.s.)

was pointing at Malik Ashtar; Al-Ahnaf ibn Qays; Sa'id ibn Qays al-Arhabi; and Al-Ash'as ibn Qays al-Kindi). O Jewish Brother! Since they accepted no solution except fighting, I fought with them until all of them were killed. O Jewish brother! They were all killed - all being more than forty-thousand of them. Not even one of them could flee. Then I pulled out the man who had breasts just like women have from amongst the dead corpses in front of these very same men that you see. He had breasts just like women do. Then Ali (a.s.) turned towards his companions and asked, 'Was it not so?' They replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Yes, it was so.'

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) Informs of his Martyrdom

Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'O Jewish brother! And about the seventh. I was faithful to all seven and just one rank remains which is undoubtedly near.' Then the companions of Ali (a.s.) cried. The head of the Jews also cried and said, 'O Commander of the Faithful! Tell us another one!' Then the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) said, 'And the last is that this (while referring to his head) shall become filled with the blood of this (while he was pointing to his crown)'. All of a sudden, all the people in the Jamea Mosque started to cry and mourned so loudly that the people from all the houses in Kufa left their homes crying. Then the head of the Jews accepted Islam right then by the hand of the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) and lived in Medina until the Commander of the Faithful (a.s.) was murdered by Ibn Muljam's sword - may God damn Ibn Muljam.

When the head of the Jews heard the news, he went to Ali's (a.s.) house and stood in front of Al-Hassan (a.s.), while the people had gathered around him (a.s.). They brought Ibn Muljam with his hands tied there. The head of the Jews said, 'O Abu Muhammad! Kill him! May God kill him. I have seen in the books which were revealed to Moses (a.s.) that in the sight of the Honorable the Exalted God this crime is much greater than the crime committed by Adam's son when he killed his brother, and the crime of those who treated the she-camel of Thamud clan wrongfully.'

The Sermon of Shaqshaqiya⁴³

Beware! By Allah, the son of Abu Quhafah (Abu Bakr) dressed himself with it (the caliphate) and he certainly knew that my status in relationship to it was the same as the status of the axis in relationship to the hand-mill. The flood water flows down from me and the bird cannot fly up to me. I put a curtain against the caliphate and kept myself detached from it.

Then I began to think whether I should assault or endure calmly the blinding darkness of tribulations wherein the grown up are feeble and the young grow old and the true believer acts under strain till he meets Allah (on this death).

I found that endurance thereon was wiser. So, I adopted patience although there was pricking in the eye and suffocation (of mortification) in the throats. I watched the plundering of my inheritance till the first one went his way but handed over the Caliphate to ibn al-Khattab after himself.

Then he quoted a verse by al-A'sha and went on to say:

My days are now passed on the camel's back (in difficulty) while there were days (of ease) when I enjoyed the company of Ja bir's brother Hayyan.

It is strange that during his lifetime he wished to be released from the caliphate but he confirmed it for the other one after his death. No doubt these two shared its udders strictly among themselves. This one put the caliphate in a tough enclosure where the utterance was haughty and the touch was rough. Mistakes were in plenty and also the excuses therefore. One in contact with it was like the rider of an unruly camel. If he pulled up its rein the very nostril would be slit, but if he let it loose he would be thrown. Consequently, by Allah, people got involved in recklessness, wickedness, unsteadiness and deviation. Nevertheless, I remained patient despite a length of period and stiffness of trial, until when he went his way (of death) he put the matter (of Caliphate) in a group⁴ and regarded me to be one of them. But good Heavens! What had I to do with his "consultation"? Where

⁴³ Nahjul Balagha, Sermon 3

was any doubt about me with regard to the first of them that I was now considered akin to these ones? But I remained low when they were low and flew high when they flew high. One of them turned against me because of his hatred and the other got inclined the other way due to his in-law relationship and this thing and that thing, till the third man of these people stood up with heaving breasts between his dung and fodder. With him his children of the grand-father (Umayyah) also stood up, swallowing up Allah's wealth like a camel devouring the foliage of spring, till his rope broke down, his actions finished him and his gluttony brought him down prostrate.

At that moment, nothing took me by surprise, but the crowd of people rushing to me. It advanced toward me from every side like the mane of the hyena so much so that Hassan and Hussain were getting crushed and both the ends of my shoulder garment were torn. They collected around me like the herd of sheep and goats. When I took up the reins of government, one party broke away and another turned disobedient while the rest began acting wrongfully as if they had not heard the word of Allah saying: That abode in the hereafter, We assign if for those who intend not to exult themselves in the earth, nor (to make) mischief (the rein), and the end is (best) for the pious. (Holy Quran 28: 83).

Yes, by Allah, they had heard it and understood it but the world appeared glittering in their eyes and its embellishments seduced them. Behold, by Him who split the grain (to grow) and created living beings, if people had not come to me and supporters had not exhausted the argument and if there had been no pledge of Allah with the learned to the effect that they should not acquiesce in the gluttony of the oppressor and the hunger of the oppressed, I would have cast the rope of Caliphate on its own shoulders and would have given the 1st one the same treatment as to the first one. Then you would have seen that in my view this world of yours is not better than the sneezing of a goat.

It is said that when Amir al-Mu'minin (a.s.) reached this point in his sermon, a man from Iraq stood up and handed him something in writing. Amir al-

Mu'minin (a.s.) began looking at it, whereupon Ibn Abbas said, "O Amir al-Mu'minin (a.s.), I wish you resumed your sermon from where you broke it." Thereupon, he replied, "O Ibn Abbas, it was like the foam of a camel which gushed out but subsided." Ibn Abbas said that he never grieved over any utterance as he did over this one because Amir al Mu'minin (a.s.) could not finish it as he wished to.

Imam Ali (a.s.) condemns the Quraish

In Sermon No. 216 Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) complains of the treatment which he faced from the Quraish and his loneliness.

O Lord! I beseech You to take revenge on the tribesmen of Quraish and on those who are assisting them, for they have cut asunder my kinship and overturned my cup. They have joined together to contest a right to which I was entitled more than anyone else. They said to me: "If you get your right, that would be just, but if you are denied the right, that, too, would be just. Endure it with sadness or kill yourself in grief." I looked around but found no one to shield me, protect me or help me except the members of my family. I refrained from flinging them into death and, therefore, closed my eyes despite the dust, kept swallowing saliva despite (the suffocation of) grief and endured the pangs of anger although they were more bitter than colocynth and more grievous than the stabs of knives.

Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) complains to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

Delivered in the morning of the day when Imam Ali Ibn Abu Talib (a.s.) was fatally struck with the sword's blow:

I was sitting when sleep overtook me. I saw the Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.a.) appear before me and I said, "O Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.a.) what crookedness and animosity I had to face from the people." The Prophet of Allah (s.a.w.a.) said the following: "Invoke (Allah) evil upon them, but I said, "Allah may change them for me with better ones and change me for them with a worse one."

Final Words on the Sufferings of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.)

As reported in traditions, during the last moments of one's life, the complete lifespan of a person flashes in front of the dying person.

It is not improbable that after Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) was hit on the head by Ibn Muljim (may the Almighty curse him), he would have remembered all the sufferings and calamities which befell on him right from be'sat till that fateful morning. He would have remembered the stones and wounds he received from Qurasysh in Mecca, the trials of the night of migration, the isolation of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) at Ohad, his loneliness in fighting the disbelievers in Khandaq and Khayber, he would have remembered the last moments of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in his lap, the passing away of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), his loneliness after the death of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), burying him alone, the cries of Zahra (s.a.), Imam Hasan (a.s.) and Imam Husain (a.s.) on losing their beloved father and grandfather, he would have remembered Saqifa and the snatching away of his right, he would have recollected going door to door reminding the people his successorship, he would have remembered the burning door, the infant martyr – Mohsin, the lashes on Zahra (s.a.), her cries in the day and night, the sedition of the followers of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.), the opposition of the nation to him, the taunts he received, the sufferings he faced, the injustice meted out to him till the strike of Ibn Muljim, and how he endured all these sufferings patiently, all alone, without any helper or friend, and probably after remembering all these sufferings, he would have remarked,

فُزْتُ وَرَبِّ الْكَعْبَةِ

