

ALI IN HIS OWN WORDS

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In the Name of Allah,
the Gracious, the Merciful

A Summary of the book titled
ALI IN HIS OWN WORDS

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Unit 1: His Lineage

The Commander of the Faithful, Ali (PBUH)¹ is the son of Abu-Ṭālib. His grandfather was Abd al-Muṭṭalib, the son of Hāshim, the son of Abdul-Manaf. One branch of the Abdul-Manaf family is the Hāshim clan, while the other one is Bani Abd al-Shams, the ancestor of the Umayyads. Each of these two families is from the Quraysh tribe. The family of Hāshim was known for their magnanimity and generosity among the Quraysh, even though they did not have a status like that of the Abd al-Shams clan.

His mother was Fatima the daughter of Asad, the son of Hāshim, and the son of Abdul-Manaf. For some time, Fatima was in charge of the upbringing of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) and she was like a mother to him. The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) always honoured her and when she died, he covered her with his shirt.

1. The abbreviation 'PBUH' denotes "Peace be upon him or her" while 'PBUHH' denotes "Peace be upon him and his household".



Ali's famous teknonym is Abu al-Hasan (i.e., The Father of Hasan) and he has several nicknames. Among those nicknames, the most famous among the Iranians are Asadullah and Haydar. The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) gave him the nickname "Asadullah", while his mother called him "Haydar", which means "Lion" in Arabic.

Ali (PBUH) was born inside the House of Allah (Ka'bah) and this honour is exclusively for him. His birthday was on Friday, the thirteenth or the twenty-third of the month of Rajab, while the middle of the month of Sha'ban was documented by some historians.

Unit 2: His Upbringing

Ali (PBUH) was brought up by the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH). Abu-Ṭālib, who was the guardian of Muhammad as a child, had many children and relatives. It was a difficult year for Quraysh. Muhammad (PBUHH) said to his uncle Abbas: "Your brother Abu-Ṭālib has plenty of dependents, and as you can see the people are in a difficult situation, so let's try to take some of the burden off him. I will take one of his sons, and you also take one and we will be their guardians." Abbas accepted, and they went to meet Abu-Ṭālib and shared the story with him. Abu-Ṭālib replied: "Leave Aqeel to me and do whatever you want." Consequently, Muhammad (PBUHH) took Ali and Abbas took Ja'far. Therefore, Ali was raised in Muhammad's house, and he (Ali) himself said the following about this: "I was following him the way a baby camel follows its mother, he set



up a manifestation of his morality for me every day and ordered me to follow it.”

The more he grew up, the more the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) improve his upbringing, and he (PBUH) said this about it: “When I was a child, he used to put me next to him and placed me on his chest. And he made me sleep on his bed such that my body becomes his body and his pleasant smell got me.”

When the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) ascended to the rank of prophethood on the Mount of Hira and returned home, Khadijah, Ali and Zayd son of Haritha were staying in his house. He told these three people about his situation and mission before he told others, and all three of them accepted him without any hesitation. It is believed that Ali (PBUH) was the first man to accept Islam. He says the following in this regard: “Every year, he used to seclude himself in the Mount of Hira. I saw him and no one saw him except me. At that time, there was no Muslim in any house except the house where the Messenger of Allah and Khadijah were. I was the third of them. I saw the light of revelation and prophethood and I heard the smell of prophecy.”

On another occasion, he said; “No one accepted the call to the truth (i.e., Islam) before me, and no one is blessed with the act of keeping the family ties, forgiveness and generosity like me.”

At the early stage of Islam, inviting people to Islam was done secretly. This period has been written to be three years until



when the verse “Warn the nearest of your kinsfolk”) Qur’an 26: 214) was revealed, and the Prophet, therefore, said to Ali: “Allah has told me to invite my close relatives to worship Him. Therefore, slaughter a sheep and prepare a loaf of bread and a glass of milk.”

Ali did as instructed. On that day, forty or nearly forty of the children of Abd al-Muṭṭalib came, and all of them ate the food to satisfaction. However, as soon as the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) wanted to start his speech, Abu-Lahab said: “He has cast a spell on you” and the gathering was disrupted.

The Prophet (PBUHH) invited them on another day and said: “O children of Abdul-Muṭṭalib! I don’t think anyone among the Arabs has ever brought for his people anything better than what I brought for you. I brought for you the [goodness] of this world and the Hereafter.”

At that time, he delivered his mission to his near relatives and said: “Which of you is willing to help me in this [divine] task, and be my brother, my minister and my vicegerent?” All [the guests] were silent, but Ali said: “O Messenger of Allah, I am ready to help you.”

The Prophet (PBUHH) said: “This is my successor and my vicegerent among you. Listen to his words and obey him.” Ali was appointed from that day as the successor and vicegerent of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH).



Unit 3: Ali on the Night of Prophet's Migration

The Quraysh people, or at least their leaders, were not afraid of Muhammad's invitation of people to the [worship of] one God because they did not value idols based on a strong belief. However, they were afraid of what (i.e., the verses) the Prophet (PBUHH) recited to the people from the revelation. They perceived the commandment to care for the orphans, not being hard on the slaves, avoiding hoarding wealth and taking care of the family as a threat to their wealth and this is not acceptable to them. Then what should be done? This flame will not be extinguished until Muhammad is killed. But if he was killed, Bani Hāshim will stand to take revenge for his blood. Each family of them is related to other families, which will therefore lead to conflict between Quraysh and peace will be disturbed. Therefore, another means must be sought.

The family heads gathered in Dar Al-Nadwah, which was their assembly place. After a lot of discussions, they all agreed on this action to choose an agile young man from each tribe and each one of them should have a sharp sword in his hand. Then they will attack Muhammad at night and strike him [altogether] with their swords so that no particular person will be accused of his killing. If this is done, Bani Hāshim would not be able to fight with all the tribes, and they would have to pay for blood instead.

The Arch Gabriel informed the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) not to sleep in his bed that night. The Messenger of Allah



(PBUHH) said to Ali: “Sleep in my place and you will not be harmed.” Ali asked: “If I sleep in your place, would you be saved?” He (PBUHH) replied: “Yes.” Ali smiled and prostrated. Then the verse “And among the people is he who sells his soul seeking the pleasure of Allah” (Qur’an 2: 207) was revealed concerning this incident in honour of Ali.

Shortly after he arrived in Medina, the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) sent Abu Waqid al-Laithi with a letter to Mecca and asked Ali to come to Yathrib. Ali left Mecca with Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, Fatima, his mother and Fatima daughter of Zubayr ibn of Abd al-Muttalib whom were referred to as Fatimas by historians. In the middle of the way, a group of Meccan polytheists blocked his way. Ali fought with them and killed one of them who was the faction of Mawla Harb ibn Umayyah. The rest of them dispersed and Ali got to Yathrib with his entourage peacefully.

Unit 4: His Marriage Proposal

From then on, Ali was constantly with the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) and participated in battles that were referred to as military expeditions by historians. In the Battle of Badr, which took place in the second year of the Hijra, the Quraysh elders intended to suppress the people of Medina, and a battle broke out between them. The polytheists of Mecca were badly defeated despite the fact that their military strength was three times more than that of the people of Medina, more than seventy of them were killed while the same number were captured. Ali (PBUH)



killed several of the leaders of the polytheists in this battle. In remembering this day, he says: "At my young age, I buried the great Arabs leaders and killed the leaders of Rabia and Mudir. You know my status in the sight of the Messenger of Allah and the type of relationship I have with him."

As documented, the battle of Badr ended with the victory of the Muslims, and calmness emerged in Medina. Lady Zahra (PBUH), the prophet's daughter, lived in her father's house. Abu Bakr and Umar came one after the other to propose to her in marriage, but the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) did not accept. These two and also some other people from Ansar told Ali (PBUH) to propose to Fatima. And he went to the house of the Messenger of Allah and he (PBUHH) asked: "O son of Abu-Tālib! What did you come here for?" "For a marriage proposal of Fatima". He (PBUHH) replied: "Hello and welcome! Men from Quraysh were angry with me because I did not give them my daughter in marriage. I told them that this was based on Divine permission¹".

The battle of Uhud took place in the third year of the Hijra. Abu Sufyan wanted to compensate for their defeat in the battle of Badr. He went to Medina with three thousand men, two hundred horses and a thousand camels. The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) wanted the city to take a defensive position, but in the war council, the passionate youth were in the majority and decided to attack. Before the commencement of the battle,

1. For information on their matrimonial life, refer to the book titled "Life of Fatimah" by the same author.



Abdullah ibn Ubayy, who was disloyal to the Prophet, returned to Medina with three hundred of his people.

At the beginning of the battle, the Meccan army retreated and the people of Medina began to collect booty. The sniper group, which was in charge of guarding the valley, left its position to get the booty. Khalid son of Walid, who was looking for an opportunity attacked and the Medinan army was surrounded from both sides. A group of people with weak faith ran away from the Prophet. Some [of them] even shouted that Prophet Muhammad (PBUHH) has been killed. At such a moment, Ali (PBUH) was beside the Prophet, he lifted him from the ground and kept the attackers away from him. When the armies were sure that the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) was alive, they returned. From that side, Abu Sufyan stopped fighting and returned from Uhud with the promise of fighting the following year. The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) told Ali: “Follow them and observe, if they ride their camels and pull their horses, they will go to Mecca. But if they ride horses and drive the camels, they have an interest in Medina.” Ali (PBUH) returned and said: “They rode the camels and pulled the horses and started moving towards Mecca.”

Abu Sufyan did not achieve what he desired in the battles of Badr and Uhud. As a result, he lost the honour he had in the sight of the Quraysh elders. Inevitably, to compensate for these defeats, a large army was prepared, and because that army was made up of various tribes, it was called Ahzab (i.e., The parties).



The Jews of Banu Nadir who had gone to Khaybar, as well as the Jews of Banu Qurayza, also united with Quraysh. The number of the Meccan army was documented to be between seven and ten thousand. In this battle, Medina took a defensive position and based on the suggestion of Salman Farsi, they dug trenches around the city. Amr ibn Abd al-Wud, who was renowned for his bravery, decided to cross the trench along with Ikrimah son of Abu Jahl. Amr thereafter challenged the Muslim army of Medina to a fight, but no one dared to face him. Ali (PBUH) went to fight him. When he faced him, he did not hit him. Those who were with the Prophet and were watching from a distance criticized him (they thought Ali was scared). Huzaifa stood up to defend these people, the Prophet said: "Huzaifa! Stop, Ali himself will tell the reason". Ali killed Amr and came to the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH). The Prophet (PBUHH) asked: "Why didn't you kill him when you met him?"

He said: "He cursed my mother and spat on my face. I was afraid that if I killed him, it would be for my own anger. I left him until my anger subsided, and then I killed him".

A few verses of the poem have been written by Ali about this battle. I bring a summary of its translation: "He, out of ignorance, helped the stone (idol), but I helped Muhammad from the right decision of the Lord. I left him on the ground like a branch of a palm tree. I did not look at his clothes, but if he had killed me, he would have taken out my clothes. O group of parties! Never think that Allah will humiliate His religion and His prophet."



Concerning this day, the author of *Kashf al-Ghumma* has narrated the following hadith from *Manaqib Khwarazmi*: “The fight of Ali son of Abu-Ṭālib with Amr son of Abd al-Wud on the day of the trench is better than the action of my nation till the day of resurrection.”

Unit 5: Ali and the Battle of Khaybar

The battle of Khaybar took place in the seventh year of Hijra. The Jews living in Khaybar Castle were in an unknown situation and as it was documented, some of them assisted Abu Sufyan in the battle of the trench. There was a possibility that they would attack Medina and the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) instantly went to their place, but the Jews stood firm. Qamus Castle was under siege for twenty days and finally, the Prophet said: “Tomorrow, I will give the flag to someone who loves Allah and the Messenger. Allah and His Messenger love him and he will return victorious.”

The leaders of the emigrants and the helpers nominated themselves for this mission. The next day, the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) asked: “Where is Ali?” “He has severe eye pain!”, they replied. “Call him!” Ali was brought to the Prophet with his eyes closed. The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) spat in his eyes, and his eyes got better. In this battle, Marḥab, who was the bravest of the Jewish warriors, was killed by Ali (PBUH) and the Muslim army was victorious.



Unit 6: The Conquest of Mecca

In the eighth year after the migration of the Prophet (PBUHH) to Medina, Mecca was conquered. The idols that were placed inside the Ka'bah were removed by Ali (PBUH). He climbed up on the Prophet's shoulders to remove them. With the conquest of Mecca, the Quraysh unwillingly surrendered. The Thaqif tribe also stopped her resistance after the battle of Hunayn. Thus, with the acceptance of Islam by these two great Arab families, the other tribes considered resistance as a futile effort.

In addition to participating in the battles in which the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) himself was present, Ali was in charge of several military expeditions. Among them is the expedition that was sent to Bani Sa'ad in Fadak in the 6th year of Hijra. The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) was informed that Bani Sa'ad wanted to assist the Jews of Khaybar. The Prophet (PBUHH) immediately sent Ali with a hundred people to them. Ali (PBUH) used to walk at night with his men and wait during the day. However, when he reached the water called "Hamj" between Khaybar and Fadak, he saw a man and asked him about Bani Sa'ad. He responded: "If you spare me, I will take you to their place." When they assured him of safety, he took them to the location of Bani Sa'ad. And in this expedition, considerable booty fell into the hands of the Muslims.

In the tenth year of Hijra, the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) sent Ali to Yemen. Hamadan tribe all converted to Islam in one day. Ali wrote the story [of their conversion] to the Messenger



of Allah (PBUHH) and he repeated three times: “Peace be upon the people of Hamadan.”

Then the people of Yemen accepted Islam and Ali wrote a letter to the Prophet in this regard and the Messenger of Allah thanked Allah.

In the tenth year of Hijra, the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) went on pilgrimage and taught Hajj ruling to the people and said in his famous sermon: “O people! I don’t know if I will see you here in another year or not. From today, your blood and wealth have become forbidden from each other until you meet Allah.

When he was returning from Mecca at the place called Juhfa (where the caravans separated from each other and it was named Ghadir Khumm), he stopped the people by Allah’s commandment, and there, he introduced Ali to them in the gathering as his successor while he said: “Whosoever I’m his master, Ali is his master.”

Unit 7: Ali during the passing of the Prophet (PBUHH)

The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) departed this world two months after his return from his Farewell Pilgrimage. It can be said that the saddest days in the life of Ali were two days. The day the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) passed away and the day lady Fatima Zahra (a.s) was buried.

The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) fell ill and passed away



thereafter. At this time, Ali (PBUH) was with him while on his sickbed. He (PBUH) said in this regard: “The Messenger of Allah died while his head was on my chest. I was responsible for his ritual washing while the angels were my helpers. There was crying from within the house and its surroundings. Who is therefore more deserving to him than me both during his lifetime and after his death?”

While Ali and Bani Hāshim were gathered in the Prophet’s house and shedding tears over his departure, some people from among the emigrants (i.e., Muhajir) and the helpers (i.e., Ansar) came from all corners and gathered at a place known as Saqifa Bani Saidah to clarify the leadership issue. As every Muslim knows that it is an Islamic tradition to hasten the ritual washing, praying, and burying of the dead Muslim. This tradition is related to the general Muslims but performing such a rite for the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) has another virtue. It should be asked why in the first instance they didn’t come together to understand this virtue. Why didn’t they go to the Prophet’s house and offer condolences to his family members? Was there any danger? Of course! The same danger that the Holy Qur’an has warned Muslims against: “If he dies or is slain, will you turn back on your heels?” (Qur’an 3: 144)

On the day when the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) recited this verse to them, they might have said no. However, his holy body had not been buried yet, when a confrontation between the southerner and the northerner began. The southerners said: “We



invited the Prophet, we sheltered him, he lived and died among us, so the leadership is our right.” The northerners said: “We are the relatives of the Prophet. He is from the Quraysh and we are also Quraysh, so his right transfers to us.”

In any case, the dispute escalated, Abu Bakr, by quoting a narration that “The leadership is a special right of the Quraysh” drove the Ansar out of the square. Similarly, the Ansar were not unanimous and united. Some of the immigrants who were present complimented each other and finally pushed Abu Bakr forward. As a result, they deprived Ali, who was appointed by the Prophet (PBUHH) as his successor two months ago in that gathering.

Unit 8: Ali after the passing of the Prophet (PBUHH)

The leaders of the groups, without paying any attention to what the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) told them two months ago, considered his own people to be more worthy to lead the Muslims than the others. What did they want? Did they have the sadness a Muslim should have when losing a loved one, or did they aspire for a leadership position and fame?

What is certain is that a clan or clans of Quraysh did not want the lamp that was lit in Bani-Hāshim to remain flourished. What actually happened to Ali on that day? It is Allah Who knows such a reality! From Mu’awiya’s letter and the reply of Ali to him, we can know how the oath of allegiance was taken from



him: "You said that they were driving me by the nose like a camel to pledge allegiance. You wanted to blame Allah, but you praised Him instead, and you disgraced yourself. What is wrong with a Muslim if he is oppressed, and he is sure of his religion without any doubts and aside from hesitation? I read this proof that I brought only for you but I spoke from what I remembered."

After what happened in Saqifa, except for Bani-Hāshim and a few people, no one showed interest in Ali. If they agreed with their words, but they acted against it. Imam Ali (a.s) said in this regard: "I looked and saw that there is no help for me, and there was no helper except my people. I feared that for them to open their hands to help me, lest they end up in the shackle of death. Inevitably, the thorn of grief is broken in the eyes, and the breath in the chest and throat is closed from the truth. I closed my eyes and drank the bitter syrup (drink) of patience."

Ali and some members of Bani-Hāshim, who were with the body of the Prophet, finally did the ritual washing and they completed his burial. Ali, while washing the pure body of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH), said: "May my father and mother be redeemed for you. With your death, a connection is severed that no one has ever seen in any death except that of you. The end of the Prophetic mission and the stopping of the Heavenly messages. Your death compelled the afflicted ones with patience and it left everyone in the same mourning condition. Were it not that you have enjoined patience and forbade illness, we would have continued weeping over you,



and the pain would remain untreated, the suffering and sorrow would be by the soul. This mourning and restlessness for losing you are little. Although, death can neither be avoided nor can anyone be freed from it. May my father and my mother be your ransom! Remember and keep us in your mind before your Lord.”

As it was documented, the worldly people abandoned Imam Ali and deserted him. In those periods, the only person who could defend the Prophet’s tradition was the Prophet’s daughter, and the only place where the lawsuit was raised was the Muslim Mosque. The Prophet’s daughter came to the mosque and made a sermon full of preaching, seeking justice and guidance for those people: “When the Almighty Allah chose the neighbourhood of the Prophets for his Messenger, hypocrisy was revealed and the goods of religion had no buyer. Every misguidance of the litigant, every anonymity of the ruler, and every backbiting in the warmth of the market. Satan came out of his hiding place and invited you to him. He saw how quickly you heard his words and ran lightly after him. You crawled into his trap and danced to his song. Two days have not passed since the death of your Prophet, and our sadness has not been relieved, but you did what you should not have done and took what was not yours, and you introduced a great heresy.”

In that gathering, which was half fascinated and half intimidated, what impact did these fiery speeches that came from a sorrowful, right-seeking and tradition-loving heart? Only Allah knows!



It is so clear that the basis of her statement was ignored and the speeches were forgotten. While she did not make that sermon to get a few stalks of dates and a few bushels of wheat.

A family that denied themselves food but feeds the hungry does not shed tears for their children's stomachs. What she wanted was to keep the Prophetic tradition alive and uphold justice. She was afraid that the ignorance, which has been buried by the equality of Islam, would rise again and the tribal pride would be revived.

It was not long after the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) that Ali's wife, the pure Lady Zahra (PBUH) fell ill and hasten to meet her Lord. The death of Zahra (PBUH) was another sadness that befell Ali's heart. Here I bring the speeches of Imam Ali (PBUH) while he was burying her. The speeches that show the extent of his suffering and annoyance: "Peace be upon you, O the Messenger of Allah, from me and your daughter who is resting by your side and reached you earlier than others. O Messenger of Allah, the death of your dear daughter has taken away my patience and I am left with no strength. But for me, who has witnessed the difficulty of your separation and suffered the weight of the calamity, it deserves condolence. We made for you a laying bed here, which was your grave, and your precious soul passed away between my chest and neck. We all belong to Allah and unto Him shall we return. "

You have fulfilled the trust and the hostage (i.e., soul) has returned to its Owner (Allah). My continuous activity now is



grief and taking medication. My nights are kept vigil until Allah chooses for me the house where you live. Very soon, your daughter will inform you of what your nation (Ummah) has done, they oppressed her. Ask her as much as you can, and she will inform you of what you need to know, that it has not been long and she has not forgotten you. Peace be upon you! Greetings unto the one who says greetings, not because he is offended and seeks a distant path. If I return, it is not because of tiredness, and if I stay, it is not because of suspicion, I hope and know that Allah has promised the patient. "

Unit 9: Patience of Ali over his Oppression

When the news of the Prophet's death spread in the Arabian Peninsula, most of the tribes and neo-Muslims returned to the religion of Jahiliya. Because it was difficult for them to abandon the religion of their ancestors, and it was even more difficult for them to pay zakat, which they considered a sign of weakness.

The news of these people's apostasy reached Medina and had a negative impact on the cities and towns. But few people who had foresight knew that the tribal leadership will come to an end and the door which was opened by Islam to the people of this land would not be closed, and it would be beneficial for them to support Islam.

Abu Sufyan, who fought with the Prophet (PBUHH) as long as he could, but feared being killed during the conquest of Mecca converted to Islam at the request of Abbas, the Prophet's uncle.



He was still nursing the hatred of Islam in his heart, seized the opportunity by approaching Ali, and said: “What has happened to the leadership [after the Prophet] when the lowest family of Quraysh should have been in charge of it? By Allah, if you desire, I will fill Medina with riders and dismounts [of soldiers].” Ali said: “Abu Sufyan, you have been an enemy of Islam for a long time.”

Ali was aware of what was in his heart and what was happening outside, and he knew that in order to preserve the name of a Muslim, he had to remain silent and tolerate those in the helms of the government. This is what he said in this regard: “I put aside the caliphate, and thought deeply about what should be done. And which of these two is possible? Should I fight alone or be patient and avoid conflict? The world is dark and calamity prevails all over. A calamity which made the elderly feeble; turned old the young and kept the religious ones in the grip of suffering until he meets their Lord. Because I considered it wise, I found that endurance thereon was wiser.”

When he saw that people abandoned him and turned to the world, even though he could fight with them and stand up for his right, he closed his mouth and did not say anything, as he himself said: “I turned to patience while I suffered as one who suffers a thorn in his eye and a bone caught in his throat. My heritage was stolen by this and that, and I am worried about that.”

If he wanted the caliphate, it was to follow the tradition of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) and to establish justice. It was



not that he had an attachment to the leadership and abandoned the people to their own fate. In a letter, he wrote during his reign as the Caliph to Uthman son of Hanif, who he appointed as the governor of Basra, he blamed him for going to a party where only the rich were present but not the poor, he wrote: “Shall I be satisfied with being called the Commander of the Faithful while I do not share with the people the hardships of the world? Or shall I not be an example for them in the distresses of life?”

Ali considered the caliphate as his legitimate right. But he saw the sanctity of the religion and the unity of the Muslims as superior to that, he said: “You know that I am more entitled to the caliphate than others. I swear by Allah, I will accept what you have done since the borders of the Muslims was secure and no one would be oppressed except me. I accept this oppression myself and I see the reward of this tolerance and its virtue but I do not see the jewellery that you are looking at.”

“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 last one the same treatment as to the first one. Then you would have seen that in my view this world of yours is no better than the sneezing of a goat.”

With all this, he gave guidance where necessary. When there



was a problem, he would solve it, and if a wrong decision was taken, he would give them the right one. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said about him: “I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate.” He also considered Ali to be superior to all the Companions in judgment as he said: “Ali is the best of you in judgments.”

Umar intended to accompany the Muslim army that was going to fight the Persian Empire. Ali (PBUH) said to him: “You should remain still as the pole and make the Arabs encircle you as the millstone [rotates round its column]: by them ignite the flames of war. Should you leave this land, Arabs, from the corners and fringes of the Arab world, will annul [their pledges of allegiance to you], so that the dangers behind you would be of greater concern to you than that which would lie ahead of you.”

During the years of seclusion, he compiled the Qur’an and provided it as it was revealed to the Prophet (PBUHH). Ali was unique among the Prophet’s Companions in understanding the Qur’an and solving its problems, and he constantly guided Muslims to read the Qur’an and understand its meaning. He said in this regard: “May Allah’s book be upon you, which is a firm thread and a clear light, and a cure that benefits and quenches thirst, keeps the one who hangs, and saves the one who hangs. Do not let it be crooked so that it can be straightened. Do not turn to falsehood so that they return it.”

Whenever there was a problem but the Caliphs and the Companions could not solve it, then Ali would be invited and he



would solve those problems. He patiently endured the oppressions and sometimes he warned the people that: “You forgot what they shouted at you, and you considered yourself safe from what they scared you. So, you have lost your right thinking, and things are chaotic for you.”

Unit 10: Ali during the Reign of Abu Bakr and Umar

Abu Bakr died in Jumada al-Akhirah, the 13th year of Hijra and as it was documented, he appointed Umar as his successor on the last day of his life. Imam Ali (PBUH) said in this regard: “It is amazing that someone who wanted to give up the caliphate in his life, due to the approach of his death time, is also trying to make that [Umar] into another contract.”

Abu Bakr passed away when the Muslim armies entered Iran from the east and the Roman Empire from the north. This expansion of the Islamic territory continued during the lifetime of Umar, as he was after the conquering of the territories. And following the conquest of the other territories, many problems arose and some traditions were changed as well.

It can be said that during the twelve years after the death of the Prophet (PBUHH), a group of Muslims from Medina and Mecca, who were considered the main pillars of this religion, gradually got attached to this world more than the Hereafter. Justice and piety (which are the two main pillars of Islam) gave way to wealth and the attainment of a worldly position. On the



other hand, the people of the non-Arab race placed themselves at the disposal of the conquering leaders, and upon reaching their territories, the Muslim army saw a new world in front of them. The Arabs, who lived simply, saw their luxury, brought them to a life full of splendour, and they got used to it.

In Dhul-Hijjah, the 23rd year of Hijra, Umar fell on the sickbed with a dagger that hit him by the side and died after a few days. Before he died, he nominated six Companions of the Prophet, namely Ali, Uthman, Zubair, Sa'd son of Abu Waqqas, Abd al-Rahman son of Awf and Talha, who was not in Medina at that time, to discuss and appoint the Muslim Caliph within three days.

With such a combination of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah and such instruction about accepting their vote, it was clear from the beginning that Ali (PBUH) would not reach the caliphate, because Abd al-Rahman would not leave the side of Uthman because of kinship.

At the end of three days, Abd al-Rahman went to Ali and asked: "If you become Caliph, will you follow the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of the Messenger and the practice of the two Caliphs after him?" Ali (PBUH) replied: "I hope to act within the limits of my ability and knowledge." But when he asked Uthman, he replied: "Yes."

The first criticism that can be raised against the composition of this council is why were all the members of this council should



be immigrants. Why should the Helpers (Ansar) not be a part of this council?

Secondly, why do only six people sit for the consultation? Were there only these six people in that period for the consultation?

Thirdly, the point that if one or two people were against it, why should they be killed?

Fourthly, the point that if they could not choose anyone after three days, why should they (all) be killed? What was all this strictness and intimidation of council members for?

It is better to read Ali's speech in this regard: "When his life was about to come to an end, he nominated a group and included me among them. O Allah! What a council! What did I lack from the first that they didn't consider me at its base and put me in line with them? I had to agree with them and their conversations. But one chose a way out of spite, and the other saw his son-in-law better, and he sewed and cut until the third reached his goal."

Unit 11: Ali during the Reign of Uthman I

Uthman was later chosen in that council, as the Caliph of the Muslims. The Uthman's age at the time of his death was documented to be from seventy-nine to ninety years old. Even if we take it as the minimum, it indicates that his physical strength has been reduced during the period of his caliphate, while solving the problems that arose required youthful strength.



If Uthman had chosen knowledgeable and fair advisers, his old age would not have been a problem, but that was not the case.

Gradually, the affair became more difficult, while the people around Uthman did not care, and he was not aware of their behaviour. Some of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah wrote to and invited each other to come to Medina for Jihad. The people came and requested Ali to talk to Uthman. Ali went to Uthman and said: “The people are behind me and they nominated me as a mediator between them and you. By Allah! I do not know what to tell you. I do not know anything that you do not know. I will not lead you to something that you do not know. You knew what we know. We have not overtaken you in anything to make you aware of it. Apart from you, we have not heard anything to inform you about it. You saw as we saw. You heard as we heard. You were with the Messenger of Allah as we were. The son of Abu Quhafa and the son of Khattab were not worthier than you in the work of truth. You are closer to the Messenger of Allah than they are, as you are a relative of the Prophet. You became his son-in-law and they did not.”

“I swear to you, do not be the slain leader of this nation! What will be said that a leader was killed in this nation? And when he is killed, the door of killing is opened until the Day of Resurrection, and the affairs of the Ummah remain unknown to them, and sedition spreads among them so that they do not know right from falsehood, and in that sedition, they fight and mix with each other.”



Unit 12: Ali during the Reign of Uthman II

Abu Dharr was among those who criticized Uthman. On one hand, he observed the generosity of Uthman, and on the other hand, he was unsatisfied with the luxurious lifestyle of the Muslims and some of the Prophet's Companions. Therefore, he started to criticize. Naturally, Uthman's allies did not like it. He made a trip or was exiled to Syria where he noticed new changes there too. The governor, who ruled over the people on behalf of the Caliph of the Messenger of Allah, had adopted the method of the Roman Caesars. A set of people gathered around him and benefitted from his generosity, while most of the people were destitute. Abu Dharr used to sit in the mosque and narrated to the people the biography of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) and the two Caliphs after him.

Those people around Mu'awiya told him: "It is not advisable for Abu Dharr to remain here, as there is a fear that he will indoctrinate the people." Mu'awiya wrote about the incident to Uthman and he gave a directive to return Abu Dharr to Medina. When he reached Medina, Uthman scolded him and finally exiled him to Rabadhah. When he was about to leave, he saw Imam Ali (PBUH) who told him: "O Abu Dharr! You showed anger in the name of Allah, therefore have hope in Him for Whom you became angry. The people were afraid of you in the matter of their (pleasure of this) world while you feared them for your faith (religion). Then leave to them that for which they are afraid of you and get away from them (or take away) what you fear them about. How needy are they for what you dissuade



them from and how heedless are you towards what they are denying you? You will shortly know who the gainer is tomorrow (on the Day of Judgement) and who is more enviable.”

Likewise, based on the directive of Uthman, they beat Ammar so much that he lost consciousness. They carried him on their shoulders and took him to the house of Umm Salma, the Prophet’s wife. Ammar was still unconscious for the rest of the day, and he missed his noon and afternoon prayers.

Uthman was so extravagant in giving wealth to his relatives and forbidding it from deserving people as if it was his father’s property. Ali (PBUH) said the following about him: “His relatives stood firmly with him, ate the treasury and blew it away. Like a camel that took the reins and grazed the spring plants. Its forelimbs and feet were tired of work, but he suffered from gluttony.”

During these busy days, Ali (PBUH) was a mediator between the rebels and Uthman several times and went back and forth. Gradually, the situation became difficult for Uthman. In the first-hand documents, we see that Ali (PBUH) supported Uthman until the last moments. On the night of the incident, Uthman sent someone to Ali (PBUH) that the rebels had withheld water from them if he can bring them water. He also sent the same message to Talha, Zubair, Aisha and the wives of the Prophet.

The first person who came to his aid was Ali (PBUH) and Umm



Habiba. Ali went to the rebels in the dark and said: “O people, what you are doing is neither the act of believers nor the unbelievers. You are withholding bread and water from this man! The Romans and Persians give their captives bread and water. This man disagrees with you, then, how do you consider arresting and killing him as lawful? They replied: “We will not allow him to eat and drink.” Ali, therefore, threw his turban into the house of Uthman to show that he did what he requested and returned.

In those days, didn't the elders among the people of Medina secretly incite the rebels? Were there no hidden hands that wanted Uthman assassinated? Were there not people who were interested in the caliphate and took the opportunity to terminate the life of Uthman and reach a new place?

Uthman was murdered but instead of condemning his killers, his relatives identified Bani Hāshim as the culprit. Walid son of Uqba, the Uthman's maternal brother, wrote the following in his mourning poem: “O the children of Hāshim! What do you want from our life? Uthman's sword and his other properties are with you. Children of Hāshim, return your niece's weapon you loot, which is not permissible for you. Children of Hāshim, how can we be gentle with you when the armour and weapons of Uthman are with Ali? If it is possible for someone to forget the water he drank throughout his life, then I will forget Uthman and his death.”

These poems were written by a man who was in charge of the government of Kufa through Uthman. In these verses of the



poem, he did not want to identify the killers of Uthman, but he wanted the children of Umayyah to take revenge on the children of Hāshim for their grudge. Otherwise, he should have mentioned the names of those who were the main cause of Uthman's death. As Marwan son of Hakam used to say: "Talha was the one who killed Uthman."

Unit 13: The Nomination of Ali as the Caliph of the Muslims

As soon as the rebels terminated the life of Uthman, they started thinking about running the government. It is obvious that the Muslims needed a leader and a Caliph must be appointed. Who else deserves the position of the caliphate except for Ali?

Suddenly, people from all over gathered in front of Ali demanding that he should accept the caliphate. But alas, the time was not favourable. And in the twenty-five years that passed since the death of the Prophet (PBUHH), no year was more inappropriate for Ali's caliphate than this year.

Some practices have been altered, some religious rulings have been suspended, and during this period, government income has been poured into the pockets of those who did not suffer much for Islam and Muslims. The most difficult issue of all these was the action of some Quraysh leaders. This selfish and ambitious division, which in Saqifah, with the narration quoted by Abu Bakr to the people, made him the leader of the Muslims, created a kind of superiority over the other clans and all the



non-Arab Muslims. The Umayyah family which is a tribe of Quraysh has not had a good relationship with Hāshim's family for a long time, especially with Ali who killed several of their elders in the Battle of Badr.

Ali was aware of these problems and dozens of more difficult problems and he said: "Leave me and find someone else [to lead you] because we are going to face a task that is difficult and multifaceted. Verily, the cloud of sedition has covered the border to the border and the right path has become unknown. Behold if I accept your request, I will work with you as I know, and I will not listen to the words of the speaker and the accuser. And if you leave me, I will be like one of you, and I will obey and obey even better than others. If I am your minister, it is better than being your leader."

Some historians have written that the people pledged allegiance to Ali on the same day that Uthman was murdered, but some have documented that the conversation lasted for two or three days, and some have written eight days, and it was likely to be so. Those present said that they will not leave you unless they pledged allegiance to him. He (PBUH) therefore said: "If this is the case, the oath of allegiance should be performed in the mosque."

It has been documented that the first person to pledge allegiance to him was Talha, who pledged allegiance with a crippled hand. The people's allegiance to Ali was the allegiance of the masses and he thereafter said: They bombarded me so much as the



thirsty camels turn to drink water and the shepherd took them and they pressed each other so much so that I thought, they were thinking about killing me or some people were thinking about killing others in my presence.”

In another instance, he (PBUH) said: “Suddenly, I saw people turning unto me from all sides and standing back and forth like a hyena’s mane, so much so that my big toes became crusted and my sides ached. They encircled me like a flock of sheep.”

“They opened my hand, I held it open, and when they pulled it and I resisted. Then they bombarded me, like thirsty camels that go to their waterholes on the day of drinking water, so much so that you cut the ankle strap and the cloak fell and was trampled upon. The people’s satisfaction in the pledge of allegiance to me reached a point where the young man was happy and the old man ran there trembling.”

One of his speeches, which shows his strictness in the affair of the public treasury and buttresses his piety and justice, and he may have said it in the first days, is his objection to Uthman’s donations from the public treasury: “By Allah! if I see the dowry of women or the price of maidservants gone, I will bring it back and the one who does not show justice will find oppression more difficult.”

Tabari wrote: “For the fact that people pledged allegiance to Ali, a group of Umayyad fled Medina.” From that day, Mecca became a base for Ali’s opponents.



In any case, the people pledged allegiance to the caliphate of Ali. He attained the position of the caliphate in the most difficult time when many political and administrative problems had arisen in the Islamic domain. Because the people of his era were not the only ones who pledged allegiance to him, although among those who pledged allegiance there were also those who Allah knew what was in their hearts. But most of the people in Mecca, Kufa, Basra and other states were brought up for a quarter of a century with a practice that contradicted the tradition at the time of the Prophet. Ali wanted to return them to the tradition that he had gone through and was practicing, and the special Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) were practicing those traditions. Wasn't such a thing impossible or at least difficult?

There were oppressive rulers at the helm of affairs and he has to dismiss them. Each of these rulers belonged to a family, and each family was tied to a tribe. Were they going to sit quietly [over this]?

Unit 14: The Oppositions Against Ali

After the pledging of allegiance, Ali sent his agents to the Islamic States. Uthman the son of Hanif was sent to Basra, Amara the son of Shahab to Kufa, Ubaydullah the son of Abbas to Yemen, Qays the son of Sa'ad ibn Ubadah to Egypt, and Sahl the son of Hanif to Syria.

These rulers were not successful in their assignment because



the people were taking orders from the one who ruled over them. And if another ruler wanted to take his place, he must have a large force at his disposal to support him in case of a conflict, or the central administrative power should be such that all the States are accountable to it, or the deposed ruler should follow the order and resign from the affair or that the people have reached such a level of loyalty that if the ruler resists, they will expel him. However, none of these conditions existed in the cities where these rulers went.

Also in Medina, the task did not go according to the expectation of the Imam, as he has to leave aside the Umayyah family, several groups of the Mudir family and the supporters of Uthman who did not agree with his caliphate from the onset, and some of those who pledged allegiance to him also started whispering their opposition.

Talha and Zubair were interested in the caliphate, but when they did not achieve it, they expected to be chosen as a ruler. However, Ali did not consider them worthy of such a task. They waited for a while and when they didn't see a pleasant face from Ali, they complained to him about why he did not let them interfere in the administrative affairs. The Imam in response to them said: "By Allah! I had no desire for the caliphate and no need for government. You imposed that on me and you entrusted me with that task."

And because they did not sit down, he said: "Your allegiance to me was not without thought and planning. My task and yours



are not the same. I wanted you for the sake of Allah but you wanted me for the sake of yourself.”

Similarly, he told them: “You showed displeasure with a little thing and delayed something more important. You did not tell me what you had a right that I have withheld from you? And in what matter have I put myself ahead of you? Or in which case did a Muslim bring to me that I could not handle, or I was incapable of it, or I went the wrong way in its ruling?”

Finally, they came to Ali saying that they wanted to go for a lesser Hajj (Umrah). Ali gave them permission and later said: “They don’t go for Umrah, but they intend to deceive.”

Meanwhile, one should ask why these two preceding Companions in Islam did such a thing. Did Ali (PBUH) say something or do something that is not worthy of a Caliph?

Unit 15: The Defection of Talha and Zubair

Zubair is the son of ‘Awwam, the son of Khuwaylid (the father of Khadijah, the Prophet’s wife), his mother was Safiya, the daughter of Abd al-Muṭṭalib; the Prophet’s aunt. Zubair was with the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) in the battle of Badr and he was one of those whom Uthman used to give a lot of wealth. Ibn Sa’ad in his *Tabaqat* wrote that the total amount of this wealth was six hundred thousand.

Talha is the son of Ubaidullah from the Tim family, and he is from the same clan as Abu Bakr. Before Islam, he did business



and was a friend of Uthman. In the battle of Uhud, he was beside the Prophet and lifted him from the ground to show people that he was not killed. In that battle, his hand was hit with an arrow that was thrown at the Prophet, and a finger was severed from him, and then his hand was crippled.

Talha and Zubair were among those who pledged allegiance to Ali, but after a few days, they expressed displeasure. They didn't just want to consult with Ali, because every Muslim has the right to have an opinion in public affairs. They wanted to be partners with him in governmental affairs, but such an expectation was never fulfilled. The fact that affairs of the government were based on the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and no one could supersede Ali in the understanding of these two sources. Ali was trained by the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) and he is familiar with the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (PBUHH), its abrogating and abrogated verses, as he (PBUH) said: "And nothing of this (i.e., Hadith and its meaning) passed down to me except that I asked him (PBUHH) of its meaning and memorized it."

Anyway, these two Companions, whose allegiance to Ali was on their necks, left the group and went to Mecca. They asked Zubair: "You are a relative of Ali and pledged allegiance to him, why did you oppose him?" He said: "They reluctantly pledged allegiance to him, I was not satisfied. My hand pledged allegiance to Ali, not my heart" and Ali (PBUH) in response to him, said: "You think he pledged allegiance with his hand but



not with his heart, so he confessed to what he did. What is in his heart was just a claim. There should be clear proof for what he claimed, otherwise, he should be found (retain where he was) in what he was and went out of it (the Muslim community).”

Unit 16: Ali and the Opposition by Aisha

Another person that should be mentioned is Aisha, who if she did not oppose Ali (PBUH), the Basra war would not have occurred.

Aisha was born in Mecca about eight years before the Prophet’s migration. When she was six or seven years old, she married the Prophet with a dowry, which is mostly written as four hundred dirhams. In Shawwal of the first year of Hijrah, when the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) left Mecca for Medina, the marriage ceremony was done when she was nine or ten years old. After the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH), she was eighteen or nineteen years old.

When Aisha came to the Prophet’s house, she observed Lady Zahra next to her father, and from that very first day, she became aware of the Prophet’s great affection for her daughter and her future husband. It is natural to feel jealous because of her. Soon, Lady Zahra (PBUH) went to Ali’s house and she was blessed with glorious children while Aisha did not give birth to a child for the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH).

If someone reads the biography of Aisha and says that she did not have a good relationship with Ali (PBUH), he has not



sinned. It was not only with Ali but she also [did not have a good relationship] with his wife and children. And particularly with the Prophet's daughter, with whom the Prophet's friendship was increasing. When the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) was alive, another incident happened that added to his displeasure with Ali. On the day when the hypocrites slandered Aisha, the Prophet consulted with those around him, including Ali, and he said: "There were many women present in this regard, ask the maid about this, so that they can tell you what has happened." And if that was the case, this statement is enough for Aisha not to like Ali. She herself expressed this dissatisfaction once when she left Basra for Medina, she said: "Between me and him, there have been quarrels for a long time similar to that between a wife and her husband's relatives."

Aisha was not satisfied with Uthman, and on the day of his siege when he requested her to help him, she refused and went to Mecca while Uthman was in danger. When she arrived in Mecca, she went to the mosque, people came to her and she said to them: "O people, a riotous group from the cities, deserts and among the slaves have besieged the people of Medina; shed the blood that was forbidden and destroyed the sanctity of Medina. They took away the wealth that was forbidden to them. By Allah, a finger of Uthman is better than the earth which is full of people like them."

However, the fact is that why did the Mother of the Faithful do that? She left Uthman under siege and went to Mecca, while she



could speak to those people. Why did she request to be taken to Mecca after she heard that the people pledged allegiance to Ali, and why did she mention going to Syria? Was it not that she instructed Mu'awiya to get up and fight Ali? With the arrival of Talha, Zubair and Aisha and the immigrants who went to Mecca from Medina after the death of Uthman, this city became a resistance base against the central administrative power, and the rebels sought to provide wealth and weapons.

Unit 17: Preparation towards the Battle of Jamal

The son of Umayyah or Muniyeh (Ya'ala was sometimes referred to as his father and sometimes his mother) provided six hundred camels and six hundred thousand (dirhams or dinars). Then they consulted one another and discussed where to go. Abdullah Āmir said: "We are going to Basra, there are people who support me there and the fans of Talha." And finally, they went to Basra. The people of Mecca said: "The Mother of the Faithful, Talha and Zubair are going to Basra. Anyone who wanted the honour of Islam and the [revenge of the] Uthman's blood should come. If he wants goods and money, it is ready."

It seems that this section of Ali's speech is about that group: "Because I got up to work [i.e., I became the Caliph], a group broke the pact, and a group sought out (moved out) from among the religious people, and another group tired my heart with oppression. It seems as if they have never heard the words of the Lord, or they heard and did not act when He said: "This is the abode of the Hereafter, which We shall grant to those who do



not desire to domineer in the earth nor to cause corruption, and the outcome will be in favour of the Godway.”

On the way to Basra, they bought a camel from a man. A camel whose memory remained forever in the history of Islam and this battle was called the Battle of Jamal because of that camel. And Ali says this about them: “They went out and dragged the sacredness of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) with them, as they drag a slave girl when buying. They took her with them to Basra, but he kept his [own] wives at home. They displayed that which the Messenger of Allah had kept in the house, and withheld from them. [They came] with the army, which there was not a single one of them who was not under my obedience and who did not have my allegiance on his neck at will.”

When they reached Basra, a young man from Banu Sa’ad criticized Talha and Zubair that why did they leave their wives at home but bring the wife of the Messenger of Allah with them. Other people also protested against Aisha, but the people around her stopped them.

Once, a dispute broke out between them and the supporters of Uthman, the governor of Basra went to the battle and a group was killed on both sides. Thereafter, they agreed to peace, and it was decided that they should write a letter to Medina and ask whether Talha and Zubair pledged allegiance to Ali willingly or by force. If they pledged allegiance willingly, then they must leave Basra, but if they pledged allegiance by compulsion, then Uthman must give up [the governorship of] Basra.



Ka'b ibn Suur went to Medina on their behalf and asked a group of people from Medina but everyone remained silent. Usamah ibn Zayd said: "They pledged allegiance with reluctantly", but those present rebelled against him. Ka'b returned to Basra and informed them about what happened in Medina. The rebels attacked Uthman, the governor of Basra, at night. They beat him and pulled out his beard. They said that they asked Aisha for her opinion. First, she said: "Kill him." A woman said: "By Allah, he is one of the Prophet's Companions." She later said: "Then imprison him." Majasha son of Mas'ud said: "Beat him and cut off his beard and eyebrows." They did so and took possession of the public treasury.

Unit 18: Relocation of the Seat of Government

The affair gradually started to become difficult as they threatened the central government and public order. In this regard, the Qur'an says: "If two groups of the faithful fight one another, make peace between them. But if one party of them aggresses against the other, fight the one which aggresses until it returns to Allah's ordinance." (Qur'an 49: 9)

Ali had to leave Medina for Iraq. Several people advised the Imam not to go after Talha and Zubair and not to fight them, but he (PBUH) said: "By Allah, I am not a hyena that will be lulled to sleep by singing, then tricked and hunted. As far as I am alive, I will fight those who turn away from the truth with the help of the seeker of the truth, and I will replace the disobedient with a loyal and obedient one."



And it was likely that he made this sermon during those periods: “I know what I say and I will stand by it. The one who reveals lessons to him and learns from them and learns from punishments, keeps his piety and does not leave doubts about his downfall. Know that once again your life has been put to the test, like the day when Allah raised your Prophet. I swear by Allah Who has truly raised him that you will be reunited together with Allah, and you will be thrown together like grains that fall in a sieve, or potsherds that fall into a cauldron. So that what is below becomes rough and what is above becomes under. And those who are left behind will advance and those who are ahead will stay back. I swear by Allah, I didn’t conceal a word of truth and I didn’t tell a lie, I was informed about such a situation and such a time.”

Abdullah, son of Abbas, said that he came upon the Commander of Faithful in Dhiqar while he was mending his soles. He asked: “What is the price of these shoes?” I said: “It is worthless”. He said: “By Allah! I love this more than your government unless I am able to establish right or destroy wrong.”

Unit 19: The Battle of Jamal

When Ali’s envoys arrived in Kufa and showed the Imam’s letter to Abu Musa Ash’ari, who ruled Kufa based on the appointment by Uthman. Abu Musa stopped the people from assisting Ali. When the news of his disobedience reached Ali, he (PBUH) asked for Ashtar and told him: “I retained Abu Musa as the governor of Kufa based on your recommendation. It is



therefore up to you to take care of this task.”

Ashtar and Hasan ibn Ali left for Kufa. When Malik Ashtar and Imam Hasan arrived in Kufa, they invited the people to render their assistance to Ali. The Kufians finally deserted Abu Musa and he was driven out of the government house. After the sedition of Abu Musa was extinguished, the army, whose number was written to be twelve thousand men, set out and reached the Commander of the Faithful in Dhiqar.

By examining what is documented in history, it is clear that some groups from the Imam’s army did not want the issue to end with a compromise. And it was this group that ignited the battle. Ali might have made these speeches during those periods: “O Allah! I beseech You for help against the Quraysh who cut the ties of our relatives and turned the matter against me and prepared to fight with me over the right, which I am more entitled to than others and they said that you may get the right but we have the power to prevent you from it.”

They stayed for three days without a fight between them. Many of Ali’s army wanted to start the war but he said in a sermon: “Keep your hands and tongues from these people, and don’t get ahead of them in the fight, even if the war started today, they will have to pay compensation tomorrow (Doomsday).”

They put Aisha on a camel that was called ‘Asgar. A hideous and ill-tempered camel. Thousands of lives were sacrificed by it, and the camel, as it was documented, first lost its forelimb, its



legs and then its life.

When the two armies were ready for the fight, Ali went ahead of the army and asked for Zubair. Zubair came to him and Ali reminded him of a story. The summary is that one day the Prophet (PBUH) saw Zubair holding Ali's hand. "Do you love him?" he asked. "How can I not love him?" Then he (PBUHH) added: "Soon you rise to fight him."

Zubair said: "If you had reminded me of this story before, I would not have been with this army. I will not fight with you now" and he withdrew from the army and went outside Basra, where his grave is today, a place is known with his name "Zubair" and is part of Basra province. He was killed by Amr son of Jurmuz.

Thereafter, Ali took a Qur'an and said to his companions: "Who will take this Qur'an and make the Basra army swear by it? Whoever takes it will be killed." From among the Kufians, a young man who was wearing a white robe and was from Bani Mujasha' stood up and said: "I will take it." Ali did not accept but repeated his question three times, and all three times the young man answered. Finally, he took the Qur'an and went ahead to the army, and they killed him as predicted. It was here that Ali (PBUH) said: "Now the battle with them is upon us." Ali handed the flag to his son, Muhammad Hanafiyah and said: "If the mountains are removed from a place, take its place! Grind your teeth and leave your skull to Allah! Keep your feet on the ground and your eyes on the shore of the army, and do



not allow fear over you, and know that victory is from Allah.”

Ali’s troops won this battle. Talha and a few people from the Quraysh and the Umayyah families were killed. The forelimbs and legs of the camel were cut off and Aisha fell to the ground. However, no one disrespected her. With the death of the camel, which was like a war flag, the conflict ended and the rebels were defeated.

The fighters hoped to benefit from its spoils after the fire of war subsided, just like the battle they had participated in or had heard about. But Ali told them not to take anything from the property of the dead. It was here that a group said: “How can their blood be lawful for us while their wealth is forbidden?”

They did not know or did not want to know that these were tyrannical Muslims and not militant infidels. And it has been documented, the foundation of the Kharijites’ belief was laid in this war. After the end of the war, the Imam took the oath of allegiance from the people of Basra.

When Ali (PBUH) arrived at the death of Talha, he said: “Abu Muhammad has remained a stranger here. By Allah! I do not like the Quraysh to fall under the stars. I took my grudge against Bani Abd al-Manaf and the leaders of Bani Jumah. They raised their necks for what they did not deserve. They had to break their necks and arrest them.”

Malik Ashtar bought a camel for seven hundred dirhams, sent it to Aisha, and told her that I sent this camel to replace the camel that was killed in the battle. Aisha replied: “May Allah not bless



him, he killed the great Arab (Talha's son) and did whatever he wanted with my niece." When this message reached Ashtar, he raised his sleeve and said: "They wanted to kill me. I had no choice but to do what I did."

And thus, the battle and the killing of six thousand or ten thousand Muslims ended. When Ali came out from Aisha, a man from the Azad tribe said: "By God, this woman should not be left freely." Ali got angry and said: "Shut up. Don't open a curtain and don't enter a house and wake up a woman even if she curses you and calls you a foolish leader because they can't resist. In Jahiliyyah, we were ordered not to touch women."

Ali sent Aisha from Basra to Medina, gave her what she needed for the trip, and accompanied her with forty highly distinguished women from Basra. Aisha left for Medina. Ali said about her: "But that woman, she possesses a feminine thought, and hatred burned in her chest like a blacksmith's mountain. If they asked her to do, what she did to me, she would not do it to anyone else, and she would not rush like that. In any case, her honour should be preserved and her reckoning is with Allah."

Unit 20: Imam Ali's letter to Mu'awiya

Mu'awiya is the son of Abu Sufyan (his name was Sakhra), the son of Harb, the son of Umayyah, the son of Abd al-Shams, and the son of Abd al-Manaf. And at Abd al-Manaf, his lineage is linked to the lineage of Bani Hāshim. It has been documented that he became a Muslim during the conquest of Mecca, and he



was included among the scribes of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH).

Umar had special respect for Abu Sufyan and his children. He sent one of his sons, Yazid to capture Caesarea, which is one of the territories of Tiberias and located on the shore of the Levant. When Yazid conquered that city, he went to Damascus and Umar appointed his brother, Mu'awiya in his place. When Yazid died, Umar entrusted the governorship of Syria to Mu'awiya.

It is documented that his mother said to him: "This man (Umar) has given you something to do. Try to do what he wants, not what you want." During his reign, Mu'awiya provided an elaborate system in imitation of the governments of the Eastern Roman Empire and employed a large number of maids and servants.

When Uthman reached the caliphate, Mu'awiya got closer to his goal. When Uthman was under siege, he did not do anything even though he could have helped him, as he requested to take him to Damascus, to continue his leadership role over there.

After Uthman was murdered, he tried to identify Ali as the killer in front of the Syrian people. Ali (PBUH) therefore saw the expediency of sending someone to him and asking him for his oath of allegiance, but if he did not accept, he would go after him immediately. Ali (PBUH) consulted on who to be sent to Mu'awiya. Jarir said: "Send me as there is a friendship between me and Mu'awiya."



Imam sent Jarir to Mu'awiya with a letter with the following content: "The people who pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman also pledged allegiance to me. The one who was present could not choose another person, and the absent one could not but accept those who were present. What is the council of the Emigrants and the Ansar, if they choose a man to be the Imam, which Allah is pleased with it, and if someone blames them or creates a heresy, they should return him to the community from which he left, and if he refuses, he would fight him? O Mu'awiya! I swear by my life, if you look with wisdom and look at the air from your head, you will see that I hated the splitting of Uthman's blood more than any other person, and you know that I was aloof, except that you accused me and covered up what is obvious to you. Goodbye."

Jarir left for Syria. Mu'awiya kept Jarir in Damascus under various pretexts and secretly prepared the people for battle. Jarir's stay in Syria took a long time. And Imam wrote to him: "Whenever my letter reaches you, force Mu'awiya to act accordingly. Make him choose between these two; either battle or reconciliation. If he accepts battle, do not accept to stay with him, and if he accepts reconciliation, take an oath of allegiance from him."

Jarir returned unsuccessfully to the Imam and Ashtar said: "It would have been better if you had sent me." Jarir said: "If he had sent you, they would have killed you on the pretext that you are one of the Uthman's killers."



Unit 21: Imam Ali and the Battle of Siffin

Ali (PBUH) left for Syria and reached Karbala on the way. He observed prayer there with the people. When he finished the prayer, he took the soil of that land, smelled it and said: “O soil! Blessed are you! People who will enter the Paradise without accountability will be raised from you.”

From there, he went to the city of Raqqa. When he crossed the Euphrates, he sent Shurayh son of Hani and Ziyad son of Nadr with twelve thousand men towards Mu’awiya. On their way, they met a group of Mu’awiya’s soldiers, whose commander was Abu’l-A’war Sulami, and wrote a letter to the Imam to ask him what to do.

Imam (PBUH) asked for Malik Ashtar and told him what Shurayh and Ziyad had written and sent him to them with this letter: “I have placed Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar in command over you and all those under you. Therefore, follow his commands and take him as the armour and shield for yourselves, because he is one of those from whom I have no fear of weakness nor any mistake, nor laziness where haste is more appropriate, nor haste where slackness is expected of him.”

Both armies settled in a place popularly known as “Qanāsrin” near Siffin. Siffin is a land next to the Euphrates in the west of Raqqa. Where the armies had stationed near the Euphrates, there was just a single place where water could be found. Mu’awiya was stationed there and the Imam ordered his troops



as follows: “Do not fight them unless they initiate the fighting. You are on the right and to leave them till they begin fighting will be another proof from your side against them. If, by the will of Allah, the enemy is defeated, then do not kill the runner away, do not strike a helpless person, and do not finish off the wounded. Do not inflict pain on women even though they may attack your honour with filthy words and abuse your officers, because they are weak in character, mind and intelligence. We have been ordered to desist from them although they may be unbelievers. Even in the pre-Islamic (al-jahiliyyah) period if a man struck a woman with a stone or a stick he was rebuked along with his offspring after him.”

Mu’awiya ordered not to let Ali’s army take water. The Imam sent him a message: “We have not come to fight over water.” Amr ibn ‘As also advised Mu’awiya not to prevent them from taking water, but he refused. It thereafter led to a conflict. Ali’s army drove Mu’awiya’s troops away and stationed near the water. The Imam said: “Don’t stop the Syrians from taking water.”

The Imam likely made these speeches after his troops drove the Syrian troops out of the water source: “I saw you in the ranks from the place of being cut off and returning. The unknown, lowly desert dwellers from among the Syrian people were driving you back, while you are the chosen Arabs and the souls of the seeds of honour and the forerunner in nobility, high rank and vision. Finally, my heart burned when I saw that you drove



them away, just as they had driven you from their place, as they were driven from your place. They were killed with their arrows and spears.”

The war over water ended and interaction and correspondence began. Mu’awiya used the pretext of demanding for taking vengeance for Uthman’s blood and said that Ali should hand over the killers of Uthman to him so that he may pledge allegiance to him. In one of these conversations, Shabth ibn Raba’i, who was appointed by the Imam, said: “Mu’awiya is not an unknown person to us that you used vengeance of Uthman’s blood as a pretext to deceive the people. You abandoned Uthman and did not help him and wanted him to be killed.” In response, Mu’awiya insulted him and said: “There is nothing between you and me except a sword.”

Mu’awiya wanted the governorship of Syria from Ali. He (PBUH) said: “As for the request for the governorship of Syria! I will not give you today what I withheld from you yesterday, and the fact that you said that the Arab war has been destroyed and only half a soul is left for them. Be aware that whoever dies on the path of truth has opened his way to Heaven.”

It is clear that Ali (PBUH) was never a compromiser. He wanted the establishment of justice with the caliphate, not the acquisition of government, otherwise, on the first day of his caliphate, as Mughirah said, he would have given a governorship position to Mu’awiya, Talha, and Zubair, and he would not have fought those wars.



Once again, the confrontation between the two armies began. Sometimes in the form of an unorganized battle and sometimes in the form of a fight between the warriors. When the month of Dhul-Hijjah of the year 36 Hijra ended and the month of Muharram began, the two armies stopped fighting and rested in the hope of achieving peace that month.

The month of Muharram ended, but they did not reach a reconciliation. At the beginning of the month of Safar of the year 37 Hijra, a great battle began. As we can see in the first-hand documents, at the beginning of the great conflict, the battle was going in favour of Ali's troops. In the last attack, which if it continued, the victory of Ali's army would have been certain, Mu'awiya, based on the advice of Amr ibn 'As, used a trick and ordered that the copies of the Qur'an that were in the camp to be put on spears, go ahead towards Ali's army and invited them to judgement with the Qur'an.

This trick worked as a group of Ali's army who were among the Qur'anic reciters went to Ali and said that it is not proper for us to fight with these people, we must accept what they said. Whatever Ali said that it was a trick they adopted, as they were defeated in the battle, had no effect. The battle finally stopped, and many companions and followers were martyred in that battle. The Companions such as Abu al-Haytham Tihan, Khuzima ibn Thabit Dhu- Shahadatain and Ammar Yasir, about whom the Messenger of Allah has said: "You will be killed by a group of transgressors."



Unit 22: Ali and the Battle of Nahrawan

It was time to choose the arbitrators. The arbitrator of the Syrians was known to be Amr son of ‘As. But who should be the arbitrator for the Iraqis? Ali wanted to choose Abdullah son of Abbas, but some commanders of his army did not accept but prescribed Abu Musa Ash’ari for such a task. More than others, Ash’ath did everything to get Abu Musa chosen as the arbitrator from Ali’s army.

If we don’t consider Abu Musa a hypocrite, his naivety was certain. When Ali was going to the battle of Basra, Abu Musa directed the people to stay at home and not fight, and finally, he was expelled from the government house by the strictness of Malik Ashtar.

Now, it is necessary to know what the fight was all about, and what the arbitrators were supposed to do. We know that Ali (PBUH), in a letter written to Mu’awiya, asked him to obey the decision of the council of the immigrants and the helpers, which appointed him to the caliphate: “The special council is for the immigrants and the helpers (Ansar). So, if they gather around someone and call him their Imam, seeking the pleasure of Allah, if someone attributed a mistake to their action or initiates a heresy, he should be returned to the congregation.”

In a letter to Ali, Mu’awiya writes thus: “The supporters of Uthman are suspicious of you because you gave shelter to his killers, and now they are around you and they are helping you, and you exonerate yourself of Uthman’s blood. If you are telling the truth, handle them (i.e., the killers) to us so that we can



avenge them, and then, I will come to pledge allegiance to you.”

It is clear from Mu’awiya’s speech and letters that what they left to the arbitrators was to see if the murderers of Uthman were right in their actions or not. It was not the duty of the arbitrators to sit and think about whether Ali deserved the caliphate or Mu’awiya. As it has been written that Mu’awiya was thinking about the caliphate but he did not say it, because he did not consider it the right time. Mu’awiya was saying that Uthman was killed unjustly, and I am his relative and guardian.

A reconciliation letter was written and Ash’ath read it to the people everyone expressed their satisfaction until it reached a group of Bani Tamim. Urwa ibn Udayah from among them said: Do you make a judgement in Allah’s work? There is no judgement except for Allah and he became agitated. But the people who later became the Kharijites apologized to Ash’ath. This letter of reconciliation was written on Wednesday, the 13th of Safar, 37 Hijra.

The place of residence for the arbitrators was in “Douma Al-Jandal”; an oasis in Jawf on the northern border of the Arabian Peninsula. Finally, the day for the declaration of opinion approached. The day when both arbitrators have to declare their opinion on whether Uthman deserved to be killed or whether he was killed unjustly? However, they did not stop on the investigation of the death of Uthman; rather they even went further.



Amr ibn ‘As with special cleverness agreed with Abu Musa that Ali does not deserve to rule because he sheltered the killers of Uthman and started the war. Abu Musa also criticized Mu’awiya and did not see him as worthy of the caliphate. They decided that Abu Musa should depose Ali from the caliphate, while Amr ibn ‘As should depose Mu’awiya, and the action of appointing a new Caliph should be handled by the council (Shura). Who had given them such authority? And where did they find this right? We do not see anything of such in the reconciliation letter. But they both made such an agreement with each other. When the arbitrators had to announce their verdict, Amr ibn ‘As used another trick. He put Abu Musa forward and said: “Your honour is obligatory on me and you should first make a declaration of your opinion.”

This naive person took his beard and even though Ibn Abbas warned him and told him to allow Amr to give his opinion first, he refused and came to the crowd and said: “I depose Ali from the caliphate just like I remove this ring from a finger.” Thereafter Amr ascended the pulpit and said: “Just as he deposed Ali from the caliphate, I will also depose him and appoint Mu’awiya to the caliphate as I put this ring on my finger.”

Abu Musa got angry and said: The likeness of Amr is like those about whom Allah said: "Relate to them an account of him to whom We gave Our signs, but he cast them off." (Araf, 7: 175) Amr also said: “The similitude of you is like a donkey carrying books.”



They blamed each other and each of them went in a different direction, and what Ali feared for the Kufians happened. The Iraqis objected when they heard the decision of the arbitrators but it was too late. The group, who were later known as Kharijites, shouted “There is no judgement except that of Allah” and criticized the Imam, why did you appoint an arbitrator? Ali (PBUH) said the following about this: “Because these people were invited to allow the Qur’an to judge among ourselves, we were not a group that turned away from the Book of Allah, as He has said that “if you dispute concerning anything, refer it to Allah and the Apostle.” And referring it to Allah is to accept His Book as a judge, and referring it to the Messenger’s Sunnah is to accept his Sunnah (practice). If they truly judge with Allah’s Book, we are more deserving of it than other people.”

In response to those who said, what is the qualification of the people to be a judge in the religion of Allah? He (PBUH) said: “We did not appoint the people to be the judge, but we appointed the Qur’an as the judge. This Qur’an is written in a manuscript, which is between two cover pages. It doesn’t have a tongue to speak, it must be translated, and its translation is done by those men who understand its meaning.”

Also, “The opinion of your leaders was unanimous to accept two men as arbitrators, and we obtained an agreement from those two to take the Qur’an as a yardstick and not to exceed its rulings. Their tongue should be with the Qur’an and their hearts should follow its ruling. But those two disobeyed the Qur’an



and gave up the truth while they knew it. They desired to get out of the right path and their mood was to deviate and oppose what pleases Allah.”

They said: “Now that this was the case, we must resume the battle.” But it was not possible to resume the battle. Because according to the agreement, they could not go to war until the month of Ramadan. After they accepted (seemingly or out of belief, Allah knows) that the appointment of the arbitrator was due to their insistence, they said: “Why did you establish a term with the Syrians?” Ali said: “But your speech that why I specified a period for them for arbitration? I did that so that the ignorant ones would clearly see their error and the wise would remain steadfast in their beliefs, and that maybe during this time when reconciliation is established, Allah will make the affairs of this nation smooth.”

Another group went beyond complaining and said: “It is not in the capacity of servants of Allah [i.e., human beings] to judge in Allah’s religion. For Allah is the only judge.” And every day, they went further in their heretical thought until finally, they said to Ali: “You have become a disbeliever in the religion of Allah by appointing an arbitrator.”

At that point, they withdrew from Ali’s army and came to the house of Abdullah son of Wahab al-Rāsibī in a place called Harura. Abdullah gave them a sermon, and invited them to piety and enjoining of good deeds and forbidding of evil. Then he said: “Get out of this city whose people are and seek refuge in



the cities and places in the mountains and do not accept this heresy.” Another one of them named Harqus son of Zuhair from the tribe of Tamim said: “The possessions of this world are few and separation from it is close, the jewel of the world entices you to stay in it and prevents you from seeking the truth and denying the oppression. Allah is indeed with those who are Godwary and those who are virtuous.”

So, they said: “This gathering became greater and, in that assembly, they pledged allegiance to Abdullah son of Wahab. From there, they went to Nahrwan and invited the people to join their group.” Ali wrote a letter to them saying: “These two judges did not go according to the ruling of the Qur’an and the Sunnah. Whenever my letter reaches you, come back to us.”

They wrote in response: “You are not angry for the sake of Allah; you are only angry with them [i.e., the arbitrators] for your selfish interest. If you testify to your disbelief and repent, we will look into your affair, otherwise, know that Allah does not like traitors.”

Thereafter, they started killing people. They killed Abdullah ibn Khabbab, whose father was a companion of the Messenger of Allah, and opened the stomach of his pregnant wife. When the news reached Ali, he said to the people of Kufa: “How can we leave them alone and go to Syria? It is better to make our mind at ease on the side of the Kharijites, thereafter rush towards Syria.” On the other hand, the Kharijites of Basra, whose number was documented as five hundred men, joined the



Kharijites of Nahrwan, and their number increased and their danger became more serious.

Ali went after the Kharijites with his troops, but as it was necessary for his guidance and kindness before the war broke out, he sent Abdullah son of Abbas to them and told him: "Do not use the Qur'an as an argument against them because the Qur'an has different meanings. You will say something and your opponent will say something else. But dialogue with them with the Prophetic tradition that they had no choice but to accept it."

Ibn Abbas went to them, but talking with them was not fruitful because the Kharijites were ready for a fight. However, before the battle, Ali (PBUH) also went to their camp and said: "Were you all with us in the battle Siffin?" They responded: "Some of us were there while some were not." He said: "So, separate those who were present in Siffin into a group, and those who were not present into another group, so that I may speak to each group as it suits them."

The Imam spoke to the people: "Listen to what I say and turn to me with your heart, and the person I want to testify will speak about it as he knows: Was it when out of trickery and deception, they (the Syrians) raised the Qur'an, didn't you say that they are our brothers and co-religionists? They asked for pardon from us and turned to the Book of Allah, that we should accept their opinion and free them. I told you that this is an act that openly means accepting the judgment of the Qur'an, but the secret of which is enmity with Allah and faith?"



Some of them testified to this and thereafter Ali told Abu Ayyub Ansari to raise a flag and he (PBUH) said: “Whoever comes under this flag is safe.” Five hundred of them under the leadership of Farwa ibn Nawfal Al-Ashja’i separated from the Kharijites and moved to the city of Daskara. A group went to Kufa and a hundred people came to Ali. But most of them remained and said: “You are right, we accepted the judgment and by so, we became disbelievers. Now we have returned to Allah, if you also repent of your disbelief, we will be with you.” Ali said: “May the stone of calamity fall on you so that it leaves no trace of you. After believing in Allah and fighting with Muhammad Mustafa (PBUHH), how could I testify to my disbelief?! If I do so, I will be lost and have no way to salvation. Take the present and the path of the past as your guide. Verily, all of you shall be degraded and become the prey of the victorious sword of the oppressors after me.”

Seven or nine of Ali’s companions were martyred in this battle while only nine from among the Kharijites remained. Ali (PBUH) said before the commencement of the battle: “By Allah, ten of them would not remain and ten from you would not be killed.”

The battle with the Kharijites ended in favour of the central caliphate. But the negative effect it had on the spirit of many Iraqis was worse than the previous battle. In this battle, Muslims fought with Muslims whose foreheads were in prostration, and most of them were memorizers of all or most of the Qur’an.



Throughout the reign of the Marwan and the Abbasids, the Khawarij clashed with the governments in Basra, Ahvaz and the southern cities of Iran and defeated the large armies of the Caliph and they were later divided into different schools of thought. The only remaining sect of the Kharijites is Ibadiyyah.

Presently, the Ibadi sect of Kharijites in Algeria mostly live in the cities of Tahert and Ghardayah. The Ibadis are also found in the emirates of the Persian Gulf, as the official school of thought of the majority of the people of the Sultanate of Oman is Ibadi.

Unit 23: Ali and the Kharijites

The story of the Kharijites was the most amazing and painful incident that happened during the Caliphate of Ali (PBUH). Talha and Zubair wanted a governorship position. Mu'awiya was so interested in the caliphate. But Kharijites were not interested in any of these two. Some of them were wakeful at night and reciters of the Qur'an. On the other hand, most of them knew Ali very well as they were aware of the hadiths that the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) had said about him. They were aware of his simple and ascetic lifestyle.

They observed his accuracy in the execution of divine orders. They knew very well that he was not satisfied with the appointment of the arbitrators. They and other troops forced him to do this, and despite all this, they opposed him and stood firmly against him. Why did they do that?

Perhaps this statement of the Commander of the Faithful was an



answer to this question: “The one who seeks the truth and follows the path of error is not the same as the one who seeks falsehood and finds it.” Mu’awiya and the rebels sought falsehood and the Kharijites sought the truth, but they erred. Satan’s tricks and bonds that no one can be freed from except by taking refuge in Allah.

In one of his speeches to the Kharijites, Ali said: "If based on your assumption, you do not believe except that I made a mistake and went astray, then, why do you think that the entire nation of Muhammad was misled by my error and you attributed my error to them and because of the sin that I committed, you have made them disbelievers. Your swords fall on the neck, rightly and wrongly and you mingled the guilty with the innocent ones. You are indeed the worst people and the tool in the hand of Satan and the cause of misleading this and that. "

The battle with the Kharijites ended and the Khatriis were safe from their seditiousness.

Unit 24: Ali and his Disloyal Companion I

The Commander of the Faithful asked the army to prepare for a battle with the Syrians, but they said: “Our arrows are exhausted, our swords are blunted, our spears seized to work. Send us back to Kufa so that we can organize ourselves there.”

Ali (PBUH) was annoyed by their failure to fight and said: “We were with the Messenger of Allah. We kill our fathers, brothers and uncles and covered them in blood. This kinship killing did



not make us unhappy, but it increased our faith that we were on the right path, we were patient in hardships, and diligent in fighting the enemy. I swear by my soul, if our behaviour was like yours, the pillar of religion would not be in place, nor the tree of faith would be fresh and beautiful.”

On the other hand, the people of Syria were unanimous in obeying Mu’awiya and did not disobey his orders. The Imam in this regard said: “By Allah! I would have liked Mu’awiya to trade you to me like dinars and dirhams. Take ten of you and give me one of his people! O people of Kufa! I found that you have three things but you don’t have two things. You are deaf with listening ears, you are dumb with eloquent tongues, you are blind with seeing eyes, you will neither be free in the time of war nor in the time of calamity, you are brothers of the same colour.”

And again, comparing his companions with the followers of Mu’awiya, he said: “They are ready on their falsehood, but you are scattered on your truth. You disobey your leader concerning the truth, and they follow their leader on falsehood. They work with their leader based on trust but you work based on betrayal. They are honest in their cities but you are corrupt and evil-doers.”

When Amr deceived Abu Musa and dethroned Ali (PBUH) from the caliphate and appointed Mu’awiya for it. Mu’awiya knew that the time to attack Iraq is close. But first, he must create his fear in the hearts of the people of that State. To scare



the Iraqis, he sent commanders to the border areas of that land to loot, kill people and scare them. Ali (PBUH) constantly invited his people to Jihad, but they gave excuses every time, and the Imam, who saw them in the field with the people of Syria, scolded them and said: “You smell ugly! And do not come out of sadness to cry. They rob you and you have no shame. They fight with you but you are not ready to fight them. They disobey Allah and you are satisfied. If I call you in the summer, you will say that the weather is very hot, give some time for the heat to decrease. And if I command you in the winter, you will say that it is very cold, give some time for the cold to get out of our country. O you who run away from heat and cold like this, where will you fight with a forged sword?”

Unit 25: Ali and his Disloyal Companion II

The 39th and 40th years of Hijra were painful years for Imam Ali (PBUH). Mu’awiya sent some groups to the borders of Iraq to abduct and frighten the Iraqi people and keep them away from Ali. Nu’mān son of Bashir was sent with a thousand army to Ain al-Tamar, which was a town in the western part of Kufa.

Malik son of Ka’b, who at that time was in that city with only one hundred men, asked Imam Ali (PBUH) for help to confront Nu’mān. Imam Ali (PBUH) requested the people of Kufa to help him, but they failed to go. When Ali (PBUH) observed their laziness, he ascended the pulpit and said: “Whenever you hear that a group of Syrians have come to your place, you crawl into your houses and close the door on yourself as a lizard



crawls into its hole and a hyena crawls into its nest. By Allah, the deceived is the one who is deceived by you, and the one who expected victory from you is unlucky. ‘Indeed, we belong to Allah and unto Him do we indeed return.’!’”

Were this speech and the likes have an impact on the hard heart of those people? Definitely no! In that same year, Mu’awiya sent one of his companions named Yazid son of Shajara to Mecca to perform a Pilgrimage with the people, to take their oath of allegiance for him and to expel the agents of Imam Ali from that city. Likewise, he had a group to loot the island.

Similarly, in that very year, he sent Sufyan son of ‘Awf with six thousand men to plunder the people of Hit city. Sufyan engaged in the killing of people and taking of their properties. Imam Ali (PBUH) set out on foot and went to Nakhilah. A few people followed him and they said: “O the Commander of the Faithful! We are sufficient for task” He (PBUH) said: “You that could not handle your own task diligently; then how can you be sufficient for me in other tasks? If before my period, the subjects were complaining about the oppression of their rulers, but today, I am complaining about the oppression of my subjects to me, as if I am a follower and they are the leader, I am a subject and they are the commander.”

In the year 39 of Hijra, Mu’awiya sent Dahak son of Qays to loot and kill the people. When Imam Ali (PBUH) observed the negligence of the people in confronting him, he made this sermon: “O people who are self-sufficient but disagree in



requests. Your words are as sharp as a stone and your actions are as slow to the extent that the enemy is greedy about you. You fight in the battle of seeking a man and seeking a way to escape. The one who asks you for help is greedy and your greedy heart is far from comfort. For which house are you fighting? And after me, with which leader do you work? By Allah, the deceived is the one who is deceived by you, and the one who expected victory from you is unlucky.”

However, Satan had filled the heart of those people so much that there was no room for admonition there, and the Imam (PBUH) said: “O unmanly in the form of man. O little wise, I wish I had not met and did not know you. I swear by Allah, the end of this acquaintance was regret and the outcome of which was sadness and regret. My heart is full of blood from you and my chest is full of anger from you people, who pour a sip of sorrow into my mouth one after another and you mix things up by disobeying and giving up on my side. ”

And he shared his heartache with Allah while saying: "O Allah, they are tired of me and I am tired of them. They are fed up with me and I am heartbroken with them. So, provide me with people who are better than them, and make for them leaders who are worse than me. "

Then he sent Hujr son of Udiy to confront him. A war broke out between Hujr and Dahhak and Dahhak fled. Mu’awiya knew that he couldn’t take over Iraq as long as Ali was alive. There was another State left that had to be conquered and that was the



land of Egypt. The Egyptians were not satisfied with Uthman and there was a fear that they would attack Syria with the help of Ali. And besides, Egypt was a rich land. It had plenty of grain and cash, and it was considered a rich resource for the government, and it should not be lost.

Amr, who wanted to rule over Egypt, made an agreement with Mu'awiya and he came to him, saying: "Send an army with a worthy commander there. Whenever he reaches Egypt, our supporters will join him and your work will be progressing." Mu'awiya said: "It is better to write to our friends who are not on good terms with Ali. If Egypt comes under our control without a fight, that is much better, otherwise, we will send an army. Amr, you are strict and, in a hurry, and I want this job to go gently." Amr said: "Do as you wish, but our job will not progress except with war."

Mu'awiya wrote a letter to Maslama ibn Mukhallad and Mu'awiya son of Khudij. These two were opponents of Ali. Mu'awiya praised them for this opposition and asked them to rise for vengeance for Uthman's blood, and promised them that he would make them partners in his government. Muhammad wrote about the incident to the Imam. He (PBUH) replied: "Prepare your helpers and be patient, I will send an army to help you."

Then, he (PBUH) invited the people to go to Egypt and assist Muhammad but their response was clear. Some of them had their heart attached to Mu'awiya's promises, some of them were tired of the war, and some of them desired the triumph of Iraq



over Syria but did not achieve it, separated from their leader and did not obey his orders. Ali said to them: “O people which if I command them, they do not obey, and if I call them, they do not respond. If they fight with you, you are weak and incapable. If they are forced to do something difficult, they will back down. What do you expect from the insolence of the people? Why don’t you stand up for victory? Why don’t you fight to get your right? Shame on you. Wow! Mu’awiya invites his followers and they follow him without helping them, and I will pay your gift and you scatter away from me.”

Ali (PBUH) decided to send a more experienced ruler to Egypt and said: “Egypt must be governed by one of two people. Qais, who I removed from the government there, or Ashtar.” In those days, Ashtar was living in the city of Nasibin. Ali asked for him and told him that no one can handle the affairs of Egypt except him.

Ashtar went to Egypt and Mu’awiya’s spies informed him. Mu’awiya was worried and knew that if Ashtar reaches Egypt, it will be difficult for his supporters. He wrote a letter to Clysma’s tribute officer saying: “If you could kill Ashtar, I will not ask for tribute from you as long as you stay in Clysma.”

When Ashtar reached Clysma, the tribute officer went ahead to him and brought him to his house and fed him food contaminated with poison and got him martyred.

On hearing the news of Malik’s martyrdom, Mu’awiya said:



“Ali had two hands, one fell in Siffin (Ammar) and the other when he reached Egypt.”

When the news of his martyrdom reached Imam Ali (PBUH), he said: “Who was Malik? By Allah, if he was a mountain, he would have been a mountain different from other mountains, and if he was a stone, he would have been a thorny stone, which no poison could touch and no bird could jump above it.”

In some other narrations, he said: “Malik is to me like I am to the Messenger of Allah.”

From there, a war broke out between Muhammad and the supporters of Uthman in Egypt, and they defeated him and martyred him. And they put his body in a dead donkey and set it on fire. Their action was so cruel that when Aisha heard about it, she cried bitterly and cursed Mu’awiya and Amr after the ritual prayer.

When Ali learned about Muhammad’s death, he praised him and wrote to Abdullah ibn Abbas: “They have conquered Egypt and Muhammad was martyred. I ask Allah to reward him for his calamity. He was a benevolent and diligent child. I called people more than once to help him. Some came with displeasure, some gave false excuses, and some sat down. I beseech Allah to free me from them soon. By Allah, were it not for my desire to be martyred when facing the enemy, and my heart didn’t like a mere death, I would have liked not to spend one day with them and never meet them.”



In this way, Mu'awiya took another step towards his dream. He was in charge of Syria, he also attacked Egypt, it is now the turn of Iraq.

On the one hand, Ali (PBUH) saw the arrogance of Mu'awiya and the laziness and discouragement of his people on the other hand. Then, he made mention of the Muslims of the time of the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH). Those whose hearts and tongues were with Allah and the Prophet, those who did not look at themselves and their descendants. And if they did, they did so to seek Allah's pleasure. Now he sees that the old habit of the Jahiliyyah period has been revived.

Ali (PBUH) has been hurt by these people and he made complaints to Allah. If he saw someone who is trustworthy, he would express his heartache to him. One such was the heartache that he shared with Kumayl son of Ziyad: "There is accumulated knowledge here (pointing to his chest). If I could find students for it! Yes, I found it! He had a sharp perception, but was not trustworthy, he accumulated the world through religion and by the bounty of Allah, he sought superiority over His servants, and he sold greatness over the friends of Allah with the proof of knowledge. Either the one who is a follower of the gods of knowledge, but does not have the insight to remove him from doubt, he inevitably gets caught in the opening of the first doubt, or the one who strives hard to enjoy and drive away lust. None of them can pass the religion and mostly stay on the graze."



Unit 26: Ali's Martyrdom

The sum of the narrations that the early historians presented about the martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithful, and both the Shias and Sunnis narrated it in their literature, show that Ali (PBUH) was martyred by the conspiracy of the Kharijites.

The result of those statements is that after the end of the battle of Nahrwan, a group of Kharijites gathered and wept over their dead members, who were described with worship and piety. At that point, they said that these seditions [in the Muslim nation] arose from three people: Ali, Amr son of 'As and Mu'awiya. The affairs of Muslims will not be right as long as these three people are alive. And three of them took it upon themselves to kill these three.

Abd al-Rahman son of Muljam from Bani Murad took it upon himself to kill Ali. There is no doubt that Ali (PBUH) was hit by Ibn Muljam on the 19th eve of the month of Ramadan. However, was his killer only the Kharijite? It is doubtful. What seems more correct to us is that the root of this conspiracy should be sought first in Kufa, then in Damascus. As it was documented, Mu'awiya knew that he couldn't attain the caliphate as long as Ali was alive. Ash'ath, son of Qays, as it was mentioned that he did not agree with Ali. We wrote earlier that Ash'ath was also not satisfied with Ali. Because Ali (PBUH) had stopped him from ruling over the people of Kinda, and he also called him a



hypocrite son of an infidel in the pulpit.

Similarly, the story of a sudden discovery of a woman named Quttaam, which is documented that when Ibn Muljam saw her, he seriously fell in love with her. And this seems to be the invention of the storytellers who wanted to change the course of the incident to the story of Quttaam. While Tabari considered her a holy woman, Ibn A'tham al-Kufi introduced her as a woman of lust and a half-prostitute.

The totality of these contradictions confirms the fabrication of the original story. It seems that the story of Quttaam has been created and they linked it with three people so that it will be retained in the minds while the main conspirators will be forgotten.

I know that a story that has been in the minds of readers and listeners for more than thirteen centuries will not fade away with this writing and the likes. I don't expect them to abandon that belief and take this.

In the month he returned to his Lord, Ali (PBUH) had divided the place for his Iftar. On one night, he was with his son, Hasan; a night with Husain, and a night with Abdullah Jafar, and he did not eat more than two or three bites. They asked him why he was satisfied with this little food and he said: "There is a little time left until the divine Will comes, I want to be on an empty stomach."



Unit 27: The Last Will of Ali

Ibn Muljam took his sword and came to the mosque and lay down among the sleeping people. Ali (PBUH) made the call to prayer, entered the mosque and woke up the sleeping ones, then he went to the altar and started the prayer, bowing and then prostrating. When he raised his head from the first prostration, Ibn Muljam hit him in the same spot he was hit by Amr son of AbdulWadd in the battle of the Trench [Khandaq]. Ibn Muljam fled and Ali fell on the altar. The people shouted that the Commander of the Faithful has been assassinated. According to his narration from Hasan ibn Bazee', Balādhurī said: "When the son of Muljam hit him, he said: By the Lord of Ka'bah, I am prosperous and his last words were these verses: So, whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it (Qur'an 99: 7-8)."

Imam was taken home from the mosque. It didn't take long for the murderer to be apprehended and brought to him. He said to him: "You are the son of Muljam?" He responded: "Yes."

"O Hasan, feed him well and fasten him tightly! If I die, send him to me, so that I will make a case with him in front of Allah, and if I am alive, I will either forgive or take revenge.

In the last moments of his life, Imam asked for his children and gave them the following pieces of advice:

"Fear Allah in your relations with your neighbours. Your Prophet often recommended them to you, so much so that we



thought he would make them heirs (of our heritage).”

“Fear Allah in respect to the Holy Qur’an Remain. (Take care that) no one should surpass you in following its tenets.”

“Fear Allah in relation to your prayers, as it is the pillar of your religion.”

“Fear Allah in relation to your Lord’s House (Ka’abah), do not forsake it so long as you live, because if you do, you will not be looked upon with respect.”

“(Fear) Allah in respect to Jihad in the cause of Allah with your wealth, your souls and your tongues.”

“Maintain mutual communication and exchange of opinion among yourselves. Beware of disunity and enmity. Do not desist from bidding good deeds and forbidding evil ones, lest vicious people may overrule you, and then in such a case, your invocations will not be responded to by Allah.”

“O children of Abdul Muttalib! Do not shed the blood of the Muslims under the pretext that the Commander of the Faithful has been assassinated. Know that no one should be killed except my killer. Wait till I die by this stroke of him, then strike a single stroke against him, and do not mutilate him, for I had heard the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) saying: “Mutilate not even a rabid dog.”

Gradually, his aspiration was becoming a reality as he was coming closer to what he desired. For a long time, he wanted



martyrdom and used to say: “O Allah! Give me better than these people and give them leaders worse than me!”

Ali (PBUH) returned to his Lord and justice lost its faithful guardian and upholder and it remained helpless. The oppressors opened their hands from all directions to its sanctity and stole little by little as much as they could until nothing was left of it. Then they put oppression in its place, and it will continue to take its place until Allah wants the earth to be filled with justice and equity after it has been filled with oppression and injustice.

When Ali was buried, Imam Hasan ascended the pulpit and said: “O People! A man has passed away among you who will not be equalled by anyone before or after him. The Messenger of Allah used to give him the flag and send him to his battlefield and he would not return except with victory. Gabriel was on his right and Mikail was on his left-hand side.”

After the martyrdom of Ali, the regime seekers did not stop and as long as they could, they put false hadiths in the mind of this and that, maybe they will reduce his sanctity. However, the light that has been lit by Allah would not be extinguished by this and that cold wind, rather, its light will increase every day. Over time, the friendship of Ali finds its way into the hearts, and the voice of his Wilayah (Guardianship), day and night, in the morning and the evening caresses the ears of Shiites and his loved ones.

The book is the English translation of a summarized Persian version of the book titled “Ali in his own words” written by Seyed Jafar Shahidi a prominent figure in Islamic History. The booklet focuses on the personality of Imam Ali and his social and political roles during and after the passing of the Prophet (PBUH).

Published by Mousa Kalantari Cultural Institute



Ahlul Bayt International Center



Office of Islamic Culture Publication



Mousa Kalantari Cultural Institute