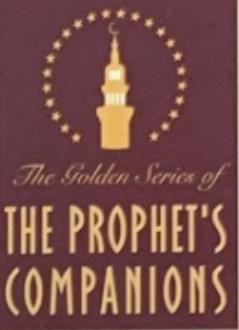


The Fourth Caliph of
ISLAM



! **AU**I

Bin Abi-Tâlib رضي الله عنه

ABDUL BASIT AHMAD



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The Golden Series of
THE PROPHET'S COMPANIONS



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The Golden Series of
THE PROPHET'S COMPANIONS

The Fourth Caliph of Islam

'Ali
Bin Abi-Tâlib رضي الله عنه



Abdul Basit Ahmad

Edited by
Abu Taymiyyah Shafiq Siddiq



DARUSSALAM

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*In the Name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*



© Maktaba Dar-us-Salam, 2014
King Fahd National Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Ahmad. Abdul Basit
Ali bin Abi Talib./Abdul Basit Ahmad
Riyadh , 2014
48 p : 17cm X 24 cm
ISBN:987-603-500-296-7
1-Prophet Companion Successers 2. Ali Ibn Abi
Talib Khalifa 35-40 H. 3-Caliphs
239.9 DC 1435/3871

L.D. no. 1435 / 3871
ISBN: 987-603-500-296-7





ٰمِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا ۚ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْهِ فِيمَنْهُمْ مَنْ قَضَى نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ
يَنْظُرُ وَمَا بَدَلُوا تَبْدِيلًا

“Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah [i.e. they have gone out for Jihâd (holy fighting), and showed not their backs to the disbelievers]; of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e. have been martyred); and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed [i.e. They never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allah] in the least.” (33:23)



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Publisher's Note

All praises and thanks are due to Allâh, the Lord of the worlds, and peace be upon the Master of the Messengers, Muhammad, his family and his Companions.

Darussalam is pleased to present this valuable series, 'The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions' to the Muslim youth. The purpose of these books is to enlighten our youth about the lives of the greatest heroes of Islam, the Prophet's Companions. Also, we wish to increase the enthusiasm of the Muslim youth for following and adhering to their religion. In this way, these books achieve two very important tasks: educating our youth and encouraging them to be good Muslims.

The following story titled 'Ali bin Abi Tâlib' - The Fourth Caliph of Islam' is the life story of one of the closest Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. He was the first boy to believe in Islam as he was very close to the Prophet ﷺ and lived in his house. He also married Fâtimah , the Prophet's daughter. During his life in the Prophet's house, he learned from him many things about the Noble Qur'ân. He was humble, just and tender. His life was a true dedication to the support of the Prophet ﷺ and Islam. The Prophet ﷺ took him

as a brother. His rank among Muslims was very high to the extent that the Prophet ﷺ told him that he was to him like Hârûn was to Mûsâ (عليه السلام).

His bravery and heroism were without equal. He killed several renowned enemies of Islam in individual combat and conquered several fortresses and towns.

We hope that these books are beneficial to our Muslim youth, as they are the future of Islam. We at Darussalam realize the importance of good Islamic literature for Muslim children, especially in the West where non-Islamic influences are so strong. For this reason, we feel that the availability of this series will be a valuable aid in instilling a genuine love for Islam in our youths. We would like to thank the author, Mr. Abdul Basit Ahmad, the editor, Mr. Aqeel Walker, and Mr. Muhammad Ayub Sapra for their diligent work in preparing this series. As Allâh says:

"Is there any reward for good other than good?" (Ar-Rahmân, verse 60)

And our final invocation is that all praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists.

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager



Foreword

Friends normally influence the behaviour of each other. This influence becomes more evident when two persons live together like members of one family. How then, if a boy lives under the care of a Prophet. For sure, the influence would be so great to the extent that the boy would most of the time become a true copy of the Prophet.

This is the case of our hero, 'Ali ibn Abi Tâlib رض. He was the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Since early childhood, 'Ali رض lived with Prophet ﷺ and learned from him how to be true, trustworthy, humble, and honest. He also learned from the Prophet ﷺ how to strongly defend his faith and sacrifice everything for the cause of Truth.

The Prophet ﷺ took him as his brother. He once told him: "*Don't you like to be to me like Hârûn was to Mûsâ, however, there will be no Prophet after me.*"

The Prophet ﷺ also gave him his beloved daughter Fâtimah رض in marriage to foster their intimate relationship.

Since childhood, 'Ali never kneeled before an idol, never indulged himself in the vices of the day and never spent a

minute of his precious time looking for superficial pleasures of life. He remained true to the morals taught to him by the Prophet ﷺ to the last minute of his life.

‘Ali ﷺ was a real hero. He fought all the battles of Islam except one and was always victorious. He challenged known heroes of his time and defeated them.

His wisdom and justice excelled all examples and his eloquence added much to the Arabic language to the extent that he left for us many statements and proverbs that indicate how wise and knowledgeable he was. As he was very close to the Prophet ﷺ, he acquired great knowledge of Islam and the Noble Qur’ân.

‘Ali ﷺ led a humble life. Once, he and his wife, Fâtimah ﷺ, were eating some dry bread. A beggar knocked at the door of their house and asked for some food. They gave him the piece of dry bread they had and spent the whole day with empty stomachs.

Let us now read the story of this great Companion of the Prophet ﷺ in order to learn how to follow his example in our lives.

Abdul Basit Ahmad

Introduction

The Prophet ﷺ suffered a lot to propagate the message of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. All the chiefs of the Quraysh, the tribe to which the Prophet ﷺ belonged, rejected to follow the new religion because they did not like to put behind their false deities, to treat the poor with justice and to be kind to their slaves. They felt that the new faith was aiming at pulling the carpet from under their feet. None of them thought of the day when all people would be presented before Allâh to account for their good and bad deeds. They said to the Prophet ﷺ that they would not be resurrected after death and that if Allâh would punish them for their deeds, let Him do it while they were alive. They were ill minded because they thought that the life they were leading was the last one and that they would end in dust forever.

The Prophet ﷺ was preaching to them that they would be resurrected after death and that they would face their Lord, Who would reward them for their good deeds and punish them for their bad deeds. He promised them Paradise if they believed in him and the message of Islam and threatened them that they would dwell in hellfire if they belie him and hold to their false beliefs.



The atrocities that the pagans were indulging themselves in either in Makkah or elsewhere, made them stand against the purity preached by the Prophet ﷺ. Only poor people and slaves along with few strong people from different clans believed the Prophet ﷺ. The first persons to believe the Prophet ﷺ were his close friend Abu Bakr ؓ, his wife Khadijah ؓ, and his cousin 'Ali Ibn Abi Tâlib ؓ. His uncle, Abu Tâlib, 'Ali's father, provided him with needed protection against the evils of the chiefs of the Quraysh. His wife Khadijah ؓ also provided him with all the affection and support he needed to continue his mission.

However, these two supporters died in the same year leaving the Prophet ﷺ alone in the face of oppression exercised by the people of Makkah.

The Prophet ﷺ frequented the marketplace and called the visitors of Makkah to Islam but no clan would listen to him. Abû Jahl and the Prophet's uncle, Abu Lahab, were following his steps to defame his personality although both of them knew that he was trustworthy and honourable. Once, Abû Jahl saw the Prophet ﷺ praying beside the Ka'bah. He threatened that if he saw him praying again in public, he would humiliate him. However, when he tried to put his foot on the Prophet's neck while he was prostrating, he turned back terrified. The other chiefs of the Quraysh who saw him retreating with terror asked him about the reason that made him so terrified. He replied that a fire separated him from Muhammad. The Prophet ﷺ told the people that if Abû Jahl had come closer to him, angels would have snatched his limbs apart.

The people of Makkah asked the Prophet ﷺ to bring about

sings that he was a true messenger for Allâh. He told them that the Qur'ân was the clearest sign to his Prophethood. He challenged them even to compose one verse like the Noble Qur'ân. However, they failed to do so. They told him that they would not believe him unless he caused stones to fall on them from the sky. They were so arrogant. However, the Prophet ﷺ was merciful and patient towards them and asked Allâh to guide them instead of throwing stones down over their heads.

The Prophet ﷺ left Makkah with his followers to find a shelter in order to preach the message of Islam. The people of Al-Madinah who were also worshipping stone idols believed in him. The Jews who were living in the suburbs of the town were always threatening them that a Prophet ﷺ was going to appear in Makkah and that they would follow him and conquer them. The people of Al-Madinah provided all kinds of support to the Prophet and his Companions and were sincere to the message of Islam. They fought several battles against the pagans and finally conquered Makkah and put an end to idolatry in the Arabian Peninsula.

The people of Makkah thought that the Prophet ﷺ, whom they oppressed and forced to leave his hometown, would avenge himself against them. However, the Prophet ﷺ proved to them that he was not sent by Allâh to kill but to heal. All the people of Makkah believed in the message of Islam. Even when the other parts of the Arabian Peninsula recanted, the people of Makkah along with the people of Al-Madinah and other few tribes kept faithful to their religion.

By conquering Makkah, Islam flourished and expanded in

all directions. Before the Prophet ﷺ passed away, he prepared an army and ordered them to march to Syria. By the end of Abû Bakr's rule, Muslim armies were fighting the Romans and the Persians at the northern and north-eastern borders of the Arabian Peninsula. When 'Umar bin Al-Khattâb رضي الله عنه died, the Islamic rule covered most parts of Syria, Irâq, Irân, Egypt and other countries. Many people from these countries embraced Islam and shared in building the flourishing Islamic State.

Islam continued its march during the coming years through the Umayyad and Abbasid reigns. The Muslim armies reached India and the borders of China. On the other side, they conquered Spain and were about to conquer Europe. Most people of these countries embraced Islam because they tasted the sweet justice of Islam. Those who allege that Islam spread by force and the use of the sword deliberately omit to mention the civilization that Islam brought to the world when they were living in the gloom of dark ages. They want to defame the sublime message of Islam and make people keep away from the true meaning it gives to their lives because they want people to remain ignorant and hence they can exploit them as much as they can.

It is Islam that made the Bedouins of Arabia messengers of freedom and peace after they had been living in a state of constant war with each other. It is Islam that made the whole world breathe the fresh air of equality and salvation from the burdens of injustice. It is Islam that made people of all races join together as brothers without any discrimination in terms of colour, social status, financial position or any other worldly aspects.

Background

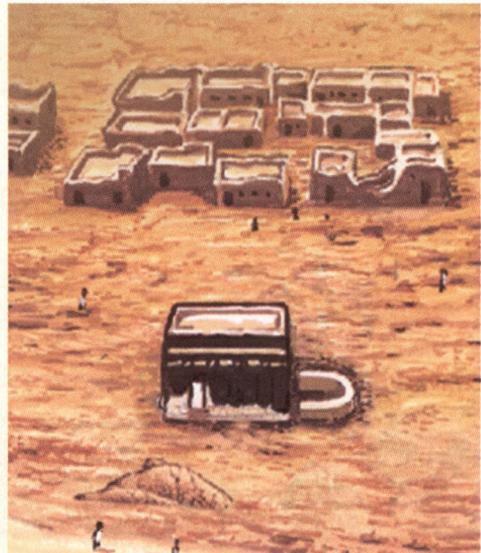
'Ali Ibn Abi Tâlib ﷺ belonged to the house of 'Abdul Muttalib of Bani Hâshim from the tribe of Quraysh. After the death of 'Abdul Muttalib, 'Ali's father, Abû Tâlib, became the chief of the clan. He took care of Muhammad when he was only eight years old as he was an orphan. He lost his father before he was born and lost his mother when he was only six years old. His grandfather, 'Abdul Muttalib, took care of him but he passed away when Muhammad was only eight years old. Abu Tâlib loved his nephew dearly. When Muhammad ﷺ was twelve years old, Abu Tâlib took him with him to Damascus. When he was twenty-five years old, he married Khadijah ﷺ.

Abu Tâlib was not well off. He had several children. Muhammad ﷺ wanted to help his uncle. Hence, he took 'Ali while he was still a child to live under his care. 'Ali was born twelve years before the Prophet ﷺ was blessed with the message of Islam. The Prophet ﷺ used to isolate himself from the society of Makkah to worship Allâh following the precepts of the religion of Ibrâhim. 'Ali helped in bringing food to the Prophet ﷺ at a cave called Hira' at a mountain near Makkah during the period when the Prophet ﷺ was praying to Allâh. He also shared with the Prophet ﷺ in his house, food and spent a long time with him. Hence, he learned many things from the Prophet ﷺ which qualified him to be a true Muslim since his early childhood. 'Ali was greatly impressed by the manner in which the Prophet ﷺ and his wife Khadijah ﷺ performed their prayers. He noticed

that they were leading a life different from the one other people of Makkah were leading. He was also impressed by the way the Prophet ﷺ was dealing with others. He noticed how honest, trustworthy and straightforward the Prophet ﷺ was towards all people, both rich and poor.

Introduction to Islam

While Muhammad ﷺ was worshipping Allāh at the cave of Hira', he received the Angel Gabriel. The Angel told him that he had been chosen by Allāh to preach Islam to his people. The Prophet ﷺ was ordered to preach the religion of Islam when Makkah and the whole Arabian Peninsula were indulging in the worship of idols. In the beginning, Allāh ordered the Prophet ﷺ to preach the message of Islam to his close relatives. The Prophet ﷺ and his wife Khadijah ﷺ kept their worship secret. As 'Ali was living with them in the same house, he knew everything they were doing. Once, he entered the house and saw the Prophet ﷺ and Khadijah ﷺ praying in a way different from the one his people were doing. He inquired about the prayer they were performing. Although he was very young to get involved in matters of such importance, the Prophet ﷺ told him that Allāh, the only



Lord of the universe, sent him to preach Islam to the people. The Prophet ﷺ also explained to 'Ali the principles of Islam and asked him to accept the message of Islam.

'Ali received this invitation with hesitation. He told the Prophet ﷺ that he would ask his father's counsel. The Prophet ﷺ said to him that if he did not like to accept the religion, he should keep it secret and not to tell anybody about it even his father. 'Ali promised to keep the message secret. Knowing how faithful the Prophet ﷺ was, he thought about the invitation very seriously. He was fully convinced that Muhammad ﷺ would not tell him lies or cheat him, especially that he loved him dearly and wished all the best for him. The next day, he came to the Prophet ﷺ to announce that he believed in the religion of Islam. At that time, 'Ali ﷺ was only twelve years old. It is reported that he was the first boy to accept Islam. 'Ali ﷺ asked the Prophet ﷺ to teach him how to pray. Now, all members of the house of the Prophet ﷺ were praying together. 'Ali was standing beside the Prophet ﷺ and his wife during prayers and learning more and more about the sublime principles of Islam. He was an eye witness of the revelation of the Noble Qur'an and memorized the first verses revealed to the Prophet ﷺ.

Oppression by the Quraysh

The Prophet ﷺ continued preaching Islam secretly to his closest relatives. However, he did not realize much success. Only four or five people accepted the message of Islam. His uncles tried their best to dissuade him.



Three years later, he was ordered by Allâh to proclaim Islam in public. ‘Ali ﷺ never thought that the Prophet ﷺ would meet such resistance as long as he was calling his people to goodness. However, he was a witness to the insults and oppression that the Prophet ﷺ faced but he was too young to provide any help to him. All he could do was to stop the boys whom the pagans instructed to insult the Prophet ﷺ and throw stones and dust at him.

Although ‘Ali’s father did not accept the Prophet’s invitation to Islam, he offered all the protection he could to the Prophet ﷺ. However, Abû Tâlib did not live long after the proclamation of the message of Islam. Khadijah ﷺ also died and left the Prophet ﷺ alone in the face of the troubles that the chiefs of the Quraysh were causing to the Prophet ﷺ. ‘Ali became an orphan while still a young boy. However, he found support and love under the care of the Prophet ﷺ. They both shared happy and difficult times of life.

The Quraysh and other tribes living in and around Makkah found that their efforts to stop the message of Islam were useless. They agreed to besiege Muslims and Bani Hâshim in an arid valley and cut all social and commercial relations with them. ‘Ali ﷺ and his fellow Muslims suffered much for three long years. The Quraysh prevented anyone from providing any food supplies to the Muslims. They wanted them to die out of hunger.

Migration to Abyssinia

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions, who were mostly weak people and slaves, received all kinds of torture at the hands of the chiefs of the Quraysh. Thirteen years of calling to Islam yielded only little success. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ had to find a shelter for his Companions against the tyranny of the Quraysh. He thought that they should leave to Abyssinia. There ruled a just Christian Emperor whom the people of Arabia respected much.

Some weak Muslims left Makkah secretly to Abyssinia. They lived there for some time. The chiefs of the Quraysh tried their best to get them back to Makkah but they failed. 'Ali did not like to leave the Prophet ﷺ alone. He kept beside the Prophet ﷺ trying his best to defend him and the other followers of Islam.

The Prophet ﷺ continued his struggle to spread the call of Islam among his tribesmen and the towns near Makkah but he faced huge oppression and resistance.

As Abyssinia was considered a temporary shelter for Muslims, the Prophet ﷺ did not leave Makkah to Abyssinia with his followers. He changed his way of calling to Islam. He began calling Arabs who were visiting Makkah during seasons. A group of men from Yathrib, a town about four hundred kilometers away visited Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ met them and explained the principles of Islam to them. They



consulted among each other whether to accept the call or not. They became sure that the Prophet ﷺ was truthful. They all believed in him. The Prophet ﷺ told them that he needed protection in their city to be able to proclaim Islam. They promised to provide every means of protection needed for the call to continue as destined by Allāh. They also told him that they would come back the next year with their chiefs to make the final agreement with the Prophet ﷺ. The next year seventy men and women from Yathrib visited Makkah and agreed with the Prophet ﷺ to provide all means they had to protect him and his followers. Hence, the Prophet ﷺ asked his followers to leave to Yathrib. All the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Yathrib secretly. There they received help and protection. The Prophet ﷺ, Abū Bakr and ‘Ali رضي الله عنهما did not leave with the other migrants. They stayed with the in Makkah until orders came down from heaven to the Prophet ﷺ to leave to Yathrib.

The Plot

When the chiefs of the Quraysh felt disparate to stop the call of Islam and that all Muslims escaped their hold and tyranny, they gathered and plotted to kill the Prophet ﷺ. They agreed that forty strong young men from all clans should surround the house of the Prophet ﷺ and all share in murdering him. The Angel Gabriel brought news of the plot to the Prophet ﷺ and conveyed orders to him from Allāh to migrate to Yathrib. The Prophet ﷺ told his Companion, Abū Bakr رضي الله عنهما, of the plot and asked him to accompany him to Yathrib.



Sublime Sacrifice

'Ali ﷺ hoped to migrate with the Prophet ﷺ, but the Prophet ﷺ ordered him to stay behind. He told him that some people had entrusted him with some of their precious belongings because they, in spite of their rejection of his call to Islam, believed that he was the most trustworthy man in the tribe. He also asked 'Ali ﷺ to sleep in his bed and cover his body with his blanket during the night when he and his Companion, Abu Bakr, would leave Makkah. 'Ali ﷺ accepted the mission and slept in the Prophet's bed.

The Prophet ﷺ left his house in the midnight. The forty young men were waiting around the house for the time to come to attack Muhammad and murder him. They did not notice that Muhammad had left his house. At the same time, 'Ali slept in the Prophet's bed and covered his body with the Prophet's blanket. The young men were now and

then peeping through the cracks of the door. They thought that Muhammad did not leave his house and that he was sleeping in his bed.

When it was time to go in and kill Muhammad, they removed the bed cover to surprisingly find 'Ali and not Muhammad ﷺ in the bed. Had they not removed the cover, they would have killed 'Ali ﷺ thinking that they had killed the Prophet ﷺ. 'Ali risked his life for the life of the Prophet ﷺ.

The young men were surprised to see 'Ali ﷺ. They asked him where Muhammad was. 'Ali ﷺ replied that he did not know. They beat and arrested him. After some time they released him. 'Ali delivered all properties that had been kept with the Prophet ﷺ as trusts to their owners and left Makkah to Yathrib. In Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ fostered ties of Islamic brotherhood among the Muhâjirin and the Ansâr (migrants and supporters). Every Migrant was made the brother in Islam of a supporter.

The Prophet ﷺ took 'Ali ﷺ as his brother in Islam. He also told them that whoever loved the Prophet ﷺ should love 'Ali and whoever hurts 'Ali would hurt the Prophet ﷺ. He also said:

*"Whoever is loyal to 'Ali
is loyal to me."*

A New Stage of Struggle

Now 'Ali ﷺ was twenty-five years old. He did his best to help in building the first mosque in the new Islamic State. To earn his living, 'Ali ﷺ was drawing water from wells to irrigate farms of Al-Madinah.

Permission

to Fight the Disbelievers

Immediately after settling in Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions began establishing firm foundations for their new state of Islam. At the same time, they were permitted by Allah to fight the pagans and spread the light of Islam around Al-Madinah. Muslims began patrolling outside Al-Madinah for security purposes. They received the news that a trade caravan belonging to the Quraysh was bound to Makkah back from Damascus nearby Al-Madinah. They went towards it to check it. Abū Sufyān, the leader of the caravan, received news of Muslims coming towards them, and in fear of their attack, he changed his direction and managed to escape their catch. When the Quraysh heard of the threat, they prepared a well-armed army of one thousand soldiers and headed to Al-Madinah to destroy the new state of Islam. Muslims, on the other hand, prepared an army one third the number of the Quraysh army with little arms. Both armies met at a place called Badr near Al-Madinah.



The Lion of Allâh

As usual, the pagans requested individual combat between heroes of the two armies. Three strong men from the Quraysh army advanced and challenged Muslims. Three Muslims from the supporters advanced and accepted the challenge. However, the three Makkans refused to fight them and asked for three men from the migrants. 'Ali ﷺ with two other Migrants advanced and challenged the Makkans. In no time, 'Ali ﷺ killed his opponent. The battle started fiercely. 'Ali ﷺ was known for his courage and skill in combat. He killed several pagan heroes and took several prisoners of war. The battle ended with a great victory for Muslims and utter defeat for the pagans. 'Ali ﷺ and his fellow Muslims returned to Al-Madinah to continue their struggle for building the Islamic State.

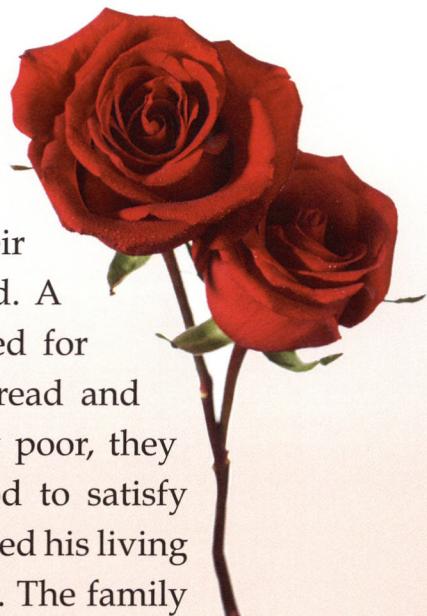
Marriage to Fâtimah

In the same year, the Prophet ﷺ accepted for his daughter, Fâtimah ؑ, to be married to 'Ali ﷺ. Eleven months later, 'Ali ﷺ and Fâtimah got married. All that 'Ali ﷺ could offer as a dowry was his armor which he had sold for five hundred and eighty dirhams. The Prophet ﷺ gave to his daughter an ordinary cot, a mattress stuffed with palm leaves, a water bag, two grinding stones and two earthen pitchers.



The Pure Family

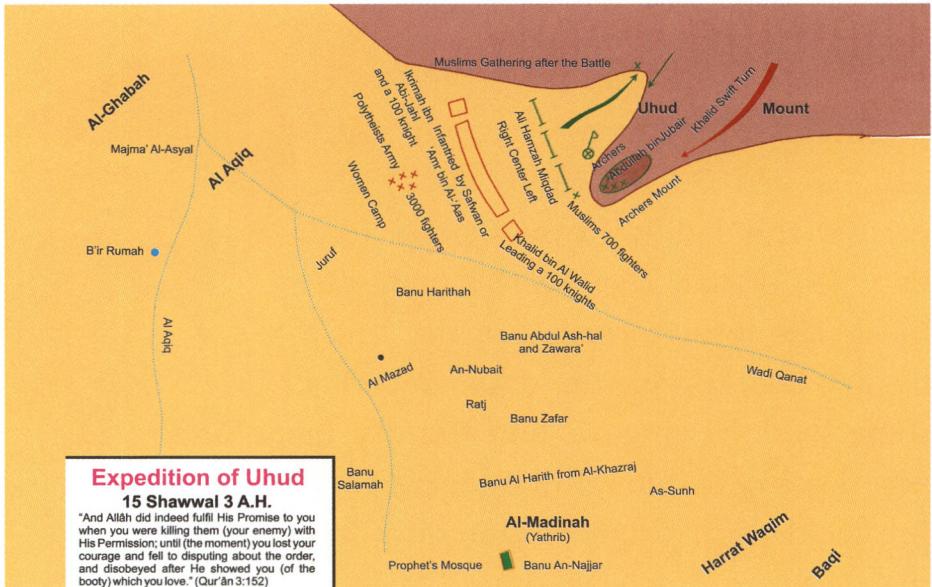
Although they were very poor, 'Ali and Fâtimah رض led a happy life. Allâh praised this family in the Qur'ân for their self-denial. They were having their meal. The meal consisted of dry bread. A beggar knocked on the door and asked for some food. They gave him the dry bread and kept hungry. Although they were very poor, they preferred to give the beggar their food to satisfy their Lord. During peace times, 'Ali earned his living from irrigation of farms in Al-Madinah. The family had their first child and named him Al-Hassan. The child was loved dearly by his family and the Prophet صلی اللہ علیہ وسالہ وآلہ وسالہ.



The Pagans Attack again

The pagans did not accept the awful defeat they received at the Battle of Badr. They collected their whole energy and wealth and began preparations for another attack against Muslims. With a force of three thousand men under the command of Abû Sufyân they marched to Al-Madinah. They were determined to destroy the new state of Islam and bring Muslims back to Makkah as slaves.





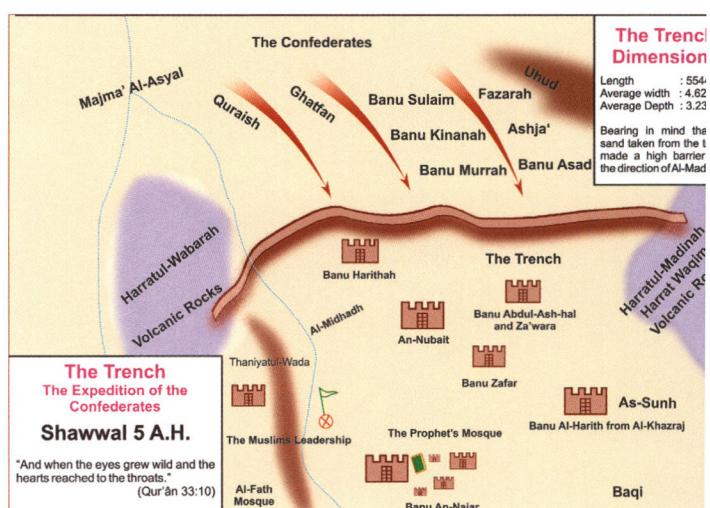
In the first clash of arms, Muslims got the upper hand in spite of the fact that they were less than one third the number of the Quraysh army. 'Ali ﷺ fought a brave battle and held fast to his position. The archers, whom the Prophet ﷺ placed on top of a small hill behind the Muslim army to protect their backs, saw the pagans flee from the battlefield. They left their positions and began collecting war booty. The course of the battle changed when the Quraysh horsemen climbed the hill and killed the remaining archers. Mus'ab bin 'Umayr ﷺ, the banner holder, fell down but 'Ali ﷺ took the banner and raised it high. He defended the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions to the last minute of the battle. Although the pagans won this battle, they did not achieve their objectives of destroying the state of Islam. 'Ali was very sad to lose his uncle, Hamza ﷺ, who was a great hero of Islam. He came back to Al-Madinah sad for the loss of the battle but he kept determined to protect his religion and leader.

More Attempts to Destroy Islam

In the third attempt, the Quraysh and their allies gathered an army of ten thousand soldiers and marched toward Al-Madinah. The Muslims were not strong enough to fight an open battle against such a huge army. Therefore, they dug a trench around the city and stood behind it to defend the city against the aggressors. A very brave man from the Quraysh challenged the Muslims to an individual combat.

'Ali advanced and accepted the challenge.

The man told 'Ali ﷺ that he did not like to kill a young man like him. However, 'Ali ﷺ told him that he liked to kill him. Both men engaged in fighting and 'Ali ﷺ killed the man. The Muslims

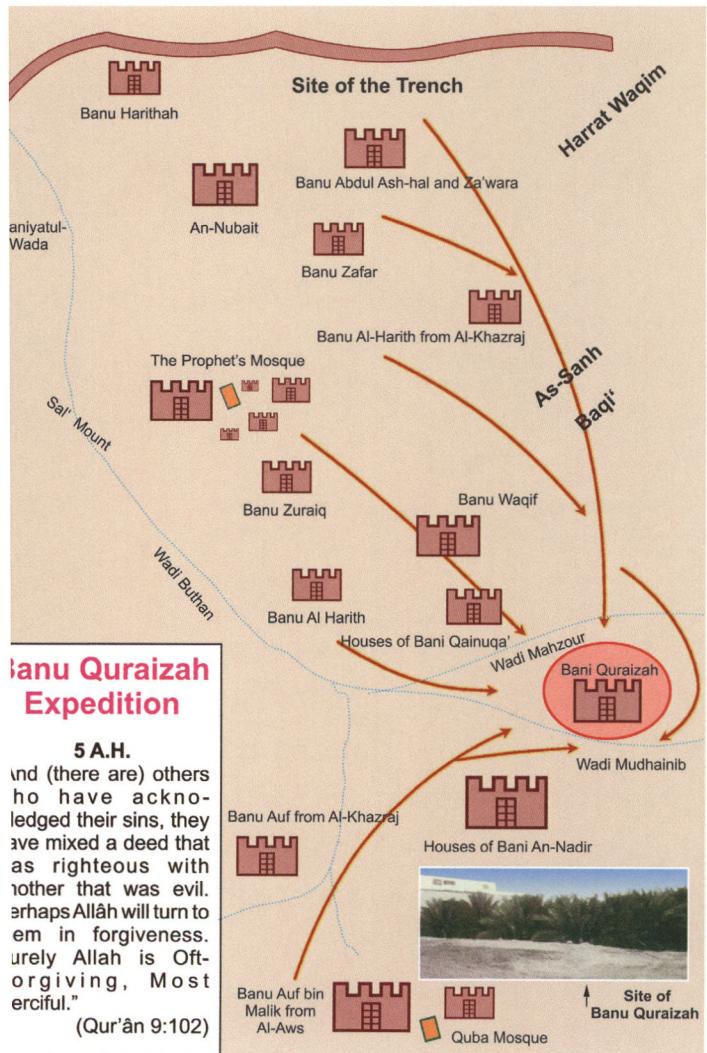


were very happy to see 'Ali ﷺ victorious. This event added to the morale of the Muslims and weakened the pagans' stance. 'Ali ﷺ stood at the side of the trench and dared anybody from the pagans to cross over. Three persons crossed over at a weak point. 'Ali ﷺ challenged the three men. He killed them one after the other. The siege continued for about one month. Finally, the pagans were forced to leave by a high wind and cold weather. The Muslims were very happy to see the pagans leave the outskirts of their city.

The Treacherous Jews

The Jews of Banū Quraidhah broke their agreement of mutual support with the Muslims and shared in the siege. The pagans finally left back to Makkah. As the Muslims were finished with the pagans who left their positions back to their homes, they were ordered by Allāh to punish the traitors. Without

taking off his armor, ‘Ali ﷺ and the other Muslims accompanied the Prophet ﷺ to the fortress of Banū Quraidhah. They besieged the Jews who already cheated the Muslims and refused to support them as they had already agreed. ‘Ali ﷺ was the Commander. He kept pressing on the fortress of the Jews until they surrendered. The Prophet ﷺ punished the Jews for their deception and breach of the agreement they held with the Muslims.



The Treaty

After this event, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions wished to visit Makkah and perform 'Umrah. Although they wanted their visit to be peaceful, the pagans denied them the right to visit the Ka'bah. After lengthy negotiations at a place called Al-Hudaibiyyah, both the Muslims and the pagans agreed to make a peace treaty with each other. 'Ali ﷺ was ordered by the Prophet ﷺ to write the agreement. 'Ali ﷺ started the agreement with the words:

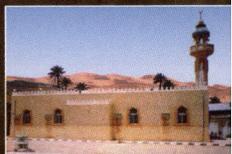
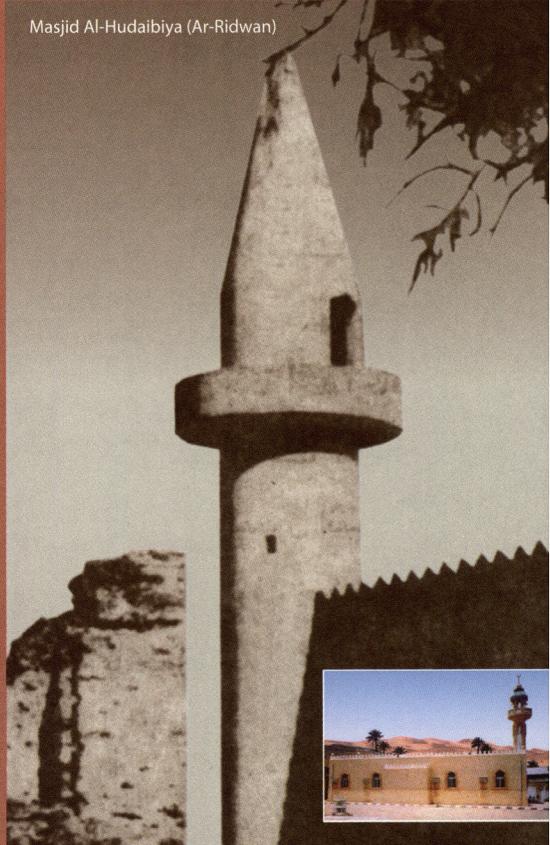
"In the Name of Allâh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful."

The pagans objected to that and told the Prophet ﷺ that they had not believed in the Gracious. They asked the Prophet ﷺ to write '*In the Name of Allâh*' only. The Prophet ﷺ ordered 'Ali to write as they requested. 'Ali then wrote:

"This accord is to be held between the Prophet Muhammad and the Quraysh."

They again objected saying that had they accepted him as a Prophet of Allâh, they would not have fought against him. The Prophet ﷺ asked 'Ali ﷺ to cross out the words but 'Ali ﷺ did not accept to cross out the eternal Truth. The Prophet ﷺ himself crossed out the words.

Masjid Al-Hudaibiya (Ar-Ridwan)

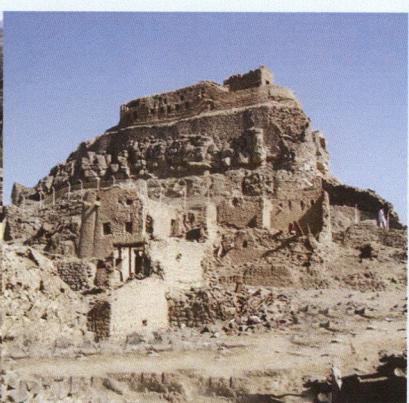


The Man Whom Allâh and His Prophet Love

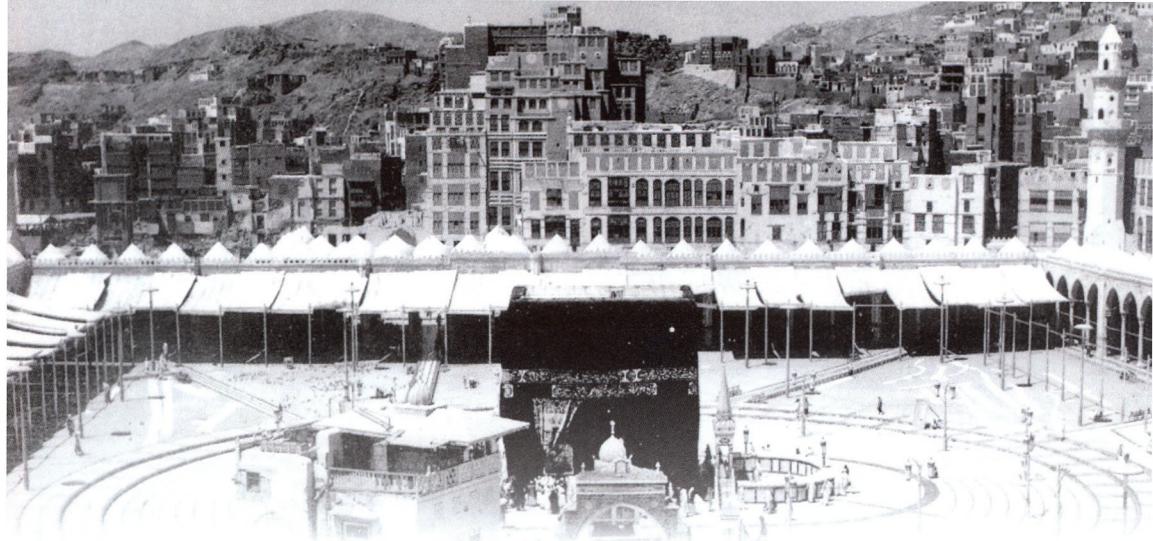
Some of the Jews from around Al-Madinah broke the agreements they had made with the Muslims. They supported the pagans and plotted to kill the Prophet ﷺ and weaken the Muslims. They did not like the way Islam was spreading in Arabia. They gathered inside a fortified city called Khaybar near Al-Madinah and began preparations to attack the Muslims. The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions surrounded Khaybar. Several Muslim leaders tried to conquer the city but no one of them came back with victory. On the last day, the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Tomorrow, I will give the banner (leadership) to a man whom Allâh and his Prophet love.”

The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ wondered at who this person would be. The Prophet ﷺ gave the banner to ‘Ali رضي الله عنه. He led the army to the fortress and challenged their leader named Mirhâb. In no time, he killed Mirhâb, opened the gate of the fortress and conquered the town.

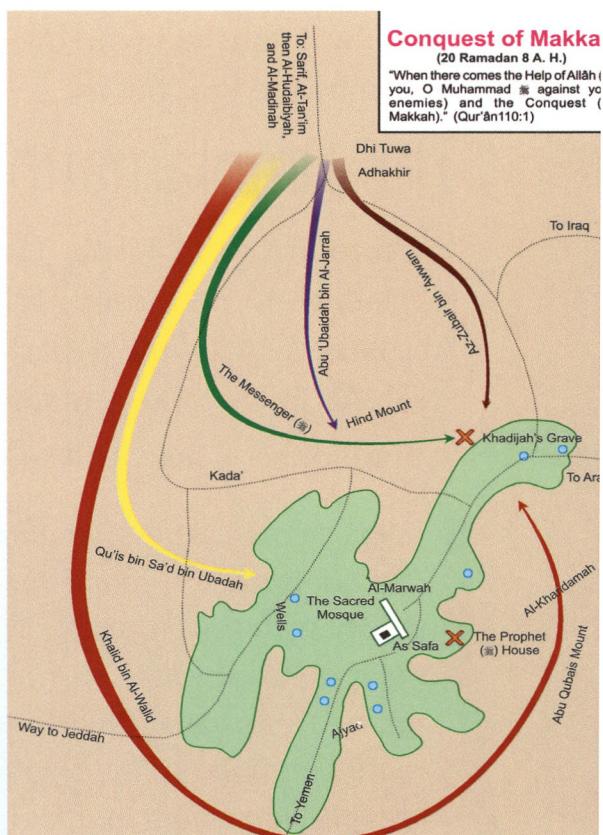


Ruins the City of Khaybar and fort of Khaybar



Makkah Conquered

The treaty that the Muslims made with the pagans did not stand for long. As usual, the pagans broke their covenants and killed some of the subjects of the Muslim Alliance. The Prophet ﷺ had no choice but to conquer the city as promised by Allāh. An army of ten thousand Muslims marched toward Makkah. ‘Ali ؑ was a Commander of one of the wings of the army. He entered the city peacefully and destroyed the stone idols that were worshipped by the people of Makkah. No one in Makkah was harmed by the Muslim army.



Dearer to the Prophet ﷺ than Anybody Else

In the ninth year after migration to Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ led an army to Tabûk in the northern borders of Arabia to deter the Romans who were conspiring to destroy the Islamic State. He left 'Ali behind as administrator of Al-Madinah in his absence. 'Ali ﷺ was not satisfied with this mission. He wanted to join the army. He thought that leaving him behind would be a shame to him. The Prophet ﷺ told him:

"Do you not like to be to me like Hârûn عليه السلام was to Mûsâ عليه السلام?"

'Ali was satisfied with the mission and the position given to him by the Prophet ﷺ.

The Proclamation

On return from Tabûk, The Prophet ﷺ sent the Muslims to Makkah to perform pilgrimage under the leadership of Abû Bakr ؓ. After the departure of the Muslims to Makkah, Sûrah Al-Tawbah (Repentance) was revealed.

The Prophet ﷺ sent 'Ali ؑ to Makkah to read the proclamation:

"No idolater shall after this year perform pilgrimage. No one shall run round the Ka'bah naked. Who has a treaty with the Prophet ﷺ, it shall continue binding till its end. For the rest, four months are allowed to every man to return to his territory, after which there will exist no obligation on the Prophet ﷺ except towards those people with whom treaties have been made."



Sad for the Loss of the Prophet

In the same year, 'Ali ﷺ joined the Prophet ﷺ and the other Muslims in the farewell pilgrimage. After completing the rites of the pilgrimage, the Prophet ﷺ stood at Mina and addressed the Muslims. He told them that the religion of Islam was now complete and perfect and advised them to be good Muslims.

Through the speech delivered by the Prophet ﷺ, 'Ali ﷺ understood that the Prophet ﷺ was going to pass away soon. Upon returning to Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ fell ill. Being the cousin, son-in-law of the Prophet ﷺ and the first Muslim among boys, 'Ali stayed beside the Prophet ﷺ during his sickness. He saw how hard the fever was on the Prophet ﷺ and how the Prophet ﷺ was patient. After a few days, the Prophet's condition became worse. Al-Abbâs bin Abdul-Muttalib held him by the hand and said to him:

The Preacher

In the tenth year after migration, The Prophet ﷺ sent 'Ali ﷺ to preach Islam to the people of Yemen. He did the job very successfully to the extent that the whole of the Hamadhân tribe accepted Islam. The Prophet ﷺ praised him for the success he achieved in Yemen.

"In three days you, by Allâh, will be ruled (by somebody else). And by Allâh, I feel that Allâh's Messenger ﷺ will die from this ailment of his, for I know how the faces of the offspring of 'Abdul-Muttalib look at the time of their death. So let us go to Allâh's Messenger ﷺ and ask him who will take over the caliphate. If it is given to us, we will know it, and if it is given to somebody else, we will request him to tell the new ruler to take care of us."

'Ali ﷺ said:

"By Allâh, if we asked Allâh's Messenger ﷺ for it (i.e., The caliphate) and he refused to give it to us, the people will never give it to us after that. And by Allâh, I will not ask Allâh's Messenger r for it." (Al-Bukhâri)

After some days, the Prophet ﷺ passed away like all human beings are destined to. He elected to be near to his Creator and Lord. 'Ali ﷺ felt very sad over the loss of the Prophet ﷺ. He knew that the nation had lost the man who took it out of darkness to light and that it had now to pave the way for Islam to spread over the world by itself.

'Ali ﷺ was one of three persons who bathed the Prophet's body. He was also one of the people who went down into the Prophet's grave and placed him in it.

To the misfortune of 'Ali ﷺ, six months later, his wife, Fâtimah ﷺ also passed away. Her death added to his sadness. He was left alone in the face of many difficulties. However, he proved to be a man of courage at all times.



Ali ibn Abi Talib

The Fourth Rightly-Guided Caliph

Immediately after the Prophet ﷺ passed away, the Muslims elected Abū Bakr ؓ as a Caliph. ‘Ali ؑ helped the Caliph in defending the Islamic State especially when the apostates in the Arabian Peninsula threatened to tumble the state.

After Abū Bakr’s death, ‘Umar ؓ took over rule upon the recommendation of Abū Bakr ؓ. ‘Ali ؑ was appointed as a judge. ‘Umar ؓ referred difficult cases to him and took him as his advisor. Before he passed away, ‘Umar ؓ selected six persons among whom was ‘Ali ؑ to select one of them as a Caliph. The majority preferred ‘Uthmân ؓ to ‘Ali ؑ.

During ‘Uthmân’s rule, ‘Ali ؑ continued his efforts to strengthen the Islamic State. He kept beside ‘Uthmân ؓ as an advisor. He did his best to make the state of Islam spread over new lands.

Following the murder of ‘Uthmân ﷺ, the senior Companions insisted that ‘Ali ﷺ take over. In the beginning, he did not accept the mission. However, both Az-Zubayr and Talhah ﷺ urged him to accept the position of the fourth Caliph of Islam. They wanted a strong man to stop the rebels and restore order to the state. The conditions of the state were very bad at that time. The people who revolted against and killed ‘Uthmân ﷺ took hold of Al-Madinah and even led the public prayers. The people of the city gave allegiance to the Caliph. However, several regional rulers refused to pledge loyalty to him. They did not deny Ali’s ability to lead and his many virtues. However, they felt that he should have taken a firmer stance against Uthmân’s murderers.

‘Ali ﷺ was confronted with a huge number of problems. The rebels tumbled the life of the society. They were very strong and liked to control the Caliph and the people. However, ‘Ali ﷺ wanted to stop them. They requested him to dismiss the rulers who were relatives to ‘Uthmân ﷺ. ‘Ali ﷺ knew that these rulers were not good. He immediately ordered them to give up their positions. The rulers of some provinces also refused to listen to him and held fast their positions.

Some rulers took the case of ‘Uthmân’s murder as an excuse to revolt against the Caliph. They requested the Caliph to kill the people who killed ‘Uthmân ﷺ. They demanded the killing of the murderers, and in their forcefulness they created problems for the new Caliph.

The situation was very bad for him. He did not like to shed blood and at the same time wanted to stop the corruption of rulers. He asked Mu’âwiyah ﷺ to pledge loyalty to him, but

Mu'âwiyah refused to listen to him. Mu'âwiyah asked 'Ali to detain the rebels and kill them for killing 'Uthmân ﷺ. He resisted 'Ali's control. Unfortunately, the two Companions could not reach a settlement for a long time. Instead of directing the efforts of the government to spread Islam, all resources were being used for suppressing troubles here and there. Finally, both 'Ali and Mu'âwiyah agreed to resort to arbitration instead of fighting. They were both keen to keep the Muslim nation strong and unified.

'Ali ﷺ selected Abû Mûsâ Al-Ash'ari ﷺ as his arbitrator and Mu'âwiyah ﷺ selected 'Amr bin Al-'Âs ﷺ as his arbitrator. 'Amr deceived Abû Mûsâ Al-Ash'ari ﷺ when both arbitrators agreed to dismiss both Mu'âwiyah ﷺ and 'Ali ﷺ and to leave it to the nation to select a ruler. Abû Mûsâ ﷺ came out to the people and declared that he dismissed 'Ali ﷺ. However, 'Amr ﷺ told the people that he supported Mu'âwiyah ﷺ. Hence, settlement was not achieved and the troubles for the Caliph continued.

In addition to these troubles, some of 'Ali's supporters revolted against him because he accepted arbitration. They were fanatics. They also claimed that 'Ali ﷺ had become a disbeliever when he accepted arbitration. The Khawârij (dissidents) killed anyone who supported 'Ali's point of view. 'Ali ﷺ did his best to bring them back to the fold of Islam peacefully but without success. Hence, he had no choice but to



fight them and stop their aggression against people.



As a result of all these troubles, three of the dissidents agreed to kill 'Ali, Mu'awiyah and 'Amr . Each one of them prepared himself well for the evil job. One named Abdur-Rahmân bin Muljim, whom 'Ali was very kind to during past days, came to the mosque and hid in it. He knew that 'Ali would come to the Fajr (dawn) prayer. As 'Ali started performing prayer, the man came forward and stabbed him several times with a dagger. The people behind him caught the murderer and carried 'Ali home. Three days later 'Ali passed away leaving the nation in the eye of the storm.

'Ali's rule lasted for four years and nine months. The majority of historians confirm that he died at the age of sixty-three. His sons Al-Hassan and Al-Husain buried him. The whole nation was disturbed by the death of this great Companion of the Prophet .

Hence, the period of 'Ali's rule was full of troubles for him and for the Muslims in general. During this period no new lands were added to the Islamic State. The Caliph was busy trying to bring order to the state itself. The differences among the Muslims killed any chance of conquest.

Following 'Ali's death, Mu'âwiyah restored order to the state and became the Caliph.

Virtues of 'Ali bin abi Tâlib

رضي الله عنه

Simplicity

'Ali ﷺ lived a simple life. Till the age of twenty-five or twenty-six he had lived with the Prophet ﷺ and had tried to imitate him in every way. His household was so simple that it consisted of few items. He gave his guests dinner on his wedding day only by selling his armour. Fâtimah was doing all her housework and 'Ali ﷺ would help her now and then. He was earning his living by doing manual work like drawing water for irrigation. There were many days in his life when he went without meals. When he became a Caliph, he did not change his simple way of life. He continued putting on the most ordinary clothes and taking the simplest possible food. All that he used to take was a cup of milk, a piece of barley bread and some vegetables. He always told his companions that a Caliph was only entitled to two dishes, one for him and his family and the other for the poor. He continued living in the same small house and did not build any house of his own. No guard was kept at the house and there was nothing to distinguish it from those of poor people.

Simplicity was the keynote of his life. Even as a Caliph, he did not feel shy of doing manual labour even mending his shoes. He would sit on the ground and even go to sleep on the bare floor. A goat-skin served as the rug of his house on which he received envoys and distinguished persons.

Generosity

Although 'Ali ﷺ was very poor and barely had adequate living, he would never let any poor man go disappointed from his door. In his early days, he once irrigated an orchard throughout the night to earn some barley. He divided the barley into three portions and had a portion cooked. When the meal was ready a beggar came and 'Ali ﷺ gave all of the food to him. He had the second portion cooked when an orphan turned up and the food was given to him. The third portion went to a prisoner. He was ever ready to help the weak and to redress the wrongs of the oppressed.

Courage

'Ali ﷺ was unsurpassed in terms of bravery. He had given a glorious example of it in every battle he fought. In Badr, he killed his opponent in individual combat. He also killed



several pagan fighters who were known for their skill, to the extent that he emerged as the hero of the battle. In the Battle of Uhud, he also killed the man from the enemy army who challenged him to an individual combat. Likewise in the Trench Battle, he advanced to challenge a renowned hero and killed him. His bravery earned him the title of 'Lion of Allâh.'

In all other battles, 'Ali ﷺ proved to be the man whom the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims could rely on. Khaybar stood fast in the face of several Muslim commanders but when the mission was given to 'Ali, it could not stand. He also kept close to the Prophet r in all battles and never retreated.

Great Badr Expedition

(The Day of Criterion, the day when the two forces met.)

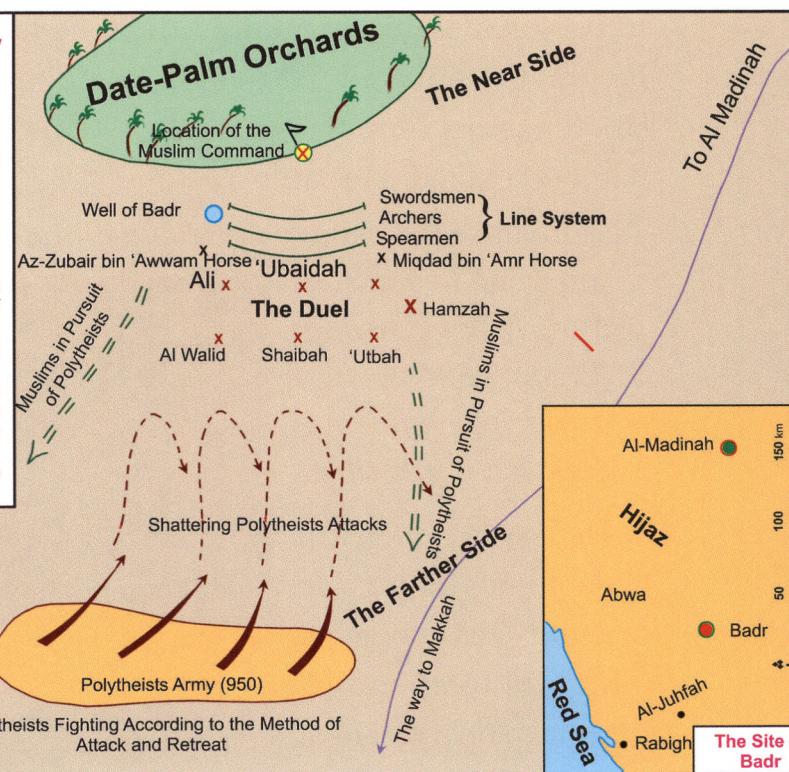
17 Ramadan 2 A.H.
13 March 624 A.D.

"Verily, Allâh loves those who fight in His Cause in rows (ranks) as if they were a solid structure."

(Qur'ân 61:4)

"And Allâh has already made you victorious at Badr, when you were a weak little force. So fear Allâh much that you may be grateful."

(Qur'ân 3:123)



Treatment of Enemies

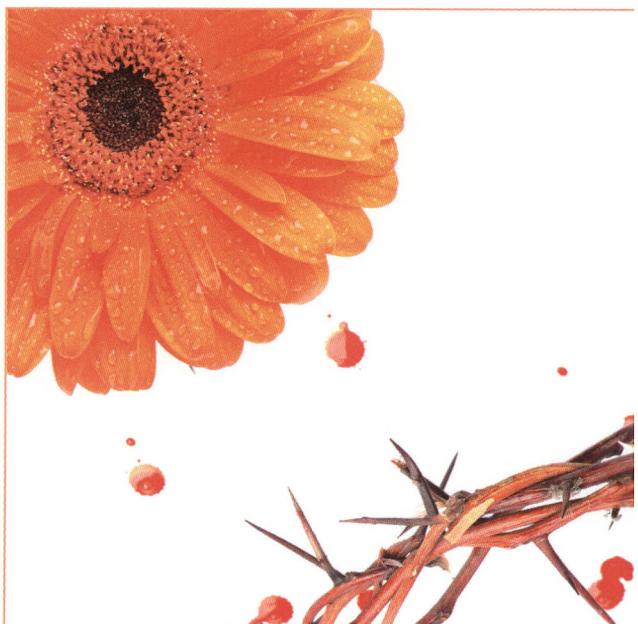
The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Strong is not he who overpowers his foe, but one who restrains his temper."

'Ali ﷺ was a living example of this precept. He overpowered many foes, but he did not ill-treat any enemy. In a duel, he had once thrown down his enemy and was on the point of cutting off his head when the desperate foe spat on his face. 'Ali ﷺ spared his life and let him go. When asked to explain his strange conduct, 'Ali ﷺ said that if he had killed his enemy after spitting on his face, his motive would not have remained purely for the cause of Allâh but due to personal anger. In another duel, he left his enemy when he fell down naked. Although Az-Zubayr bin Al-'Awwâm stood against him, he wept when he received news that he had been killed. He said:

"Announce the penalty of Hellfire to the killer of Safiyyah's son. I had heard from the Prophet ﷺ saying: "Every Prophet had a disciple and Az-Zubayr is my disciple."

He was merciful even to his killer. He ordered his sons to offer him food and let him sleep on a soft bed.





Justice

'Ali ﷺ was known for his acute sense of justice. Whatever was received in the treasury he used to distribute equitably and would not even listen to the request of his brother 'Aqeel to give him a little more share. 'Abdullâh Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ as well as 'Umar ﷺ used to say that 'Ali was the best judge.

Once an interesting case had came before him. Two persons had sat down together to take a meal. One had five loaves and the other had three loaves. When they were about to start eating they were joined by a third person. The loaves were put together and all the three ate the meal. The third person gave eight coins and went away. The man who had five loaves took five coins and gave three to the other. The latter insisted on equal distribution and the matter came up before 'Ali ﷺ. He advised the man to accept what was offered

to him as it was profitable for him but he demanded justice. 'Ali ﷺ then announced that seven coins should be retained by the man who had five loaves and the other man should be given one coin. The latter's objection to this judgment was refuted when 'Ali explained the reason for his decision. He stated that every loaf should have been divided in three parts. Thus the man with three loaves had nine parts and the total would be twenty-four parts. As three persons had shared the meal, it should be taken that every man had eaten eight parts of the loaves. Thus the second man had himself taken eight of his nine parts of loaves while the first one had contributed seven. The first one should therefore get seven coins and the second should get only one.

Learning

'Ali ﷺ memorized the Qur'ân by heart. He knew precisely when, where and in what conditions most verses of the Qur'ân were revealed. He was considered among the top interpreters of the Qur'ân. For thirty years he was a constant companion of the Prophet ﷺ and therefore he was well versed in a large number of the Prophet's sayings. Even in the time of earlier Caliphs he used to give lectures on the Noble Qur'ân and Hadith (Prophet's sayings). Abû Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmân ﷺ and 'Â'ishah ﷺ used to refer difficult cases to him for a decision.

'Ali ﷺ was also an orator of the highest order. He could deliver highly inspiring speeches before any audience.

Religious Life

'Ali ﷺ paid much attention to not only obligatory prayers but also to nawâfil (additional prayers). Often he would spend whole nights in prayer and used to get so absorbed in them that nothing else mattered. In the Battle of Uhud an arrow had deeply pierced his leg. It was removed when 'Ali ﷺ stood up for prayers and he did not show any signs of pain at the time of its extraction.

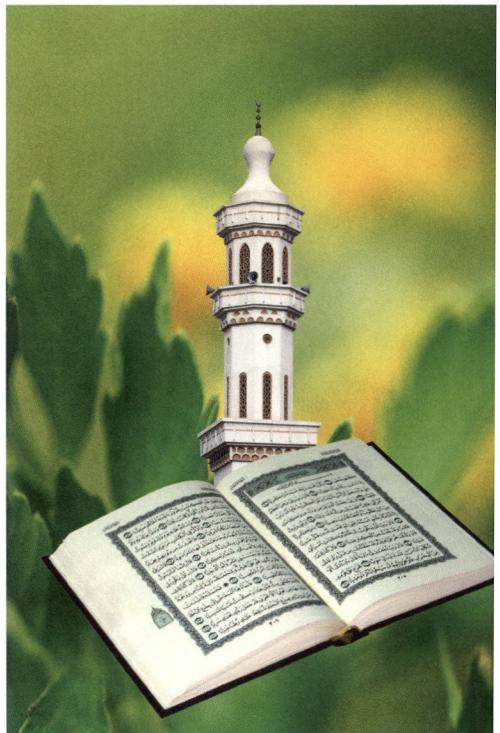
Wisdom and Eloquence

'Ali ﷺ was known to be very wise. Many of the cases referred to him were very difficult but he could always solve them. 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattâb always consulted him in cases of Shari'ah (Islamic law). In addition 'Ali ﷺ was one of the most eloquent Arabs. He delivered about five hundred speeches. He also made many statements which Arabs still reiterate in their speech.

Some of them were taken as proverbs. Examples of such statements are:

"Like for others the things you like for yourself."

"Do not treat others with injustice as you do not like others"



to treat you with injustice."

"Do not take your friend's enemy as your friend."

"He who makes good his inner intentions, Allâh would make good his outer appearance."

He once described the Noble Qur'ân as follows:

"You should learn that this Qur'ân is the sincere advisor, the guide that never leads you astray and the speaker that never lies. Anyone who reads the Qur'ân would benefit from it"

He also advised his son saying:

"Profession with adequacy is better than richness with injustice. You should keep your secret within yourself. Keep company with good people and keep away from bad people. The worst food you take is the one you earn in a forbidden way. Be kind to anyone who might be harsh to you, for after a while he would become kind to you."

All in all, practice of justice, self-denial, honesty, purity and love of truth were the hallmarks of 'Ali's character. He never looked at worldly things with admiration. He considered this life as a farm for the life to come. He always wanted to grow good deeds to receive the fruits of them on the Day of Judgment.

He holds a very high position in the hearts and minds of all Muslims. They all remember him with respect and admiration for his long struggle for the cause of Islam and for his kinship to the Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ said to 'Ali:

"You are my brother in this life and the life to come."

'Abdullâh Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said about him:

"May Allâh be pleased with him. He was the banner of guidance, the shelter of piety, the wisest and the best in holding to the true faith of Islam. He was the best believer, the most eloquent and the most generous and the husband to the best and purest woman."

The days of 'Ali's reign were troublesome. His life was a continuous struggle and he had hardly a moment of peace. To increase his difficulties, when Ibn Muljim stabbed him on his head and side, he said to his son:

"Treat the man kindly and give him food and water. If I die, his life is left to justice, and he shall be slain for the deed he had done; but do not mutilate him, for that was forbidden by the Prophet ﷺ."

As his condition deteriorated people asked him if he would like his son Al-Hassan t to succeed him. As 'Ali ﷺ was true to the principle of consultation, he replied:

"I do not commend this, neither do I forbid it. You better decide for yourself."

He then called Al-Hassan and Al-Hussain to his bedside and advised them to be steadfast in piety and submission to the Will of Allâh. He dictated his testament and continued repeating the Name of Allâh. He breathed his last breath on Friday the 20th of Ramadhân in the year 40 after the Hijrah. All the Muslims were very sad to learn that 'Ali ﷺ was killed. However, 'Ali ﷺ had always asked Allâh to die as a martyr for the Cause of Islam. Allâh accepted his prayers.

May Allâh bestow his mercy on 'Ali ﷺ for his full dedication to the welfare of Islam and the Muslims.