

*On the occasion of year 2001  
year of dialogue among  
civilizations*



**IMAM ALI (S)**  
SUNSHINE  
OF  
CIVILIZED  
ISLAM

By  
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Author of  
"Imam Ali (S) - A Biography"

IMAM ALI (S) SUNSHINE OF CIVILIZED ISLAM

## Imam Ali

Author : Mohamad Jawad Chirri

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### DISTINGUISHED BENEFACTORS

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### About the Author

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Imam Mohamad Jawad Chirri is a native of Lebanon and a graduate of the distinguished religious  
institute of Najaf in Iraq. He is an Islamic theologian lecturer historian and author. He is the host of  
a weekly radio program called "Islam In Focus " poadcast by WNIC. From his published books are:

Moslem Practice.

## **Islamic Teaching.**

Imam Hussein Leader of the Martyrs Inquiries About Islam (Thousands of American libraries acquired this book.) "Al-Khilafatu Fi Al-Dustour Al-Islami" (The Caliphate in The Islamic Constitution-Arabic.) "Ameer Al-Munineen" (The Leader of Believers-Arabic.)

Imam Chirri was invited by the Detroit Muslim Community to be their spiritual leader. He was instrumental in constructing the Islamic Center of Detroit one of the largest Islamic institutes in North America. He is currently the Director of this Center.

Imam Chirri's work was extended to West Africa. While on a lecture tour in 1958 he was able to induce the Lebanese community in Sierra Leone to build a children's hospital as a present to the natives of that country.

During a visit to the Middle East in 1959 the author dealt with an old Islamic problem and succeeded in finding its solution. For over a thousand years the Muslims were divided into Sunnites and Shi-ites (neither of the two sides was recognizing the soundness of the teachings of the

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other) in spite of the agreement of both Schools on all the teaching of the Holy Qur'an and the authentically reported hadiths of the Holy Prophet Mohammad.

The author met the late Sheikh Al-Azhar Sheikh Mahmood Shaltut on July 1 1959. He discussed with him the important issue. At the conclusion of the discussion Sheikh Shaltut acknowledged the soundness of the Islamic Shi-ite Jaafari School. The author requested him to declare equality between the Shi-ite Jaafari and Sunnite Schools. The Declaration was podcast and published on July 7 1979. This Declaration was historical and the first of its kind since the separation of the two Schools.

The spirit of true Islamic brotherhood can prevail only by mutual understanding among the various Islamic Schools. It is with this in mind that the author presents this book The brother of the Prophet Mohammad. Needless to say that the arguments among various Islamic Schools revolve mainly around the history of this great Imam. A true understanding of his position in Islam is bound to lead the Muslims to a more genuine brotherhood.

## Introduction

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Americans who know Islam and Muslims are relatively few and those who know the plurality of the Islamic Schools of Thought and that there are among the Muslims Sunnites and Shi-ites are fewer.

However the events of the Iranian Revolution which took place in 1978-79 put the news of the Muslims in general and the Shi-ite Muslims in particular on the front pages of the Western and Eastern press. This is because the Shi-ite Muslims are the absolute majority among the Muslims in Iran. The American press spoke of the Shi-ites piefly and many times inaccurately. This reconfirmed my conviction for the need of an English book dealing with the Islamic Shi-ite School with some details based on serious research.

Since this is the School of the Imam Ali Son of Abu Talib it would be appropriate to study this great Imam and his political-religious history. For this is the only means through which we can understand the foundation of this school.

To satisfy this need I wrote this book and called it The pother of the Prophet Mohammad. This is a title which was given to Imam Ali uniquely by the Holy Prophet Mohammad who "pothered" him from among all the Muslims. He never chose for himself any other man as a pother.

The title was the dearest to the heart of the Imam; for when he introduced himself publicly he used to mention his potherhood to the Prophet after mentioning his servitude to the Almighty. And it was pleasing to the Holy Prophet to call Ali "My pother."

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The Muslims agree that Imam Ali had what no other person from among the Muslims had of distinctions. He is from among them the only person who was raised by the Messenger of God since the days of his childhood. He was pought up by him according to his ethical standards; then he chose him from among all men to be his pother.

The Muslim scholars Sunnites and Shi-ites agree that Ali was the most knowledgeable in the Book

of God (the Qur'an) and the teachings of His Prophet among all the companions. He was the richest source of wisdom and the most eloquent speaker the greatest defender of the faith the firmest in maintaining justice and the most selfless endeavorer in the way of God. These qualities are the Islamic criteria of distinctions for the Holy Qur'an announces that God prefers the endeavors in His way to the inactive; that those who know and those who do not know are not equal and it announces that the noblest among people in the sight of God are their most righteous.

This makes it very clear that the Sunnites and the Shi-ites do not only agree on all Islamic principles stated in the Holy Qur'an or in the authentic hadiths of the Holy Prophet Mohammad but also agree on the religious and the scholarly place of the Imam Ali in Islam. Therefore when the Sunnites and Shi-ites differ they do so only politically; for they differ on the political-religious aspects rather than the Imam Ali's religious and scholarly place in Islam.

While they agree that Ali was a righteous Caliph who came to power through a popular election they disagree on whether he was in addition to this a Caliph by the Prophet's selection. Those who do not believe that the Prophet appointed Ali as his successor think that the theory of the Prophet's selection of the Imam Ali is a theory of inheritance of rule through blood relationship. Those who believe that the Prophet selected the Imam as his successor say that the belief in the selection of the Imam Ali by the Prophet is the opposite of the belief in the inheritance of rule.

The Muslims also disagree on his political-religious role in the history of Islam as a statesman. While they agree on his adherence to the principle of absolute justice and his

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firmness in enforcement of the Islamic law in spirit and letter they disagree on the wisdom of such an inflexible attitude.

There is another important matter pertaining to his political-religious place in the Islamic history namely; his role in founding the Islamic State. This aspect was not mentioned clearly nor was it a subject of a serious discussion among the historians and scholars of history.

Since the Muslims agree on the religious-scholarly place of the Imam it would be superfluous to discuss those aspects of the Imam's life.

This book therefore does not review the history of the Imam in details nor does it speak of his knowledge his eloquence or his wisdom. Nor does it discuss his piety and immaterialistic attitude nor does it speak of his unusual performance. Its discussion centers on the political-religious place

of the Imam in Islam his spiritual relationship to the Prophet Mohammad and his contribution in establishing the Islamic State and the spread of the Faith of Islam.

It discusses him as a Caliph and as a statesman. It discusses also what was said about his policy and statesmanship and the causes which led to the accumulations of the difficulties which prevented him from reaching a peaceful and more lasting rule during the days of his caliphate.

Finally the book discusses the caliphate as a religious-political system and the kind of caliphate which is consonant with the nature of the Islamic message. Therefore this book contains the following parts:

1. The Imam during the era of the Prophethood.
2. The Imam in the era of the Three Caliphs.
3. The Imam in his own era.
4. The Caliphate in the Islamic Law and the conclusion of the discussion.

I have endeavored to discover the relationship between the historical events which involved the life of the Imam and which took place during the fifty-three years since the commencement of the Prophethood to the end of the righteous Caliphate.

The reader may find that those events were connected

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with each other through strong ties. Thus they formed a chain of causes and effects the subsequent among them was the outcome of its precedent.

In narrating the events of that period I did not rely on only the sources from the respected books of history but I tried to add to that whenever it was possible what I found in the Authentics and other reliable books of hadith which recorded those events. This is because many Muslim scholars rely upon hadiths more than they rely upon books of history especially when the hadiths are recorded in the known Authentics and the rest of the reliable books. I did not try to discuss the Imam as a man whose special relationship with his Lord distinguished him and enabled him to perform miracles and ping unusual events. I rather tried to discuss him as a man who is subject to rules of nature time and place who tried his utmost to serve sacred principles and tried to live by those principles and for those principles.

I hope that this book will contribute to better understanding and stronger pothorhood among the Muslims. Certainly the personality of the Imam and his history are inspiring and if the Muslims are

ready to receive that inspiration it will lead them to unity.

What would be written of truth about the personality of a man who was chosen by the Prophet to be his pother would certainly be a potential for strengthening the spirit of potherhood and love among all Muslims.

Mohamad Jawad Chirri

## PART I : THE IMAM DURING THE ERA OF THE PROPHET HOOD

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### **1.The House of the Prophet Mohammad**

All Muslims glorify the Members of the House of the Holy Prophet Mohammad who are called Aal Mohammad or Ahl Beit Mohammad. This attitude is in accord with the instructions of the Holy Prophet who commanded Muslims to pray simultaneously for the members of his House whenever they pray for him. By so commanding them he actually required the Muslims to reserve a place for them next to his. The Holy Qur'an made it mandatory to offer prayers for Mohammad and to greet him:

"Certainly God and His Angels honor the Prophet (Mohammad)

O believers pray (God to honor) him and greet him repeatedly." (1)

Many companions asked the Prophet to teach them how to comply with this command. Many highly respected hadith recorders (including Al-Bukhari and Muslim) reported in their "Sahihs" (authentics) that Kaab Ibn Ujah stated that the Prophet said:

"Say: God bestow honor on Mohammad and the members of the House of Mohammad as Thou bestowed honor on the members of the House of Apaham Thou Art praised and Glorious. God bless Mohammad and the members of the House of Mohammad as Thou had



(1) The Holy Qur'an. Chapters 33 57.

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blessed the members of the House of Apaham. Certainly Thou Art Praised and Glorious." (2)

When instructing his followers on a religious matter the Messenger of God did not speak out of his human desire.

The Qur'an testifies that he only said what was revealed to him.:

"Nor does he (Mohammad) say (aught about religion) of (his own) desire. It is not but a revelation sent to him." (3)

IS THE HONOR.

DUE TO THE RELATIONSHIP?

It may appear that inclusion of the members of the House of Mohammad in prayers for him is due to their blood-relationship. If so it would not be in accord with the spirit of the Islamic teachings. To bestow on them such a unique honor because of their relationship to Mohammad is to advocate a family supremacy and is in conflict with the following principles:

1. All people in the eyes of God are equal for the Holy Qur'an declared:

"Surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you." (4)

(2)Of these hadith-recorders are the following: A. Al-Bukhari, "Sahih Al-Bukhari" (Authentic of Al-Bukhari) Part 6 p. 101 (in the Book of the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an)

B. Muslim Sahih Muslim Part 4 (in the Prayer on the Prophet after the declaration of the Faith p. 136.

C. Mohammad Ibn Majah Sunan Ibn Majah, Vol. 1, hadith No.904.

D. Al-Termathi, hadith No. 483, Part No. 1. Other hadiths are reported by Abu-Sa-eed Abu Mas-ood Talhah and Ibn Mas-ood. All Acoord with the above-mentioned hadith of Kaab Ibn Ujrah.

(3)Chapter 53, verse 4-5.

(4)The Holy Qur'an, Chapter 49 verse 13.

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2. God does not penalize or reward a servant of His for the sins or good deeds of his parents or his close or distant relatives. From the Holy Qur'an:

"And beware a day on which no parent avails his child; nor will a child avail his parent."(5)

3. God does not penalize nor reward a human being for what is beyond his ability and without his choice.

Being related or unrelated to the Prophet is not a matter of personal choice. None of us chose before our birth to be related or unrelated to a particular family nationality or race.

Therefore it would be very difficult for Muslims to believe that they should include Mohammad's relatives in their prayers simply because they are his relatives.

**It Is Due to Their Merits Not Their Inheritance**

To dispel this apparent conflict it is important to know that the word "Aal Mohammad " which is repeatedly mentioned in the daily prayers does not include all his relatives.

Only a very small number of them are included. Had they all been included it would be a clannish or a tribal discrimination because many of them did not walk in the path of Mohammad and to place them above others is to advocate a clannish supremacy.

Kinship to the Prophet Mohammad does not mean acceptance by God; nor does it secure for his relatives a place in Paradise or insure them against Divine punishment. God according to Islamic teachings has created Paradise for whoever obeys Him and the place of punishment for whoever disobeys Him regardless of family affiliation nationality or race. The Holy Qur'an even contains a chapter defaming Abu Lahab who was an uncle of the Prophet Mohammad.

"Perish the two hands of the Father of Flame and per-

(5)The Qur'an Chapter 31 verse 33.

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ished he. His wealth and whatever he gained did not avail him.... "(6)

The truth is that the word Aal Mohammad means only the "chosen" relatives of Mohammad. These chosen individuals are not chosen nor honored because of their relationship to Mohammad but because of their virtues. They lived the true Islamic life followed the instructions of the Holy Qur'an and the Messenger and never parted with them in word or deed. When God informs us in His Book that the noblest among His human creatures are the most righteous and His Messenger commands us to honor the members of his house when we honor him we infer that they are the most righteous after the Prophet.

Had they not been so they would not deserve such a unique honor and the Prophet would not have instructed us to honor them whenever we honor his name. To do otherwise would not be in accord with the Holy Qur'an. Thus by commanding us to pray for them whenever we pray for him the Prophet was actually informing us of their high merit being the most obedient to God and His Messenger.

#### **THE RECORD ATTESTS TO THEIR MERIT**

All Muslims agree that Ali the Prophet's cousin whom the Prophet "pothered" and his wife Fatimah (the Lady of Light) the dearest child of the Messenger and their two children Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein are from the chosen members of the House of Mohammad and that they are included in our prayers for him. The high qualifications of the chosen relatives of Mohammad is the main reason for the very unique honor bestowed upon them.

Imam Ali stood above all others after the Prophet. He was the strongest supporter of the Messenger of God. He never hesitated to give his life for the promotion of Islam.

The readers of history can easily know that Imam Ali was the top defender of Islam and the most adherent to its rules.

(6)The Holy Qur'an Chapter 111.

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Imam Ali's attitude towards personal power and prestige was unique. Whenever he had to choose between adherence to his ideals and the pleasures of the earthly life he unhesitatingly chose the former. History testifies that he preferred to lose the leadership of the Muslim World rather than to accept a condition in which he did not believe. He was offered this leadership contingent on his pledge to follow the Book of God the instructions of the Messenger and the traditions of the first

two Caliphs in the absence of the Quranic and the Messenger's instructions. He replied:

"(I shall follow the Book of God and the instructions of His Messenger; and in the absence of specific teachings of the two sources) I shall endeavor to the best of my knowledge and ability."  
(7)

His knowledge was amazing in its depth and extensiveness.

His sermons lectures and the words contained in Nahjul-Balaghah (Path of Eloquence) testify to the authenticity of the reported statement of the Messenger:

"I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate; so whoever wants to enter the city should come through the gate." (8)

The record of the other three distinguished members of the House of Mohammad Fatimah and her two children Al- Hassan and Al-Hussein shows that they were the most sincere servants of Islam.

The authentic hadiths spoke of their distinctions and qualifications as permanent allies of justice and truth. Zeid Ibn Arqam reported that the Messenger of God said to Ali Fatimah Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein:

"I am at peace with whomever you are at peace; and I am at war with whomever you are at war."  
(9)

Abu Huraira reported that the Messenger of God said:

(7)Ibn-Atheer Al-Kamil (the complete history Part 3 p. 35.

(8)Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak Part 3 p.26.

(9)Ibn Majah Sunan Ibn Majah hadith No.145.

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"Whoever loves Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein loves me; and whoever hates them hates me." (10)  
Hubshi Ibn Janadah said that he heard the Messenger saying:

"Ali is from me and I am from Ali and no one represents me but Ali."(11)

The Messenger did not intend to distinguish Ali simply because he was related to him. Al-Abbas

(his uncle) and the rest of the Hashimites including Jaafar (the pother of Ali) are all related to the Messenger. All of them would have been qualified to represent him. But he said "No one represents me but Ali."

At one time Muaweyah was criticizing Ali in the presence of Saad Ibn Abu Waqass. Saad said to him: "I heard the Messenger of God saying to Ali: 'You are to me like Aaron to Moses. But there shall be no Prophet (of God) after me.' " (12)

Thus the Messenger gave Ali a position next to his own for the position of Aaron was next to that of Moses.

Al-Bukhari recorded in his Sahih that the Messenger said: "Fatimah is the leader of the women of Paradise."(13)

No one enters Paradise but through righteousness and whoever enters Paradise is noble in the sight of God. If Fatimah is the leader of the women of Paradise she must be the most righteous and the noblest woman in God's view.

Al-Hakim recorded in his Mustadrak that Abu Tharr (a famous companion of Mohammad whose truthfulness is known to the Muslims) said that the Messenger said: "The example of the members of my House is like that of Noah's ark. Whoever embarked on it was safe and whoever failed to embark was drowned.... "(14)

(10)Ibid. hadith No.143.

(11)Ibid. hadith No.119.

(12)Ibn Majah hadith No.121.

(13)Al-Bukhari Sahih Al-Bukhari Part 5 (Chapter of distinction of relatives of the Messenger) p. 25.

(14)Al-Hakim Sahih Al-Musradrak Part 3 p.151.

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The Messenger of God commanded the Muslims to follow his chosen relatives. Therefore the relatives of Mohammad are considered to be the party of truth distinguished because of their merit and work as they rank among the most righteous servants of God.

#### **WHY WERE THEY SO MERITORIOUS?**

Why did the members of the House of Mohammad surpass other Arabs or non-Arabs in righteousness?

## Precedents in History

To understand the reason we ought to remember that what took place in the House of Mohammad was not unprecedented in the history of Prophethood. There are many similar precedents. The Almighty God made Aaron a partner to his pother Moses in his heavenly mission. He did not bestow this honor on any other person from the Israelites. This was due to the high qualification of Aaron and in response to the prayer of Moses as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

"He (Moses) said: My Lord Open my mind and loosen a knot from my tongue; that they may understand my word. Appoint for me a minister from my folk Aaron my pother. Confirm my strength by him and let him share my task..." (15)

The Prophet Apaham prayed to the Lord to make some of his offsprings imams of the people. God responded to his prayer and promised to make imams from his good offsprings without allowing any of their wrong doers reach that high rank. From the Holy Qur'an:

"And We gave (Apaham) Isaac and Jacob and We made recipients of Prophethood and revelation from among his progeny and We granted him his reward

(15)The Holy Qur'an Chapter 20 verses 25-32.

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in this life and he was in the Hereafter of the company of the righteous."(16)

God also has chosen along with the relatives of Apaham the relatives of Imran and preferred them above others.

"God chose Adam and Noah the family of Apaham and the family of Imran above all people. Offsprings related to each other and God hears and knows all things." (17)

Zakaria prayed to the Almighty to grant him a righteous child. God answered his prayer and the angels gave him good tidings:

"There did Zakaria pray to his Lord saying: O my Lord grant unto me from Thee a progeny that is pure; for Thou Art He that hears prayer."

"While he was standing in prayer in chamber the angels called unto him: God doth give thee glad

tidings of Yahya (John) witnessing the truth of a word from God and (besides) noble chaste and a Prophet of the (goodly) company of the righteous."(18)

According to these verses the Prophethood which preceded that of Mohammad took the same course. From among the offspring and kinsmen of these Messengers there were chosen persons who reached the highest degree of piety and therefore deserved to be commissioned by God.

Why Did God Give Those Prophets.

Such Distinguished Children and Relatives?

The Almighty God created persons among the kinsmen and offspring of these Messengers in response to their prayers or as a reward to them for their endeavors in spreading the Message of God.

Like other prophets Mohammad was given unusual rel-

(16)The Holy Qur'an Chapter 29 verse 27.

(17)The Qur'an Chapter 3 verses 33 and 34.

(18)The Qur'an Chapter 3 verses 38 and 39.

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atives and offspring as a reward for his endeavor in the service of God and in response to his prayers.

He commanded us to say: "God honor Mohammad and the members of his House " and he prayed for the purity of these members on various occasions.

Al-Hakim reported that the Prophet covered Ali Fatimah Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein with a garment and prayed saying:

"God these are my family. I ask Thee to honor Mohammad and the family of Mohammad." In response to his prayer the following revelation came: "God wants only to keep abomination away from you and make you members of the family of Mohammad spotless." (19)

Thus it was not unusual to have in the kinsmen and offspring of Mohammad distinguished men and women of the highest degree of righteousness. On the contrary if such persons did not exist among the relatives of the Prophet it would have been very unusual. God honored Apaham Moses

Zakaria and other Prophets by creating in their progeny and relatives distinguished persons preferring them above other people. Why should He not honor His final and most important Prophet by creating in his offspring and relatives some people with highest distinction?

### **The Prophet's Reward**

The Holy Qur'an makes it explicit clear that the love of relatives of Mohammad is an Islamic duty. God commanded Mohammad to ask the Muslims to reward him for his fulfillment of the heavenly mission by loving his close kins.

"That is (the bounty) whereof God gives glad tidings to His servants who believe and do righteous deeds. Say: No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of (my) near kins. And if any one earns good deeds We

(19)Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak Part 3 p. 148.

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shall give him an increase of good in respect thereof God is Oft-Forgiving. Most ready to appreciate (service). " (20)

God is telling Mohammad to inform all Muslims that the only reward he wants for fulfilling his Heavenly mission is that the Muslims love his relatives.

This is only because those members are the most obedient to God and his most beloved servants among the Muslims.

By commanding His Messenger to do so He actually commanded the Muslims to glorify the chosen relatives of Mohammad place their confidence in them and walk in their path.

In compliance with this heavenly command the Holy Prophet asked all his followers to love them. He stated that he is at peace with whomever they are at peace and that he is at war with whomever they are at war. He considered them to be similar to the ark of Noah. Whoever embarked on it was safe and whoever failed to be on it was drowned.

The House of Mohammad can be a means of unity to the Muslims. This unity can be realized when Muslims take the attitude which God and His Messenger wanted them to take toward these people. It would be erroneous for the Muslims to separate Mohammad from the Members of his House while he himself wanted to be united with them. This is clearly evident by his instruction



that his followers couple his name with his chosen relatives whenever they pray for him whether within or outside their daily prayers.

(20) The Holy Qur'an Chapter 42 verse 23.

### Members of the House of Mohammad

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2. Relying on the tacit agreement among the Muslims we assumed the Imam Ali his wife Fatimah and their two children Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein are members of the blessed House of Mohammad. The most reliable evidence in this matter is the reported words of the Prophet Mohammad himself where he spoke of Ahl Beit Mohammad or his Itrah. The reported words of the Messenger on this subject can be classified into two types:

1. The hadiths which contained descriptions that distinguish the House of Mohammad from others who would be excluded by the same descriptions.
2. The hadiths which specify these members.

#### **DESCRIPTIVE HADITHS**

From the first type are the following: Jaber Ibn Abdullah a famous companion reported that the Messenger of God said:

"O people I have left for you that which if you follow you will never go astray: the Book of God and the members of my House who are my "Itrah" (close relative and progeny)." ( 1 )

Zeid Ibn Arqam a well known companion of Mohammad reported that the Messenger of God said:

( 1 ) Al-Termathī Sunan Al-Termathī Part 5 p.328 (hadith No. 3874)

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"I have left for you that which if you hold fast you shall not go astray after me: The Book of God a rope extended between Heaven and Earth and the members of my House who are my Itrah. Certainly both (the Book of God and the members of my House) shall not part from each other until they join me on the Day of Judgement. Beware how you will treat both of them after me." ( 2 )

Zaid Ibn Thabit reported that the Messenger of God said: "I am leaving among you two successors: The Book of God a rope extended between the Heaven and the earth and the members of my House who are my Itrah). Certainly they (the Book and the Itrah) will not part from each other until the Day of Judgement." ( 3 )

Zeid Ibn Arqam again reported that the Messenger of God said on the day of Ghadeer Khum:

"I am about to be summoned by God and I shall respond. Certainly I have left for you the two most valuable legacies. One of them is bigger than the other: The Book of God and my "Itrah " members of my House. Beware how you will treat both of them after me. They will not part from each other until the Day of Judgement.".

Then he said:

"Certainly God is my 'Moula' (Guardian) and I am the Moula of every believer." Then he held Ali's hand and said: 'Whoever I am his Moula this is his Moula.' God love whoever loves him and cast out of Thy favor whoever antagonizes him." (4)

Accordingly the members of the House of the Messenger are the ones who possess the following qualifications:

( 2 ) Al-Termathi Sunan Al-Termathi Part 5 p. 329 (hadith No. 3876)

( 3 ) Imam Ahmad reported it in his Musnad by two authentic ways Part 5 p.181.

( 4 ) Al-Hakim in his Sahih Al-Mustadrak Part 3 p.109.

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1. To be of Mohammad's Itrah. Man's Itrah is his close relatives (by birth) and his progeny. By this definition the wives of the Prophet and his companions from the non-Hashimites are excluded.

2. Righteousness of the Highest Degree. The members of the House of the Prophet have been described in these hadiths as true allies of the Qur'an who will never part from it. Thus unpius men and women would be disqualified for the membership whether they are Hashimites or non-

Hashimites.

3. To Possess the Highest Degree of Knowledge in the Contents of the Holy Qur'an and the Teachings of the Messenger. Those who have limited knowledge in religion are excluded even if they are closely related to Mohammad.

They are bound by their very lack of knowledge to fall intentionally or unintentionally into disagreement with all Qur'an. The members of the blessed House according to the hadiths are secured against disagreement with the Book of God. Such a security cannot exist without a profound knowledge in the Qur'an and all the Islamic teachings.

4. To Be in Agreement with Each Other. When there are persons or groups contradicting one another some of them will be wrong and in disagreement with the Qur'an.

Since all members of the House are in agreement with the Holy Qur'an they must be in full agreement with each other.

5. To Possess Certitude in all Religious Knowledge.

By this the Islamic scholars whom we call "Mujtahids" who are capable of conducting religious research and forming their own opinions are excluded even if they are Hashimites (related to the Prophet). To understand this clearly a few points ought to be mentioned: When we try to know the Islamic rules of our devotional or non-devotional actions our main evidences come from the Qur'an or from the hadiths of the Prophet.

When we find clear and specific instructions in the Qur'an about a certain matter our knowledge reaches the degree of certitude whether we are Islamic scholars or lay-

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men. When we do not have a clear Qur'anic instruction we solicit that from the hadiths of the Messenger. Some of the hadiths are clear in their indication and reported by numerous companions. Again our knowledge through this type of hadith attains certitude.

The difficulty is that hadiths of this type are not numerous and the majority of them are reported by one or two or a very few companions. Through such hadiths our knowledge concerning the rules which we try to know never reaches the level of certainty because the conveying companion did not report it to us directly because he is not living in our time nor did he record it in a book.

A person received a hadith from a companion. He in turn reported it to another and so on. Later the hadiths were recorded in a book after they passed through many hands. Thus our knowledge through this type of hadith would be at best conjectural. There are other places at which instructions of the Messenger have been reported unclearly or in two opposite ways. The conclusion can be drawn in such cases only by professional scholars or "mujtahids."

The conclusion reached and the opinions formed by the scholars in any of the above mentioned cases are mostly conjectural. They do not usually reach the height of certainty nor do they certainly agree with the Book of God.

The probability of disagreement with it is very high considering only one of the opinions in each case. If we consider two opposite opinions of two scholars we would be certain that one of them is in disagreement with the Holy Qur'an because the two opinions contradict one another and the Qur'an cannot agree with two contradictory views.

From this it becomes clear that the Mujtahids whether Hashimites or non-Hashimites are not included in the particular membership of the House of Mohammad. This is because the knowledge of Mujtahids is mostly conjectural and in many cases does not agree with actual teaching of the Qur'an while the knowledge of the members of the House is securely in agreement with the Book of God.

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This is because the aforementioned hadiths clearly indicate that the knowledge of the members of the House of Mohammad is a knowledge of certainty rather than a knowledge of conjecture; otherwise they would have parted in many cases with the Holy Qur'an. By this we ought to consider a mujtahid such as Abdullah Ibn Abbas (a cousin of the Prophet) out of the circle of the House in spite of his extensive knowledge in religion and his close relation to the Holy Prophet. The rest of the companions who were not closely related to Mohammad nor reached the degree of knowledge of Ibn Abbas are obviously excluded.

How Could It Be Possible for the Members of the House of Mohammad to Obtain a Knowledge of Certainty in All the Islamic Teachings?" Possession of certainty in religious teachings was very possible at the time of the Messenger. It is very logical to assume that the Prophet taught a disciple of his such as Ali all the contents of the Holy Qur'an and informed him of all the Islamic laws which may number a few thousands. It is fair to assume that such a close disciple taught some of his disciples all that he received from the Prophet. These assumptions are supported by certain facts:

Ali was with the Prophet from the time of his childhood until the time of the death of the Prophet. He was his trusted disciple and close associate. He was his keen-minded student who attended his public as well as his private teaching.

Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein (the grandsons of Mohammad and the sons of Ali) lived with their father many years. They were his close associates. They were his most illustrious disciples and the purest Muslims who resembled their teacher and his teacher. Thus we can say that the certainty of knowledge pertaining to the Holy Qur'an and the instructions of the Prophet was available and possible to some of the disciples of Mohammad.

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### **THE SPECIFIC HADITHS**

Several hadiths of the Prophet named the members of the house of Mohammad. Muslim recorded in his Sahih the following:

"When the (following) verse came down (at the time of a debate between the Messenger and Christians from Najran): 'If anyone disputes in this matter with thee now after full knowledge has come to thee say: Let us summon our sons and your sons our women and your women ourselves and yourselves; then let us earnestly pray and invoke the curse of God on those who lie.' The Messenger of God called Ali Fatimah Hassan and Hussein and said: God these are the members of my family." ( 5 )

Al-Termathī Ibn Manthoor Al-Hakīm Ibn Mardawaih and Al-Bayhaqī in his Sunan all recorded the report of Om-Salemah wife of the Prophet in which she said:

"In my own house the (Quranic) verse (from chapter 33): 'Certainly God wants to keep away all abomination from you members of the House (of Mohammad) to make you pure and spotless.' Ali Fatimah Al- Hassan and Al-Hussein were at my house. The Messenger of God covered them with a garment then said: "These are the members of my House. God keep away abomination from them and make them pure and spotless." ( 6 )

Muslim in his Sahih recorded that Ayesha Said: "The Messenger of God came out wearing a wide cloak made of black hair. Fatimah Hassan Hussein and Ali came successively then he covered them with his cloak and said: 'Certainly God wants to keep all abominations away from you members of the House of Mohammad and make you pure spotless.'" ( 7 )

( 5 ) Muslim Sahih Muslim Part 15 p. 176.

( 6 ) Al-Termathi Sunan Al-Termathi Part 5 p. 328 (hadith No. 3875)

( 7 ) Muslim Sahih Muslim Part 15 p. 194.

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The two following hadiths are recorded in Al-Durr Al-Manthour by Al-Sayooti (his commentary on the Qur'an)

"Abu Al-Hamra (one of the companions of the Messenger) reported that the Messenger of God continued eight months in Medina coming to the door of Ali at every morning prayer putting his two hands on the two sides of the door and exclaiming: Assalat Assalat (prayer prayer). Certainly God only wants to keep away all abominations from you ye members of the House of Mohammad and to make you pure and spotless." (8)

Ibn Abbas reported:

"We have witnessed the Messenger of God for nine months coming every day to the door of Ali son of Abu Talib at the time of each prayer and saying: Assalamu Aleikum Wa-Rahmatullah Ahl Al-Beit (peace and mercy of God be upon you ye members of the House of Mohammad). Certainly God wants only to keep away all abominations from you members of the House and to make you pure and spotless."( 9 )

These hadiths clearly indicate that each one of the four is a member of the House of Mohammad. They also exclude all other individuals who were living at the time of Mohammad the Hashimites as well as the non-Hashimites from the Arabs and non-Arabs.

### **Members Born After the Prophet Mohammad**

This restrictive statement however does not exclude all Hashimites who were born after the time of Mohammad .

The first group of hadiths we advanced indicate that members of the House are to continue after his death and through numerous centuries because the members according to the hadiths shall exist as long as the Qur'an exists.

( 8-9 ) Al-Sayooti Al-Durr Al-Manthour Part 5 p.198 (Conveyed by Sayed Taqi Al-Hakeem Al-Ossol Al-Ammah for Al-Fiqh Al-Muqaram pp.155-156)

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By commanding the Muslims to follow the Book of God and the members of his House and by declaring that Ali Fatimah Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein are the members of his House the Holy Prophet actually placed Ali and his two sons at the seat of leadership of the nation.

Thus the two sons did not need to be appointed by their father and Al-Hussein did not need to be appointed by his pother Al-Hassan.

### The Indispensable People

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3. When we review in retrospect the important events involving the history of a nation we find that those events and their early evolutions were not dependent on most of the individuals and small groups who lived in those particular times. The presence or the absence of this soldier or that farmer or worker or merchant or politician did not affect those events.

Every individual except a very few was dispensable or it was possible to replace any of them with another person who could have performed a similar role.

There are of course some small groups and some individuals who perform important roles which other people cannot or do not want to perform. These small groups and a few individuals would be indispensable and the big events therefore would be connected strongly to these groups and individuals.

The presence of any of the small-role performers (and these are the overwhelming majority in every nation) in relation to the important event ought to be called incidental and dispensable. We say that the presence of such people or small group is incidental and dispensable in relation to an important event because that event could have been realized with or without such persons or group for everyone of them is easily replaceable.

As we look retrospectively at the onset of the faith of Islam and its gradual spread during the time of the Holy Prophet we find that Islam was strongly connected with the presence of a small number of individuals and groups.

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It is needless to speak about the connection of the faith of Islam with the presence of the Messenger for he is the one who received the revelation carried the message and faced what no other person faced. He is the only man whose qualities qualified him to receive the revelation.

As the faith of Islam was dependent on the person of the Holy Messenger in its commencement and continuity during the period of the Prophethood we find that the continuity of Islam during that period was connected strongly and positively with three small groups who protected the life of the Messenger and offered great sacrifices in his defense.

### **The Hashimites**

The first of these small groups was the clan of Hashim.

This clan had offered what no other Meccan clan offered during the years the Holy Prophet spent between the beginning of his Prophethood and the beginning of his Hijra.

This group was privileged with the honor of defending the Holy Prophet during those years. No other Meccan clan shared this honor. The rest of the clans had chosen to take a hostile attitude towards the prophet his message and his clan. That hostile attitude threatened the Messenger and the members of his clan constantly with serious dangers.

Thus it would be justifiable to say that the presence of the rest of the Meccan clans in relation to the development of the message during that period was not only incidental but also a negative force for those clans did not offer as groups any assistance to the Messenger; in fact they impeded progress.

Some men and women related to these Meccan clans had believed in the Messenger and offered some sacrifices for him and his message but they did that as individuals.

The groups to which those persons belonged had taken hostile attitudes towards the Messenger and persecuted those individuals because they deviated from their hostile line.

Had Omayad Makhzoom Zuhra Jumah and the rest

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of the Meccan clans been absent the Holy Prophet and his message could have been freed from many dangers. The Imam Ali in one of his messages directed to Muaweyah mentioned the following:

"Our people (the Meccan clans) wanted to kill our Prophet and annihilate our clan. They plotted and committed atrocities against us. They prevented us from the water and clothed us with fear. They forced us to live at a rugged mountain and started the fire of war against us and the Almighty decided for us to defend His religion and fight for His sacred cause. Our believer was seeking the Divine reward and our unbeliever was trying to protect his honor. The rest of the Qureshite Muslims were free of what was surrounding us either through an alliance which protected them or through a relationship to a clan which was ready to defend them. Thus they were in a security against murder.

"Whenever the war became bloody and the companions were unwilling to fight the Messenger put the members of his House in the front protecting his companions through them from the heat of the swords and spears." ( 1 )

### **The Ousites and the Khazrajites**

The other two small groups with whom the continuity of the faith of Islam was positively connected at another stage of the development of the Islamic movement were the two tribes of Al-Khazraj and Al-Ous. The two tribes were privileged from among the non-Meccan Arab tribes by honor of their defense of the Holy Messenger and his message after the Hijrah. Had other tribes wanted to share with the two tribes this honor they could have acquired it; unfortunately they chose to oppose the Messenger instead of assisting him.

Thus the continuity of the faith of Islam was connected to these three small groups. The presence of the rest of the tribes and clans was dispensable and less than incidental

( 1 ) Al-Shareef Al-Radhi Mohammad Ibn Al-Hussein Nahjule- Balaghah collection of words of the Imam Ali Part 3 pp. 8-9.

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in relation to the faith of Islam in that period. For the presence of those clans and tribes had a negative effect and was fraught with dangers which threatened the life of the Messenger and his message.

### **ABU TALIB**

As we find these three small groups connected strongly with the message of Islam the history of this faith presents to us two men whose existence was indispensable and necessary during the period of Prophethood.

One of these two men was Abu Talib uncle of the Messenger his guardian during the days of his childhood and his main defender after the commencement of his Prophethood. The protection by this hero of his nephew and his defense against the threats of the Qureshites (the non-Hashimite Meccan clans) was a main factor in the continuity of life of the Messenger and his message. The Meccan clans were burning with hatred towards the Messenger and anxious to shed his blood. What prevented them from that was the presence of Abu Talib the chief of Mecca who led the Hashimites and made out of them and himself an unpeakable fortress around the Messenger.

The readers of the Islamic history know how the Qureshite clans delivered to Abu Talib an ultimatum to stop his nephew from defaming their fathers and belittling their gods and ridiculing their minds; otherwise they would confront him and Mohammad on a battlefield until one of the two parties perished. Abu Talib did not have any doubt that his acceptance of the Qureshite challenge meant his death and the annihilation of his clan; yet he did not pressure his nephew to stop his campaign. He only informed him of the Qureshite ultimatum and then he told him kindly:

"Save me and yourself my nephew and burden me not with what I cannot bear."

When the Messenger rejected their ultimatum declaring to his uncle that he would not exchange his message with the possession of the whole universe Abu

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Talib immediately reversed his attitude and decided to go along with the Messenger to the end. He called him after he turned his back: "Come back my nephew."

When the Messenger came back the great uncle said to him: "My nephew go on. Say whatever you like I shall never let you down at any time." ( 2 )

### **Abu Talib fulfilled this huge promise with distinction**

When a Meccan threw some dirt on the Messenger while he was prostrating Abu Talib went on pandishing his sword and holding the hand of his nephew until he came to the sacred Mosque. A group of the enemies were sitting there and when some of them tried to stand for Abu Talib he said to them: "By the One in Whom Mohammad believes if anyone from you stands up I will hit

him with my sword."

Then he went on putting dirt on their faces and beards. ( 3)

The Qureshite clans formed a strong alliance against Abu Talib and his clan and resorted to the weapon of starvation instead of confrontation. They knew that the Hashimites would fight if fought; and that they could not be annihilated without costing their adversaries great losses.

Thus the Meccan clans imposed an economical and social embargo against the Hashimites. This continued for three years during which time the Hashimites were forced to live at a rugged mountain called "Shi-ab Abu Talib." The Hashimites during that period were forced sometimes to eat leaves of trees to alleviate the pains of hunger.

During that period the main concern of the old hero was to protect the life of the Messenger. Abu Talib during those years often made some members of his own family (especially his son Ali) lie at the bed of the Holy Prophet protecting him by his dearest son from danger of assassination.

( 2 ) Ibn Husham Biography of the Prophet Part 1 p. 266.

( 3 ) Khalid Mohammad Khalid Fee Rihab Ali.

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## **ISLAM OF ABU TALIB**

A number of historians and hadith-recorders reported that Abu Talib died while he was a pagan. Some of them reported that the verse "It is not permissible to the Prophet and the believers to ask God to forgive the pagans even if they were akin to them after it became clear to them that those pagans are from the people of Hell " was revealed in relation to Abu Talib for the Prophet wanted to ask God to forgive him and the Almighty prohibited him from doing that .

Such statements were fabricated as a part of the smear campaign which the Omayyads and their allies waged against Imam Ali. They tried by fabricating these hadiths to prove to the masses of the people that Abu Sufyan father of Muaweyah was better than Abu Talib father of Ali claiming that Abu Sufyan died while he was a Muslim and Abu Talib died while he was a pagan .

The recorders of the hadiths and the historians took these hadiths without paying attention to the evidence of their forgery. They did not try to examine these hadiths yet the date of the revelation of the above mentioned verse testifies that it was not revealed about a matter pertaining to Abu Talib .

The verse is a part of the chapter of Bara-ah (number 9). This chapter is totally Medinite with the exception of the last two verses (129 and 130). The verse which is the subject of our discussion is the 114th. The chapter of Bara-ah was revealed during the ninth year after the Hijrah. The Prophet ordered Abu Bakr to announce the first part of it during the days of pilgrimage of that year when he sent him as an "Amir Al-Hajj" (commander of the pilgrimage). Then he sent Ali to take that part from him and announce it because God commanded him that no one should deliver the revelation other than himself or a man from the members of his House. The chapter speaks of events that took place during the campaign of Tabouk which was during "Rajab" of the ninth year.

Since this chapter contains the above mentioned verse

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the verse could not mean Abu Talib. because he died in Mecca at least two years before the Hijrah .

Asking God to forgive a deceased usually takes place at the time of a funeral prayer. The wording of the verse indicates that for it says: "It is not permissible to the Prophet and the believers to ask God to forgive the pagans." This indicates that the Prophet was with other believers (in a congregational prayer) when he asked forgiveness for the pagans.

As a matter of tact the funeral prayer was not instituted before the Hijrah. The first prayer offered by the Messenger for a deceased was his prayer for Al-Bura Ibn Maarour from Medina.

It is likely that the verse was revealed after the Prophet offered a funeral prayer for one of the hypocrites who used to pretend Islam and conceal paganism. It is very likely that the verse was revealed when the Holy Prophet offered a funeral prayer for Abdullah Ibn Abu Salool who died during the ninth year and who was well noted in his hypocrisy his hatred to the Messenger and his adversity to the faith of Islam. About him and his followers the chapter of Al-Munafiqoon ( the Hypocrites ) was revealed before that time. Had the historians and hadith-recorders (who inadvertently mentioned the fabricated hadiths about Abu Talib's paganism) thought with some depth and logic they would not have committed this terrible historical error.

To say that Abu Talib was a pagan is to say that he was a believer in the divinity of idols. But this belief cannot co-exist with his belief in the truthfulness of Mohammad who denounced idols and considered their deification and worship a defiance to the Creator.

For Abu Talib to believe in the divinity of idols he either had to believe that Mohammad was

deliberately misinforming people about God or that he was hallucinating. If Abu Talib were pagan and in spite of that he offered so much sacrifice for the sake of Mohammad he must have been insane or an unusual fool. Had he believed that his nephew was unbalanced or a conscious misinformant about God Abu Talib should have confined Mohammad and

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become his strong opponent rather than his formidable protector for the mission of Mohammad was expected to bring destruction and death to Abu Talib and his clan.

Abu Talib tied his fate to the fate of his nephew. He was unconcerned with what might happen to him and to his clan. He witnessed the dangers surrounding him and his clan and the difficulties that were accumulating around him because of his protection of his nephew. In spite of all what happened to him and to the members of his clan history does not record any harsh word on the part of Abu Talib to his nephew. On the contrary he offered himself and the members of his clan as a redemption to his nephew.

He treated him better than any compassionate father treated his most beloved son. He told him: "Nephew continue your mission and say whatever you desire to say. By God I shall never leave you to any danger." Abu Talib was a man of great faith and strong belief in the truthfulness of Mohammad. He lived with that mission about eleven years and the difficulties for Mohammad and for him increased in size by the passage of time. He was a man of unusual faith in the truthfulness of Islam. History witnessed distinguished companions running away when the danger grew. But Abu Talib did not run away nor did he lose his determination. He continued his sacrifice for the Prophet for the duration of his life.

This should give credence to what Al-Tabarsi recorded through his channel to the Imam Jaafar Al-Ssadiq:

"While the Imam Ali was sitting at the 'Ruhbah' in Kufa " surrounded by a group a man stood up and said: "Commander of the Believers you are in this great position at which God has placed you while your father is suffering in hell." The Imam replied saying: "Be silent. May God disfigure your mouth. By the One Who sent Mohammad with the truth if my father intercedes for every sinner on the face of the earth God would accept his intercession." ( 4 )

He concealed his faith and God rewarded him twice.

( 4 ) Al-Tabarsi Al-Ihtijaj Part 1 p. 341.

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He concealed his faith only to protect Mohammad. Had he revealed his belief in Islam the relation between him and the rest of the Qureshites would have been severed. He wanted to maintain the dialogue between him and the Qureshites and not let it be discontinued for this could have led to an armed conflict in a decisive battle which might have led to the destruction of his clan. By this the Hashimite wall around Mohammad would fall and the Meccan pagans could reach him.

In spite of concealing his faith Abu Talib on more than one occasion made his belief in Islam clearly known.

While on his deathbed he said to the Hashimites: "I command you to be good to Mohammad. He is the most trustworthy of Quraish and the ever-truthful of the Arabs. He pought a message which is accepted by the heart and denied by the tongue for fear of hostility

By God whoever walks in the path of Mohammad shall be on the right road and whoever follows his guidance shall have the happy future. Had there been a balance in my years I would have shielded him against dangers and defended him against adversaries .

"And you the Hashimites respond to Mohammad's invitation and believe him. You will succeed and be well-guided. Assist Mohammad; certainly he is the guide to the straight path." ( 5)

We All Are Indebted to Him

All Muslims are indebted to Abu Talib for the continuity of the Islamic Message is a result of the continuation of the life of the Messenger until God completed His message to mankind. The protection of Abu Talib to the Messenger was the main physical deterrent to the Qureshites.

I once made this statement in an Islamic seminar and the following question was raised: If God is the One Who wanted the message of Islam to continue and to spread

( 5 ) Khalid Mohammad Khalid Fee Rihab Ali.

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was not He able to preserve it and spread it without Abu Talib and his protection to the Messenger? In my reply I stated the following: Muslims believe that God was able to preserve the life of the Messenger and He was able to make all the children of Adam Muslims and believers in God His oneness and in the Day of Judgement. He could have made them obedient to all Heavenly

laws. He was able to make all the Qureshite clans obedient to Mohammad. He was able also to make all people obedient to His command without creating Mohammad .

Yet in spite of our belief in all this we know that God did not do that. He did not make all people believers. He did not interfere directly to change their thinking and their belief. He rather left for them their freedom to choose. This means that God did not want to run the events of the world miraculously and through Divine intervention. He rather wanted to run the affairs of the world in accordance with the natural means and courses. Therefore He sent revelations down to a human being named Mohammad and spread Islam through that person.

The Almighty did not choose to force the Qureshites to believe or disbelieve. The majority of the Qureshites chose to oppose Mohammad and Abu Talib chose to believe in his message and to defend him by all of what he had of men and means. This protection of Abu Talib to the Messenger was an important factor in preserving the life of the Messenger and the continuation of his mission until Abu Talib departed from this world.

To attribute paganism to a man such as Abu Talib who was so benevolent to all Muslims by guarding the life of the Messenger for about eleven years is one of the worst forms of ungratefulness. It is a reward of great favor by the worst insult.

Abu Talib was the first of two great men with whom the continuity of the faith of Islam was strongly connected and their presence in relation to the continuity of the faith of Islam was not incidental.

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## **IMAM ALI**

The other man with whom the continuity of the faith of Islam during the days of the Messenger was strongly connected is the son of Abu Talib Ali who carried the same mission after his father's death but on a larger scale.

Numerous companions made great efforts for the sake of Islam and rendered to the Prophet of Islam assistance worthy of appreciation. It is sufficient to mention the three Caliphs: Abu Bakr Omar and Othman along with the numerous Meccan companions such as Al-Zubeir Talhah Abdul-Rahman Ibn Ouf Abu Obeidah Ibn Al-Jarrah Saad Ibn Abu Waqass Al-Miqdad Ibn Al-Aswad Abdullah Ibn Mas-ood and Ammar Ibn Yasir. Add to these people from the Medinites men such as Abu Dujana Qais Ibn Saad his father Saad Ibn Abadah Saad Ibn Maath and others from other communities such as Abu Tharr Salman Al-Farisi and hundreds of companions other than these.

All these men endeavored in the way of God by sacrificing some of their wealth or their life or both.

If we review the period of the Prophethood and the roles which these righteous companions performed we find them indispensable as a group. Yet each one of them as an individual was replaceable by another companion to perform a role similar to his.

It was possible to replace Abu Bakr by Omar to perform a role in a manner similar to his. It was possible to replace Abu Bakr Omar and Othman by Abu Obeidah Ibn Al-Jarrah Talhah and Al-Zubeir. It was possible to replace Saad Ibn Abadah by Saad Ibn Maath or by his son Qais Ibn Saad Ibn Abadah or to replace Abu Tharr by Salman or Ammar Ibn Yassir or Al-Miqdad Ibn Al-Aswad. The roles of these companions were close or similar. Had Omar been the companion of the Messenger in the Cave at the night of the Hijrah instead of Abu Bakr Islam would not have lost by the exchange. But Ali's role in guarding the life of the Messenger could not have been performed but by Ali. It was easy for Ali to perform the role of any other companion during the time of the Messen-

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ger but it was not easy for any other companion to perform Ali's role.

It was easy for Ali to be the companion of the Messenger in the Cave of Thour at the night of the Hijrah. But it was not easy for Abu Bakr or any other companion to lie on the bed of the Messenger redeeming the Messenger by his life resigning to receive the Qureshite attack which was expected to come from ten warriors supported by the rest of the Meccan pagans.

It was not possible for any of the companions of the Messenger to perform the role of Ali at Badr where he destroyed nearly 50 percent of the Qureshites who perished at that battle. Thus he tipped the scale through his personal efforts in favor of the small Islamic army when the faith of Islam was at stake.

It was not possible for any companion to perform Ali's role at Ohod when the companions ran away climbing the mountain not turning their faces to the Messenger while the Messenger was calling upon them to come to him. The Messenger was singled out to face thousands of pagans. No one remained with him except Ali to confront the regiments which were seeking the life of the Messenger.

Ali faced them one after another and forced many of them to retreat until a few of the companions came back to defend their Prophet. Had Ali run away as the others did and the



pagans reached the Messenger the direction of the history could have been changed if the Almighty did not protect Islam and His Messenger by a very unusual miracle .

These are only a few of many events which prove clearly that Ali's endeavor was a very substantial factor in pinging about the victory of the Faith of Islam and the defeat of its enemies. This proves that Ali was the protective shield of the Messenger against the numerous dangers which surrounded his precious life. This means that Ali had two important exclusive honors:

1. The continuity of Islam which was dependent on the life of the Messenger and his triumph during that period was strongly connected with Ali's presence and endeavor .
2. The strong connection between the birth of the

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Islamic State and his presence. It was impossible for the Muslim State to be established if the enemies of Islam were to be victorious and able to destroy the new power.

Since the endeavors of Ali had a clear effect in tipping the scale in favor of the new power at the decisive battles between the Messenger and his enemies it would be very true to consider the endeavor of Ali one of the most important factors in the birth of the Islamic State.

How true the word of Omar was when he said to a man accusing Ali with conceit: "By God the pillar of Islam could not have been established without the sword of Ali."

### **UNIQUE BRAVERY SUPPORTED WITH UNIQUE SINCERITY**

Ali's unusual pavery and physical strength alone could not make out of him a protective shield for the Messenger nor could they tie the continuity of Islam and the birth of the Islamic State to his existence. What made him so transcendent was his unusual sincerity to the Heavenly principles and his deep insight by which he discovered the unknown truths and through which his pavery and physical strength were directed to the service of the truth .

History witnessed many men equipped with physical strength and pavery. But the lack of knowledge of the truth or the absence of sincerity toward the truth made them spend what they were given of power in supporting falsehood and combating the truth; or made them self-worshippers spending all their energy for obtaining a false glory or cheap material.

Unlike these Ali was an example of a different type of men whose knowledge made them directly

witness the truth and enjoy sacrifices which other people found unbearable. He accompanied this world bodily while his soul was connected to the higher world. He and the ones whom he exemplified are the ones whom God had chosen to be the rulers on this earth!.

### **His Birth and Childhood**

The strong tie between Ali's endeavor and the birth of

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the Islamic State was not a product of chance. It was rather the product of spiritual evolution started at an early stage of his life. Ali was being prepared for the unique honor since the days of his childhood. He had the exclusive honor of having the strong ties to the great Messenger who took him to himself during the days of his childhood as a member of his own family. He directed the child's clear mind and illuminated nature towards the truth. He saturated him from the strength of his faith knowledge wisdom and purity.

At the hands of that teacher Ali grew and his qualities developed. He became a mirror reflecting the lights of the Prophet.

"Abu Talib's wife Fatima the daughter of Asad (the lady whom the Messenger used to consider his second mother) gave birth to Ali at the Kaaba. Thus he was the first human to be born inside the Ancient and Sacred House of God. His birth was thirty years after the birth of the Prophet and twenty three years before the Hijrah. His mother named him Haidrah (lion) or Asad. His father named him Ali (high). The two names were appropriate for he was destined to be the lion of God and His Messenger as he was the highest person after the Messenger who "pothored" him among all Muslims.

"The capability of Abu Talib as a provider was below the need of his family especially with famine by which the Meccans were plagued at that period. The Prophet suggested to his uncle Al-Abbas that both of them try to lighten the burden of Abu Talib by taking some of his children. Abu Talib honored their request. Abbas took Jaafar and the Prophet took Ali and kept him with him until the day of the commencement of his Prophethood." ( 6 )

The Messenger and Al-Abbas were well-to-do and they were able to offer Abu Talib what he needed of food during that hard period and leave Ali and Jaafar with their

( 6 ) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak Part 3 pp. 5-6 and so in Ibn Husham Biography of the Prophet Part 1 p.246.

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parents. But the Messenger chose that he and his uncle take the two children to them.

It seems that the Messenger seized upon the opportunity of the famine. He took Ali to him trying to provide him through his uppinging with his spiritual food along with his bodily food preparing him to the great future which was awaiting him .

It appears that he was willing to do so even if Quraish did not have the famine. Ali was the most valuable companion of the Messenger .

The Messenger himself informed us that his relationship to Ali was not incidental. He told him: "Ali people are from various trees but you and I are from one tree." ( 7 )

Of course the Messenger did not mean by this statement that Ali was his relative and first cousin and that their grandfather was Abdul Mutalib because that is not important information. These facts are common place to people. Furthermore Al-Abbas and Al-Hamzah were children of Abdul Mutalib and Jaafar and Aqeel were potherers of Ali. Their relationship to the Prophet is like that of Ali to him exactly.

What the Messenger meant is that Ali's soul resembles the soul of the Holy Prophet and that he was strongly connected to him as an extension of his personality. Thus he was from the Messenger of God as he spoke of himself: "And I am from the Messenger of God as one of two trees originated from one root and as the lower arm extending from the upper one." ( 8 )

It seems that the Messenger took Ali to himself while Ali was still a small child for Ali himself stated the following: "And you have known my place from the Messenger of God with the close relationship and the special position. He seated me on his lap while I was a small child empacing me making me join him in his bed

( 7 ) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak Part 2 p. 241.

( 8 ) Nahjul-Balaghah Part 3 p. 73.

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touching his holy body and smelling the sweetness of his fragrance. He used to chew the food and put it in my mouth." ( 9 )

The Prophet lived before the days of Prophethood as a world by himself. He lived in a society in which ignorance and idol-worshiping were prevalent sanctifying superstition and legalizing the unethical conduct. Yet he was able to think of what the minds of the people of his society were unable to discern. The purity of his nature enabled him to see and hear what people could not see or hear. He lived in the midst of his society as an island of knowledge wisdom and civilization surrounded by an ocean of barbarism and ignorance.

Ali was destined to be a part of that independent world and to live in the atmosphere of that island without being affected by the surrounding society. He grew up as a light derived from the light of Mohammad. His illuminated nature and keen mind enabled him to follow the steps of the Prophet living up to his principles and ideals. The Imam spoke of his growth under the direction of the Prophet Mohammad and the influence of his attachment to him in forming his high characters:

"And he (the Messenger of God) never found an untruth in my words or any wrong in my deeds. God had attached to him (Mohammad) from the time of his weaning the greatest of His angels to walk him through the path of virtue and to teach him the highest ethics of the world . . . and I was following him as a baby following his mother. He used to raise for me every day a banner of his ethics and command me to follow it.

"He used to seclude himself every year in Hira and I was with him while no one else could see him. And during the early period of Islam there was only one house sheltering the Messenger of God Khadijah and myself as their third seeing the light of revelation and smelling the fragrance of the prophethood." ( 10)

( 9 ) Nahjul-Balaghah Part 2 p. 157.

( 10 ) Nahjul-Balaghah Part 2 p. 15.

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By that time Ali arrived in his spiritual ascendance to a degree by which he became able to hear and see what the Messenger was hearing and seeing at the days of the commencement of his Prophethood. He (Ali) said that at an occasion which took place during the first few days from the commencement of his Prophethood the Prophet told him: ". . . Certainly you hear what I hear and you see what I see but you are not a Prophet. You are a minister and you are on a good path." As Ali had covered so much distance in his spiritual development before passing ten years of age it was only natural for him to add to his special position with the Prophet the other exclusive honor of being the first of the believers in the Prophethood of Mohammad and the fastest in response to his call.

## Brother and Minister

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5. During the first three years of the Prophethood the Prophet did not call people publicly to the new faith. The message remained an unannounced conversation for its announcement would necessarily lead to a confrontation with the clans of Mecca. The Prophet knew that the Meccan clans and the Masses of Arabia would not hesitate to use any violent means against him if he demanded from them to change their religion.

Yet this confrontation was inevitable and expected to be fraught with danger. The message was not revealed in order to be kept secret. It came down to reform mankind and to change the beliefs of the people and the ways of their lives. This could not be realized except by calling to them loudly warning them openly and informing them about the message.

For a new religious message or a new ideology to succeed the man of the message and his followers have to have freedom of speech and practice. Average individuals do not have the courage to embrace a new ideology when its embracement causes them to confront a society that does not sanctify the individual's freedom. Such a society by its nature is inclined to violence and there are not many individuals who are ready to suffer the loss of position wealth and life for ideals. Just to make the spread of the new ideology feasible in such a society the freedom of speech and practice must be protected and secured for the potential converts. Otherwise they would be too terrified to change their religion. This means that the new

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ideology will have only a limited success if any. Only the heroes of an unusual courage would rise above fear and these are not many.

As to the man of the message the chance of his success is very slim when his life and relative freedom are not protected though he may be a big hero. His rise above fear does not secure success in a violent society. His death by assassination or other means before establishing his religion will bring his whole mission to an end.

Thus the first requirement for the success of a new religion in a non-democratic society is a protective shield around the life of the man of the message and his relative freedom. He needs strong supporters who will be ready to give their lives for protecting their leader and his message.

If such people are not available it would be necessary to have at least one supporter of an unusual quality who is similar to the Messenger in sincerity courage and strength.

Such a person would be expected to be found among the relatives of the man of the message since the relatives are expected to be more sympathetic to him than others.

The Holy Qur'an informs us that when Moses received the Command of God: "Go to Pharaoh certainly he has exceeded the limit " he asked his Lord to strengthen him through a minister from his own family! "He (Moses) said: O my Lord expand my peast.

Ease my task for me and remove the impediment from my speech. So they may understand what I say. And give me a minister from my family Aaron my pother.

Add to my strength through him and make him share my task." ( 1)

Mohammad is the final of the prophets. His message is the conclusion of all heavenly messages. His message therefore must succeed and stay forever.

God runs the affairs of the world usually according to the law of cause and effect and through natural courses.

Therefore He did not order His Messenger Mohammad to

( 1 ) Chapter 20 verses 25-32.

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face the whole society at once with the invitation to Islam because this might lead to the failure of the mission rather than to its success. Wanting him to go gradually in his invitation He issued to him a command (after three years from the beginning of his Prophethood) to begin with his close relatives. From the Holy Qur'an: "And warn thy nearest kinsmen. And lower thy wing to the believers who follow thee." ( 2 )

When this command came down the Messenger of God invited the descendents of Abdul-Muttalib (they were forty men) to a banquet which contained little amounts of food and milk.

They ate and drank until they became full.

Then the Messenger spoke saying: "O children of Abdul-Muttalib by God I do not know any young man from among the Arabs who has ever sought to do for his people better than I sought to do for you. I sought to do for you the good of this world and of the Hereafter and God has commanded me to invite you to it. Who is among you willing to be my minister in this mission and he will be my pother my executor and my successor in you?"

None of them responded but Ali who was the youngest among them. He stood up and said: "Messenger of God I will be your minister in this mission."

The Prophet repeated his invitation but none responded except Ali who repeated his words. The Prophet put his hand on the neck of Ali and said:

"This is my pother my executor and my successor in you. Listen to him and obey him."

They laughed saying to Abu Talib: "He ordered you to listen to your son and to obey him." ( 3 )  
Thus the Messenger

( 2 ) Chapter 26 verses 214-215.

( 3 ) This hadith is recorded by the following authors: A. Ibn Al-Atheer Al Kamil Part 2 p. 22.

B. Al-tabari History of Nations Messengers and Kings Part 2 p. 217.

C. Abu Al-Fida in his History Part 1 p. 116.

D. Imam Ahmad Al-Musnad Part 1 pp. 111-119.

E. Ibn Is-haq Al-Baihgai in Al-Dala-il (Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi Muntakhab Kansul-Ummal in the margin of Musnad Ahmad Part 5 pp. 41-42 printed in Beitut by Sader)

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of God invited his close relatives to embrace Islam but his main purpose was to find among them a person who would assist him in spreading the message.

Embracing Islam is very important but more important is to find among the converts a person who will be willing to pay a high price for its success. And how many millions of Muslims of today are unwilling to pay the least for Islam!

## **CONFLICTING HADITHS**

The two sheikhs: Al-Bukhari and Muslim did not mention this important event though it was reported by many historians and hadith-recorders. Muslim and other hadith-recorders reported an event that took place after this event.

They reported the appearance of the Messenger on Al-Safa and his call to the Qureshite clans (the Meccans) and his invitation to them to believe in the new faith. Muslim and these reporters mentioned this late event and tied it with the verse of the warning of the closest relative of the Holy Prophet. Muslim recorded that Abu Huriarah reported the following: When this verse was revealed: "And warn thy closest relatives " the Messenger of God called the Qureshites and they came together. He addressed them in general and in particular. He said: "O children of Kaab Ibn Lu-ay save yourselves from Hell. O children of Murrah Ibn Kaab save yourselves from Hell. O children of Hashim save yourselves from Hell. O Fatima save yourself from Hell.

For I do not possess any protection for you from God except that you have relations to me which I would like to observe." ( 4)

It is amazing that God commanded His Messenger to

( 4 ) Muslim Sahih Muslim Part 3 pp. 79-80.

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warn the closest of his relatives who were the children of Abdul-Muttalib but the Prophet called upon the children of Kaab Ibn Lu-ay and the children of Murrah Ibn Kaab who are from the remotest of his relatives. It is inconceivable that the Messenger of God disobeys what his Lord commanded him to do .

And what is more amazing is that the messenger called upon his daughter (Fatima) publicly to save herself from Hell yet she was the purest Muslim girl whose father and mother were the purest parents .

Fatima at the time of the revelation of the above verse was according to the historians either two years or eight years old. ( 5 ) It would be illogical that the Prophet addresses himself to a two year old child or that he put a pure Muslim girl (who was still a minor not exceeding eight years of age) on the same level with the pagans of Banu Kaab and Banu Murrah.

And more curious is the hadith of Ayesha which Muslim recorded in his Sahih as follows: "When the verse of warning was revealed the Messenger of God said: 'O Fatima daughter of Mohammad Safia daughter of Abdul-Muttalib I have nothing in my power to protect you against God. Ask me



from my wealth whatever you want.' " ( 6 )

This hadith does not agree with the previous one. For this hadith reported that the Holy Prophet addressed himself to the children of Abdul-Muttalib alone while the other hadith reported that the Holy Prophet publicly addressed himself mostly to other than the Prophet's clan And most curious in this hadith is that the Messenger addressed himself publicly while on the Safa mainly to his youngest daughter Fatima while she was living with him where he sees her every hour. It is also curious that the address which he directed to her and to the other members of the children of Abdul-Muttalib did not contain any

( 5 ) Al-Hakim in his Mustadrak Part 3 p. 61 reported that she was born 41 years after the birth of her father .

( 6 ) Muslim in his Sahih Part 3 pp. 79-80.

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message such as calling upon them to worship God or to avoid idol-worshipping .

Furthermore Ayeshah was not born at the time of the event. The Messenger died when she was still eighteen years old.( 7 ) And this event took place ten years before the Hijrah (twenty years before his death). Abu Hurairah also was not an eye-witness to the event because he saw the Messenger for the first time when the Messenger was coming back from Khaibar. (In the 7th year after the Hijrah).( 8 )

And more curious than all is that Al-Zamkh-Shari reported that Ayeshah daughter of Abu Bakr and Hafsa daughter of Omar were among the ones whom the Holy Prophet addressed after the revelation of this verse of warning (which was revealed before the birth of Ayeshah) . ( 9 ) This clearly indicates that recorders or the reporters of these hadiths were seriously confused. They overlooked the fact that the verse commands the Prophet to warn his closest relatives who were the children of Abdul-Muttalib and that the Holy Prophet is not expected to disobey the order of God. What these hadiths reported is opposed to the verse itself and whatever disagrees with the Holy Qur'an has to be disregarded.

The event which the historians and many hadith re-corders reported of holding a conference with his immediate relatives is the only logical course which the Holy Prophet was expected to follow after the revelation of the verse.

#### **THE OFFERED REWARD**

The Prophet was about to come to a confrontation with the idol-worshippers. Therefore he needed a minister who had his courage sincerity and firmness. Forty men from

( 7 ) Ibn Saad Al-Tabaqat Part 8 p. 61.

( 8 ) Al-Tabaqat Part 4 p. 327.

( 9 ) Ali Ibn Burhanuddeen Al-Halabi Al-Seerat Al-Halayah (Bio- graphy of the Prophet) Part 1 p. 321.

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the children of Abdul-Muttalib would be an important asset for Islam if they adopted it. But if they were ordinary people they would not be able to face the masses of Mecca and Arabia.

God will soon command His Messenger to extend his invitation to all of the Arabs then to other nations as well and they will violently resist the invitation for years to come.

Forty average persons will be terrified by the hostiles of Mecca and Arabia; yet one man of high courage will be able to face whatever the Messenger will face.

For this the Prophet spoke to them about this important goal after a very short introduction saying:

"Who is among you willing to be my minister in this mission? (Whoever is willing to be so) will be my pother executor and successor."

How Could the Prophet Make Such a Promise? Suppose all or most of them had accepted Islam at the meeting and promised him their assistance. What could he do? It may be conceivable that all of them would become his pother but it is very hard to conceive that all of them would be his executors. And if this is probable it is not conceivable that everyone of them would be his successor.

With a little analysis one may know the answer .

The Messenger was well aware that the majority of them would not have the courage to pledge to him a genuine support of Islam. For such a pledge would put them face to face with the whole society and draw them into a war which might end with the loss of their lives. A true assistant of the Messenger must be an unusual person and the majority of the attendants were just average people .

What happened at the meeting clearly substantiates the truth of what the Prophet expected. None of them was willing nor had the daring spirit to pledge to him assistance except one person and the following years proved that he was the man for the job .

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Why These Specific Rewards? The Prophet evidently wanted to follow the footsteps of Moses. Moses asked his Lord to give him a minister from his own family and here the Prophet Mohammad gathered his close relatives seeking from among them a minister. The minister of Moses was his pother Aaron .

The Prophet Mohammad did not have a pother because he was the only child of his parents Abdullah and Aminah.

To follow the course of Moses he wanted to make his minister also his pother.

The same applies to the position of successor. Aaron was the successor of Moses among his people when Moses went to the mountain to hear the words of his Lord and secluded himself for forty nights. Before going to the mountain he said to Aaron according to the Holy Qur'an: "Be my successor among my people and do good and follow not the path of mischief makers." ( 10 )

What the Prophet said to Ali many years after this event supports this understanding and confirms its soundness. Leaving him in Medina when he took his long journey to Tabouk he said to him:

"Ali will it not satisfy you to be to me like Aaron to Moses except that there will be no prophet after me?" ( 11)

Giving Ali all the ranks of Aaron with the exception of the Prophethood means that Ali was like Aaron in the rest of the ranks: The ministry the potherhood and the succession. The statement of the Prophet at the above mentioned conference and this statement are consistent with each other and they aim at one purpose .

### **Why Such a Big Reward for a Ministry?**

It may be said: Why should the Holy Prophet give Ali

( 10 ) Chapter 7 verse 142.

( 11 ) Muslim in his Sahih Part 15 p. 175; Al-Bukhari reported it in his Sahih Part 5.

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such a big reward for his ministry? Is not the rank of assistant (or minister) to the Prophet a high reward by itself? The answer is that the ministry of Ali is not a reward from the Prophet as much as it is a gift from Ali. This ministry or assistance is a tremendous sacrifice on the part of the minister. To make this clear I would like to say that there are two types of ministry:

1. A Ministry of Adminstrating the Affairs of an established state. The man of such a ministry is a counselor to the head of the state by authorization from his superior or from the congress or from the people.

2. A Ministry of Founding and Establishing a State.

The minister here would be the assistant of his superior in pinging into being a state which did not exist yet or in spreading a new faith which is not yet known to the people. The mission of a minister of this kind is to carry with his superior the tremendous responsibility of establishing a faith and a state and to face with him all dangers. He would be his protective shield constantly ready to sacrifice himself for the safety of his superior.

A ministry of the first kind is a gift from the head of the state to his minister and a great honor bestowed on him by elevating him to a high office.

The ministry of the second kind is not a gift from the superior as much as it is a gift from the minister. It is a tremendous sacrifice which the minister offers continuously for the protection of his superior and for making his mission a success. A minister of this kind faces with his superior dangers and difficulties which could not be faced by a human multitude .

The minister whom the Holy Prophet was seeking from among the members of his clan was from the second rather than from the first kind. There was no established state nor was there yet any Muslim community. The Messenger of God was not (and even after the Islamic State was established) in need of a counselor to advise him how to spread the message or to found a state. He was in need of a person of unusual sincerity and heroism with an absolute obedience to God and His Messenger .

( 70 ) A person that deserves to be the pother of the Messenger of God and his successor after his absence from this world must have a soul that is virtuous enough to be an extension of the soul of the Prophet himself. He must resemble him to a high degree in knowledge wisdom and rise above self interest. In other words he must be a replica of the great Prophet.

Yes the Messenger of God was not in need of a person who advises him about the wise course he

should take. The Messenger was the most intelligent and the wisest. He only was in need of a minister who would assist him by his big action sacrifices and heroic work. That minister would be the recipient of his knowledge and when the need arises he will be able to represent the Messenger and sit on his chair after him.

### **The Prophet Wanted to Have No Excuses**

One should not doubt for a minute that the Messenger of God was aware of who will be his minister before he spoke to the members of his clan. He knew that there was none among the group that had the quality of the needed minister but Ali .

However the Messenger would not choose Ali to the high offices without leaving no excuse for the rest of his relatives. He would not let the coming generations say that if he had asked someone other than Ali he would have found many qualified persons. He would not let us wonder whether the Messenger had a favoritism towards Ali and distinguished him without a clear reason. It was necessary to give the rest of the members of his clan the opportunity to make them show their attitude and to make the merit of Ali evident.

### **THE OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE HOUSE OF THE PROPHET**

The conference to which the Messenger called the children of Abdul-Muttalib produced a unique pact; history

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has never witnessed its like nor has it witnessed its equal in nobility and high aim. It is a covenant between the final Prophet of God the Conveyor of the Message of the Heaven and his minister Ali Ibn Abu Talib who at the time of the covenant was not above the thirteenth year of his age.

The substance of the covenant was two items:

1. A pledge on the part of Ali to the Prophet to be his minister in fulfilling his great mission .
2. A promise by the Holy Prophet put in a form of a declaration in which he told the members of his clan while his hand was on Ali's head: "This is my pother my executor and my successor in you. Listen to him and obey him." It is worthy to note that the Messenger fulfilled his promise immediately at the conference. He did not wait for Ali to fulfill his pledge. The Prophet put his promise in a form of an immediate reward to his minister. He declared while he was still at the conference that Ali was his pother and made him his executor and successor. He did not wait for Ali to fulfill his pledge because he knew that Ali's word carried its full meaning and that his word

and his deed were united and never would contradict each other. Ali put himself at the disposal of the Messenger from the minute he uttered his pledge. Several years elapsed before the Holy Prophet needed Ali's immediate assistance .

Ali's father was still alive and strong guarding the life of the Messenger; and the believers were not yet permitted by God to fight their adversaries. Also the danger against the Holy Prophet had not reached its peak.

The dangerous hour came ten years after the conference and after Abu Talib departed from this world. The Meccan chiefs in their "Nadwa" (club) conferred and decided to bring to an end the life of the Messenger by assassination.

The Prophet called upon his minister to start fulfilling his pledge. Thus the night of redemption came and Ali was the redeemer of the Messenger and his Trustee.

Ali pronounced his word while he knew the magnitude of the mission in which he pledged to assist the Prophet.

He was fully aware that due to its magnitude the mission

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seemed to be impossible. The mission aimed at changing the beliefs of the society and its ways of life.

It aimed at making the society embrace Heavenly principles that do not agree with its nature. Ali knew that it would be opposed by all forces in society. He knew that the success of this mission could not be achieved unless it prevailed against all adversary forces and that this required the establishment of an Islamic state based on the foundation of the newly revealed principles. Such a state would protect those principles and the freedom of their followers.

Such a mission cannot be accomplished even by a whole nation regardless of what it may muster of forces. This mission is what the Messenger was determined to achieve and it is the mission which Ali promised to support by his assistance and by facing all what the Prophet will face in its achievement.

As the conference yielded this result it was expected that Ali will fulfill his huge pledge as it was expected that the Holy Prophet will declare in the future to all Muslims what he had declared to his immediate relatives concerning Ali. We shall see in the following pages that Ali fulfilled what

he pledged to the Messenger and that the Messenger after the birth of the Islamic State had declared to the Muslims what he declared to the forty men from the children of Abdul-Muttalib.

### The Redeemer

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6.The rapid increase of the number of Muslims in Medina heartened the Medinites and encouraged them to invite the Prophet to move to their city pledging to defend him with all their power. Upon this pledge the Holy Prophet accepted their invitation. The Meccan pagans knew about what took place. They conferred secretly and reached the conclusion that the death of Mohammad was the only means to stop the spread of Islam. From each clan in Mecca a strong and courageous man was selected to attack Mohammad at an appointed night. Thus all the Meccan clans would be participants in his murder.

The Almighty revealed to His Messenger the news of the conspiracy and ordered him to depart from Mecca at the appointed night. His departure while under their surveillance was expected to put him face to face with danger .

Like other Meccan houses the house of the Prophet was not sight proof. An outsider could see its inside. The bed of Mohammad therefore should not be unoccupied; otherwise the enemies would discover his departure and block the roads and search the houses to find him. But whoever occupied Mohammad's bed at that night should be ready to die for the attack was surely coming .

The Messenger revealed to Ali the news of the conspiracy and asked him to lie on his bed. As expected Ali neither declined the dangerous invitation nor did he think of his own fate. He only thought of one important thing:

The fate of the Prophet. "Messenger of God " he asked:

"Will you be safe?" When the Prophet replied in the affir-

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mative Ali went down to the earth prostrating thanking God for the safety of His Messenger.

The Holy Prophet commissioned Ali with another mission: He asked him to deliver to the Meccans in the following days their trusts which were in the possession of the Prophet. The Messenger was the trustee of the Meccans friends and enemies alike. He was to them the Trustworthy.

No one should deliver those trusts on behalf of the Prophet other than his trustee and representative Ali.

The recorders of the hadith reported that the Messenger commissioned Ali with a third mission that night. Al-Hakim reported that Ali said that the Messenger accompanied him to the Kaaba (on the night of the Hijrah) to try to destroy Quraish's biggest idol. The Messenger mounted the shoulders of Ali in order to reach the roof of the Kaaba but he found some weakness in Ali. He went down and told Ali to mount his shoulders and he did. And the Messenger rose up. Ali felt that if he wanted to reach Heaven he could. Ali went up to the roof of the Kaaba.

He shook the largest idol which was made of copper being bound to the roof. When he took hold of the idol the Prophet told him to throw it down. He did and the idol was poken. ( 1 )

It seemed that this mission was completed before the conspirators surrounded the house of the Prophet and that the Prophet and Ali came back to the house after fulfilling this mission; then the Prophet left when the enemies were surrounding his house. Ali remained to fulfill the other two great missions: Occupying the bed of the Messenger and delivering to the Meccans their trusts.

Ibn Al-Atheer in his history (Al-Kamil) reported that Gapiel came to the Prophet and told him not to lie on his bed that night and that the Prophet ordered Ali to lie on his bed. He also commissioned him to deliver what was in his possession of the trusts to the Meccans and informed him that the enemies would not harm him.

The Prophet took a handful of soil and threw it on the

( 1 ) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak Part 3 p. 5.

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heads of the enemies who were surrounding his house and left unnoticed reciting the chapter of Yasine. Seeing the bed of the Prophet occupied the enemies believed that Mohammad was sleeping on his bed. They waited until morning and when Ali rose from the bed they recognized him. "Where is Mohammad?" they asked. "I do not know "



Ali replied. "You ordered him to leave and he left." They beat Ali up pought him to the Mosque detained him for one hour then freed him. ( 2)

It is also reported that when the dawn drew nigh they dashed into the house and were surprised to find that the occupier of the bed was Ali rather than Mohammad. Ali stood up and they asked him: "Where is Mohammad?"

He denied any knowledge about his whereabouts. Violence erupted and Ali pressed the hand of their leader making the sword of the man fall from his hand. Seizing upon the sword he was able to drive them out.

The chiefs of Mecca realized that their conspiracy was abortive. The Meccans in groups went in every direction trying to find Mohammad. One group led by a tracker took the right direction until they approached the Cave of Thour. Hearing the rumble of their feet Abu Bakr who was hiding with the prophet was extremely frightened and sweating. As they came to the mouth of the Cave Abu Bakr whispered in the ear of the Prophet: "If one of them looks under his feet he will see us." The Prophet calmly replied: "Be not afraid God is with us."

The Almighty protected His Prophet from his enemies and the historical Hijrah by which the faith of Islam and the Muslims were transferred from a state of weakness to a state of dignity and strength. commenced.

### **THE MAGNITUDE OF THE MISSION**

Let us try to evaluate Ali's sacrifice and the magnitude of his mission. When the Prophet accepted the invitation of the Muslims of Medina the Muslims in Mecca numbered

( 2 ) Ibn Al-Atheer in his history Al-Kamil Part 2 p.72.

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about 150. The Prophet permitted or rather urged these Muslims to migrate to Medina. He did that in spite of his awareness of the new danger which resulted from his covenant with the Medinites. He knew that the Meccans would not let him depart from their city safely. He could have kept a number of prominent Muslims around him to shield him against the imminent danger. He could also commission any one of them to occupy his bed at such a time. But he did not do that; instead he urged them to leave Mecca ahead of him and kept Ali for the hard task. He chose Ali because he knew that an occupant of his bed that night must have the following

qualities:

1. His love to God His Messenger and His religion should be stronger than his love to himself.
2. He must be endowed with a courageous spirit that would enable him to face death for the Divine cause with satisfaction.
3. He should have an indomitable spirit with which he would not be frightened by his aloneness while facing the violent wrath of the Meccan community because he foiled their plot against the Prophet. In addition to this he had to be patient enough to withhold all information about the Prophet regardless of what he might face of torture.

It was extremely difficult if not impossible to find a person other than Ali ready to perform such a role and do it so calmly without fear.

Here we may understand the meaning of the ministry and assistance which Ali promised the Prophet ten years before the time of this event.

Significance of the Delivery of the Trusts It is worthy to note that the Prophet commissioned Ali with the delivery of the trusts to the Meccans. This clearly put in action what he promised Ali of executorship. The Messenger could have commissioned someone other than Ali to deliver the trusts. Ali's survival was highly in doubt because of his dangerous mission. The rest of the Muslims were in no danger; thus the Prophet would be expected to commission Abu Bakr or another companion with the

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delivery of the trusts rather than Ali. Yet he chose Ali in spite of the dangers with which he was surrounded.

### **A Miraculous Prophecy**

Choosing Ali to deliver the trusts proves that Ali was the only person representing the Prophet. Deputizing Ali by himself was a unique prophecy. God revealed to Mohammad that Ali would pass the crisis safely and that he would be in a position to deliver the trusts. Had the Prophet not been certain that Ali would survive the crisis he would have commissioned someone other than Ali with the trusts. Their delivery was a duty whose imperativeness compelled the Prophet to choose the surest way in delivering them. Thus it was the duty of the Messenger to choose for such a mission a person who was expected to survive rather than a person who was expected to die .

### **Value Undiminished**

The reader may think that Ali was certain of his survival and his certainty came from information of the Holy Prophet and from his being commissioned by him to deliver the trusts for this indicates that the Prophet was sure of Ali's survival. If this were the case the event would lose its importance for the occupant of the bed of the Prophet would not be harmed regardless of the magnitude of the danger.

The fact is that the Messenger of God commissioned Ali with the delivery of the trusts after he accepted the mission of redemption without hesitation or concern with what would happen to him during that night. It was equal to Ali to stay alive or to die as long as the Prophet was safe. Ali was the one who used to seek martyrdom as an ultimate goal. He believed that martyrdom is the great gain and the highest form of victory. We know the truth of this when we read what is recorded in Nahjul-Balaghah where he speaks about the revelation of the following verse: "Do men think that they will be left alone saying: 'We believe ' without being tested?".

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The Imam tells us that when this verse was revealed he reminded the Prophet of a statement he made when the Imam was saddened because he did not obtain martyrdom which many other Muslims obtained at the Battle of Ohod.

The Prophet told him at that time: "Be cheerful martyrdom is coming to you." The Prophet confirmed his previous statement saying: "That will be so. How will your patience be at that time?" The Imam retorted: "Messenger of God this will not be a place of patience. It will be a place of cheerfulness and thanks." ( 3)

The Almighty informed the Messenger when he was migrating to Medina that he would come back to Mecca: "Certainly the one who commanded you to deliver the message of the Holy Qur'an will ping you back. . . ."

This revelation was a promise from God to His Prophet to make him survive all difficulties until he returns him to Mecca regardless of any battles he attends. Thus the Prophet had attended numerous battles while he was certain of his safety. This did not diminish the value of his endeavor for he was determined to do that even if he were not promised with a Divine protection.

This is true also concerning Ali. His belief in his survival until he delivered the trusts does not diminish the magnitude of his sacrifice because he was ready to make that sacrifice and to redeem the Prophet whether he was informed of his survival or his martyrdom The history of Ali

after the Hijrah substantiates this conclusion. The Prophet did not inform Ali that he would survive the battle of Ohod but that did not prevent him from staying with the Messenger protecting him by himself and combating the regiments one after another and forcing them to retreat after all companions ran away .

The Almighty protected His Messenger from the Qureshite conspirators and enabled him to arrive in Medina safely where he found strength and support. But Quraish was not expected to adopt a peaceful attitude or to sleep while Mohammad was alive. To them his very existence

( 3 ) Nahjul Balaghah Part 2 p.5.

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was a tremendous danger threatening their religion and influence. They expected his power to grow by the passage of time and that he would come back accompanying an army that Quraish could not face .

Certainly the survival of the Messenger made the Qureshites more eager and determined to kill him and more violent in combating him. They were expected to wage a long war against him and his followers. They were ready to use whatever they had of power and influence to fight him and to stir up the pagans and non-pagan tribes against him. They wanted to succeed in accomplishing by confrontation what they could not accomplish through attempts of assassination .

Ali's redemption of the Holy Prophet at the night of the Hijrah was a fulfillment of the pledge which he made at the conference of the House where he promised the Holy Prophet to be his minister. The events which followed the Hijrah demanded from Ali assistance to the Prophet much more and greater in size and magnitude year after year until the victory of the Heavenly message was realized.

The Faith of Islam could not have continued and spread unless the followers of Islam were liberated from fear and enabled to enjoy religious freedom. This could not be realized unless a powerful state based on the principles of the new faith is established. Such a state could not be established unless the evil forces which were threatening the faith are defeated .

We shall see in the following pages that Ali was that unique minister who was great enough to assist the Prophet to achieve these goals .

Thus Ali earned the two honors of being the Redeemer of the Final of the Prophets and the honor of being the executor of the Prophet (in action) whom he deputized to deliver to the Meccans

what was in his possession of their trusts. Both honors were unique .

When his two missions were so successfully fulfilled Ali set out towards Medina. As he arrived to Qoba he found the Holy Prophet waiting for him to enter with him the city which was destined to be the capital of Islam.

### Ali's Role in Building the Islamic State

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7. Self-determination is an inalienable right of every nation and every nation therefore has the right to establish a state and institute a national government.

Such a state has the right to unite all its people under one banner unless legitimate governments for sections of one nation had been already established. These rights are natural and no power has the right to prevent a nation or a people of a country from exercising them.

The Arab nation at the time of the Messenger was no exception. It had the right to establish a state and institute a government. This was not only a right but also the duty of the Arab nation. Yet due to unusual circumstances the Arab people in Hijaz Najd and Tuhama were living without government of any kind. There was no power to stop a public offender and enable people to live in peace and security for their wealth lives and honors.

The Arab tribes were reciprocating hostilities. No honor blood or property of a tribe was sacred to other tribes. Anarchy to them was a matter of course and no change was necessary; and if anyone thought of a change he did not have the means to realize it.

The rest of the Arab people in Yemen Syria and Iraq were ruled by foreign powers who did not have the right to rule them.

It was a duty of any new government to try to liberate these people from foreign domination and unite them with the rest of the Arabs regardless of any religious principles.

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But there was no one to fulfill this duty or exercise these rights.

The Almighty wanted to deliver the Arabs and other nations and liberate them from their social political and religious anarchies. He sent Mohammad to lead mankind to the right road and wanted the Arab nation to be the starting point. Probably the Arabs were the most needy for such a guidance and should they be guided by a heavenly leader they would be well qualified to carry His message to other nations.

The Messenger tried to deliver His message and to establish a state. The forces of anarchy from pagans and non-pagans tried with all their means to prevent him from fulfilling his mission waging against him a relentless war.

It was impossible for him to fulfill his mission without accepting their challenge and meeting them at the battle field and defeating them completely.

It was the right as well as the duty of the Holy Prophet to defeat the adversary forces in order to establish a new state from a new and ideal kind.

The Islamic State which he was trying to establish was not a subduing force which ruled people against their own will and imposed itself above them. The Messenger wanted to found a state and a government in which the ruler and the ruled are equal and pothers to each other.

A strong individual or group in this state would not be respected for strength nor would the weak be deprived of his right because of his weakness. The government the Prophet wanted to establish was projected to direct mankind to the Creator of the Universe and make the nations as well as the individuals realize that He is their True Ruler. Thus they would obey His command and obtain the projected worldly and spiritual happiness in His obedience. The Projected government would develop as a spontaneous outcome of their adherence to a set of principles which elevated people to make them live spiritually above their own human level.

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### **THESIS VERSUS ANTITHESIS**

The anarchic and evil forces of Mecca and other Arab communities did not only deny Mohammad the right to establish a state and a government but also tried to prevent him and his followers from exercising their religious devotion. They denied him and his tollowers the right to live as long as they believed in One God.

These forces drove Mohammad and his followers out of their homes and properties. They wanted to shed his blood and the blood of his followers. Had these forces done nothing other than preventing him from establishing a state he would have had the right to combat them and defeat them for the continuation of their power meant the continuation of injustice towards the weak and the absence of security in society; above all that the Almighty would not be worshiped and His Oneness would not be acknowledged.

The adverse elements were the opposite barriers the removal of which was a necessary requirement for establishing the projected state. It was impossible to ping such a state into existence without destroying its opposite. Thus the Heavenly state was destined to be born on the battlefield when the founder of the state and his followers were accepting the challenges of the evil forces one after another. Had these forces been able to prevail on the battlefield the Islamic state could not have been born or continued to exist.

### **Quality Versus Quantity:**

Muslims at the beginning of the Hijrah were a very small minority compared to the rest of the Arab forces which stood against them. They were overwhelmingly outnumbered and poorly equipped .

For the Faith of Islam to triumph and establish a state it had to have one of the two following methods:

1. A Divine intervention through which the evil forces would be miraculously destroyed. God is able to do that and nothing is beyond His power. Whenever He wants to

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do anything He only says: "Be and it is." However it is evident that this was not to happen.

The Almighty runs the events of the world through the natural courses. He tests the believers and they do not pass the test unless they try to fulfill what He commands them to do offering in His way what they possess of resourcefulness and power.

2. The other way by which the small Islamic minority could obtain victory was to have a superior quality which enabled it to prevail against opponents with quantitative superiority. This is what took place.

## The Unique Hero

Here we find Ali Ibn Abu Talib next to the Messenger .

He proved to be a unique hero and a giant; mankind had never witnessed his equal in the history of "Jihad." The reader may remember that the Messenger of God gathered his close relatives after the commencement of his Prophethood seeking from among them a minister to assist him in his difficult mission. None of the Hashimites other than Ali responded to his call. "Prophet of God " he said "I shall be your minister." The Prophet upon hearing this told the Hashimites: "This (Ali) is my pother executor and successor."

This event took place ten years before the Hijrah when Ali was thirteen years old. During the ten years which followed the event Ali's manhood reached its unequalled strength. This became crystal clear at the night of Hijrah when he lay on the bed of the Messenger giving the highest example in the history of Islamic redemption. This manhood was destined to be transformed into a unique heroism when the Messenger and his followers accepted the challenge of their enemies and went on defending their sacred freedom trying to ping about the birth of the Islamic State which was conceived to carry the torch of guidance for mankind .

No one other than the Messenger expected the word "Wazeeruk" (your minister) which Ali uttered at the historical conference to be so full of its meaning and flowing

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with so much of heroism. The Messenger was the only one who expected from Ali all his future record.

The Messenger was the architect and the founder of the Islamic State. His minister Ali was the eliminator of the obstructive forces which stood in the way of its establishment for he was the hero and the bearer of the banner of the Messenger in every decisive battle. ( 1 )

The Messenger made him the commander-in-chief of every expedition he attended. He never placed him under any command other than his. Whenever he carried the banner of the Messenger he came back with an impressive victory and history. His leadership was unique in style. He was not a commander who was defended by his soldiers.

He was rather the leader who stood in the front line literally leading his soldiers. On more than one occasion his soldiers took refuge in him and he was their protector at more than one battle. On occasions the bulk of the companions ran away leaving the Messenger alone and Ali stood



along with him compensating him through his heroic performance for what the Prophet missed of their defensive actions.

Ali attended eighteen battles with the Messenger. In addition he led numerous expeditions. It suffices to mention briefly his indispensable contributions in four decisive battles: Badr Ohod the Moat and Kheibar. These four battles were truly the battles of destiny for Islam and Muslims.

The future of Islam was dependent upon their outcomes.

( 1 ) Ibn Saad in his Al-Tabaqat Part 3 p. 25.

Al-Hakim also reported that in his Al-Mustadrak Part 3 p.111.

#### At Badr

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8.The Battle of Badr was the most important among the Islamic Battles of Destiny. For the first time the followers of the new faith were put into a serious test. Had victory been the lot of the pagan army while the Islamic forces were still at the beginning of their developments the faith of Islam could have come to an end.

No one was as aware of the importance of the outcome of the Battle as the Holy Prophet. We might read the depth of his anxiety in his prayer before the beginning of the Battle when he stood up supplicating his Lord: "God this is Quraish. It has come with all its arrogance and boastfulness trying to discredit Thy Apostle. God I ask Thee to humiliate them tomorrow. God if this Muslim band will perish today Thou shall not be worshiped!" ( 1 )

At this battle in which the pagan army consisted of 950 fighters and the Muslims did not exceed 314 (including the Messenger) the Islamic defense was a combination of three elements resembling three defensive lines:

1. The personality of the Messenger his leadership and his unequalled firmness. He was to the Muslims the final refuge at Badr and at every battle he attended .
2. The Hashimites (the clan of the Prophet) led by Ali Ibn Abu Talib who entered this Battle

relatively obscure and came out of it with unequaled military fame .

His military performances became the popular subject of the Arab caravans' conversations throughout the Arabic Peninsula .

( 1 ) Ibn Husam Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p. 621.

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3. The hundreds of companions of the Messenger whose hearts were filled with faith and readiness for sacrifice. Many of them viewed martyrdom to be a gain equal to life and victory. These good companions were the army of Islam its first line of defense and the thick wall behind which the Messenger used to stand. They were defenders and they were attackers .

As to the clan of the Messenger they were the ones whom he used to call before any one else to offer the heavy sacrifice. They used to stand in the first line of defense opening for the army the way through their thrusts in the lines of the enemies. When the general offensives began and every companion present participated the clan of the Messenger were the most damaging to the enemies. They were so at Badr and at the following battles.

The battle began when Utbah Ibn Rabi-ah his son Al-Waleed and his pother Sheibah (all from Omayad) stood in front of their pagan army and asked the Prophet to send to them their equals for a duel. Hundreds of companions were around him and many of them were expecting to be called upon by the Prophet but he chose to start with his own family. The load was heavy and the heavy load could be carried only by the people to whom it belonged. He called upon Ali Al-Hamzah and Obeidah Ibn Al-Harith (all from the clan of the Prophet) to face the three warriors. Ali destroyed Al-Waleed and Al-Hamzah killed Utbah; then they both assisted Obeidah against his opponent Sheibah. Sheibah died immediately and Obeidah was the first martyr at this battle. He died after he lost his leg.

When the general offensive began hundreds of companions participated in the battle. They offered sacrifices and pleased their Lord. But the members of the House of the Messenger distinguished themselves. Ali's endeavor was unique at this battle. When Hanthala Ibn Abu Sufyan faced him Ali liquified his eyes with one blow from his sword. He annihilated Al-Auss Ibn Sa-eed and met Tuaima Ibn Oday and transfixing him with his spear saying: "You shall not dispute with us in God after today."

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The Messenger took a handful of gravel when the battle was extremely heated. He threw it at the faces of the pagans saying: "May your faces be disfigured. God terrify their hearts and invalidate their feet." The pagans ran away turning their faces to no one.

The Muslims went on killing them and taking prisoners.

Seventy pagans met their death and the Muslims took from them seventy prisoners. History preserved in its records only fifty of the names out of the seventy pagan losses. Twenty two or twenty-two 3 of them died at Ali's hands.

This battle laid the foundation of the Islamic State and made out of the Muslims a force to be reckoned with by the dwellers of the Arabic Peninsula.

However we should not overlook the fact that it took three hundred and twelve companions to achieve sixty percent of the outcome of the battle while Ali alone achieved at least forty percent of it. It is not an exaggeration to say that his endeavor was a very substantial factor in pinging the battle to its victorious conclusion. Should we subtract his forty percent the outcome of the battle might have changed. On the other hand if we subtract any other single companion in that battle the outcome of the battle would not have changed .

( 2 ) Ibn Husham Biography of the Prophet pp. 708-713.

( 3 ) Al-Waqidi Al-Maghazi (Oxford printing) Part 1 p. 152.