ISLAM AND THE EARLIEST MUSLIMS
TWO CONFLICTING PORTRAITS

S. ABUL HASAN ALI NADWI

Translation:
MOHIUDDIN AHMAD

ACADEMY OF
ISLAMIC RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS
P.O. BOX 119, NADWA, LUCKNOW-226 007
U. P. (INDIA)

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

All rights reserved in favour of :

Academy of
Islamic Research and Publications
Post Box No. 119, Nadwatul Ulama
Lucknow - 226 007 (India)

Series No. 184

Edition : Urdu 1984
English 1985
Arabic 1985
Persian 1985

Price : Rs. 10.00

Printed at :

Nadwa Press
Nadwatul Ulama
Tagore Marg
Lucknow. (India)

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
Prerequisites for Universal Faith ...	3
Miraculous Guidance	*ib.*
Success of Prophetic Guidance ...	4
Prophets and Political Strategists ...	5
Pure and Simple Scripture ...	6
Fount of Gudiance	7
Miraculous Moulding of Hearts ...	8
The Soul shining through its Crystal-covering	*ib.*
Caliph ʿAlī's Testimony	9
Attestation by European Scholars ...	11
Testimony of a Shi'ite Scholar ...	14
Caliph ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān	16
Caliph ʿAlī b. Abī Tālib	19
Puritanical Life of the Earlier Caliphs ...	20
Integrity of Abu Bakr	22
Caliph ʿUmar's Journey to Syria ...	23
Caliph ʿAlī and his Predecessors ...	25
Companions and the Ahl-Bait	26
Heavenly Social Order	29
The Picture painted by the Shi'ites ...	30
Pronouncements of Imām Khomeini ...	32
Impressions of Muhsin-ul-Mulk ...	33
Observation of Imām Shuʿaibī	34
Shiʿite Presumption	*ib.*
Prophet's attitude towards his Household ...	35
The last to receive any Favour ...	37
Key to Salvation	
Order of Caliphate	41
Accuracy and Preservation of the Qurʾān ...	42

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

	Page
Testimony of non-Muslim Scholars ...	43
Shi'ite Creed in regard to the Qur'ān ...	44
Indifference to the Qur'ān	46
An Eye-Opener to the Deniers of the Qur'ān...	47
The Doctrine of Imamate	*ib.*
Iranian Influence	49
Faith in Imam Ghā'ib	50
'Allāma Khomeini's views about Imāms ...	*ib.*
A Beatific vision of Shāh Walīullah ...	51
The Glorious Lamp of Heaven... ...	52
Eulogistic Poetry	*ib.*
Approbation or Denunciation ...	54
Character of 'Alī and his Progeny ...	56
Contradictory Pictures of Early Islamic Era ...	59
Shi'ite Creed of 'Allāma Khomeini ...	61
Followers of Imām Khomeini ...	63
Significance of Creed in Islam ...	*ib.*
The Secret of Khomeinī's Success ...	65
Bibliography	67

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

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

INTRODUCTION

Praise be to Allah, the One, and peace and blessings on His Messenger and Servant.

This slim volume is neither meant to demonstrate soundness of any particular creed, system of belief or school of thought nor is this a polemical or scholastical effort to refute the beliefs of any sect. This work may prove disappointing to those who go through it with a view to finding such matters discussed in it. There are innumerable works on the subject, specially in languages spoken by the Muslims, such as Arabic Persian and Urdu; so large is their number that it is not possible to touch upon them even briefly.

This work seeks to present an sketch of the earliest, ideal era of Islam; the period of the holy Prophet and his companions; the new mode of thought and feelings Islam had produced; all of which was the result of the last Prophet's teachings and guidance. It shows how the guidance provided by the Prophet of Islam differed and overpassed the endeavours of all the previous reformers and founders of religions. The first Islamic society that came into existence solely through the efforts of the holy Prophet has been presented in the light of verifiable facts of history. The book also brings out the divine scheme for the protection of the Qurā'n against every form of corruption, since it was destined to remain the last revelation from God for the guidance of humanity. It also highlights the basic difference in the policy pursued by the harbingers of revolution and founders of empires for perpetuation of dynastic rule, on the one hand, and the prophetic system and disposition, on the other, essential for bringing man to the

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

threshold of God. This distinction is also illustrated by the behaviour, character and morals of the Prophet's household. The matters discussed in this connection bring into relief the need as well as importance of the Prophet himself being the ultimate authority in every matter pertaining to creed and law from the inception of prophetic mission to the end of time—the essentiality of the doctrine of finality of Prophethood.

This doctrine upheld through consensus of the *Ahl-i-Sunnat wal-Jamā'at*, uniformally and continuously, and the way it has been perceptible throughout the life-time of the Prophet and in subsequent ages has been set side by side with the beliefs and deeds of the *Athnā 'Asharī* sect of the Shi'ites (from its first protagonists to 'Allāma Khomeini) as presented in the authentic works of their eminent theologians. It has been left to the discretion——common sense, prudence and better judgment——of the readers to form their own opinion as to which of the two portrayals is upheld by the Qur'ān as well as accepted by the historians, Muslims and non-Muslims. It has been left to the judgment of the readers to decide which of the two presentations of Islam befits a Prophet who was undoubtedly the most successful Apostle of God and the greatest guide and reformer world has ever seen. They can decide which of the two versions in consistent with the claim of a religion to show the path of godliness and virtue to all races and nations in every time and clime, to make man loving and kind-hearted and self-sacrificing, and to raise him to the highest reaches of humaneness from the level of animality.

Lucknow **S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi**

19th Safar, 1405/14th November, 1984.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Islam and the Earliest Muslims

TWO CONTRADICTORY PORTRAITS

Prerequisites for Universal Faith

There are four prerequisites for a religion claiming to be universal, eternal and true, the only saving principle, the only sound creed and the sole path of virtue; inviting man to open the gates of a new and lasting revolution for his own good, on the individual as well as social plane; and presenting itself as a revelation from on High. These postulates are clearly pointed out by human dispositions and intellect, history of religions, insight into psychological factors governing the rise and fall nations and races and the end-result of well-known revolutionary endeavours undertaken anywhere over the ages.

Miraculous Guidance

The first condition in that the prophet giving the call of such a religion should be able to transform those coming into contact with him as if they were reborn with a completely new outlook, thoughts and values : this revolutionary change should have also been brought about without any means or the methods employed by other wise-heads, or social organisations. He should be dependent neither on fine arts, nor literature, nor oratory, nor poetics, nor philosophic discourses, nor yet take recourse to rewards of position and prestige. The guidance and training provided by such a prophet, who is more often unlearned and unlettered, should be different in the influence exerted and the change brought about by all others to a marked degree—leaving no doubt that the two

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

are basically different in their origination and consummation. The change in the character and morals resulting from such a prophetic guidance should be indicative of the Divine Will and succour. which could not be attributed to anything save to a light vouchsafed to the prophet or the blessing of his sacred companionship. For those who are guided by a prophet come to possess a living awareness of God, sincerity of purposes, humility and submission, selflessness, devotion, least regard for anything worldly, anxiety for salvation, self-analysis and steadfastness——the qualities which are conspicuous by their absence in the men trained and guided by all other master-minds like great philosophers, pedagogues, thinkers and intellectuals.

The miraculous and revolutionary guidance provided by prophets of God has been vividly described in this verse of the Qur'ān :

> "He it is who has sent forth among the unlettered ones a messenger from among them, to recite His verses to them, to purify them, and to teach them the Book and the Wisdom, though before that they were in error manifest."[1]

At another place the sacred Scripture reads :

> "But God has endeared to you belief, decking it fair in your hearts, and He has made detestable to you unbelief, wrong-doing and disobedience."[2]

Yet another verse of the Qur'ān announces :

> "Allah sent down His tranquillity upon His messenger and the believers, and made the word of piety binding on them, for they were most worthy and deserving of it."[3]

Success of Prophetic Guidance :

Such a prophet should be able to bring about a

1. Q. 62 : 2
2. Q. 49 : 7 For a detailed discussion of Qur'ānic verses praising the companions of the Prophet see *Ayāt-i-Bayyanāt*, Vol. I., pp. 12-31 by Muhsin-ul-Mulk.
3. Q. 48 : 26.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

marvellous change in the manner and morals of a large number of his comrades. He should be able to produce men with angelic qualities, each one of whom should be capable of converting an entire nation or country to his faith through his strength of character and virtuous behaviour. The Prophet should be able to transform the life of his people in such large numbers that an ideal society should come into existence within his own life-time since the prophet who fails to accomplish this feat can hardly be expected to lay a claim that his successors would change the world or bring their contemporaries to inculcate a living awareness of God on a scale wider than the prophet had himself achieved.

Prophets and Political Strategists.

Any one sent by God for giving a call for such a religion should bear no resemblance in his character and morals, procedure and behaviour patterns as well as his ends and objectives with political leaders, conquerors and founders of empires. The methods applied by him in pursuance of his objectives should rather be contrary to the ways adopted by all other worldly-minded persons whose ultimate aim is to establish a dynastic rule. The history of Roman, Byzantine, Sassanid, Kiyāni, Suryavanshi, Chandravanshi and similar other dynasties is a witness to the fact that the family of an empire builder is passed on the reins of government and if, for any reason, that is not possible, the clan, tribe or family of the victor comes to occupy a position of prosperity and privilege which is enjoyed by it for several generations. Their exploits are like the kill of a lion providing feast to other animals of the jungle. One would have hardly believed the stories of wanton enjoyment and festivity of the Roman and Persian emperors if these had not been recorded by reliable historians.[1] The grandeur of their palaces and the

1. A Christensen. *Iran Sous Les Sassanides*, Paris, 1936 (trans. by Prof. Muhammad Iqbal, *Iran ba'ahd-i-Sāsāniān*).

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

golden carpets[1] they contained as well as the ostentatious living of the Indian rulers furnish an example of their luxurious way of life.

As against the kings and emperors, a messenger of God never builds an empire nor does he do anything to ensure a life of ease and prosperity for his progeny, nor yet he vests his family with any exclusive right or privilege to be exercised by them by virtue of their relationship to him. Rather, his way is entirely different: he requires his family members to lead a life of hardship, austerity and self-sacrifice and they have to depend after him on their own capabilities and efforts. They are never allowed by a prophet to become social parasites like monks and priests.[2]

Pure and Simple Scripture.

The third essential feature is that the scripture revealed to such a prophet is the bullwork of his religion, fountainhead of his teachings, a means to bring man closer to God, a lighthouse of true spirituality and, finally, a guidebook of his creed; it teaches nothing else than absolute and uncompromising monotheism. It has to retain these characteristics to the end of time. God takes the responsibility of protecting it from every corruption. It remains entirely unchanged, understood and recited by the people in large numbers and also treasured in human memory through Divine dispensation unlike any other book. All this is made possible since it has to be presented as the last revelation to the coming generations for their salvation. The annals of the Old and the New Testaments and other religious scriptures record the events leading to the destruction of these sacred writings sometimes by the invaders and enemies and often through interpolations by their own over-religious followers.[3] Some of these writings were even lost

1. See 'Abdul Halīm Sharar, *Tārikh Islām*, Vol. I, p. 356, *Tārikh Tabrī*.
2. Details given elsewhere.
3. See *Tārikh Suhaf-i-Samāwī* by Prof. Nawāb 'Ali and the author's *Islamic Concept of Prophethood*, pp. 171-183.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

for ever by the heedlessness of their insincere and selfish trustees. The reason for it was that safekeeping of these scriptures was entrusted to their followers alone who were *bidden to observe it and thereunto were they witnesses.*[1] The responsibility of protecting the holy Qur'ān against every alteration and interpolation was assumed by God for He says : *Lo : We, even We, revealed the Reminder, and Lo ! We verily are its Guardian.*[2]

Fount of Guidance.

The fourth characteristic is that such a prophet should be the sole leader and guide and cynosure for his followers. Just as the Creator of the universe is to be accepted as the Only Lord and Master, the followers of such a prophet have to be unanimous in their obedience, love and regard for the unique personality of the prophet whom they should hold as the wisest of the wise, the last of the prophets and prince of all human beings. They ought to disdain to regard anybody else, howsoever near and dear he may be to the prophet, as impeccable, worthy of their unquestioning obedience or recipient of revelation. In reality, the solidarity of his followers, protection against multiplicity of creeds and divisive forces and the guarantee of their own inheerent spiritual strength lie in their acceptance of the principle of finality of prophethood.[3]

Now we shall discuss each of these four requirements for an abiding religion in order to examine each issue objectively in the light of observations of Muslim as well as non-Muslim thinkers and writers and the record of events preserved by history.

---

1. Q. 5 : 44.
2. Q. 15 : 9.
3. See Chapter VIII-" *Muhammad, the last Prophet*" of the author's *Islamic Concept of Prophethood*, (Lucknow 1976). The creed of Imāmate held by the Shi'ite sect will be discussed later on.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Miraculous moulding of Hearts.

Every messenger of God had guided and trained a band of virtuous men who had gaven a new lease of life to our world by making the existence of man more meaningful. Among the accomplishments of these prophets that of the holy Prophet Muhammad (on whom be peace) stands out as the most luminous and surpassing all others. His achievements in this regard, preserved by historians in much greater detail, show that his success was not only more than a match for earlier prophets but that he had to start his work in circumstances more adverse than anybody else. He undertook the task of character building among a people who were as profligate as beasts and raised them morally to a standard never achieved by any prophet. Thus, beginning his work from the lowest he took it to the highest level.

The Soul shining through its Crystal-covering.

Every man guided by the holy Prophet was a shadow of the divine perfection, of whom the entire humanity can justly be proud of. We do not find men with similar elegance and sublime character save among the apostles of God. Their unflinching faith, depth of knowledge unsullied heart, simplicity, self-abnegation, clemency, pious disposition, kindness to others, courage and valour, devotion to God and eagerness to lay down their life for Him, their vigils by night and engagements by day, indifference to the world and all it contains, probity and candidness and their direction and management were unprecedented in world history. Everyone of them would have been taken as a legendary figure if verifiable records of history had not preserved their extraordinary achievements.

The companions of the holy Prophet were a class by themselves; a group of men who had absorbed, through prophetic guidance, the highest qualities of head and heart ever aspired by man. Iqbāl, the poet of the East, has made an immortal verse of their acme of perfection which can be

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

rephrased as under :

Child of earth and light, creature with divine traits,
His heart is indifferent to both the worlds, this and that.
Of hopes, he has little, but lofty in aims,
Winsome in his ways, his glance is sure to attract.
Courteous in speech, irresistible in effort,
Whether it's war or peace, he is pious, pure of heart.
His ways are strange, his exploits unsurpassed,
March ahead was his call to the times past.
Inspiring to the upward-looking, cup-bearer to the chaste,
His liquor is uninebriate, truth is his sword.

Now we shall present some historical evidence to show that the holy Prophet's companions really deserved the above eulogy.

Caliph Ali's Testimony:

We begin with two statements of Caliph 'Ali whose testimony is based on his personal knowledge. He is reported to have made these observations after most of his comrades had already reached their journey's end. His attestation does not relate to his four confidants (Salmān Fārsī, Abū Darr Ghifārī, Miqdād b. Aswad and 'Ammār b. Yāsir) who were alive when he was elected Caliph,[1] but to all the departed companions of the Prophet. These extracts have been taken from the *Nahjul Balāghā*, an authentic compilation of his sermons, letters, orders and sayings. It was compiled by the noted Shi'ite poet and man af letters, As-Sharīf ur-Razī (359-404/970-1013) and has been regarded highly ever since it came to be written Another eminent Shi'ite scholar Ibn Abī'l Hadīd (586-655/1190-1257) has written a detailed commentary

1. 'Ammār B. Yāsir died in 37 A.H. and Salmān Farisī in 36 A.H during the reign of Caliph 'Alī who died in 40 A. H.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

of this work. The elegance, warmth and vigour of Caliph 'Alī's diction is apparent in these statements in all its intensity and colour.

"I have seen companions of the holy Prophet (may the peace of God be upon him and his descendants). None of you leads a life like them; they used to spend their nights in prayers and meditations; they were very often standing or bowing before God; the apprehension of the Day of Judgment always was in their minds; thought of God the Almighty always kept them frightened. They feared His Wrath and kept hoping for His Blessing and Reward."[1]

In another sermon says Caliph 'Alī :

"Where have those people gone who when invited to Islam accepted it sincerely; who read the Qur'ān and wholeheartedly followed the commands it contained; who loved Islam as a she-camel loves her young one and when ordered to fight in defence of Islam, they willingly left their homes and families. Some of them died like martyrs and some survived the ordeals. Success never overjoyed them and deaths never despaired them. Sights of human misery saddened their lives, constant absorption of their minds and bodies in performance of their duties towards God and men had made them look pale and haggared; and humility manifested itself from their behaviour (as against the vanity of pseudo-pious people). They were brethren unto me. They have gone (are dead). I am justified in desiring to meet them once again and to be sad at separation from them "[2]

---

1. *Peak of Eloquence* (*Nahjul Balāghā*), Sermons, Letters and Sayings of Imām 'Ali, (tr.) Askari Jafery, Bombay, 1979, Sermon No. 100, p. 211 (published by Islamic Seminary for World Shia Muslim Organisation, USA).
2. *Ibid*, Sermon No. 124, p. 244.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Attestation by European Scholars

After this attestation by Caliph 'Alī, we would now cite a few European scholars in confirmation of his observations. Caetani writes in his *Annali dell' Islam* :

> "These men were the true moral heirs of the Prophet, the future apostles of Islam, the faithful trustees of all that Muhammad revealed unto the men of God. Unto these men, through their constant contact with the Prophet and their devotion to him, there had already entered a new mode of thought and feeling, loftier and more civilized than they had known any before; they had really changed for the better from every point of view, and later on as statesmen and generals, in the most difficult moments of war of conquest they gave magnificent and undeniable proof that the ideas and doctrines of Muhammad had been seed cast on fruitful soil, and had produced a body of men of very highest worth. They were the depositories of the sacred text of the Qur'ān, which they alone knew by heart; they were the jealous guardians of the memory of every word and bidding of the Prophet, the trustees of the moral heritage of Muhammad. These men formed the venerable stock of Islam from whom one day was to spring the noble band of the first jurists, theologians and traditionists of Muslim society."[1]

The noted French writer Dr. Gustave Lebon states about the companions of the holy Prophet :

> "In short the new religion came across many crucial moments and, there is the least doubt, that it was the sagacity of the Prophet's companions which helped them to succeed on these occasions. They selected a man for the Caliphate whose only object in mind was to propagate the religion of Muhammad."[2]

1. Caetani, *Annali dell' Islam*, Vol. II, p. 429, cited from T. W Arnold, *Preaching of Islam*, London, 1935, pp. 41-42.
2. Translated from Urdu translation *Tamaddun 'Arab* by Dr. S. Ali Bilgrami, p. 134.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

About the first four Caliphs, the foremost companions of the holy Prophet, historian Edward Gibbon writes :

> "Any historian who balances the four caliphs with a hand unshaken by superstition will calmly pronounce that their manners were alike pure and exemplary; that their zeal was fervent, and probably sincere; and that, in the midst of riches and power, their lives were devoted to the practice of moral and religious duties."[1]

A historian taken as an authority on the history of Arabia, has to say the following about the first two Caliphs :

> "Abu Bakr (632-4). the conqueror and pacifier of Arabia, lived in patriarchal simplicity. In the first six months of his short reign he travelled back and forth daily from al-Sunh (when he lived in a modest household with his wife, Habībah) to his capital al-Madīnah, and received no stipend since the state had at that time hardly any income. All state business he transacted in the courtyard of Prophet's Mosque.....In character he was endowed with much more strength and forcefulness than current tradition credits to him."
>
> "Simple and frugal in manner, his energetic and talented successor, 'Umar (634-44), who was of towering height, strong physique and bald-headed, continued at least for some time after becoming caliph to support himself by trade and lived throughout his life in a style as unostentatious as that of a Bedouin sheikh.....His irreproachable character became an exemplar for all conscientious successors to follow. He owned, we are told, one shirt and one mantle only, both conspicous for their patchwork, slept on a bed of palm leaves and had no concern other than maintenance of the purity of the faith, the upholding of justice and the ascendancy and security of Islam and the Arabians."[2]

1. Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of* the *Roman Empire*, Vol. V, London, 1911, p. 384-85.
2. Phillip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, London, 1953, pp. 175-76.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Another European writer, by no means sympathetic to Islam, has acknowledged the sterling qualities of these companions of the holy Prophet. Writes William Muir :

> "At his court, Abu Bekr maintained the same simple and frugal life as Mahomet. Guards and servitors there were none, nor anything approaching the pomp and circumstance of state. He was diligent in business....Abu Bekr never spared himself, and many incidents are related of the manner in which he descended to the minutest things. Thus, he would sally forth by night to seek for any destitute or oppressed person;.....In the choice of his agents for high office or command, he was absolutely free from nepotism or partiality, and was wise and discerning in his estimate of character."[1]

In regard to Caliph 'Umar, William Muir says :

> "Simplicity and duty were his guiding principles. Impartiality and devotion characterised the discharge of his great office; and the responsibility so weighed upon him that at times he would exclaim, 'O that my mother had not borne me; would that I had been this stalk of grass, instead !'——He was tender-hearted, and numberless acts of kindness are recorded, such as relieving the wants of the widow and the fatherless."[2]

He portrays the great achievements of Caliph 'Umar in this manner :

> "So died Omar, next to the Prophet the greatest in the kingdom of Islam; for it was all within these ten years, that by his wisdom, patience, and vigour, the dominion was achieved over Syria, Egypt, and Persia, which Islam has ever since maintained... ...Yet throughout his marvellous fortune he never lost the equipoise of a wise and sober judgement, nor exalted himself above the frugal and

1. Sir William Muir, *Annals of the Early Caliphate*, London, 1882, p. 123.
2. *Ibid*, pp. 283-85.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

familiar style of the Arab Chief. 'Where is the Caliph?' would the visitor from distant provinces inquire, as he looked around the court of the Great Mosque; and all the while the monarch sat in homely guise before him."[1]

Testimony of a Shi'ite Scholar.

We shall not set forth the findings of any Sunnite penman here in favour of the first two Caliphs, but depend on a Shi'ite scholar, Justice Syed Amīr Alī,[2] who writes in the *Spirit of Islam*:

"An examination of the political condition of the Muslims under the early Caliphs brings into view a popular government administered by an elective chief with limited powers. The prerogatives of the head of the State were confined to administrative and executive matters, such as the regulation of the police, conrol of army, transaction of foreign affairs, disbursement of finances, etc. But he could never act in contravention of the recognised law... The law was the same for the poor as for the rich, for the man in power as for the labourer in the field."[3]

He also says:

"The stern devotion of the early Caliphs to the well-being of the people, and the austere simplicity of their

1. *Annals of the Early Caliphate, op. cit.* p. 283.
2. Justice Sir Syed Amīr 'Alī (1849-1928) was descendant of a Shia family which emigrated to India from Khurasān during the reign of Nādir Shāh. He first received education of English, Law, and Arabic in the Muhsiniya Hoogli College, Calcutta, and then was called to Bar in England in 1873. He retired from Bengal High Court in 1904 and took up residence in England. He was elected as the first Indian member of the Privy Council's Law Committee in 1909 and died in 1928. Few Indians can claim to have a command over English language and as facile a pen as Syed Amir 'Ali, Major Osborn, the noted orientalist, once remarkd that even Englishmen envied his easy and forceful diction.
3. *The Spirit of Islam*, London, 1922, p. 278.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

lives, were in strict accordance with the example of the Master. They preached and prayed in the mosque like the Prophet; received in their homes the poor and the oppressed, and failed not to give a hearing to the meanest. Without cortege, without pomp or ceremony, they ruled the hearts of men by the force of their character."[1]

Syed Amir 'Ali has paid tribute, without any reservation to the simple and frugal living, evenhanded justice and the service rendered to Islam by the first three Caliphs, Abu Bakr 'Umar and Uthmān. The circumstances leading to the election of Abu Bakr as the first successor of the holy Prophet has been described as follows by him :

"Among the Arabs, the chieftaincy of a tribe is not hereditary but elective; the principle of universal suffrage is recognised in its extremest form, and all the members of the tribe have a voice in the election of their chief. The election is made on the basis of seniority among the surviving male members of the deceased chieftain's family. The old tribal custom was followed in the choice of a successor to the Prophet, for the urgency of the times admitted of no delay. Abu Bakr, who by virtue of his age and the position he had held at Mecca occupied a high place in the estimation of the Arabs, was hastily elected to the office of Khalifa (Caliph) or Vicegerent of the Prophet. He was recognised as a man of wisdom and moderation, and his election was accepted with their usual devotion to the Faith by 'Alī and the chief members of Mohammad's family."[2]

The character of Abu Bakr has been thus depicted by Amir 'Alī.

"Like his Master, Abu Bakr was extremely simple in his habits; gentle but firm, he devoted all his energies to the administration of the new-born state and to the

1. *The Spirit of Islam, op. cit*, p. 280.
2. S. Amīr 'Ali, *A Short History of the Saracens*, London, 1955. p. 21

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

good of the people. He would sally forth by night to help the distressed and relieve the destitute."[1]

The achievements of Caliph 'Umar as summed up by Amīr 'Alī testify that :

"The short government of Abu Bakr was too fully occupied with the labour of pacifying the desert tribes to afford time for any systematic regulation of the provinces. But with the reign of Omar——a truly great man——commenced that sleepless care for the welfare of the subject nations which characterised the early Muslim governments."[2]

He also says :

"Omar's accession to the Caliphate was of immense value to Islam. He was a man of strong moral fibre and a keen sense of justice, possessed of great energy and orce of character."[3]

Martyrdom of 'Umar, according to Amīr 'Alī, was one of the greatest disaster suffered by Islam.

"The death of Omar was a real calamity to Islam. Stern but just, far-sighted, thoroughly versed in the character of his people, he was specially fitted for the leadership of unruly Arabs. He held the helm with a strong hand and severely repressed the natural tendency to demoralisation among nomadic tribes and semi-civilized people when coming in contact with the luxury and vices of cities....Of simple habits, autere and frugal, always accessible to the meanest of his subjects, wandering about at night to inquire into the condition of the people without any guard or court——such was the greatest and most powerful ruler of the time."[4]

Caliph 'Uthman b. 'Affān.

History bears witness to the fact that purity of faith and

1. *A Short History of Saracens, op. cit.*, pp. 26-27.
2. *The Spirit of Islam, op. cit*, p. 278.
3. *A Short History of the Saracens, op. cit.*, p. 27.
4. *Ibid*, pp. 43-44.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

patriarchal simplicity dominated the life of the third Caliph 'Uthmān. He entertained the guests with sumptuous meal, but himself took bread with vinegar.[1] Very often he fasted continuously for days together. He mostly attended to his necessities himself and never woke up any servant in the night. "The night is theirs", he used to say if he was asked to take their help.[2]

Caliph 'Uthmān had a slave whom he had once pulled by the ear. After he had been elected to preside over the caliphate, he asked the slave to avenge himself and insisted until the slave had exacted the retribution. He even remarked on the occasion, "Satisfy yourself, take your vengeance in this world so that nothing remains for the hereafter." 'Abdul Malik b. Shaddād relates that he saw 'Uthmān on the pulpit one Friday donning a coarse woolen sheet of Adan, hardly costing four or five dirhams.[3] Hasan Basri once saw Caliph 'Uthmān taking rest in the Mosque at noon, and when he stood up the marks left by the pebbles were visible on his body. Those present on the occasion wondered at the austere ways of the Caliph.[4] So solicitous was he about the welfare of the people that he often enquired about the market rates of different commodities even after ascending the pulpit of the mosque. Mūsā b. Talha relates that he saw the caliph sitting on the pulpit, while the *Iqāmah* was being recited, and he was enquiring from certain persons about their welfare and itinerary.[5] Nothing can illustrate his sincerity and self-abnegation more than the events leading to his martyrdom. While the insurgents had besieged him in Madina, he calmly bade the citizens to go back to their homes since he did not want to fight or

1. Abū Nua'im, Hāfiz Ahmad b. 'Abdullah, *Hilayatul Auliya*, Lebanon, 1980 (cited on the authority of Sharjīl b. Muslim), Vol. I, p. 60.
2. Ibn S'ad, *Tabaqāt*, Vol. III, p. 60.
3. Abū Nua'im *Hilyatul Auliya*, Lebanon, 1980, Vol. I. p. 60.
4. *Ibid*, p. 60.
5. Ibn S'ād, *Tabaqat*, Vol. III, p. 59.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

allow the blood of any Muslim to be shed for him. He died reciting the Qur'ān at the hands of the rebels but did not succumb to their demand of retiring from the caliphate, a trust committed to his care by the Muslims. He stood fast to his post till his last breath for he deemed it a sacred office entrusted to him in accordance with the prediction of the holy Prophet.[1] "His chief merit lay in his piety"[2], says Amīr 'Alī while William Muir observes that he had a "kindly nature which might have made him, in less troublous times, a favourite of the people."[3] His state policy has been described thus by Levi della Vida in the *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*: "As Wellhausen pointed out and Caetani has expounded at length, 'Uthmān only followed and developed the policy of 'Umar."[4]

The twelve years Caliph 'Uthmān held the helm, Islamic dominion saw an unprecedented rapid expansion. Writes Amīr 'Alī : "The incursions of the Turks in Transoxiana led to the conquest of Balkh. Similarly were Herat, Kabul and Ghazni captured. The rising in southern Persia led to the subjugation of Kerman and Sistan. In the settlements of the new acquisitions the policy of Omar was followed. No sooner were these countries conquered, than effective measures were set on foot for the development of their material resources. Water-courses were dug, roads made, fruit trees planted, and security given to trade by establishment of a regular police organisation. Byzantine inroads from the north led to an advance on the country now called Asia Minor, towards the Black Sea. In Africa, Tripoli and Barca, and in the Mediterranean Cyprus, were conquered. A large fleet sent by the Romans to re-conquer Egypt was destroyed off Alexandria."[5]

1. See Suyūti. *Tarikh-ul-Khulafā, Maktb'a-tus-Sa'āda, Egypt*, 1952; Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wan Nihāyah, Matb'a-tul-Ma'ārif, Beirut*, 1966
2. *A Short History of Saracens, op. cit.*, p. 48.
3. *Annals of Early Caliphate, op. cit.*, p. 341.
4. *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, p. 116.
5. *A Short History of Saracens, op. cit.*, p. 47.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

In short, the limits of the Islamic empire were extended from Sind, in the east, to Spain in the West. A powerful armada was organised although the Arabs did not earlier possess a single ship.

The enlargement of the grand square of the K'aba, undertaken in 26 A. H. was a great service to Islam by Caliph 'Uthmān. The mosque of the Prophet in Medina was also enlarged and beautified in 29 A. H. He also sent orders to build new mosques in the conquered dominions and enlarge the existing ones. But his still greater achievement was to secure the uniformity of the sacred Scripture for the sake of doing away with the differences in its recitation, and bringing the standard text into exclusive use throughout the far-flung Islamic dominions.[1] It would be interesting to mention here that when Caliph 'Alī found certain citizens of Kūfā blaming his predecessor for standardisation of the Quranic recitation he was filled with anger. "Silence", said 'Alī. "'Uthmān acted as he did with the advice of the leading men amongst us; and if I had been ruler at the time, instead of him, I should myself have exactly done the same."[2]

Caliph 'Alī b. Abī Tālib.

No body has ever disputed the angelical disposition of Caliph 'Alī except the Khārajites.[3] We shall give here the reminiscences of Dharār b. Dhamurah, a comrade of Caliph 'Alī, who described the character and temperament of Caliph 'Alī at the behest of Caliph Mu'āwiyah, who had been a long while at loggerheads with his predecessor. The picture of Caliph 'Alī portrayed by Dharār is really a graphic description of the chivalrous, humane, forbearing and self-sacrificing

1. *Dā'iratul Ma'ārif Islāmiyah*, Lahore, 1973, Vol. XII.
2. *Annals of Early Caliphate*, *op. cit.*, p. 308.
3. A section of Caliph 'Alī's army which mutinied during the battle of Siffīn and withdrew to Nahrwān on the borders of the desert and assumed a threatening attitude.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

companions brought up under the guidance of the holy Prophet:

"He looked askance at the world and its pleasures; the night and its darkness were more agreeable to him. By my troth, his eyes were more often filled with tears and he always appeared to be care-worn. He had the touch of conscience which often made him to reproach himself. He was happy to wear garments made of coarse cloth and partake coarse food, lived like a common man, and made no distinction between himself and others. Whenever we asked anything, he would reply; whenever we went to him, he would salute first; and whenever we invited him, he came ungrudgingly; but, despite this nearness, his awe never permitted us to talk in his presence or join in his conversation. When he laughed, his teeth used to shine as hailstones. He respected the pious and loved the poor. No man of influence or authority could hope to achieve any undeserved gain from him, nor the weak ever gave up hope of obtaining justice from him. I'll declare to God that I have seen him often after the nightfall, standing on prayer-mat, holding his beard and weeping bitterly. I have heard him sobbing and lamenting: 'O World, dost thou want to entice me away? Hast thou brought thy charms for me? Away, away with thee. Go about thy business and deceive somebody else. I have already divorced thee thrice. O World thy pleasure are transitory, thy life is short, and thy allurements are unreliable and dangerous. Alas! I have but little provisions, the voyage is long and the route is extremely perilous."[1]

Puritanical Life of the earlier Caliphs.

The sincerity, piety and nobility of the first four caliphs

1. Ibn Jawzi, *Sifat us- Safwah*, Dāiratul Ma'ārif (Hyderabad, 1355-6 A. H.), Vol. I, p. 122.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

is demonstrated by their abstinence from the wealth that flowed from the newly conquered lands of the former Persian and Byzantine empires to the metropolis of Islam. Unlike other ambitious conquerors, they did not lead a life of ease and sufficiency but preferred to pass their days as recluses—simple, austere and frugal—like their great Master. It would be rather more appropriate to say that they enjoyed greater contentment and peace of mind before they accepted the responsibility of presiding over the Islamic empire. The way these Caliphs passed their days amidst power and prestige of the greatest empire of the time has made Edward Gibbon to concede that :

> "The courage of Abu Bakr, Omar and Uthmān, had indeed been tried in the persecution and wars of the Prophet; and the personal assurance of paradise must have taught them to despise the pleasure and dangers of the present world. But they ascended the throne in a venerable and mature age, and esteemed the domestic cares of religion and justice, the most important duties of the sovereign....The austere and frugal measure of their lives was the effect of virtue or habit, and the pride of their simplicity insulted the vain magnificence of the kings of the earth."[1]

None of them ever tried to pass on his heritage to his son or a member of his family ; they kept their near and dear ones away from the strings of power and sometimes even bade the electorate not to choose them as their successors. Of what we know of human nature and the propensities and practices followed by the kings since times immemorial lead us to the conclusion that the Caliphs were absolutely sincere, free from human failings like self-indulgence, nepotism or partiality, their sole purpose in holding the helm was to propagate the faith and strengthen the commonwealth committed to their care, and to save the nascent state against all internal and external dangers. Had they been self-seeking, desirous of winning power and prestige, they would not have shunned the

1. *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, op. cit.*, Vol. V., p. 399.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

pomp and circumstance of a rapidly expanding state. Endowed with sovereign and absolute power, if they chose to maintain the same simple and frugal life as the Prophet did, they could not be accused of insincerity by any man of sound understanding. These Caliphs were too shrewed to be deceived themselves, and too honest to act the part of deceivers.

Integrity of Abu Bakr.

We shall recount here a few episodes relating to Caliph Abu Bakr and Caliph 'Umar which will convince every man endowed with commonsense to judge for himself the veracity of these saintly successors of the Prophet. The reputed historian Ibn al-Athīr (1160-1234/1640-1722) relates an incident showing the conscientiousness of Abu Bakr.

> "Once his wife expressed the longing for some sweetmeats. When Abu Bakr expressed his inability she offered to save something from the daily expenses of the household. Abu Bakr gave his consent. She saved over a period some money and asked Abu Bakr to get some sweetmeats. Abu Bakr took the money but remarked, 'This seems to be in excess of our needs,' and put it back in the treasury. He also cut down his stipend to that extent."[1]

Hasan, son of 'Alī, relates that just before his death Abu Bakr said to his daughter, "'Āyesha, the she-camel we had for milk, the pan in which we took meals and the bedspread we used were given to me since I served the Muslims. Send them to 'Umar after I have passed away." 'Āyesha sent all these things to 'Umar as she had been bidden. Thereupon 'Umar remarked: "Lord bless thee, Abu Bakr. Thou hast laid a heavy burden upon me."[2] It is also related that at the first Abu Bakr continued to maintain himself by merchandise;

1. Abdul Hasan 'Alī Ibn al-Athīr, *Tārikh al-Kāmil*, (Leyden, 1867-74) Vol. II, p. 423.
2. Jalāl-ud-dīn Suyūti, *Tārikh-ul-Khulfā, Muktab-tus-Sa'āda*, Egypt 1952, p. 78.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

but finding it interfere with affairs of the state he consented to forego his occupation and receive a yearly allowance of six thousand dirhams for his household charges. His conscience troubled him for having taken even what he did by way of stipend from the people's money; on his death-bed, therefore, he gave command that certain lands, his private property, should be sold, and a sum equal to all that he had taken refunded to the public exchequer.[1] Another report relates that he commanded to refund eight thousand dirhams for he had taken only that sum for his sustenance. He was wrapped in the same clothes in which he died; for, said he, 'new clothes befit the living, but old the mouldering body.'[2]

Caliph 'Umar's journey to Syria.

The pomp and show attending royal visits are too familiar to be recounted here. The man reigning over the most powerful empire in the sixth century A.D. had also an occasion to undertake a journey to Jerusalem for capitulation of that city in 16 A. H./1636 A.D. After a seige of some duration the patriarch sued for peace, but refused to surrender the place to any but the Caliph in person. As Amīr 'Alī says, 'Umar "acceded to the request, and travelling with a single attendant, without escort and without any pomp and ceremony arrived at Jabia."[3] We shall relate the subsequent part of the journey as narrated by William Muir from the original sources:

> "It was a memorable occasion, being the first progress of a Caliph beyond the limits of Arabia. Abu Obeida, Yazīd, and Khālid, came from the north in state to welcome him. A brilliant cavalcade, robed in Syrian brocade, and mounted on steeds richly caparisoned, they rode

1. *Annals of the Early Caliphate, op. cit.*, pp. 120-22
2. *Ibid*, p. 119; Muhammad Ibn S'ād, *Tabaqāt-ul-Kabīr*, Beirut, 1968, Vol. III, p. 131.
3. *A Short History of Saracens, op. cit.*, p. 39.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

forth as be approached. At the sight of all this finery, Omar's spirit was stirred within him. He stooped down, and, gathering a handful of gravel, flung it at the astonished chiefs. 'Avaunt!' he cried; 'is it thus attired that ye come out to meet me? All changed thus in the space of two short years! Verily, had it been after two hundred, ye would have deserved to be degraded'..... Dismissing the other generals to their respective commands, the Caliph, carrying with him Amru and Shorahbil, resumed the journey westward, and, crossing the Jordan below the Lake of Tiberias, proceeded thus to Jerusalem. They gave him a palfrey to ride on, which pranced with gingling bells after the fashion of Syria. He disliked the motion. 'What aileth the animal?' he said; 'I know not who hath taught thee this strange gait.' So he dismounted and rode upon his own horse again."[1]

Caliph 'Umar undertook another journey to Syria in 18 A. H./639 A. D. He asked 'Alī to deputize in his place at Medina on this occasion.

"His way lay through the Christian settlement of Ayla, at the head of the Gulf of Acaba. The reception he met with here brings out well the simplicity of Omar, and his kindly feeling towards the Christians. He journeyed on a camel with small pomp or following; and as he was minded to enter the village unrecognised, he changed places with his servant. 'Where is the Ameer?' cried the eager crowds as they streamed forth from the villages to witness the Caliph's advent. 'He is *before* you,' replied Omar, and he drove his camel on. So they hurried forward, thinking that the great Caliph was beyond, and left Omar to alight unobserved at the house of the bishop, with whom be lodged during the heat of the day. His coat, which had been rent upon the journey, he gave to his host to mend. This the bishop not only did, but had

1. *Annals of the Early Caliphate, op. cit.*, pp. 207-8.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

a garment made for him of a material lighter and more suited to the oppressive travel of the season. Omar, however, preferred to wear his own."[4]

Caliph 'Ali and His Predecessors.

Caliph 'Alī always co-operated with his predecessors. As Amīr 'Alī says the election of Caliph Abu Bakr, on the demise of the holy prophet, was "accepted with their usual devotion to the faith by 'Alī and the chief members of Mohammad's family."[2] William Muir has mentioned the misunderstanding arising between Caliph Abu Bakr and 'Alī on the question of inheritance of the Prophet's personal property but adds that the latter continued to frequent the Caliph's court like the rest of the chief companions and even performed the functions of chief judicial officer.[3] He also says that the despatches of Caliph Abu Bakr were chiefly indited by 'Alī.[4] In his introduction to the *Nahjul Balāghā*, rendered into English for the Islamic Seminary, a World Shia Muslim Organisation, Askari Jafery has mentioned several instances of Caliph 'Umar, seeking the advice of 'Alī and accepting them with gratitude. He says that "on the occasion of the invasion of Rome (Byzantine Empire) when Hazrath Omer sought his (Alī's) counsel as to the advisability of heading the army as the Commander-in-chief, he advised him to be at the helm and to send some experienced general as a commander.....Similarly at the time of invasion of Persia he councelled the Caliph Omar not to leave the capital and to send somebody else."[5] The well meaning counsels offered by Caliph 'Alī find confirmation in the sermons number 137 and 149 included in the *Nahjul Balāghā*.[6] It has been mentioned elsewhere that

1. *Annals of the Early Caliphate, op. cit.*, p. 236.
2. *A Short History of the Saracens, op. cit.*, p. 21.
3. *Annals of the Early Caliphate, op. cit.*, pp. 65, 416.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
5. *Peak of Eloquence, op. cit.*, p. 57.
6. *Ibid., op. cit.*, pp. 260 and 270.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Caliph 'Umar left 'Alī as his deputy in Medina while he travelled to Syria in 18 A. H. The sympathetic reflections of Caliph 'Alī on the death of Caliph Abu Bakr and Caliph 'Umar have been preserved by historians which speak volumes of his earnest grief at parting company with these venerable comrades.[1]

Caliph 'Umar nominated 'Alī as one of the members of the Council charged to elect his suceessor. The choice of the electorate fell upon 'Uthmān and with his usual patriotism and devotion to the faith, 'Alī gave his adherence to 'Uthmān as soon as he was elected.[2] When the rebels blockaded Caliph 'Uthmān, which lasted several weeks, denying food and water to the aging Caliph, 'Alī interposed and expostulated with the besiegers. Muir reports ; "They were treating their Caliph," he ('Ali) told them, "more cruelly than they would treat Greek or Persian captives in the field. Even infidels did not deny water to a thirsty enemy."[3] But as the insurgents were deaf to his entreaty, 'Alī sent water and food to the Caliph during the siege and later deputed his sons and dependants to defend the Caliph.[4] When 'Alī heared of the assassination of Caliph 'Uthmān he hastened to the place and asked his son how it had happened.[5] Death had not softened the rebels' heart who pelted the litter of Caliph 'Uthmān with stones, but the funeral procession was bravely joined by Hasan alongwith the kinsmen of the departed Caliph.[6]

Companions and the Ahl-Bait.

The Qur'ān explicitly says that the companions of the

1. Muhib-ud-dīn Tabrī, (d. 694/1295), *Ar-Riyādh ul-Nazarato fi Fazā'il il-'Asharati*, (MSS No. 1784, Nadwatul Ulama Library), pp. 126-27, 187-88.
2. *A short History of Saracens, op. cit.*, p. 46.
3. *Annals of the Early Caliphate, op. cit.*, p. 336.
4. *Peak of Eloquence, op. cit.*, p. 61.
5. *Annals of the Early Caliphate, op. cit.*, p. 341.
6. *Ibid*, p. 341.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Prophet are 'hard against the unbelievers, merciful one to another.'[1] The lives of the people who have had the opportunity of keeping company with the holy Prophet are a living illustration of this sententious expression. Their mutual love and compassion, their comradeship and their willingness to undergo any sacrifice for their mates signifies the truth of divine revelation about them. Amīr 'Alī has rightly remarked : "The intense faith and conviction on the part of the immediate followers of Muhammad is the noblest testimony to his sincerity and his utter self-absorption in his appointed task."[2] Any allegation about the improbity of these elevated souls not only belies a historical fact but also raises doubts about the truth of divine revelation and effectiveness of prophetic guidance.

A report related by Bukhārī on the authority of 'Aqba b. al-Hārith says : "Abu Bakr performed the 'Asr prayer and came out of the mosque to take a stroll. He saw Hasan playing with other children. He lifted him up upon his shoulder and said, 'My father may be an offering for him, he bears resemblance to the Prophet and not 'Alī'. 'Ali heard the remark and smiled."[3]

Husain narrates : "'Umar once asked me why I do not go and sit with him. Later on I went to his house but nobody was allowed to go inside and his son 'Abdullah was waiting for him outside. I came back but when he met me next, he again said, 'Son, you did not come to me?' I replied that I had gone to see him but he was in privy since his son 'Abdullah was waiting for his permission to see him. 'Umar replied, 'Never mind the permission for 'Abdullah, you could have seen me. The faith we have was due to your household.' Thereafter he lovingly patted me on the head."[4]

---

1. Q. 48 : 29.
2. *The Spirit of Islam*, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
3. *Sahih Bukhārt*, Matba Mustafa, Al-Bābī Al-Halabī, Egypt, 1953, Vol. II, p. 184 (Chap. Characteristics of the Prophet).
4. Hosām-ud-din 'Alī Muttaqī, *Kanzul 'Ummāl*, Vol. VII, p. 105.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Another report handed down by Zain-ul-'Abidīn b. Husain through Mohammad Bāqar and Ja'far Sādiq has been narrated by Ibn S'ād. He says "Once 'Umar received some *hullahs*[1] from Yemen which were distributed by him among the people. Those who received the *hullahs* came wearing them to the Prophet's mosque while 'Umar was sitting half-way between the Prophet's grave and the pulpit. The in-comers saluted him and he also wished to them. In the meantime Hasan and Husain happened to come out of their house (which was a part of the mosque) but none of them had a *hullah* on him. 'Umar looked sad and depressed. When he was asked the reason for it he replied that he had been saddened because of the two children as there was no *hullah* of their size; all were for the grown-ups. 'Umar then wrote to the governor of Yemen to send two *hullahs* for Hasan and Husain and also to make haste in complying with his orders. 'Umar was satisfied when these were received and he had made both the children put them on."[2]

Caliph 'Umar regulated the allocation of stipends on a fixed and systematic scale. Shiblī N'omānī has described the rule of precedence laid down by Caliph 'Umar. He writes:

> "'Umar had a great regard for affinity to the Prophet (peace be upon him). When he expressed the desire to fix the rates of stipend 'Abdur Rahmān b. 'Auf and a few others expressed the opinion that Caliph 'Umar should get precedence. However, Caliph 'Umar disagreed with them and said that the affinity to the holy Prophet should be the criterion for priority. In such wise he commenced with the Banī Hāshim, and among them he began with 'Abbās and 'Alī at the top. He gave fifth place to his own tribe Banī 'Adiy. Thus, the names of stipendiaries were listed in that order. In the fixation of allowances

1. Shirt and overskirt made of the same but costly cloth. It was highly valued by the Arabs.
2. *Kanzul 'Ummāl*, Vol. VII, p. 105; Ibn Hajar, *Al-Isābah*, Vol. I, p. 333

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

too, he kept the same rule in view; those who had fought at Badr were allowed the highest allowance. Hasan and Husain were exceptions for they were allocated the same amount although they did not fall in that category.,"[1]

'Alī was the chief counsellor of Caliph 'Umar whom he always took as the most sincere and well-meaning confidant. As stated elsewhere when Caliph 'Umar declared his resolve to march forth in person to direct the battle of Nehavend, it was 'Alī who dissuaded him from leaving Medina. When Caliph 'Umar undertook the journey to Jerusalem, he asked 'Alī to act as his vicegerent. How intimate was 'Alī to Caliph 'Umar can be gauged from the fact that the former gave his daughter Umm Kulthūm, by his first wife Fātima, in wedlock to Caliph 'Umar.[2] He also gave the names of his predecessors —Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān—to three of his sons.[3]

Heavenly Social Order.

The social order we find portrayed in the Qu'rān, hadīth and reliable annals, which was groomed and brought up under the prophetic care, presents the most shining and sublime picture of a body of men, virtuous, just, clement and noble, who are not to be found even in a smaller number at any other time or anywhere else in the world. This, in itself, tends to show, on the one hand, the innate goodness of human nature, the heights to which man can rise, his worthiness and the health of his soul and, on the other, the effective and lasting impact of the sincere and purehearted guide that the Prophet was. Actually these were the men of whom entire humanity

1. Shiblī N'omānī, *Al-Farooq*, Azamgarh, 1956, Vol. II, p. 269 (cited from *Kitāb-ul-Khirāj* by Abu Yūsuf, pp. 24-25).
2. *Annals of the Early Caliphate*, *op.cit.*, p. 276. For a detail discussion on the controversy relating to it see *Āyāt-i-Bayyanāt* (Mirzapur, 1870) Vol. I, pp. 127-162.
3. 'Abbas Mahmūd al. 'Aqqād, *'Abqariyatul Imām*, (Dārul Fathūh, Cairo, 1957), p. 958.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

can be proud of, for they were the men whom Iqbāl describes as 'children of earth and light, creatures with divine traits.'

No man belonging to such a society can ever develop inferiority-complex, malevolence or despondency. Rather every member of such a social order becomes upward-looking, takes the Prophet of Islam as his beau ideal, and his faith in the realities beyond the ken of human perception turns into a living, veritable precept. Imām Ibn Taimiyah has very correctly assessed the distinguishing feature of these emblems of human virtues.

> "Notwithstanding the weaknesses that are natural to human beings, no group or clan, excepting the messengers of God, can as a whole, be compared to the companions of the holy Prophet. If one finds minor shortcomings here and there, these are like faint marks on a white cloth. It is the fault of the cavillers who see these stains but not the tidiness of the cloth itself. Others compared to this group would be found to be wholly blemished with a few white spots.[1]

The Picture painted by the Shi'ites.

An entirely different picture of these godly men is presented by a people claiming to be Muslims and swearing allegiance to the holy Prophet. These are the *Imāmiyah* or *Athnā' 'Asharīs* (the Twelvers) whose depiction of the earliest Muslim society speaks of total failure of the prophetic guidance and training — a failure unparalleled in history. It signifies collapse of the Prophet's efforts not experienced even by those guides and reformers who were neither commissioned by God for the purpose nor enjoyed His succour and blessings. Shi'ite portrayal of the companions presents them as self-seeking hypocrites who could stoop to lies, intrigues, treachery, falsification of the sacred

1. Ibn Taimiyah, Hāfiz Ahmad Taqī-ud-dīn, *Minhāj-us-Sunnat-in-Nabawīyah* (Cairo, 1321 A. H.), Vol. III, p. 242.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

text, forgery and betrayal for their worldly ends. Were this depiction to be true, nobody would ever endeavour to reform the morals and conduct of one's fellow beings and would yield to despair in regard to future of all human beings.

Only three persons remained, according to their version, truly wedded to the Islamic faith after the death of the holy Prophet, while the rest, who had been guided and groomed and trained for twenty-three long years, recanted their faith. Were this to be correct nothing else would be needed to establish bankruptcy of the prophetic guidance.[1]

An authentic religious treatise of the Shi'ites titled as *Al-Jāmi al-Kāfi*, contains the following statement of Imām Abu J'afar (also known as Imām Bāqar) in the last section given the caption of *Kitāb-ur-Rauzah :*

> "The people became apostates after the Prophet (peace be on him) with the exceptions of three persons. (The narrator) asked : Who were those three ? He said : Miqdād be-Aswad, Abu-Dharr Ghifāri and Salmān Fārsi; may God bless and have mercy on them."[2]

---

1. It is hardly necessary to mention here how the seemly influence of Muhammad's (peace be on him) prophethood produced countless miens as glittering gems. In different ages and places such godly souls were born among the followers of the last Prophet who were able to change the morals and behaviour of the sinners and criminals just by casting a glance at them. No sooner than the wicked and perverted people came into their contact, that their behaviour and morals were entirely changed and they became virtuous and God-fearing. There are instances when a dissolute man happened to pass a night with them, he became pure of heart by the dawn. This has happened even centuries after the era of the holy Prophet and in far-off lands like India. One can, for instance, go through *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid---His Life and Mission* (published by the Academy of Islamic Research and Publications) to know more about such paradigms of spiritual perfection.
2. *Fur'ū Kāfi*, (Vol. III, entitled *Kitāb-ur-Rauzah*), Lucknow, p. 115. Another report includes 'Ammār b. Yāsir also in the list of exceptions.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Pronouncements of 'Allama Khomeini

Leader of the present Iranian revolution and founder of 'Islamic Democracy' in his country, Imām Khomeini, who is also regarded as the representative of the last *Imām Ghā'ib* (hidden or concealed Imām), seeks to set forth the companions of the Prophet as worldly-minded persons, impious, insolent and interpolators of the Qur'ān who could not be deemed as believers. He writes in the *Kashf-ul-Asrār* :

> "These persons (the companions) had nothing to do with Islam and the Qur'ān save to utilize these as the means for their worldly gains and holding the helm. For the persons who had managed to employ the Qur'ān to subserve their baser objectives, it posed no problem to delete the verses (declaring 'Alī as the vicegerent of the Prophet and the principle of Imāmate), to make interpolations in the divine Scripture and to put the Qur'ān out of sight to the end of time. The charge of corrupting, (their scriptures) laid by the Muslims against the Jews and Christians is proven against these companions."[1]

He says elsewhere in the same book :

> "Suppose that the Imām had been mentioned by name in the Qur'ān, then how does it help us to conclude that there would have been no differences among the Muslims. Those who had leagued with the Prophet's faith owing to their greed for power and position, and were conspiring since long to enroll their supporters, would have never given up their ulterior ends because of the Quranic injunctions. They would have adopted every device to achieve their objectives, or, in that case, the differences created would have been of such a nature that the very foundations of the religion would have been demolished. For, the possibility was that if those who were after wielding the sceptre had realised that they could not achieve their ends through Islam, they would have joined hands

1. *Kashf-ul-Asrār*, p. 114.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

to form a clique against Islam and openly defied it."[1]

'Allāma Khomeini's *Kashf-ul-Asrār* contains numerous derogatory remarks about the first three Caliphs and other companions of the holy Prophet, too sacrilegious to be cited here. One can refer to the book or see Maulānā Manzoor N'omani's *Shi'at Kyā Hai* if anybody wants to know more about it.

Impressions of Muhsin-ul-Mulk[2]

I cannot do better than give here the reactions of Muhsin-ul-Mulk, the author of *Āyāt-i-Bayyanāt* which reflect the burning impressions of the author who had found out the truth after a deep study of the subject. Every man endowed with commonsense would reach the same conclusion if he dispassionately thinks over the matter.

"The truth is that the belief entertained by the Shi'ites about the companions casts a blame on the prophethood and makes one skeptical of Islam. If anybody comes to hold the view that all those who gave their faith to the Prophet were really disbelievers; they pretended to be Muslims but were infidels in their heart of hearts; and

1. *Kashf-ul-Asrār*, pp. 113-114.
2. Syed Mahdī 'Alī (1253-1325 A.H.) son of Syed Zāmin Alī Husainī, honoured with the title of Nawāb Mohsin-ud-daula Muhsin-ul-Mulk and Nawāz Jang was an eminent leader and reformer. Highly educated and liberal in his attitude, he renounced the Shi'ite creed to accept the faith of *Ahl-i-Sunnat*. He took up service under the then Hyderabad state in 1291 A.H., at the invitation of Nawāb Mukhtār-ul-Mulk and was responsible for making far-reaching reforms in the state administration. He went to England in 1305 A.H./1786 A.D. and thenceforth became a close friend of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. He was elected Secretary of the Madrasatul Uloom, Aligarh and Muslim Educational Conference in 1315/1797 and held that office for the rest of his life. He was instrumental in progress of the college which eventually became Muslim University. He had an impressive personality and was prolific writer. *Āyāt-i-Bayyanāt*, one of his creations, had an immortal fame.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

they fell away as soon as the Prophet closed his eyes, cannot acknowledge his prophethood. He can ask that if the Prophet was truly a messenger of God, his teachings would have surely impressed at least a few persons and made a dent in their hearts. Who believed in him out of more than a hundred thousand persons swearing fealty to him? At least a few hundred of them would have remained faithful to him! If the companions were not perfect in faith, as you wrongly assert, then who the persons were on whom the teachings of the Prophet had left a lasting impression? How many were they who profited by his prophethood? If, God forbid, all barring the few to be counted on ones fingers were hypocrites and apostates, then who gave faith to Islam and who were those who derived any benefit from the teachings of the holy Prophet?"[1]

Observation of Imām Shu'aibī

Imām Shu'aibī (d. 110/728) has made a trenchant remark on the attitude of the Shi'ites. He says: "Jews and Christians are more well-disposed towards their messengers of God. The Jews were asked; 'Who were the most virtuous amongst you?' They replied; 'Those accompanying Moses.' The Christians were similarly asked: 'Who were the best in faith amongst you?' They replied: 'The disciples of Jesus Christ.' But when the Shi'ites were asked: 'Who were the worst amongst you?' They gave the answer: 'They were the companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him)."[2]

Shi'ite Presumption

It seems that the Shi'ites of Iranian stock had assumed that the companions of the holy Prophet were men of the same kidney as the greedy and selfish worldly-minded adventurers

1. *Āyāt-i-Bayyanāt*, Mirzapur, 1870, Vol. I, pp. 6-7.
2. *Minhāj-us-Sunnah*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 6.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

belonging to the Pahlavi, Kiyāni, Safawid and Qāchār dynasties of their country. If it is correct that the forefathers of Imām Khomeini had migrated from Oudh in India to Irān, then he must have taken the venerable companions for those petty but scheming and litigant landed gentry of that region who were wont to go to any length for realisation of their petty interests. Verily God has already declared: *This is their attainment of knowledge: Surely thy Lord knows very well those who have gone astray.*[1]

Prophet's attitude towards his Household

The second condition we had set forth for a universal religion claiming to revolutionize and improve the mores and manners of entire humanity was that its founder should not feign piety and self-abnegation for establishing a dynastic rule, like the kings and conquerors of the old. In other words, he should never endeavour to promote the interests of his near and dear ones nor foist them upon the people in any way.

Viewed in this light, we come across a miraculous aspect of the character of the holy Prophet who had been guided from on High to answer the description thus expressed in the Qur'an : "Thou art of a sublime nature."[2] This was the characteristic feature of prophetic morality emphasised by all the earlier messengers of God. Each one of them had warned his people thus : "I ask of you no wage for this, for none can recompense me except the Lord of Creation."[3] The significance of this Prophetic mark was well understood by Emperor Heraclius (610-641) who was versed in the Christian Scripture and also knew the ways of the kings. On receiving

1. Q. 53 : 30.
2. Q. 68 : 4
3. Q. 26 : 109 Prophet Noah, Hūd, Sālih, Lot, Shu'ayb repeat this to their people in order to convince them of their sincerity. See verses 127, 145, 164 and 180 of the same sūrah.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

the letter addressed to him by the holy Prophet, Heraclius decided to satisfy himself about the sincerity of the Prophet. He sent for Abu Sufyān, the Qurayshite chief, who happened to be there on business. He asked several questions from Abu Sufyān, one of which was if there had been any king in the family of the Prophet. On getting a reply in negative he observed that the purpose of his enquiry was to ascertain whether the Prophet was not trying to recover his lost kingdom.[1]

Now let us examine this index of prophethood from another angle, for it will afford proof that the holy Prophet never wanted to wrest power from the Sassanids and the Byzantine Emperors for the Arabs, let alone for Banī Hāshim and Banī Muttalib or the Quraysh. Nor even the ordinary companions had any doubt about this aspect of the mission of the holy Prophet. The answer given by Rab'ey b. 'Āmir to Rustam, the Persian general clearly illustrates this point. On being asked by Rustam why had the Arabs invaded Persia, Rab'ey replied; "God has appointed us that we liberate the creatures of God from the bondage of their fellow beings and make them submit to the One and Only God."[2]

The holy Prophet's attitude towards his relations and the members of his family was entirely different or rather contrary to that usually adopted by worldly-minded leaders and rulers. Those who were nearest to him were made to face the greatest trials and tribulations, but were always allocated the smallest share in spoils of war and emoluments. When 'Aqba b. Rabī'a, Shu'ayba b. Rabī'a and Walīd b. 'Utba stepped forward in the battle of Badr to challenge the Qurayshite Muslims, the holy Prophet ordered Hamza, 'Alī and 'Ubayda to face those celebrated warriors. There were numerous Meccan Muslims present on the occasion who were equally eager as

1 Mohammad Ismā'il al-Bukhāri, *Al-Jāmi al-Sahīh il-Bukhārī, Kitāb-ul-Wahī*, (Matb'a Mustafa Al-Bābī al-Halabi, 1953) Vol. I. p. 7.

2. Ibn Kathīr, Imād-ud-dīn Abdul Fida Ismā'il b. 'Amar, *Al-Bidāyah wan-Nihāyah* (Egypt, 1966), Vol. VII. p. 39.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

well as competent to face the enemy's combatants while the three persons called up by the Prophet not only belonged to Banī Hāshim, but were also closely related to him as well as held dear by him. But he did not summon anybody else to fight the enemy in order to save those nearer to him from the impending danger. They also succeeded in the task alloted to them; Hamza and 'Alī came back unhurt while Abu 'Ubayada was grievously wounded but all the three dealt a deathblow to their opponents.

Contrarily, when the Prophet proclaimed the levy of Zakāt (a duty incumbent on every Muslim to pay a part of his saving; an institution prescribed for social welfare of the believers for all times to come), he disqualified his own clan of Banī Hāshim to derive any benefit from it. Again, when usury was declared impermissible, he made a beginning by asking his own uncle 'Abbās b. 'Abdul Muttalib to forgo the interest due to him on the loans advanced by him. When he abolished all claims of blood-vengeance pertaining to the pagan past, he also declared that the reprisal of his cousin Rabi'ā b. al-Hārith b. 'Abdul Muttalib stood remitted with the announcement. All these measures were announced by the Prophet during his Farewell Pilgrimage when he said in his sermon :

> "The usury of the days of Ignorance is abolished, and the first usury I abolish is that of my own uncle, 'Abbās b. 'Abdul Muttalib. Lo ! the claims of blood-vengeance belonging to the pre-Islamic period have been abolished. The first claim on blood I remit is that of Rabī'a b. al-Hārith who was suckled among Banī Laith and was killed by the clan of Hudayl."[1]

The Last to Receive any Favour

Unlike the kings, rulers and political leaders the Prophet

1. *Sahīh Muslim, Kitāb al-Hajj* (Beirut, 1960), Vol. II, p. 889 ; *Abu Dāwūd* on the authority of Jābir b. 'Abdullah.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

of God always kept his kins and kindreds in the background, and gave preference to others in giving out gifts and rewards. 'Alī relates that Fātimā had to work hard in grinding corn. When she got the news that some slave-girls had been brought to the Prophet, she went to him for requesting one to be given to her. The Prophet, however, was then not present in his house. Fātima mentioned the matter to 'Āyisha who talked to the Prophet about Fātima's trouble. 'Alī says; 'The Apostle of God visited our house when we had retired to our beds. We were about to get up but he told us to stay where we were. He then sat down so close to me that I felt the coldness of his feet on my chest. Then he said, "Let me guide you to something better than what you have asked. When you go to bed, recite *Subhān Allāh* (Glory be to God) thirty-three times, *Alhamdu lillāh* (Praise be to God) thirty-three times and *Allāh-O-Akbar* (God is most great) thirty-four times. This is better than what you had asked of me."[1]

In another report of the same incident handed down through another source, the Prophet is also reported to have added, "By God, I cannot give you anything at the time when the bellies of my companions of Suffa[2] have been hollowed by hunger. I have nothing to meet their expenses and I will sell these to provide for them."[3]

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) used to visit his daughter Fātima whenever he went out of Madina and always saw her first on return. When the Prophet came back from the expedition of Tabūk he went to see Fātima following his usual practice. Fātima had purchased, a little while ago, a scarf for headwear and dyed it in sufforn and hung a curtain on her door or spread a mattress on the floor. The Prophet saw these and turned back to his mosque without

1. *Bukhāri, op. cit., Kitāb-ul-Jihād.*
2. A raised platform in the mosque at Medina where lived the poor companions desirous of remaining in attendance upon the Prophet.
3. Ibn Hajar, *Fath-ul-Bāri* (Cairo, 1348 A.H.), Vol. VII, pp. 23-24.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

going inside her house. Fātima sent for Bilāl to enquire why her father had gone back from her doorsteps. Bilāl enquired from the Prophet who told him about the things he had seen in Fātima's house. Bilāl reported it back to Fātima who tore down the curtain atonce, threw away the decorative pieces and replaced the new scarf by her usual one. Bilāl again repaired to the Prophet to tell him about it. Thereupon the Prophet went to see Fātima and said, "Daughter, you ought to live like this."[1]

Another report says: 'Once Fātima made Hasan and Husain (then still children) put on silver bracelets. When the Prophet saw them, he was annoyed and did not enter into her house. Perceiving the cause of her father's annoyance Fātima took off the bracelets. The children felt disconsolate and went weeping to the Prophet who took the bracelets from them and said." Thaubān, take these to such and such (destitute) person. They belong to my household and I would not like them to enjoy these pleasures in this very life."[2]

This had been the mental outlook of all the messengers of God, which was more pronounced in the utterance of holy Prophet when he said, "No one is heir of the prophets; that which we leave is to be treated as alms and belongs to all Muslims."[3]

Always indifferent to pleasures of the world, the Prophet himself led a frugal life, and also desired the same for the members of his family. Once he beseeched God: "O Lord, give sustenance to the progeny of Mohammad only to make the two ends meet."[4]

---

1. Hammād b. Ishāq b. Ismāil (199-267 A. H.), *Taraktomun Nabī Sallallahu Alayhi Wassallam*, Madina, 1984; *Sahīh Bukhārī*; *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 58; *Abī Dāwūd*; *Masnad Ahmad*.
3. *Sahīh Bukāri*; *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*.
4. *Sahīh Bukhāri*; *Sahīh Muslim*.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Key to Salvation

How can it be presumed, in these circumstances, that the holy Prophet would have ever thought of bequeathing a dynastic rule or dominion or command of the Caliphate or Imāmate[1] to his kinsmen.[2] On the contrary, the ideal of human equality and brotherhood as preached by Islam was expressed in the maxim: Verily, nobility lies in virtuous deeds." It was necessary for upholding this doctrine that the holy Prophet's kinsmen and descendants were urged to strive for achieving eminence and distinction, like all other followers of Islam, by giving a proof of their superior knowledge and virtuous deeds, self-sacrifice and service to the people. This was in harmony with these Quranic dictums:

> "And vie with one another, hastening to forgiveness from your Lord, and to a garden whose breadth is as heavens and earth, prepared for the God-fearing."[3]

Qur'an clearly states that every man is his own redeemer; his success and failure in this world and the next, depends on his own endeavour.

> "And that a man shall have to his account only as he has laboured; and that his endeavour shall surely be seen, then he shall be recompensed for it with the fullest recompense."[4]

And nobody will be called upon to bear the burden of others; everybody will be responsible for his own omissions and commissions.

---

1. Imāmate has a wide connotation vested with absolute and wide powers according to Shi'ite theology which will be dealt with later on.
2. According to Shi'ite doctrine Imāmate and Caliphate devolved on 'Ali who was divinely appointed as the first successor and was impeccable. The Imām should descend from the apostolic line and the world cannot last without him, It is also incumbent on all to acknowledge his leadership in all temporal and spiritual matters. (*Rijāl Kashī*, p. 78; *Usūl Kāfi*, p. 104)
3. Q. 5 : 133
4. Q. 53 : 39-41

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

"Every soul earns only to its own account; no soul laden bears the load of another."[1]

Once the holy Prophet addressed his nearest kins calling them by name, to tell them that they could have whatever they desired from his possessions but he would be of no help to them in the obligations they owed to God He said:

"O Banī 'Abd Munāf, I would not be of any help to you in matters relating to God; O Safia, aunt of the Prophet, I would be helpless in affairs that relate to God; O Fātima bint Mohammad, ask whatever you like from that which I possess but in matters relating to God, I would be helpless."[2]

Indeed, the Prophet settled the matter for all times to come by declaring that: "Whosoever trails behind in actions cannot get ahead by his lineage."

Order of Caliphate

The precedence of the first four Caliphs is really indicative of divine wisdom.

That Abu Bakr belonging to Banu Tamīm, was elected as the first Caliph by the Muslims in preference to any one belonging to the Prophet's household or his family or even to Banī Hāshim or Banī Muttalib, was not by mere chance nor was it brought about by intrigue or crafty manoeuvring. It came to happen in order that there should remain no doubt that Islam does not favour dynastic rule. Whether it be Caliphate or Imamate, the succession depends on one's capability, service rendered to the community and the opinion of the masses. It was also not adventitious that for many centuries to come Banī Hāshim were treated in a like manner by God as well as the body-politic of the Muslims. They were held in esteem by the entire community but only because of their knowledge, piety, self-abnegation and service to the community. Muslims

1. Q. 6: 164
2. *Sahīh Bukhārī*

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

loved and revered them as their leaders; whenever Islam was in danger, they came forward to defend it; and the Muslim society was always rejuvenated, given a new life by them through setting an example of their own perfection of spirit and morals. *Such is the ordaining of Allah, the Mighty, the Knowing.*[1]

Accuracy and Preservation of the Qur'ān

Yet another prerequisite, as indicated earlier, for a perennial prophethood is that the revelation vouchsafed to the last and final prophet, which forms the basis of its doctrines and teachings, and serves as a connecting link between the Creator and the created, should be preserved without the change of a dot, should remain intelligible and be recited and learnt and studied by the people at all times as a living scripture. It should not meet the fate of earlier revelations which were mutilated and changed, nor should it become an ancient writing to be preserved like an archaeological exhibit.

Quranic pronouncements on the subject are quite clear and explicit. At the time the Qur'ān was being revealed to the holy Prophet by Archangel Gabriel, and the Prophet felt anxious to commit it all the more readily to his memory in order to reproduce the Word of God exactly, without any change to others, he was promised that :

> "Ours it is to gather it, and to recite it. So when We recite it, follow thou its recitation. Then Ours it is to explain it."[2]

The promise to fix the Qur'ān in the memory of the Prophet having been fulfilled, it was conveyed to the people who memorised it in part or the whole of it. Thereafter expeditions

1. The martyrdom of Husain and those of his progeny who fought against tyrants and endeavoured for the revival of true faith is too well-known and their efforts find an honoured place in the annals of most of the Islamic countries, and are still a source of inspiration to all Muslims,
2. 75 : 17-19

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

and battles followed; Muslims began to be dispersed in distant lands, but the Qur'ān continued unchanged in its original form since God had already held out His word to safeguard it to the end of time.

> "Verily We! it is We who have revealed the Admonition and We are its Guardian."[1]

Testimony of non-Muslim Scholars

It is not necessary to cite here the findings of Muslim scholars about preservation of the Qur'ān for nobody has ever expressed any doubt about it except the Shi'ites. Absolute purity of the Quranic text, free of all corruptions, accretions and mutilations, is the creed held by those belonging to Ahl-Sunnah.[2] Let us have the testimony of a few non-Muslim, specially Christian scholars, who are agreed that the Qur'ān is "the most widely read book in existence."[3]

European scholars of Islam, commonly known as Orientalists, do not share the faith of the Muslims that the Qur'ān was revealed by God, but they agree with them that the Qur'an has never been subjected to anything, such as, redaction of the Holy Text. Sir William Muir, not very sympathetic to Islam and its Prophet, and whose allegations against the latter in his *Life of Mahomet* forced Sir Syed Ahmad Khan known for his liberal views and modernism, to pen the *Khutbat-i-Ahmadiya* to refute him, acknowledges the textual purity of the Qur'ān in these words :

> "Contending and embittered factions, taking their rise in the murder of Othmān himself within a quarter of a century from the death of Mahomet, have ever since rent the Mahometan world. Yet but one Corān has been

1. 15 : 9
2. There are several treatises in Arabic dealing with the preservation, script etc., of the Qur'ān in Arabic. Urdū knowing people can go through the *Tārikh Suhaf-i-Samāwī* by S. Nawab Alī.
3. Chārles Francis Potter, *The Faith Man Lives By*, Kings Wood Surrey, 1955, p. 1; Phillip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, London. 1953, p. 126.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

current amongst them; and the consentaneous use by them all in every age up to the present day of the same Scripture, is an irrefragable proof that we have now before us the very text prepared by command of the unfortunate Caliph. There is probably in the world no other work which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text,"[1]

Wherry writes in his commentary on the Qur'ān :

"The text of the Qur'ān is the purest of all works of a like antiquity."[2]

Lane-Poole testifies :

"It is an immense merit in the Kuran that there is no doubt as to its genuineness.....That very word we can now read with full confidence that it has remained unchanged through nearly thirteen hundred years."[3]

Bosworth Smith has reached the conclusion that :

"In the Kuran, we have beyond all reasonable doubt, the exact words of Mohammad, without substraction and without addition."[4]

Prof. Arnold writes in the *Islamic Faith* :

"The text of this recension substantially corresponds to the actual utterances of Muhammad himself."[5]

Many more evidences can be produced in support of the preservation of Quranic text in its original form but it is perhaps not necessary to prolong this discussion with further citations.

Shi'ite Creed in regard to the Qur'ān

Let us now take the Shi'ite belief in regard to the Qur'ān.

1. Sir William Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, London, 1912, Vol. I, pp. XXII-XXIII.
2. Wherry, E. M., *A Comprehensive Commentary on the Qur'ān*, Vol I London, 1896, p. 349.
3. Lane and Lane-Poole, *Selections from the Kuran*, Turnber, London, 1879, Intro. p. c..
4. Bosworth Smith, *Mohammad and Mohammedanism*, London, 1874, p. 22.
5. Arnold, T. W., *Islamic Faith*, London, p. 9,

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

They hold that the Quranic text was mutilated; there is almost a consensus among their scholars on this point.[1] 'Allāma Nūrī Tabrasī has written a treatise entitled *Fasl-al-Khetāb fi-Ethbāt Tahrīf Kitāb Rabb el-Arbāb*[2] in which he says that more than two thousand reports handed down by the Imāms positively assert that there have been many alterations in the text of the Qur'ān we have at present.[3] Until the tenth or the eleventh century, that is, to the time of 'Allāma Bāqar Majlisī who was the greatest expounder of Shi'ite faith, or even thereafter, the Shi'ite doctors have been advertising the view that the Qur'ān has been subjected to alterations, additions and redactions.[4] We have already referred to 'Allāma Khomeini's views in regard to Qur'ān wherein he said that "it posed no problem (for the companions) to delete those verses (declaring 'Alī as vicegerent of the Prophet and the principle of Imamate), to make interpolations in the divine Scripture and put the Qur'ān out of sight to the end of time." He has also asserted that "the charge of corrupting (their scriptures) laid by Muslims on the Jews and Christians is proven against these companions."[5]

Usūl Kāfī is one of the most authentic theological works on Shi'āism. It gives a number of examples to show that several verses were deleted from the Qur'ān while others were inserted in it.[6] The book makes the allegation that about

1. Only four Shi'ite doctors, Sadūq, Sharīf Murtazā, Abu J'afar Tūsi and Abu 'Alī Tabrasī are exceptions to this agreed view of Shi'ite theologians, but some of them are reported to have recanted thair views. Anyway, there is always a doubt that they might have expressed their opinion in favour of purity of the Qu'rān because of their accepted principle of *taqaiyya* or dissimulation of one's faith.
2. This book has recently been published in Pakistan.
3. *Fasl al-Khetāb*, Najaf, 1298 A. H. p. 227.
4. For details see M. Manzoor Nomani, *Irāni Inqālab, Imām Khomeni aur Shi'āt*, Lucknow, 1984, p. 156.
5. *Khashf-ul-Asrār, op. cit.*, p. 114.
6. Ar-Rāzī, *Al-Usūl Min-al-Jam'e al-Kāfi*, Lucknow, 1302 A. H., pp. 262, 264-66 and 267. The author of the book is reported to have got it

(continued on page 46

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

two-thirds of the Qur'ān has been pilfered since it originally contained as many as seventeen thousand verses.[1] Shi'ites hold that the Qur'ān in its original form was compiled by Caliph 'Alī and it is still in the safe custody of the *Ghāib* (hidden) Imām. According to their belief the Qur'ān with the Imām *Ghā'ib* is entirely different from the existing one.[2] A few of their Imāms are on record that they possessed the original Qur'ān known as *Mushaf-i-Fātima* (Fatima's Scripture) which was three times more voluminous than the existing Qur'ān.[3]

Indifference to the Qur'an

The holy Qur'ān is read as a text-book by practically every Muslim in every part of the world and the number of those who commit it to memory runs into hundreds of thousands; there would hardly be a town where a few of its memorisers would not be found or where the whole of it is not recited once or twice in the *tarāwih*[4] prayers during Ramadhan; yet, the Shi'ites have shown little interest in its teaching and preaching which is apparently a logical result of their attitude towards the Word of God. It is commonly believed that the Shi'ites do not have the *hhuffāz* or the memorisers of the Qur'ān. The writer of these lines has had an occasion of meeting with an experience of similar nature during his tour of Iran in 1973, which confirmed this impression. Wherever there is a Muslim religious gathering, Europe and America not excluded, a Muslim is always found who can recite a small chapter or a few verses of the holy Qur'ān before initiating the proceedings of a meeting. But in Iran it was otherwise. The writer had gone to that country as the head of a delegation deputed by the World Muslim Organisation. He was

continued from page 45)

approved by Imām Muhammad b. al-Hasan, the twelfth and the hidden Imām.

1. *Usūl Kāfi, op. cit.*, p. 271.
2. *Ibid*, p. 271.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
4. Special prayers offered during Ramādhan.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

invited to a meeting held to welcome the delegates by an eminent theologian known as Ayatullah at his residence in Zarrin N'āl, Tehran. The meeting began with the recitation of the Qur'ān but it was read from a copy of the Scripture held by the son of the theologian. The writer alo heard recitation of the Qur'ān in the mosques of Qum and Meshhad relayed from cassettes of Egyptian *qāris*.[1] This indifferences to the Holy Book seems to be the reason why Iranian libraries lack such illuminated copies of the Qur'ān as are normally found in almost every library of the Islamic world.

An Eye-opener to Deniers of the Qur'ān

How can anyone claiming to be a Muslim but denying the absolute purity the Qur'ān can present his creed to others with confidence or claim that Islam is the only saving principle for man? How ugly and unattractive is the picture of Islam and its early adherents painted by those who believe in the perversion of the Qur'ān and how can they, with these concepts in their brains, invite others to give faith to the truth of Islam? Does one need anything more to rebut the claim of Islam as the last and eternal faith of mankind?

The Doctrine of Imamate

The fourth and the last condition mentioned by us for a perennial prophethood was that the prophet should be the centre of affections and source of guidance for his followers. Like the Oneness of God, the Prophet is the sole expositor of divine laws and commands. Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal has correctly explained the cultural value of the finality of prophethood in Islam in one of his articles on Qadianism in which he says :

> "Muslims are naturally extraordinarily sensitive to those movements which pose a threat to their unity; for, Islamic unity derives its strength from the finality of the Prophet.....

1. Reciters of the Qur'ān.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

> We believe that Islam as a religion was revealed by God but Islam as a society or community owes its existence to the personality of the holy Prophet".[1]

Let us now take the beliefs and doctrines of Imamate held by the Shi'ites as given in the *Usūl Kāfī*.[2] The Imām, according to their belief, is a successor to the Prophet appointed by God. In that capacity he is infallible, endowed with the divine gift of impeccability, and has to be obeyed by all in religious as well as temporal matters. He is equal in dignity or rather excells the prophets. Divine judgement of man's faith depends on the Imāms for they are the source of religious certainty. World cannot last without an Imām and it is incumbent on every faithful to acknowledge his leadership. Therefore, he is to be obeyed like the Messenger of God. The Imāms have the authority to declare anything permissible or impermissible for they are divinely protected against error and sin. One who had faith in an Imām would attain salvation even if he were a sinner and wrongdoer.—— The Imāms are equal in dignity to the last Prophet but higher than all other messengers of God; they possess the knowledge of what was and what will be, that is, the past and future. The deeds of all creatures of God are presented every day before the Imāms who are continually paid visits by the angels. They experience Ascension every Thursday while a new scripture is sent down to them each year in *Shab-i-Qadr* (Night of Power). They possess authority over death and can grant whatever of this world or the hereafter they like on whomsoever they are pleased to confer. The significance of this concept of Imamate has been construed even by non-Muslim writers as making the Imāms "partakers of the divine nature."[3] The inference drawn by another European writer W. Ivanow is: "With the light of *imāmat* continually flowing into the

1. Sherwānī, Latif Ahmad (ed.) *Harf-i-Iqbāl*, Lahore, 1947, p. 122, 136.
2. *Usūl Kafi*, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-259.
3. Thomas Patrick Huges, *Dictionary of Islam*, London, 1885, p. 574.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

world, the institute of prophetship, or apostleship, occupied only an auxiliary position:"[1] Phillip K. Hitti has also correctly assessed the implications of Imamate for he says : "The founder of Islam made a revelation, the Koran, the intermediary between God and man; the Shi'ah made the intermediary a person, the imām. To 'I believe in Allah the one God' and 'I believe in the revelation of the Koran, which is uncreated from eternity', the Shi'ites now added a new article of faith : 'I believe that the Imām especially chosen by Allah as the bearer of a part of the divine being is the leader to salvation."[2]

Iranian Influence

This exaggerated view of Imamate which goes beyond racial and lineal chauvinism to raise the Imāms to the position of divinity, reflects the ancient creed of Iran in the divine origin of kings. In the pre-Islamic Iran religious and temporal authority used to be exercised by particular tribes. It was concentrated in the region of Media in the ancient past; after Zoroastrianism consolidated its hold on the country, religious leadership came to be held by the al-Moghān tribe. The Iranians believed that the priestly class was the shadow of God on earth, created for the service of gods and, therefore, the ruler of the country should also be from their flesh and blood. In the estimation of Iranians the ruler was an incarnation of God and it was his prerogative to officiate as chief priest at the fire-alter.

The motive behind acceptance of Shi'āsm by the Iranians and the peculiar concept of Imamate held by them has been thus explained by an eminent Egyptian scholar Dr. Ahmad Amīn in the *Zuhal-Islām* :

"A great majority of the Iranian were led to the

1. H. A. R. Gibbbs and J. H. Kramers, *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Leiden, 1953, p. 166.
2. *History of the Arabs, op. cit.*, p. 248.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

faith in Shi'āsm because they were accustomed to attribute divinity to their monarchs. They believed that the blood running in the veins of the rulers was different from that percolating in the body of a common man. Therefore, when they embraced Islam, they viewed the holy Prophet in the same light as they were attuned to treat their sovereigns. Thus they associated divinity to the Prophet's household like the members of old imperial families.

"When the prophet bid farewell to the world, they were instinctively convinced that only the Prophet's kins could become his successors."[1]

Faith in Imām Ghā'ib

The culminating point of this exaggerated concept of Imamate attributing it with a substance of prophethood and frequently with the divine attributes, is the belief in the twelfth concealed or *Imām Ghā'ib*. His birth and subsequent concealment and then guidance of the faithful to the end of time transcends the law of physical existence on this earth. In accordance with their beliefs, the twelfth Imām Muhammad withdrew to a cave in the town Surraman Ra'i, alongwith his family and dependents, ten days before the death of his father, the eleventh Imām al-Hasan al-'Askarī. It is believed that he is still alive and will reappear again in the last days as the *Mahdī* or "Director" to rule over the whole world.[2]

It is also held by the Ethnā 'Asharī or the Twelver sect of the Shi'ites that initially the last Imām maintained contact with his followers and guided them from his cave. After a time, he went into total concealment and nobody can have access to him now until he decides to reappear again.[3]

'Allama Khomeini's views about Imāms

Lest somebody may think that these incredulous dogmas

1. *Zuhal Islām*, Egypt, 1952, Vol. III, p. 209.
2. *Usūl Kāfī*, *op. cit.*, pp. 202, 207.
3. An-Nurī al-Tabrasī, *Ehtajāj Tabrasī*, Tehran, 1302 A. H., p. 230.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

were held by the people before the dawn of enlightenment but now the informed and educated persons, particularly after the Islamic revolution, must have changed their views, we give here an extract from Imām Khomeini's *Al-Hukūmatul-Islāmiyah*. He says:

> "The Imām occupies the Glorious Station, the supreme place and wields such a delegated authority of genesis that everything in this universe submits to his surpassing glory. In accordance with the accepted tenets of our religion neither any angel of the highest rank nor anyone sent as a prophet can attain the sublime position of an Imām. As related in our *ahādīth* the Great Prophet and the Imāms existed before the creation of this cosmic order in the form of light, encircling the Throne of God and enjoying such propinquity to Him as known only to God."[1]

Imām Khomeini entertains belief in the *Imām Ghā'ib* (the Hidden Imām) like all other theologians of the Ethnā 'Asharī sect. Although more than a thousand years have passed since his concealment, the Imām may reappear, according to 'Allāma Khomeini, after a lapse of another few thousand years.

A Beatific Vision of Shāh Walī-ullah

These polytheistic beliefs about the Imām bring to reason the beatific vision of Shāh Walī-ullah in which he claims to have seen the holy Prophet and asked his opinion about the Shi'ite sect. The Prophet is stated to have told him that the misbelief inherent in its creed could be understood by the term Imām. Shāh Walī-ullah further says that after his descent from his spiritual transport he gave thought to the matter and came to understand how the belief in the impeccability of the Imām, unquestioning obedience to him and his reception of revelations——the distinctive features of the prophets

1. 'Allāma Khomeini, *Al-Hukūmat ul-Islāmiyah*, Kutubkhāna Buzurg Islāmī, p. 52.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

of God—amounted to denial of the finality of last Prophet."[1]

The Glorious Lamp of Heaven

The Prophet of Islam, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, deserves not merely our submission to his commands but much more than that. Every believer has to cultivate an affection and devotion, an emotional and spiritual attachment to him that overpasses the love for one's own life, progeny and property. Next to God, the ardour for the holy Prophet should be more intense than the regard for any human being, be he one of the Prophets's household, a doctor of religion or a saint perfect of soul. The Prophet is like the Glorious lamp of heaven while all others—his companions, kins, the reformers and the juris-consuls, the revolutionaries and the conquerors——bear resemblance to starry hosts made radiant by the sun.

Eulogistic Poetry

The doctrine of Imamate is at odds with the nurturing of tender feelings for the holy Prophet. A logical result of the reliance on Imamate as an article of faith has been that Shi'ite writers have failed to produce good biographies of the holy Prophet or odes in his praise. Their rhyms lamenting the martyrdom of Husain and penegyrical poems in the honour of the Prophet's household do express exquisite impressions of their heart and can be classed as paintings with the gift of speech but when it comes to the eulogium of the Prophet their compositions betray the lack of poet's innermost feelings issuing in rhythmic language. They have failed to produce any poet inditing laudatory verses comparable to even Amīr Minā'i, Altāf Husain Hālī, Muhsin Kākorwi, Muhammad Iqbāl or Zafar 'Alī Khan, let alone of the calibre of Qudsī and Jāmī. The reason for their failure is not far to seek. The writer

---

1. Shāh Walī-ullah, *Ad-Durrul Thamin fi-Mubashshiratin Nabi il-Amin*, Matb'a Ahmadī, Delhi, p. 504.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

of these lines had thrown light on this issue in one of his works entitled *Daryā'i Kābul Se Daryā'i Yarmūk Tak*. It would not be out of place to reproduce his observations here.

"The revered Imāms of the Prophet's progeny have always been very like lighthouses of guidance in the surrounding sea of darkness. No Muslims true to his faith can have the least doubt about it. But we feel that their immoderate emotional attachment and extravagance in the adoration of the Prophet's household has overcome their intellect and conscience. In our opinion this superabundance of affection for the Prophet's household has weakened their regard and ardour for the Prophet himself, although it should have been the ruling passion of every Muslim. For the Prophet's kins are honoured by us because of the Prophet himself, he deserves our devotion more than anybody else. It seems that a part of the love and regard which was due to the holy Prophet has got itself surreptitiously transferred to his household.

The eulogistical poetry of Iran versified in the later period lacks intensity of passion and exquisite felicity that immortalizes the feelings of love for the Prophet. The panegyrical poems in the honour of the Prophet's household and verses lamenting the martyrdom of Husain and 'Alī as well as those describing the hardships undergone by them breathe a spirit of tenderness. This difference in the painting of innermost feelings can be seen everywhere in the Shi'ite poetry. For instance, if we compare the elegies of Anīs and Dabīr with eulogistical rhymes composed by them or their contemporary poets we would see a marked difference between the two. The one would seem to be a genuine work of art while the other an attempt at mimicry. This holds good, more or less, for the biographies of the Prophet and his household. We have noticed the effect of this attitude in other spheres also. The Iranians have a greater regard for the shrines

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

than the mosques and more intense longing for paying a visit to Najaf and Karbalā and similar other holy places than for performing the Haj or undertaking a journey to call at the two sacred mosques.

"This attitude of our Shi'ite brothers might be a reaction to the failure of certain overzealous Sunnite scholars who sometimes fail to acknowledge the services of or do not pay the honour due to the household of the holy Prophet. But this turn of mind is something more than a mere reaction. Their intense passion of love, ardent regard and devotional leanings seem to be encircling the spiritual centre of Prophet's household and their intemperate glorification of Imamate is capable of holding it up as a rival of prophethood, attributing the characteristics of the latter to the former. If it comes to take that course, then the entire life-pattern of its votaries would be woven round an emotional centre which might come up to vie with the attachment to the leader and last of the Prophets."[1]

Approbation or Denunciation

The incredulous beliefs of the Shi'ites and their exaggerated ideas presenting the Prophet's household as supernatural beings, sometimes making the Imāms partakers of divinity, help to portray them as characters with contradictory morals and behaviour. They present them, including Caliph 'Alī who was known for his valour, spirit and dertermination, as men lacking boldness, courage of conviction, losing their nerves in speaking out what they considered to be correct and right, procrastinating always and taking recourse to dissimulation as masters in the art of disguising their creeds, not at all in an apologetic way, but considering it as an act of merit and means of gaining propinquity to God.[2] They

1. *Daryā'i Kābul Se Daryā'i Yarmūk Tak*, Lucknow, 1978, pp. 104-6.
2. Imām J'afar Sādiq is stated to have told his disciple Salmān : "O

[*Continued on page 55*

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

are sometimes stated to have concealed the truth and teachings of the Prophet when with a little courage or no great danger to their own person, they had the opportunity of winning the support of the people. The biographical accounts of the Imāms written by Shi'ite scholars present them as strategists and intriguers, wirepuller of underground movements like the Free Masons and Ikwān-us-Safa.[1] Their writings fail to stir up courage and ambition, fortitude and venturesome spirit for the cause of Islam which has always appeared at the darkest hour of Muslim history and turned the tables on its adversaries.[2] Iqbal has correctly listed the sterling features of such godly souls in a

---

Continued from page 54)

Salmān, he among you is the most honoured before God who uses the *taqaiyya* most in concealing the faith and he is the most demeaned who publishes it." Imām Bāqar is reported to have said: "He is dearest to me who is most pious, versed in jurisprudence and hides away our tenets." *(Usūl Kāfi,* pp. 485-86). Shi'ite doctors even assert that ninth-tenth of their faith consists of *taqaiyya* and one who does not practice it, has no faith at all. (p. 483).

1. Ikhwān-us-Safa (Brethren of Purity) was a secret society during the Abbasid period. It was an interesting eclectic school of popular philosophy. The Ikhwān formed not only a philosophical but also a religio-political association with ultra Shi'ite, probably Ismailite, views and were opposed to the existing political order, which they evidently aimed to overthrow by undermining the popular intellectual system and religious beliefs. Hence arises the obscurity surrounding their activities and membership. Baghdād was their centre in the fourth century A. D. They held meeting in camera and no outsider was allowed to participate in them. A collection of their epistles, *Rasā'il,* 52 in number, treating different sciences was compiled but the names of the writers were kept secret. Mu'tazilites and others sympathetic to their way of throught used to make out copies and smuggle them into other Islamic countries. These letters were published from Leipzig in 1883, from Bombay in 1886, and from Egypt in 1889. (For details see *History of the Arabs*) *op. cit.,* pp. 372-73, 401).
2. A detailed account of these revivalist movements will be found in the author's *Saviours of Islamic Spirit,* Vols. I-III.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

couplet which says:

The freehanded austere beats Dārā and Sikandar,
Whose poverty smaks of spirituality and valour.
Mark of a courageous man is valour and truthfulness.
For lions of God know not how to be heartless.[1]

Character of 'Ali and his Progeny

The holy Prophet's household, his nearest kins, particularly Caliph 'Alī and his descendants were men of great self-respect. Unlike descendants of other religious leaders they never tried to take advantage of the love and regard of the people because of their relationship to the Prophet of Islam. Let alone deriving any worldly benefit, they disdained to claim any kind of privileged position or miraculous powers as were attributed to them later on. Historical and biographical literature concerning these sons of Islam enumerate numerous examples of their restraint, simplicity, dignity and indifference to the things worldly. They were a class by themselves entirely different from those belonging to priesthood among the followers of other religions living on the labour of others. A few instances of their lives will illustrate their character.

Once Hasan b. 'Alī was on an errand of making purchases. He asked the price of a certain article which was told by the shop-keeper. Thereafter, somehow the shop-keeper came to know that he was the grandson of the Prophet. He reduced the price as a concession to him but Hasan left the shop without purchasing the wanted article. He said later on that he did not want any concession to be made for him.

Juwariyah b. Asmā, the personal attendant of 'Alī b. Husain, who is also known by the name of Zainul 'Abidīn, relates that the latter never availed himself of any concession even equivalent to a dirham because of his kinship to the holy Prophet.[2]

1. *Bāl-i-Jibrīl.*
2. Ibn Kāthir, *Al-Bidāyah wan Nihayah, op. cit.*, Vol. IX, p. 106.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Whenever 'Alī b. Husain went on a journey he never allowed the people to know his name and affiliation. On being asked the reason for it he replied: "I do not want that I should be benefited by them while I am unable to do so."[1]

The descendants of Caliph 'Alī had inherited the courage and fortitude of their forefathers who had always staked their lives for the defence of what they considered to be true and right and had set a glowing example of self-sacrifice for a nobler cause. Zayd b. 'Alī (son of Zainul 'Abidīn) attempted a rising in 122/740 against Hishām b. 'Abdul Malik, the Umayyad Caliph who was the most powerful ruler of his day, carried larger imperial armies before him in several battles, and was ultimately crucified.[2] Muhammad, a great-grandson of Hasan, whose lofty standard of virtue had obtained for him the name of *an Nafs-uz-Zakiya*, or 'the Pure Soul', raised the banner of revolt against the 'Abbasid Caliph Mansūr at Medina in Rajab, 145/September, 762 while his brother Ibrāhīm b. 'Abdullah gave battle to the troops sent against him at Basra in Zil Hijja, 145/March, 763. Imām Mālik and Imām Abu Hanīfa, the founders of the two important and popular juristic schools of Sunnites sided with Muhammad and Ibrāhīm by urging their followers to take oath of fealty to them and also offered financial assistance for their cause. The struggle of the two brothers closed with a heroic fight and death of Muhammad at Ahjār az-Zayt near Medina on 15th Ramdhan, 145/7th December, 762 and Ibrāhīm at Kūfā on 24th Zil-Hijja, 145/15th March, 763. Imām Mālik and Imām Abu Hanīfa had to undergo severe hardships by incurring the displeasure of the Caliph Mansūr.[3]

These insurrections speak volumes of the courage and

1. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafyāt al-Ayān*, Vol. II, p 434.
2. The incident is mentioned by all the historians like Ibn Jarir Tabri, Ibn Athīr and Ibn Kathīr.
3. Imām Abu Hanīfah had also supported the the revolt of Zayd b. 'Alī. Syed Manāzir Ahsan's *Imām Abu Hanīfah ki Siyāsi Zindagi* gives a detailed account of these events.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

intrepidity of the Alids but the few and far between occurances of this nature tend to show that the descendants of the Caliph 'Alī had, by and large, arrived at the conclusion that there was no need to rise in revolt against the well-established 'Abbasid Caliphate, holding sway over a greater part of Asia and Africa, since it was maintaining law and order, promoting learning and arts and trying to enforce commandments of Islam as the law of the land. They did not want to fan the fire of disorder and lawlessness among the Muslims, and desired no personal gain at the cost of the vast majority of their co-religionists. Instead, they devoted their energies to the spiritual uplift and religious guidance of the Muslims, which, by no stretch of imagination, can be construed as procrastination or dissimulation as implied by imputing *taqaiyya* to them.

The author had made an appraisal of the valuable service rendered to Islam by the illustrious progeny of Caliph 'Alī in his *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*. It would bear repetition here.

> "Although crass materialism had captured the soul of the ruling classes during the Umayyad (also 'Abbasid) period, the masses had still not forsaken the moral values and the deep-seated deference for Islamic teachings. The regard for moral worth and tenets of Islam was due mainly to those scholars of impeccable worth and ability who were held in high esteem by the masses for their moral and spiritual excellence, selflessness, piety, sagacity and beneficence. Outside the governmental circles these persons wielded tremendous influence over the people which acted as a corrective force and saved the masses from falling a prey to the pulls of worldly temptations. The person most respected and loved during the period was 'Alī Ibn Husain (Zainul 'Ābidīn). In the simple, pure and saintly life led by him, 'Alī Ibn Husain had no peer. Once Hishām Ibn 'Abdul Malik, the crown prince, came to Ka'aba for *tawāf* (circumumbulation) but owning to the huge gathering he could not reach the

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Hajr-i-Aswad. He, therefore, sat down to wait till he could get a chance to kiss it. In the meantime 'Alī ibn Husain arrived and the people at once cleared the way for him to make the *tawāf* and kiss *Hajr-i-Aswad*. Everyone present in the Ka'aba received 'Alī ibn Husain with the utmost deference. At last Hishām, pretending as if he did not know 'Alī ibn Husain, asked who he was. The poet Farzdaq, who happend to be present on the occasion instantaneously composed an introductory ode for 'Alī ibn Husain, It is alleged that certain additions were made to this famous ode later on, but it is still regarded as a masterpiece of Arabic poetry. It opened with the verse:

Pebbles and paths of Mecca affirm his virtue,
The House of God knows him well as the environs do.

Other highly reputed religious scholars of outstanding piety during he Umayyad period were Hasan al-Muthanna, his son, 'Abdullah al-Muhadh, Sālīm ibn Abdullah ibn 'Umar, Qāsim ibn Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr, Sa'eed ibn Musayib and 'Urwah ibn Zubair. Complete detachment from the ruling circles of their day, immaculate selflessness, unswerving truthfulness, readiness to serve and make any sacrifice for the cause of religion, erudition and moral worth had made each of these persons an ideal of Islamic piety. The demoralisation that had set in owing to the frisky conduct of the ruling elite was undoubtedly on the increase but moral influence wielded by these persons on the masses was not without a salutary effect; their pure and simple life was a standing reproach to the unprincipled this-worldliness of the rulers, which made people think of reforming their intemperate life."[1]

Contradictory Pictures of Early Islamic Era

What was the standard set by the earliest Islamic Era?

1. *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vol. I, (Lucknow, 1983), pp. 16-17.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

What was the result; how the character and morals of the people were moulded under the Prophet's guidance; and were these men different from national leaders, founders of kingdoms and persons aspiring for personal aggrandisement? What was their attitude to their kins; did the posterity of the Prophet try to take advantage of its kinship to their great forefather? How did these persons, particularly those belonging to the Prophet's household, endeavoured for the propagation of their faith? How these men, the companions of the Prophet and his household, conducted themselves towards one another? What was the conduct of those who held wide and absolute power over a vast empire in that era? Did they indulge in pleasure and how did they behave with those committed to their care? What is the verdict of history in this regard? How far the claim about uncorruptibility of the Scripture, which forms the bedrock and buttress of this religion is correct? Was it really protected against all mutilations, accretions and alterations? The answers to these questions portray two contradictory pictures of Islam. One of it is that presented by the creed of *Ahl-i-Sunnat* (Followers of Traditions) and the other is painted by the doctrines and tenets of Imāmiyah *Ethna 'Asharis* (The Twelvers). These portraits are not only diverse but also antithetical and contradictory.

Now anyone endowed with reason, sense of justice and knowledge of history can easily decide which one of the two versions is correct. Which of the two depictions befits a religion revealed as a mercy for the world and which claims that its teaching are practicable in every age and region? It is the religion which announces that its Prophet was the most successful among all the messengers of God and the era of its Prophet was the most blessed period of its history. It was the era, it claims, of which entire humanity can be proud of for in the dark and dungy annals of the world with nothing but accounts of self-aggrandisement, wars for personal gains, struggles for power and prestige and taking advantage of one's

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

victorious exploits, this was the only period when we find self-abnegating and truthful individuals, a virtuous society and a really democratic form of government, all working for the common weal. Those were the times which bear testimony to what Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Aziz had thus given expression : "The Prophet (peace be upon him) was sent as a guide of humanity and not as a collector of revenues."

But the picture of Islam that emerges through the creed and portrayal of events by the Shi'ites induces every intelligent and educated man to ask that if the call to Islam could not make any lasting impact on the people addressed by its founder and all of his followers barring four persons, became apostates just after his death, how can its claim to purify morals and behaviour of man be accepted ? How can it claim to raise man from his baser instincts to the sublime stage of humaneness ? Let us suppose that a missionary of Islam is inviting the people to accept Islam in a Western or any other non-Muslim country. A man who has gone through the Shi'ite literature, interrupts him to ask : 'How can you invite others to Islam when its Prophet had no more than four or five believers in him after labouring for twenty-three long years ? The vast majority recanted its faith !' What answer could be given to the man raising these objections !

Shi'ite creed of 'Allāma Khomeini

When Ayatullah Roohulla Khomeini gave a call for Islamic revolution and established the so-called Islamic Republic of Iran by overthrowing the Pahlawi monarchy a few year back, it was expected that in order to make his call more appealing and acceptable for all the Muslim he would not open the door of Shi'a-Sunni controversy——at least he would not begin it again if he was unable to close the chapter. It was hoped that if he did not publicly renounce those Shi'ite tenets which were as much a stumbling block in the way of Islamic unity as in spreading the message of Islam, for reasons of political expediency, he would at least not reiterate them publicly.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

A man of his deep scholarship was expected to see the hand of Islam's enemy who had cleverly exploited the injured pride of Iranians by the loss of their empire to the Arabs for sowing seeds of dissension among the Muslims. With his astounding victory over the Emperor and a powerful fighting machine to back him, it would have not been difficult for him to announce that the Muslims should now open a new chapter of friendship and amity for making Islam strong and powerful as well as for reforming the Muslim society of its ills, by forgetting the painful past. This was expected of him to make the future of Islam bright and also for inviting others to accept the truth of Islam.[1]

But these hopes were belied. He started publishing his Shi'ite views through his works and articles. In his work entitled *Al-Hukūmat-il-Islamiyata Vilāyatul Faqīh* he describes the Imāms and the Imamate in a way that elevate them to the stage of divinity; he makes them out as superior to every prophet and angel; he pleads that the universe has been subordinated to them in its origin and creation.[2] Similarly in the *Kashf-ul-Asrār*, written by him in Persian, he not merely criticises but reviles and denounces and uses coarsely insulting language for the companions, especially for the first three caliphs, befitting the most wicked and vicious conspirers.[3] Both these, his propagation of the Shi'ite creed and imprecations of companions are being publicized simultaneously on a wide scale through his works for these are not his private epistles meant for his followers alone.

---

1. The reason is that Islam cannot be presented as a saving principle for mankind if out of more than a hundred thousand companions stated to be present on the occasion of Prophet's last pilgrimage, only four of them remained wedded to the faith after the Prophet's death, if the Qur'ān was totally mutilated and the real faith was kept secret by the Imāms as claimed in *Usūl-Kafi*, *Fasl al Khetāb* and *Kashf al-Asrār*.
2. *Al-Hukumat il-Islamiyah op. cit.*, p. 52.
3. *Kashful Asrār*, *op. cit.*, p. 113-14.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Followers of 'Allāma Khomeini

The views of Imām Khomeini in regard to Imamate and the Prophet's companions are no secret. His works are being published widely both within and outside Iran. His pleadings for the Shi'ite faith : the danger his views posed to the Islam's fundamental creed of Tauhīd, the oneness of God ; attribution of prophetic characteristics to the Imāms ; and more than these, the invectives showered by him on the Prophets's companions who were held in the highest regard and whose era was held as the ideal period of the Islamic or rather the world history, were expected to alienate at least those subscribing to the faith of *Ahl-i-Sunnat*. It was hoped that his activites would undermine his claim as the leader of an Islamic revolution and founder of a truly Islamic form of government. But it is disheartening to see that a section of Muslims projecting itself as the standard-bearer of Islamic thought and reviver of Islamic glory has accepted Imām Khomeini as the "Promised Guide" ; it has lavished its affection and regard for him and is not prepared to condone even a word uttered in his criticism. This attitude leads to a two-fold conclusion.

Significance of Creed in Islam

First, the criterion devised by certain persons for approbation and disapprobation of anything is not that it conforms to the *Kitab* and the *Sunnah*, or the practice or creed of our honoured precursors, but that it leads to the establishment of a Islamic government, wresting of power for Islam, posing a challenge to any Western power or creating difficulties for Western supremacy. This is what certain persons have come round to regard as the qualification for an ideal leader.

Secondly, fundamental Islamic creed is being taken lightly by our modern educated class. This is a dangerous development, sufficient to disturb all well-meaning believers. The dividing line between the movements launched by political leaders and the divine call given by the messengers of God

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

is nothing but the creed propagated by the latter. The prophets are never prepared to make any compromise at the cost of their creed.[1] Their criterion for acceptance or rejection of any proposition is how far it is compatible with their creed. If the Muslims have been able to preserve their religion unadulterated, in its original form despite their numerous weaknesses, it has been due to their sensitiveness and zeal for maintaining it in its purest form. The doctors of Islam, those charged with the protection and interpretation of its doctrines, have refused to be cowed down by the most tyrant and powerful rulers. They have never played safe nor kept mum whenever they have found any Islamic tenet being misconstrued by the kings and emperors, let alone accepting any non-conformist view for their own benefit or for the good of Muslim masses. The fortitude shown by Ahmad ibn Hanbal d. (241/856) in facing the persecutions of Caliphs Mamūn Rashīd and Mu'tasim, the two most powerful emperors of his time, on the question of Qur'an's creation[2] and the way Shaykh Ahmad Mujaddid Alf Thānī (d. 1034/1624) continued to struggle against the Emperor Akbar's claims of Islam's supersession by his eclectic religion of *Din-i-Ilāhī* and the emperor's divine right of final say in all religious matters, until the Mughals were forced to change their policy[3], are but two examples that need be cited here. History of Islam offers innumerable shining examples of its votaries acting on the dictums : *Be truthful to the face of a tyrant ruler* and *No obedience to created beings involving disobedience to the Creator.* The tempter in this regard is often a tyrant ruler, occasionally the public opinion, at times fame and popularity, and not infrequently success in life ; while the experience tells us that it is the latter ones which are hardest to withstand.

The teachings and the creed of Islam are really like a river which never changes its course nor it goes dry.

1. See the author's *Dastur-i-Hayāt*, Lucknow, 1978.
2. See *Saviours of Islamic Spirit, op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 67-86.
3. See *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Lucknow, 1983, Vol. III.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

Political powers, occasional revolutions, rise and fall of governments, movements and forces come and go. If the river is flowing in the right direction they pose no danger. But if the creed is distorted, it means that the river has changed its course or its water has been contaminated. Thus, no mission, call or movement to make any country strong and powerful or to reform any society of its ills can ever be acceptable if its creed is not sound, seamless. This is essential for the stability of this religion and maintaining the vigour of its followers. This is why the savants and doctors of Islam, who have to safeguard the *Sharī'ah* and the *Sunnah*, cannot avoid taking steps apparently unpleasant to certain person.

The Secret of Khomeini's Success

The reason for the popularity of Āyatullah Khomeini are more than one. His success against the Shāh and a peculiar type of revolution in the Iranian society ; failure of America, the greatest world power to face his challenge ; the fire and passion of Iranian youths for self-sacrifice ; the unsatisfactory state of affairs, religious and moral shortcomings apparent in several Arab and Muslim countries ; dissatisfaction of the Muslim youth in the Indo-Pak sub-continent owing to the conditions obtaining in their own countries ; their readiness to accept whatever is presented to them in the name of Islam, are some of the factors that have won the same popular regard for Imām Khomeini as was once enjoyed by Kamāl Atāturk in India and Gamāl Abdul Nāsir in the Arab world. There are also some heads of states in a few Muslim countries who are admired by their people although they openly deny validity of the *Hadīth* and the *Sunnah*, at times they make fun of these, endeavour to make their countries culturally a part of the West and are known as sympathisers of communism. Imām Khomeini, however, got ahead of all such leaders because of his religious appeal. He is held in the hightest regard by some who would not listen to any argument even

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

if it aims at an appraisal of Imām Khomeini's actions in the light of accepted creed, the *Kitāb* or the *Sunnah*. They simply cannot tolerate any adverse criticism of Imām Khomeini. The way things are shaping is extremely dangerous for the future of Islam and the preservation of its spirit; this brings to mind a pithy remark by Caliph 'Alī who said: '(there are those) who run after every rattler'.

Our Lord, make not our hearts to swerve after Thou hast guided us; and give us mercy from Thee. Verily Thou art the Giver. (3 : 8).

END

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arabic Persian and Urdu

1. ʿAbbās Mahmūd al-ʿAqqād, *Abqariatul Imām*, Dārul Futūh, Cairo. 1957.
2. Abu Dawūd, Sulaimān b. al-Ashʿash al-Sajistānī, *Sunan Abī Dawūd.*
3. Abu Nua'im, *Hilyatul Auliyā*, Lebanon, 1980.
4. Ahmad Amīn, *Zuhul Islām*, Egypt, 1952.
5. ʿAlī Muttaqī, Hosām-ud-dīn, *Kanz-ul-ʿUmmāl*, Hyderabad, 1313 A. H.
6. Bilgrāmī, Nawāb Syed ʿAlī, *Tamaddun ʿArab*, Agra, n.d.
7. Al-Bukhārī, Muhammad Ismāʿīl, *Sahīh Bukhārī*, Matʿa Mustafa al-Bābī al-Halabī, Egypt, 1953.
8. *Dāiratul Maʿārif Islāmiyah* (Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam), Punjab University, Lahore, 1973, Vol. XII.
9. Gilānī, Syed Manāzir Ahsan, *Imām Abu Hanīfa ki Siyāsī Zindagi*, Karachi, 1957.
10. Ibn Athīr, Abul Hasan ʿAlī, *Tarīkh al-Kāmil*, (Leiden, 1867-74), Vol. II.
11. Ibn Hajar al-Asqālani, (1) *Al-Isābah fi Tamīz-is-Sahābah* (ed. Sprenger), Calcutta, 1856; (2) *Fatūh-ul-Bāri*, Cairo, 1348 A. H.
12. Ibn Jawzī, *Sifat-us-Safwah*, Daʿiratul Maʿārif, Hyderabad, 1355-56, A. H., Vol. I.
13. Ibn Khallikān, *Wafyāt-al-ʿĀyān*, Matbʿat-us-Saʿādah, Egypt, (1948), Vol. II.
14. Ibn Kathīr, ʿImād-ud-dīn Abul Fida, *Al-Bidayāh wan-Nihāyah*, Makatabatul Maʿārif, Egypt, 1966, Vol. VII.
15. Ibn Sʿad, Muhammad. *Tabaqāt-ul-Kubra*, Beirut, 1908, Vol. III.
16. Iqbàl, Dr. Sir Mohammad, *Bāl-i-Jibrīl*, Lahore, 1944.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

17. Iqbāl, Prof. Muhammad, *Iran ba 'Ahd Sasānian*, Delhi, 1941.
18. Ibn Taimiyah, Hāfiz Ahmad Taqī-ud-dīn, *Minhāj-us-Sunnat-in-Nabawiyah*, Cairo, 1321 A.H, Vol. I, III.
19. Al-Kasi, Shaikh Abu 'Amr Muhammad b. 'Umar'Abdul Aziz, *Rijāl Kashi*, Bombay, 1317 A. H.
20. Khomeini, Ayatullah Roohullah, (1) *Al-Hukumat il-Islamiyata Vilāyatul Faqih*, Kutub Khāna Buzurg Islami, n.d. (2) *Kashf-ul-Asrār* (Place and year of publication not mentioned).
21. Al-Muslim, Abul Husain, *As-Sahih al-Muslim*, Beirut, 1960.
22. Muhsin-ul-Mulk, *Ayāt-i-Bayyanāt*, Mirzapur, 1870, Vol. I.
23. Nadwi, Syed Abul Hasan 'Alī (1) *Daryā'i Kābul Se Dārya'i Yarmūk Tak*, Lucknow, 1978; (2) *Dastūr-i-Hayāt*, Lucknow, 1983.
24. Nawāb 'Alī, Prof., *Tarikh Suhaf-i-Samāwi* Delhi, n.d.
25. Nomānī, Muhammad Manzoor, *Irāni Inqalāb, Imām Khomeini aur Shi'at*, Lucknow, 1984.
26. An-Nurī, Husain b. Muhammad Taqi al-Tabrasi, (1) *Fasl-al Khetab fi Ethbāt Tahrif Kitāb Rabb-el-Arbāb*, Najaf, 1298 A.H. (2) *Ehtijāj Tabrasi*, Tehran, 1302 A.H.
27. *Ar-Razi*, Abu Ja'far b. Ya'aqūb al-Kalini, (1) *Al-Usūal min-al-Jāme al-Kāfi*. Lucknow, 1302 A.H. (2) *Al-Fur'ū min-al-Jām'e al-Kāfi*, Lucknow, 1302 A.H.
28. Sharar, 'Abdul Halīm, *Tarikh Islām*, Vol. I, Hyderabad, 1343/1925.
29. Serwānī, Latif Ahmad, (ed). *Harf-i-Iqbāl*, Lahore, 1947.
30. Shiblī N'omanī, *Al-Farooq*, Azamgarh, 1956, Vol. II.
31. Suyūti, Jalāl-ud-dīn, *Tārikh-ul-Khufla*, Matbat-us-Sa'āda, Egypt, 1952.
32. Tabrī, Al-Muhib, *Ar-Riyādh al-Nazarato fi-Fazā'il il-'Ashrata* (MSS No. 1784) Nadwatul Ulama Library.
33. Tabrī, Ibn Jarīr, *Tarikh-ul-Umām wal-Malūk*, Maktaba Husainiya, Egypt, n. d.
34. Walīullah, Shāh, *Ad-Durrul Thamin fi-Mubashshiratin Nabi il-Amīn*, Matb'a Ahmadī, Delhi, n. d.

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

English

35. Amir Ali, Justice (1) *The Spirit of Islam*, London, 1922 ; (2) *A Short History of Saracens*, London, 1955.
36. Arnold, T. W. (1) *Preaching of Islām*, London, 1935; (2) *Islamic Faith*, London.
37. Askary Jafery (tr.) *Peak of Eloquence* (*Nahjul Balāghā*), Bombay, 1979.
38. Bosworth Smith, *Mohammad and Mohammadanism*, London, 1874.
39. Christensen A., *L'. Irān Sous les Sassānides*, Paris, 1936.
40. Gibbs, H.A.R. and J. H. Kremar, *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Leiden, 1953.
41. Gibbon, Edward, *The History of the Decline and Fall of Roman Empire*, London, 1911. Vol. V
42. Hitti, Phillip K., *History of the Arabs*, London, 1953.
43. Huges, Thomas Patrick, *Dictionary of Islam*, London, 1885.
44. Lane and Lane-Poole, *Selections from the Kuran*, London, 1879.
45. Mohī-ud-dīn Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid, His Life and Mission*, Lucknow, 1975.
46. Muir Sir William (1) *Life of Mahomet*, London, 1912; (2) *Annals of the Early Caliphate*, London, 1882.
47. Nadwi, Syed Abul Hasan 'Alī, (1) *Islamic Concept of Prophethood*, Lucknow 1976 ; (2) *Saviours of Islamic Spirit*, Vols. I-III, Lucknow, 1983.
48. Potter, Charles Francis, *The Faith Man Lives By*, Kings Wood Surrey, 1955.
49. Wherry E.M., *A Comprehensive Commentary on the Qur'an*, London, 1896, Vol. I.

———

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org

www.abulhasanalinadwi.org