

# 'Ali, Amirul Momenin(the history of Islam: a look at the personology of Hazrat 'Ali (a.s.)

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Based on speech lessons of Seyed Hassan Iftikhar zadeh

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**Abstract:** *Islam is the last religions and the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, is the last prophet and the Qur'an is the last divine books. In this way, Islam is not bound to any time and is universal, and the Prophet is the communicator of a religion that has the color of eternity and time does not expire it. On the other hand, the way of creation is such that the Messenger of God, like other human beings, has a limited outward life, and according to the clear word of the Qur'an, he will also taste death, as others: <sup>أَنَّكَ</sup> مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُمْ مَيِّتُونَ* You are mortal, and they are mortal."(Zumar: 30).

**Key words:** 'Ali, vilayat.

The Prophet of God is responsible for the mission of communicating the teachings of religion, and he is the leader of the society. In other words, the Messenger of God is the intellectual authority of the people and also the leader of people. Based on this, a serious and important question - which can never be easily ignored and has been an important preoccupation of Islamic thinkers throughout history - is that this great divine leader and the glorious authority of God who declared his religion to be universal what has done for the future of his religion and school of thought? Has he set a definite future or has he not made any plan for the future and left the work entirely to the people or...?!

Vilayat in communicating and introducing God's religion goes hand in hand with the prophetic mission. The Holy Prophet of Islam,

during the public announcement and public propagation of the mission, spoke frankly about the continuation of the mission (his vilayat) and introduced 'Ali bin Abi Talib as his successor, caliph and companion.<sup>1</sup> The Prophet of God, in addition to the public announcement of this fact, on the first day of the public preaching of his school of thought, many times and on different occasions, called 'Ali as the next leader after him, and finally, in the last year of his life which was full of actions and epics, in the land of Ghadir in front of ten thousand people who had returned from visiting the house of God said: " مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَهَذَا عَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ اللَّهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالَاهُ وَ عَادِ مَنْ عَادَاهُ وَ انْصُرْ مَنْ نَصَرَهُ وَ اخْذُلْ مَنْ خَدَلَهُ".

The Messenger of God, based on the verse: وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ (Warn your tribe and your near kinsmen.) (Shu'ara:214) was

commissioned by God to invite their relatives to Islam<sup>2</sup> and when they gathered by invitation of Prophet of God, after the preliminaries in which Prophet tries to prepare the ground for his invitation, he says: " فإيكم يوازي على هذا الأمر على ان يكون أخى و "وصيى و خليفتى فيكم؟" or in some quotes: "...خليفتى من بعدى"<sup>3</sup>

In that group, the only one who answers positively to this call is 'Ali. The beloved Messenger of Islam said to this affirmative answer: *إِنَّ هَذَا أَخِي وَ وَصِيي وَ خَلِيفَتِي فَيُكْمُ فَاسْمَعُوا* "This is my brother, my executor of my will, my minister, and my caliph among you, so listen to him and obey him."<sup>4</sup>

Thus, on the first day of the public invitation to the Prophet, the prophet of God established the leadership of 'Ali bin Talib, and this is how we say that Imam 'Ali's guardianship goes hand in hand with the prophetic mission<sup>5</sup>.

That day, those who gathered in that assembly understood this message clearly and understood from the words of the Messenger of God, the leadership belongs to 'Ali bin Talib and realized the necessity of obeying him; Because of this, some sarcastically said to Abu Talib: "you are ordered to obey your son!"<sup>6</sup> the people present there, despite this clear message, were arrogant and did not tolerate the truth and arrogantly refused to accept it.<sup>7</sup>

This declaration of successorship and concern for the continuation of guidance and the divine succession of 'Ali bin Talib was performed every time in various way:

1. Open expression<sup>8</sup>,
2. simile expression<sup>9</sup>
3. practical expression<sup>10</sup>,

The Messenger of God, like the prophets before him, always proved

this succession to be a divine command so that the people would know that family ties, the personal interest, the position of the Prophet, or the Prophet's intense affection towards his cousin, were not the reasons for choosing 'Ali Ibn 'Abi Talib as his successor.

After the demise of the Prophet, the high ideal of that honorable man was not put into practice and his lofty thought was buried under the tumult of powerful figures and in the wonderful and terrible struggle of politicians<sup>11</sup>. Finally, the robe of caliphate was worn by one who was also aware of the high position of 'Ali bin Abi Talib.<sup>12</sup>

The Prophet of Islam conveyed great concepts to the people by addressing 'Ali with the title of "Amir al-Mu'minin (Commander of the Faithful)".

A few points can be mentioned about this title:

1. It is mentioned in the history that the beloved Prophet of Islam, during his own lifetime, arranged for people to greet 'Ali bin Abi Talib with the words: "Peace be upon you, or Amir al-Mu'minin." This was to announce to all Ali even at the life time of Prophet is Amir al-Mu'minin. In other words, his being the Amir is both during the lifetime of the Messenger of God and alongside him and also after the demise of the Messenger of God.

2- There are many documents and evidences among Shia Imamia and Sunni sources in which, citing the companions of the Messenger of God, people greeted Hazrat 'Ali bin Abi Talib with the title of "Amir al-Mu'minin" on the order of the Prophet before his holiness passed away. This order was announced by God through Prophet Gabriel.

3- In addition to their own narrations, the Shiites also refer to

the hadiths that have been narrated by the Sunnis.<sup>13</sup> For example, according to several narrations that Ibn Mardwiah Esfahani gave from Sunni scholars in his book *Manaqib*, the Prophet of God has described ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib with the title of "Amir al-Mu'minin" several times. In one of these traditions, it is stated that Gabriel called Hazrat ‘Ali bin Abi Talib “the Commander of the Faithful” in the presence of the Messenger of God.<sup>14</sup>

Or according to a narration from Umm Salama<sup>15</sup> and also Anas Ibn Malik, the Prophet mentioned ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib as Commander of the Faithful in a conversation with two of his wives.<sup>16</sup>

4- It is stated in the Shia traditions that during the Ghadir day, the Prophet of Islam introduced ‘Ali as his successor and master of all Muslims and asked everyone to greet ‘Ali bin Abi Talib, with the title of

"Amir al-Mu'minin". Accordingly, following the Prophet's request, the Muslims entered ‘Ali’s tent in groups and greeted him as the Prophet had ordered. According to<sup>17</sup> other narrations, the Messenger of God, asked seven people, including Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, Talha and Zubayr, to greet ‘Ali calling him Amir al-Mu'minin, and they obeyed.<sup>18</sup>

Or, in the hadiths of Ascension (Me’raj), the Messenger of God has been quoted as saying:

لَمَّا أُسْرِيَ بِي إِلَى السَّمَاءِ كُنْتُ مِنْ رَبِّي كَقَابِ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْبِي، فَأَوْحَى إِلَيَّ رَبِّي مَا أَوْحَى ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ ، أَفْرَكَ عَلَيَّ بَنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ السَّلَامَ، فَمَا سَمَّيْتُ بِهِذَا أَحَدًا قَبْلَهُ، وَلَا أُسَمِّي بِهِذَا أَحَدًا بَعْدَهُ»<sup>19</sup>;

That is: "The night when I was taken to the ascension, some things were revealed to me by my Lord; Then God said to me: O Muhammad! call ‘Ali bin Abi Talib by the name of " Amir al-Mu'minin ". This is a name that no one has been called before

him or after him.

5- On the other hand, even though our religious leaders were the leaders of the Shiites, they never applied this title to themselves, and they strictly forbade anyone to attribute or apply it to themselves.<sup>20</sup>

In some narrations, by announcing the exclusivity of this title for the son of Abu Talib, even the person who applied the title "Amir al-Mu'minin" to someone other than 'Ali is considered an infidel:

«قَالَ رَجُلٌ لِّجَعْفَرِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ نُسَلِّمُ عَلَى الْقَائِمِ بِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ؟ قَالَ لَا ذَلِكَ اسْمُ سَمَى اللَّهُ بِهِ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَا يُسَمَّى بِهِ أَحَدٌ قَبْلَهُ وَلَا بَعْدَهُ إِلَّا كَافِرًا قَالَ: فَكَيْفَ نُسَلِّمُ عَلَيْهِ؟ قَالَ: تَقُولُ: السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا بَقِيَّةَ اللَّهِ قَالَ ثُمَّ قَرَأَ جَعْفَرٌ بَقِيَّتَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ...»؛

It means: "Someone asked Imam Sadiq that they greet Imam Qaim as the Commander of the Faithful?" They said: No! God exclusively gave that name to Amir al-Mu'minin ('Ali bin Abi Talib), and no one before

him was called by that name, not after him, and no one except a disbeliever uses that name for himself. I said: may God sacrifice me for you, so how should they greet him (Imam Mahdi)? He said: They should say: السلام عليك يا بقيه الله! Peace be upon you the rest of God!"

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6- It should be clarified that in some of the narrations of some of the infallibles, addressing the ruler of their time, the phrase "Peace be upon you, Commander of the Faithful" is used.

By examining what has happened in the history, it becomes clear that after the demise of the Messenger of God and giving power to people other than the true successor of the Prophet the title of "Amir al-Mu'minin" was changed from a divine position to an earthly and attainable level.

Addressing the ruler of the time with this title had a political

meaning. When a person met the ruler of the time and used this title this meant that I am at peace with you and I do not intend to rebel against you.

The people who set up Saqifa event lowered this high rank to such an extent that sometimes it is observed that the Imam, following the principle of *Taqiyah*, in confronting the ruler of his time, used this title to address the ruler<sup>22</sup>, while the same Imam warned in private and among his close companions no one but a disbeliever attributed this title to himself, and this title is special and unique to our ancestor ‘Ali bin Abi Talib.<sup>23</sup>

In fact, the title of "Amir al-Mu'minin" with its lofty and heavenly meaning, was deliberately turned into an earthly title by the people of Saqifa, which seemed to have been perverted and given to everyone which became the ruler

and it was applied in any way. In fact, they pretended the meaning of the word Amir was the ruler of the time, and the meaning of Mu'minin was all the people of the streets!

7- Rulership has two meanings in divine and prophetic culture and using the title of "Amirul Mu'minin" for ‘Ali bin Abi Talib:

1. Anyone who truly considers him as Amir is a true believer. [‘Ali bin Abi Talib is the Amir over the believer and not over the transgressor]

2. Anyone who has faith, in a practical action, considers and chooses ‘Ali bin Abi Talib as his Amir. In other words, no one can be a believer but chose another Amir]

It is for this reason that in the Ziyarat of *Aminullah*, when we address the Imam ‘Ali or other infallibles and acknowledge their imamate, we ask God:

اللَّهُمَّ فَاجْعَلْ نَفْسِي ... مُسْتَنَّةً بِسُنَنِ أَوْلِيَائِكَ  
[أَنْبِيَائِكَ مُفَارِقَةً لِأَخْلَاقِ أَعْدَائِكَ ...]»؛

That is: "...O God, make my soul... follow the ways of your infallibles, separator from the morals of your enemies...".

This is a behavioral role model that has no expiration date and is a practical indicator for Muslims at all times.

Here, the indicator of faith is not only prayer and fasting; Rather, the indicator of faith is to accept the villayat of Hazrat ‘Ali bin Abi Talib; this fact has been specified in many hadiths in this sense.<sup>24</sup>.

For example, in a detailed narration quoted by Zurarah, Imam Baqir says: “Islam is organized on five pillars: Prayer, Zakat, Hajj, Fasting, and Guardianship. I said: Which of these is superior? He said: The guardianship is superior, because it is the key to all, and the governor is

the leader of them. I continued, which of them has superiority next?

He said: Prayer. Truly the Messenger of God said: Perpendicular prayer is the pillar of religion.

He said: I said, then which one? He said: Zakat, because God made it a companion to prayer and mentioned it before prayer, and the Messenger of God said: Zakat takes away sins. I asked: and next? He said: It is Hajj, Almighty God has said, “and it is for God that Hajj is for the people of the House of Kaaba, whomsoever He directs to it. Whoever disbelieves, then verily God is not in need of the worlds." And the Messenger of God also said: "One accepted Hajj is better than twenty unfulfilled prayers, and whoever circumambulates the house of the Kaaba and counts seven rounds of it and perform two rak'ats of its Salat well, may God have mercy on him. And he said what he said on the day



of 'Arafah and the day of *Mash'ar*. I said: What is after that? He said, "fasting", I said, "why fasting is the end of all virtues? He said: The Messenger of God said that fasting is a shield in front of fire.

He said: Then his holiness said: Verily, the best things are those that, when they are lost from you, there is no repentance or compensation, so that you can not return to them and do them. Verily, prayer, zakat, Hajj, and Villayat, when they are lost, there is not something in their place. But concerning fasting, when the fast was broken, or you neglected it, or you traveled during it and broke your fast, instead you fast for a few days other than the month of Ramadan, or you made expiation instead of the fast, ... but from these four there is none that can be accepted in its place other than itself.

Then He said: The highest of religion and the highest task and the

key to it ... and pleasing God the Most Merciful is obedience to the Imam after knowing him, because God Almighty says: "Whoever obeys the Messenger has truly obeyed God, and whoever disobeys, we did not send you as a guard over him."

However, if a person worships every night and fasts every day, gives all his wealth in charity, and performs Hajj all his life, and does not regard the guardianship of Imam, so that he follows him ... then there is no right for him to ask reward from God. And he is not from the people of faith, then he said: If each one of them does good deeds (are benevolent), God, by His Grace and Mercy, will enter him into paradise.

8- The great Shiite scholar, Seyyed Ibn Tavus, who died in 664 AH), by writing a valuable book titled "اليقين باختصاص مولانا على بإمارة" «المؤمنين», in Arabic, citing 220

hadiths from Sunni sources, tries to show that the title of Commander of the Faithful , is specific to ‘Ali Ibn Talib and the Messenger of God bestowed this title on him. This book was published together with the book of Al-Tahsin Ibn Tayus with a similar topic.

The subject of this book is the narrations in which the Prophet of God gave the title of Amir al-Mu'minin to Hazrat ‘Ali bin Abi Talib and this title is reserved for him. Before Ibn Tayus, Ibn Ghazaeri (died 411 AH) had a book called “*Al-Taslim ‘Ali Amir al-Mu'minin*”.

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It seems that the writing of this book was based on the words of some such as Ibn Abi al-Hadid, who in his description of *Nahj al-Balaghah* mentions this issue and says: “Shi'a think that ‘Ali was addressed as Commander of the Faithful during the time of the Holy

Prophet and all the emigrants and Ansar called him by this title, but this has not been proven in the news of the narrators.”<sup>26</sup>

*Al-Yaqin* book has a detailed introduction and a conclusion and three parts. In the introduction, the author lists the 220 chapters of the book and then describes the narrations in three groups with the following titles:

The first; The hadiths that state that ‘Ali bin Abi Talib was called "Amir al-Mu'minin". (include 177 chapter)

The second; The hadiths prove that he was called "Imam al-Mutaqin". (including 24 chapters)

The third; Hadiths that proved the title of يسعوب الدين “Yas‘ub al-Din” for him. (including 19 chapters)

According to Seyyed Ibn Tāvus in the introduction of the book, *al-Taḥsin*, the total number of hadiths in *al-Yaqin* has exceeded 400 hadiths.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Yawm al Anzar

<sup>2</sup> See the details of the story in historical sources, including: Tarikh Tabari, vol. 2, p. 319; Al-Sahih Man Sirat al-Nabi al-‘Azam, vol. 3, p. 61 with many sources; Imam ‘Ali bin Abi Talib fi Al-Kitab val Sunnah, Ahadith of the Caliphate, Hadith Yawm al Anzar.

<sup>3</sup> Sharh ibn Abi Al-Hadid, vol.13, p.244 and also: Naqz al-‘Uthmaniyeh, p.303; al-Ghadir,v.2,p.395.

<sup>4</sup> Nasim al-Riyad fi Sharḥ Shaqa’, vol. 3, p. 35; Amali Tusi, p. 583; Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 18, p. 192 .

<sup>5</sup> Ghadir, the height of the invitation to Wilayat, section on Yawm al Anzar.

<sup>6</sup> Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 18, p. 192.

<sup>7</sup> This matter has been reported in different ways and with different quotations; in a way that leaves no doubt. In addition, let us add that Abu Ja’far Askafi, a Mu’tazili, considered the hadith "authentic", as well as other scholars,

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including Shahab al-Din Hafaji, in his commentary "Al-Shifa Bita’rif al-Mustafa’s Laws", Qazi ‘Ayyad and Mutaqi Hindi [kanz al-‘Ummal, vol. 13, p. 128], which was reported Ibn Jarir Tabari’s correction. Tabari narrated the incident in his history as it was mentioned, but in the commentary and explaining the verse, as he narrated the incident, he distorted its text and wrote: "ان هذا اخى و كنا و كنا". Ibn Kathir has also followed his path, and so have some claimants of freedom in research, such as Muhammad Hassanin Heikal... . Look at al-Ghadir, vol. 2, p. 406 (new edition), how surprising the dirty hands in history and wonder from Ali's oppression! Others have also emphasized its authenticity. Look at the article "Hadith al Anzar Yawm al-Dar ", Ayatollah ‘Ali Ahmadi Miyanji in Risalah al-Thaqalayn magazine, number 22, p. 111]

<sup>8</sup> A clear expression like: the hadith of Yawm al Anzar.

<sup>9</sup> The analogy like "Indeed, the will executor and caliph after me is ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, and after him the two grandson of me Hassan and Hussein, who after him [Hussein] nine others come from his progeny, were the Imams of pures they are twelve as the number of leaders of Bani Israel....». [Kifayat al Athar fi al-Nas ‘Ala al-Aimmah al Athna ‘Ashar, pp. 13-14.

<sup>10</sup> A practical expression like the story of the delivery of Surah Bara'at or the story of the Battle of Kheybar. The verses of Surah Bara't were revealed when the Prophet of God did not decide to participate in the Hajj ceremony. Because They had participated in the Hajj ceremony in the previous year, which was the year of the conquest of Mecca, and they decided to participate in this ceremony in the next year, which was later called the Farewell Hajj, so they had to choose someone to deliver the divine messages. First, they called Abu Bakr and taught him a part of the beginning of Surah Bara'at and sent him to Mecca with forty people to recite these verses for them on the day of Eid al-Adha. Abu Bakr was on his way to Mecca, when suddenly a divine revelation was revealed and he ordered the Prophet of God that the divine message should be delivered to the people either by the Prophet himself or by someone from him, and no one has the authority to do this except for these two people. Soon the Messenger of God summoned Hazrat Ali bin Abi Talib and ordered him to take the road to Mecca, find Abu Bakr on the way, and tell him that this task has been assigned to him. Hazrat 'Ali bin Abi Talib Ali with Jabir and a group of companions of the Messenger of God, while riding on a camel specially for the Prophet, took the road to Mecca

and conveyed the words of that Hazrat to Abu Bakr. He accepted. Amir al-Mu'minin Ali entered Mecca and on the 10th day of Dhul-Hijjah, he recited thirteen verses of Surah Al-Bara'at with a loud voice and announced the four-point resolution of the Prophet in a loud voice to all the participants.

<sup>11</sup> To learn about what happened on the eve of the Prophet's demise, see: Sharh Ibn Abi al-Hadid, vol.2, p.20 forth. Al-Shafi fi al-Imamah forth; Tabaqat ibn Sa'd, v.2,p.63; Tarikh Tabari, v.3,p.192; Al-Muraji'at,pp.352-370; Sirah al-Mustafa,p.725.

<sup>12</sup> It is a point to the first sentences of a great sermon (Shaqshaqiyyah): اما و الله ... لقد تقمصها ابن ابي قحافه ... Masadir Nahj al-Balaghah, vol. 1, p. 303.

<sup>13</sup> For further reading, refer to: Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 37, p. 290, chapter 54. In this chapter, Allameh Majlisi has collected the hadiths related to people greeting Ali bin Abi Talib with the word Amir al-Mu'minin at the command of the Messenger of God.

<sup>14</sup> Manaqib, pp. 62-64.

<sup>15</sup> Al-Irshad, v.1,p.48

<sup>16</sup> Tarikh Madineh Dameshq, vol. 42, pp. 303 and 386; Hilyat al-Awliya, vol.1, p.63.

<sup>17</sup> Al-Irshad, Part 1, p. 176.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p.48.

<sup>19</sup> Amali Tusi, p. 295

<sup>20</sup> Bihar Al-Anwar, vol. 37, p. 334; Al-Wasa'il al-Shia, vol. 14, p. 600; Imams shared many titles with each other; Even in relation to the specific titles of the Imam Mahdi (a.s.), when the narrator asks Imam Sadiq, "Are you the Mahdi?", the Imam replied: "كلنا مهدي الى الله." [Al-Wafi, vol. 2, p. 475. There is also the word "بقيه الله" which was applied to each imam during their lifetime, but in the present time, it is a special title for the imam Mahdi (a.s.).

<sup>21</sup> Interpretation of Furat Al-Kufi, p. 193.

<sup>22</sup> It is narrated from the book "Muhaj al-Da'awat" by Seyyed Ibn Tavus, from 'Atiqi book with a document attached to Muhammad Ibn Rabi' Hajib, that one day Mansour sat in the Al-Khadra Dome, which was called the Al-Hamra Dome before Muhammad and Ibrahim were killed, and the day he sat in it, was called Yawm al-Zhibh (the day of slaughter). And he had summoned the Holy Prophet from Madinah. When the night came and it was about midnight, my father called Rabi' and said: Rabi', you know your position and dignity in my eyes... Now go to Ja'far b. Muhammad and bring him to me in the same condition as you found him, and definitely do not change his condition! When Mansoor saw him, he

said: "And you, O Ja'far, , you do not stop envying, oppressing and corrupting the people of this house from Bani Abbas, and God will not add anything to you as a result except the intensity of envy and hardship of living and a little charity as much as you can afford it. "

The Holy Prophet said, "By God, O Commander of the Faithful, I have never done anything of this kind, and I have never done such a thing during the rule of the Umayyads, who, as you know, were the worst enemies of us and you among the creatures, let alone you, the Commander of the Faithful! . [Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 47, p. 195]

<sup>23</sup> In the text, there is a narration from Imam Sadiq in this regard.

<sup>24</sup> For further reading, refer to Usul Kafi, chapter Da'aim al-Islam = Foundations of Islam

<sup>25</sup> Al-Yaqin, pp. 22 and 23.

<sup>26</sup> Al-Yaqin, p.12

<sup>27</sup> .Ibid, p.4