

(The Excellence of Imam Ali Bin Abu Talib (A.S

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Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah .1 bless him and his family, said:] "O 'Ali, I am the master of the messengers, and you are the commander of the faithful, Imam of the Allah-fearing, and leader of the excellent, famous ones."

As for Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, he is the pioneer of thought and wisdom in Islam. He is the soul of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, gate of the city of his knowledge, and his testamentary trustee after him. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, lauded his exalted rank and great position. No tradition has been transmitted from him, may Allah bless him and his family, concerning his praising any of his companions like his praising Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him. His purpose of that is to provide evidence of his succession after him.

2. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When I was ascended to the heaven, Gabriel took me by the hand and sat me on a darnuk of the Garden. Then he gave me a quince from it (the Garden), and it (the quince) and what was therein was prepared for Imam 'Ali, peace be on him." Certainly, Allah has prepared for 'Ali, peace be on him, all favors of the hereafter and made him dwell Paradise and live wherever he likes.

3. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "O 'Ali, I asked my Lord to give me five qualities regarding you, and He gave (them) to me. As for the first of them, it is that I asked my Lord to split open the ground and to dust my head and you were with me, so He (Allah) gave it to me. As for the second, it is that I asked my Lord to let me stop by the Scale of the Balance and you were with me, so He gave it to me. As for the third, it is that I asked him to make you the carrier of the standard, which was the Standard of Allahu Akbar under which were those who gained the Garden, and He gave it to me. As for the fourth, it is that I asked my Lord (to let) you water my community from my pond (hawd), and He gave it to me. As for the fifth, it is that I asked my Lord to make you the leader of my community to the Garden, so my Lord gave it to me. Praise belongs to Allah who has bestowed that upon me!"

Surely, Allah singled Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, with all noble qualities and endowed him with all virtues. He accepted the supplication of His Prophet when he asked Him to give these qualities and virtues to 'Ali.

4. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When the Day of Resurrection occurs, I will take hold of the hijza of Allah; you will hold my hijza; your sons will grasp your hijza; and the Shi'ites of your sons will take hold of their hijza."

Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, has a noble rank with Allah, the Exalted. Through this rank he has gained exaltedness over the righteous and the Allah-fearing, and through it he, his sons, and his Shi'ites will be distinguished from the rest of the people on the Day of Judgment.

5. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "O 'Ali, you will be the Divider of the Garden and of the Fire; you will knock at the gate of the Garden and enter it with out any reckoning."

This tradition has been narrated by a group of religious scholars from among the Shi'ites and the Sunnis. It gives an account of the outstanding merit of Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and his great importance with Allah, which none of the people has ever reached except the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

6. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When the Day of Resurrection occurs, you and your sons will be on the (backs of) piebald horses and crowned with pearls and corundum. Allah will order you (to be taken) to the Garden and the people look (at you)."

How great the rank of the Imam and his pure sons with Allah is! For He has singled them out with all noble qualities and distinguished them from the rest of his creatures.

7. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "When the Day of Resurrection occurs, I will be called out from inside the Throne: The best father is your father Ibrahim; the best brother is your brother 'Ali b. Abu` Ta`lib!"

Allah singled His great Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, with all kinds of excellence of which is that he was among the progeny of Ibrahim, Allah's bosom friend, and that his

brother was Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, who defended the word of monotheism, the values and principles of Islam.

8. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Verily, Allah ordered me to love four (persons): 'Ali, Salman, Abu` Dharr, and al-Miqdad b. al-Aswad." Surely, these four (leading figures) took part in building Islam and carried the torch of monotheism; accordingly, Allah ordered his Prophet to love them, for they were among the elements of piety and righteousness.

9. He, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "O 'Ali, surely, Allah has already forgiven you, your progeny, your Shi'ites, those who love your Shi'ites, those who love the lover of your Shi'ites; therefore be cheerful, for you are free from polytheism and full of knowledge." Imam 'Ali, peace be on him, had great communication with Allah, the Exalted, so Allah endowed him with this excellence of forgiving him, his children, his Shi'ites, and their followers.

10. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "Whomsoever I am his Master, then 'Ali is his master. O Allah, be friend of one who is his friend and be the enemy of one who is his enemy; and desert one who deserts him and help one who helps him." The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, declared these brilliant words, which were the most expensive medals he gave to the Imam, on the Day of Ghadir Khum, which is the most important 'Id in Islamic world, for he appointed the Imam as a successor after him and ordered the Muslims to pledge allegiance to him. They pledged allegiance to him, so did the wives of the Prophet, May Allah bless him and his family. On that immortal day, the greatest favor toward the Muslims was completed, and on it this holy verse was revealed: This day I have completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion.

11. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "O 'Ali, had it not been for you, the believers would not have been recognized after me." Surely, Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, is the measure through whom the believer is distinguished from the sinner; so, he who loves him is a believer and he

who shows enmity toward him is a sinner. 'Aisha says:
When gold is touched by a touchstone, its cheat appears without doubt.
Cheat is in us, and 'Ali, the purified gold, is like a touchstone among us.¹

12. Through his chain of authorities, he said: ['Ali b. Abu Talib, peace be on him, related to me. He said:] "I have inherited two books from Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family: the Book of Allah, the Exalted, and a book concerning the sheath of my sword." He was asked: "O Commander of the faithful, what is the book concerning the sheath of your sword?"

"He who kills other than his killer and hits other than his hitter, then the curse of Allah be upon him." Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, inherited all qualities of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, of which are what he, peace be on him, has mentioned above.

13. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "O 'Ali, you have been given three (things) the like of which I have not been given."

I (i.e. 'Ali) asked: "May my father and mother be your ransom, what have I been given?" He, may Allah bless him and his family, replied: "You have been given a father-in-law like me; you have been give a wife like Fatima, peace be on her; and you have been given the like of your two sons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn."

Allah, the Most High, singled Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, with these three traits with which He had never endowed anyone.

14. Through his chain of authorities, he, peace be on him, said: [Allah's Messenger, may Allah bless him and his family, said:] "On the Day of Resurrection there will be no rider other than us, and we will be four."

A man from the Ansar stood up and asked him: "O Allah's Apostle, who are they?"

He (the Apostle) replied: "I will be on (the back of) al-Baraq riding animal; and my brother (Prophet) Salih on Allah's she-camel which was slaughtered; my uncle Hamza on my she-camel al-'Adba`'; and my brother 'Ali b. Abu Talib, peace be on him, on one of the she-camels of the Garden and the Standard of Praise will be in his hand; and he will say: There is no god but Allah; Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, is the Messenger of Allah! So the

human beings will say: That is an angel brought nigh or a prophet sent out or the bearer of the Throne. So an angel from the inside of the Throne will answer them: O group of human beings, that is not angel brought nigh nor a prophet sent out nor a bearer of the Throne; that is 'Ali b. Abu Talib!"

Certainly, on the Day of Resurrection, Allah, the Most High, will manifest the position of His friend Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, and his exalted rank with Him, to the extent that He will make the prophets brought nigh, the messengers sent out, His friends, and the rest of the creatures know the importance of the Imam with Him.

15. Through his chain of authorities, he said: ['Ali, peace be on him, said:] "He who loves me finds me at his death in such a manner which he loves; and he who hates me finds me at his death in such a manner which he hates."

Many traditions indicate that Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, attends at the death of everyone, believer and unbeliever. He asks the Angel of Death to treat the person gently if he/she is a believer; and he asks him to treat the person roughly if he/she .is unbeliever