

Imam Ali's (A.S.) Struggles

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“Leave me and seek someone else. We are facing a matter that has (several) sides and colors, which neither hearts can bear nor intelligence fathom. Clouds are hovering over the sky and a clear path is not apparent. You should know that if I respond to you, I can lead you as I know how.”¹

We know that ‘Ali never used to refrain from mentioning that successorship [khilafah]² was his lawful right during the time of caliphate of the caliphs. What’s more, we see that after the bloody revolution against ‘Uthman³, which resulted in his murder, people poured into ‘Ali’s house, insisting on swearing allegiance to him, if he were to take the reins of power. But he was reluctant to accept the caliphate.

The above statements are mentioned in Nahj al-Balaghah.⁴ He says, “Leave me and seek someone else.” Later, Imam ‘Ali (‘a) himself explains the reason for his refusal so that, God forbid, no one would assume that Imam ‘Ali (‘a) did not think himself worthy for caliphate after the Prophet (s). He described the situation as extremely chaotic and that an even more chaotic situation was to be expected. This is the clause, “We are facing a matter that has (several) faces and colors (it is an enigmatic matter).” We do not have a clear future ahead of us. In the following sentence the Imam refers to several issues, “Clouds are hovering in the sky (and the horizons are blocked with fog).” Just like when fog in the air blocks man’s vision rendering him unable to see his path. “A clear path is not discernible (the way is unrecognizable to people).” But then he gives what seems to be an ultimatum. He says, “You should know that if I respond to you, I will as I know how (not how you want me to).” Finally he said, “Leave me be. At present, I would rather stay a minister than to become a chief [amir].”

These statements reveal that ‘Ali had envisaged many problems during his caliphate; these same problems appeared and later revealed their facets. What were those problems? I cannot describe all those problems in one session for you; therefore, I shall discuss with you ‘Ali’s biggest problem with clarification. I will enlighten you of the rest of ‘Ali’s problems in a brief summary leading up to ‘Ali’s most serious problem and the biggest complication that entrapped him.

Uthman's assassination (the problem of hypocrisy)

The first difficulty that presented itself was the assassination of ‘Uthman, of which ‘Ali used to say: “We have a vague future ahead of us.” ‘Ali had inherited a caliphate, of which the previous caliph had been murdered in a revolution, the rebels of which would not permit his burial and who had many complaints. And now this revolutionary group has joined ‘Ali. What did other people think? Not all people had the same views as that of the revolutionaries’.

Also, ‘Ali’s thoughts did not match those of the revolutionaries or of the rest of the people. On one side was ‘Uthman and his associates, together with all the inequality, injustice and cruelty, all the advantages given out to relatives and bonuses bestowed upon friends, and on the other side were the angered groups who had gathered from different cities (Madinah⁵, Hijaz⁶, Basrah⁷, Kufah⁸, Egypt⁹), who were constantly protesting and criticizing. But ‘Uthman would not surrender himself. ‘Ali is an ambassador between the revolutionaries and ‘Uthman, which in itself is another peculiar story. Although ‘Ali disagrees with ‘Uthman’s tactics, he also opposes ‘opening doors’ to Caliph killing.

He does not want them to kill the Caliph as it would lead to rioting amongst Muslims, which itself has a long story.¹⁰ He is critical towards ‘Uthman and tries to dissuade him from the path he has taken trying to lead him towards the right path, so that this might extinguish the fire within the revolutionaries and to stop the rioting. Neither did ‘Uthman nor did his associates agree to change their way, nor did the revolutionaries stop the upheaval which, consequently, resulted in ‘Uthman’s assassination.

Ali knew that ‘Uthman’s murder would become an issue that caused mutiny. This is especially interesting in view of the strange fact that has been discovered by sociologists, historians and researchers who have studied Islamic history that some of ‘Uthman’s associates and followers played a part in his assassination (the Nahj al-Balaghah also explains this issue). They wanted ‘Uthman to be killed, for conflicts to be triggered in the

Muslim World, so that they may use this to their advantage (these are present in the texts of the Nahj al-Balaghah).

Mu'awiyah, in particular, played an important role in 'Uthman's murder. Covertly, he was trying to escalate the rioting, so that it may result in the killing of 'Uthman, thus enabling him to use this murder to his own advantage. This is another problem which I cannot discuss any further.

'Ali's opponents differed from the Prophet's opponents in that the Prophet's opponents were mainly groups of non-believers and idol-worshippers who rejected Allah's existence openly, and who fought the Prophet under the motto, "Long Live Hubal"¹¹ The Prophet (s) also had an explicit motto, "Allah is the greatest of all." However, 'Ali was facing an intelligent, non-religious group, who, although pretending to follow Islam, were not true Muslims. Their slogans were Islamic but their aims were against Islam. Mu'awiyah's father, Abu Sufyan, had fought the Prophet (s) under the slogan of "Long Live Hubal", therefore making the Prophet's task of fighting him much easier. His son, however, Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, who has the same soul and shares the same goals as his forefathers, fought against 'Ali using the following verse from the Qur'an as his slogan, "And whosoever is killed unjustly (wrongfully), we have indeed given his next of kin [his heir] an authority."¹²

The slogan is a good one. However, is there anyone who can ask Mu'awiyah who 'Uthman's legal guardian is, who can ask for 'Uthman's blood? Of what business is it to you to ask for 'Uthman's blood when you are a very distant relative? 'Uthman has a son and other closer relatives and what's more, what did 'Uthman's death do with 'Ali? Nevertheless, a man as manipulative as Mu'awiyah does not care about these questions; he only wants to use this to his advantage.

Mu'awiyah had ordered his spies beforehand to send 'Uthman's blood-spattered shirt to him in Syria as soon as 'Uthman was killed. Therefore, as soon as 'Uthman was assassinated, without even waiting for the blood to dry, they sent the blood-spattered shirt, together with 'Uthman's wife's¹³ fingers, to Mu'awiyah. He got very excited then and ordered for 'Uthman's wife's fingers to be hung from his podium. Then, he said "O people!! The world is surrounded by oppression, Islam is lost! These are the fingers of the Caliph's wife!" Then, he ordered for 'Uthman's shirt to be hung on a stick and taken to a mosque or somewhere else. He went there himself and started crying for the innocent Caliph. For a while he read sermons about 'Uthman and prepared the people to avenge 'Uthman's blood; whom do we seek vengeance from? We should seek it from 'Ali! 'Ali cooperated with the revolutionaries who had sworn allegiance to him. If they had not cooperated with him, then why are they in his army?" This was a big problem which resulted in the two battles of Jamal¹⁴ and Siffin¹⁵, caused by the spiteful people.

Inflexibility in the enforcement of justice

'Ali (peace be upon him) faced other problems, on the one hand, were related to his tactics and, on the other, were the changes Muslims had undergone. 'Ali was an inflexible man. For years after the Prophet's death the society had become accustomed to allocating special subsidies to influential people, but 'Ali was rigorously opposed to this action. He would say, "I am not somebody who will divert even slightly from the path of justice." Even his followers would come to him and say, "Sir! Please show some flexibility", he would reply, "Are you asking me to gain victory and success in politics at the price of oppression and destroying the rights of powerless people?! I swear upon the All-mighty, as long as there is day and night in this world, I will not do such a thing. As long as a star moves in the sky, such a thing is not practical."

Bluntness and honesty in politics

The third problem with his caliphate was his bluntness and honesty in politics, which again some of his friends did not favor. They would say, "Politics does not require bluntness and truthfulness, some dishonesty and deception is necessary. Deceit is the zest in politics."

(Everything I mention here is present in Nahj al-Balaghah). Some would even say, "'Ali has no diplomacy. Look at how tactful Mu'awiyah is!"

'Ali would say, "I swear upon Allah, the All-mighty that you are wrong. Mu'awiyah is not more cunning than I am. He is deceitful. He is lewd. I do not want to be deceitful. I do not want to stray from the path of truth. I do not want to commit debauchery and wickedness. If Allah, the Honorable and Almighty did not consider deception as his enemy, then you would have seen that 'Ali would have been the most cunning of all people. This kind of

deceitfulness is immoral, evil and wicked. It is blasphemous. I know that on the Day of Judgement every deceitful person is resurrected holding a banner (apparently the point is that the ones deceived are under the banner of deceit).¹⁶ This was another one of 'Ali's problems.

Kharijites [khawarij]¹⁷, Imam Ali's fundamental problem

All that has been said so far serves as an introduction to the fundamental issue pertaining to 'Ali's caliphate on which I intend to touch on here. During the Prophet's time, the group that was created by the Prophet was not one formed as a result of a revolution which simply gathers the masses under one flag. He trained a group, united them, brought them forward step by step and gradually penetrated Islamic morals and teachings into their souls.

The Prophet (s) was in Mecca¹⁸ for thirteen years. He suffered all kinds of torture, agony and pain from the people of Quraysh¹⁹, but continuously called for patience whenever his companions would say, "O Messenger of Allah! Please give us permission to defend ourselves, how long should we suffer? How many should they torture or kill from among us? How many times must they lay us on the heated grounds of Hijaz and place large stones on our chests? How many more times must they lash us?"

However, the Prophet (s) would never grant permission for a holy war and defence. Finally he only consented to emigration after which some groups emigrated to Habashah (Ethiopia)²⁰, which was beneficial. However, what was the Prophet doing during these thirteen years? He trained and taught. In other words, he was creating the core of Islam. The group, who at the time of migration might have been around 1,000 people, were all familiar with the essence of Islam and the majority had Islamic training.

The main prerequisite of a movement is the presence of a teaching and training group which have already become familiar with the principles and goals as well as the tactical ideology of that movement. These groups can, therefore, form the focal point to which others can later join and be trained by in order to learn to adapt themselves to their teachers. This was the secret behind the success of Islam.

Therefore, the difference between 'Ali's situation and that of the Prophet was, firstly, that the people with whom the Prophet (s) dealt were predominantly non-believers. This means he was confronting explicit paganism. He was dealing with a blasphemy that spoke for itself. However, 'Ali was dealing with covert paganism, i.e. hypocrisy. He was tackling a nation that was pursuing the objectives of the non-believers, but hid under an Islamic cover of sanctity and piety, bearing a Qur'anic appearance.

The other difference apparent in the era of caliphate, especially during 'Uthman's, was that the Prophet's (s) methods of teaching and training were not explored and practised as much as was expected and instead other triumphs and many conquests were pursued. Conquests alone do not achieve much in the long run. Throughout the thirteen years that the Prophet remained in Mecca, he did not even allow Muslims to defend themselves. This was because the people were not yet capable of this sort of defence or jihad²¹.

If war and conquest is to take place, it must be simultaneous to the spread of Islamic culture and ethos which must be built up. People who become attracted to and those who convert to Islam must also learn and understand its objectives and principles, its 'core and crust'. However, as a result of the negligence that took place during the time of the caliphs, an important social phenomenon took place in the Islamic world: formation of a new group in the Islamic community.

Although this group was fond of Islam and believed in Islam, it was only acquainted with Islam's 'crust', its appearance. It did not know the essence of Islam. This was a group that concentrated on, for example, the act of praying with little knowledge and appreciation of the Islamic objectives behind it. A priggish and dogmatic group formed of people who had formed calluses on their foreheads, palms and knees as a result of their excessive and long prostrations.

These prostrations would sometimes last from an hour or two to five hours even on bare sandy grounds. When 'Ali had sent Ibn 'Abbas²² to them when they rioted and rebelled against him, Ibn 'Abbas came back saying, "Their foreheads are wounded because of excessive prostrations; they have hands that have calluses like the knee of a camel. They have old, ascetic looking clothes. Most manifest are their resolute and indomitable faces..."²³

An ignorant and puritanical faction oblivious in worship had come into existence in the

Muslim World; a faction with no knowledge whatsoever of Islam yet very keen to be part of it. It was not familiar with the 'core' of Islam but was glued to its 'crust'.

'Ali describes this group of people thus, "They are a people who are rough, remorseless, tough, hard-hearted, rude, but with inferior, slavish characters and spirits. Their souls are not magnanimous. You cannot find nobility in their souls. They are a hooligan type of people. It is not clear which corner they have appeared from. One is from this corner, another is from the other. A group of lowborn and lowbred people, whose origin and background is unclear; a crowd who should come and sit in the first year of Islam and learn Islamic lessons. They are illiterate and have no knowledge. They do not know what the Qur'an is. They do not understand the meaning of the Qur'an. They do not know the traditions of the Prophet (s). They must be taught and trained. They have not gathered Islamic education and training. They are not part of the Emigrants [muhajirin] and Helpers [anṣar] who were trained by the Prophet (s). They are a group of people who have no Islamic demeanour."

'Ali became caliph at a time when this group of people existed among Muslims. They permeated every area, even his army. You have probably heard many times the story of the Battle of Siffin and the con that Mu'awiyah and 'Amr ibn al-'As²⁴ used. When they finally realized that they were losing, they plotted to use this group of people to their advantage. They ordered for Qur'ans to be raised on spears: "O people! We all believe in the Qur'an. We are all people of the same Qiblah. Why are you fighting? If you want to fight then take aim at these Qur'ans."

Immediately, this group stopped fighting, claiming, "We shall not fight the Qur'an." They came to 'Ali and said, "All matters have now been resolved. The Qur'an has been set forth. Now that the Qur'an is brought forward, there is no reason for war." 'Ali said, "Do you not know that from day one I tried to convince them to pass judgment and ruling about who is right based on the Qur'an? They are lying. They have not brought forward the Qur'an itself but its papers and cover so that they can rise up again against this very Qur'an. Do not pay attention. I am your imam. I am your 'speaking Qur'an'. Go and progress forward." They said, "What! What nonsense is this?! Up until now we considered you a good person and were of the belief that you are a decent person. Now it is clear that you have your own ambitions. You mean we should go and fight against the Qur'an? No, we will not fight." To which 'Ali replied thus, "All right. Do not fight."

Malik al-Ashtar²⁵ was progressing forward. They said, "Send an immediate order to Malik to return. Fighting the Qur'an is no longer tolerable." They placed great pressure on 'Ali, who then sent a message to Malik requesting that he return. Malik did not return, saying, "Sir! Please give me permission. In only two hours they will be defeated." The messenger came back informing them that Malik would not return, to which they replied, "Either Malik returns or we shall cut you into pieces with our swords [they were about 20,000 in number]. You are fighting the Qur'an?!" 'Ali ('a) sent another message, "Malik, if you want to see 'Ali alive, come back." Then, the issue of arbitration was put forward. They said, "Well now! Let us choose an arbitrator, now that the Qur'an has been set forth." The other side chose the evil 'Amr ibn al-'As. 'Ali chose the clever and honorable scholar 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas. They said, "No, we should choose somebody who is not related to you." 'Ali then said, "Malik al-Ashtar." They said, "No, we do not approve of him." Some others also objected to this. They said, "We only approve of Abu Musa al-Ash'ari²⁶." Who was Abu Musa al-Ash'ari?! Was he a member of 'Ali's army? No, he was a former governor of Kufah who was ousted by 'Ali. He was in his heart an enemy of 'Ali. They brought Abu Musa.

He was tricked by 'Amr ibn al-'As in a con that was more similar to a game than any serious issue you may have heard of. When they realized they had been deceived, they said, "We made a mistake." Now, from saying they have made a mistake, they mean to confess to another mistake. They did not say, 'We made a mistake when we stopped fighting Mu'awiyah and we should have continued the fight. This was not a battle against the Qur'an.

This was a battle for the Qur'an.' They said, No, that was correct. They also did not say, 'We made a mistake for choosing Abu Musa. We should have accepted Ibn 'Abbas or Malik al-Ashtar.' Instead, they said, "Principally, the fact that we accepted two people to judge the religion was blasphemous. In the Qur'an it states, "The judgment (command) belongs to none but Allah."²⁷ Because in the Qur'an it says judgment (command) exclusively belongs to Allah, then no human has the right to make a judgment. Therefore, choosing arbitrators was fundamentally blasphemous and, in fact, a form of polytheism. We are now repenting, 'I

ask Allah's forgiveness and turn towards Him'."

They then went after 'Ali, "'Ali! You have become a non-believer like us. You must also repent. (Now, do you see the problem? Is Mu'awiyah 'Ali's problem or these puritans? Is 'Amr ibn al-'As, 'Ali's problem or these puritans?)" He replied, "You are wrong! Arbitration is no blasphemy. You do not understand the meaning of the verse. It refers to the fact that the law must be set by Allah alone or somebody who is permitted to do so by Him. We did not want somebody to come and set us law. We said, 'Qur'anic law'; let two people come and judge according to the Qur'an." They said, "This is it." 'Ali said, "I shall never confess to a sin I have never committed. I shall never say that something is against the religious law when it is not. How can I falsify something to Allah, the Honorable and Exalted, and the Prophet (s)? You want me to say arbitration and choosing arbitrators in the time of disagreement is against the religious law and is blasphemous? No, it is not blasphemous. You can do whatever you wish."

Imam Ali's (a) demeanour towards the Kharijites

They parted ways with 'Ali and formed a faction known as the Kharijites, meaning the rebels against 'Ali. They began causing great suffering to 'Ali, who tolerated them until they started an armed riot. Thus, he endured them to the greatest degree possible; never stopping their share of the government treasury or limiting their freedom. They would disrespect him explicitly and yet 'Ali would be patient. When 'Ali gave sermons upon the podium, they would often heckle his speeches. On one occasion, when 'Ali was upon the podium, somebody asked a question. 'Ali gave an excellent reply without any hesitation, which caused great astonishment among the people causing them to all glorify Allah, the Glorified and Exalted [takbir].²⁸ However, one of the Kharijites, who was present in the congregation, said, "May Allah kill him. How knowledgeable he is."²⁹ The companions of 'Ali poured onto him wanting to kill him, when 'Ali said, "Leave him be. He cursed me. The most you can do to him is to curse him. Leave him alone."

'Ali was busy praying. He was praying in congregation at a time when he was the ruler of the Muslims. (What kind of forbearance is this by 'Ali?) They never followed him in prayer, instead they claimed, "'Ali is not a Muslim. He is a non-believer and a polytheist." When 'Ali was reciting al-Fatihah³⁰ and the Surat³¹ of his prayer, someone by the name Ibn al-Kawwab³² entered and recited this verse, "And indeed, it has been revealed to you and to those [who have been] before you: 'Surely if you associate (other deities with Allah), your deeds will certainly come to naught.'"³³

This verse is directed at the Prophet (s), "O Prophet! We have sent divine revelations to you just like the prophets before you. If you become polytheist, all your deeds will go to waste, or if those prophets had become polytheists, their deeds would have gone to waste." By reading this verse he was implying: "'Ali! We agree that you are the first Muslim; this is what your records and services to Islam show. But because you have become a polytheist and considered a partner for Allah, the Glorified and Exalted, you have no more rewards left with Allah, the Glorified and Exalted.' How was 'Ali supposed to react? 'Ali acted by considering the verse that says, "And when the Qur'an is recited, listen to it, and keep silent, that you would possibly be granted mercy."³⁴

This indicates that when you hear somebody reciting the Qur'an, pay attention and listen to it, and so 'Ali kept silent and listened. When Ibn al-Kawwab finished, he continued his prayer. As soon as the Imam proceeded, the person repeated the verse. 'Ali again kept silent and when Ibn al-Kawwab had finished, continued with his prayer. For the third or fourth time when he repeated the verse, 'Ali paid no more attention and read this verse, "So have patience; verily, the promise of Allah is true; and those who have no certitude, never induce you to levity (make you unstable and divert you from your path)."³⁵

And he continued to pray.

The principles of the Kharijites sect

Were Kharijites satisfied with this? If they had been, they would not have been a major problem for 'Ali. They slowly gathered and formed a party which later became a religious sect. They formed an Islamic sect (by Islamic I do not mean them being truly a part of the Muslims, we consider them as non-believers) and a new religion within the Muslim World.

They also set their own religious dogmas and laws.³⁶ They said, "Whoever is with us should firstly believe that 'Uthman, 'Ali and Mu'awiyah, as well as those who agreed to arbitration, are non-believers. We also became non-believers, but we repented. And only those who

repented are Muslims.” They continued to say, “Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil [al-amr bi'l-ma'ruf wa nahy 'an al-munkar] have no conditions. One should rise up against any unlawful imam or any cruel leader even if they are convinced that this rising is of no use.” This gave them a strange and violent face.

The other principle they set for their sect, which was also another indication of their greed and ignorance, was that action is fundamentally a part of faith. ‘We have no faith separated from action. A Muslim is not a Muslim by just declaring shahadatayn.³⁷ If a Muslim prays, fasts, does not drink, gamble, commit adultery, lie, or commit any other major sin, it is just the beginning of his Islam. If he lies, he is a non-believer; he is impure [najis]³⁸ and becomes a non-Muslim. If he backbites once or drinks, he has left Islam.’ The perpetrator of a major sin was considered to have left Islam. The result was that these puritans considered only themselves as Muslims. It was as if they were saying, ‘There are no Muslims in the world other than ourselves’, and produced a series of principles for themselves.

Since the Kharijites considered ‘Ali a non-believer and part of their doctrine was that ‘enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil’ is obligatory [wajib]³⁹ and unconditional, one must therefore rise up against an unlawful imam. There was no other choice but to rise up against ‘Ali, they claimed. They all camped outside the city and began rioting officially.

They followed a set of rigid and rough principles during their riots and claimed, “All others are non-Muslim and because they are not Muslim we cannot marry from them; that their meat slaughtered is forbidden [haram]⁴⁰; that one must not buy meat from their butchers.” Worst of all, they considered the killing of women and children from those other than themselves as permissible. Since they considered the killing of others as permissible, they went out of the city and began robbing and killing. A bizarre situation had come about.

One of the Prophet’s companions was passing by their location with his pregnant wife. They stopped him and asked him to disown ‘Ali. He refused. They killed him and ripped his wife’s stomach with a spear. “You are non-believers,” they said.

Once they were passing a palm garden (the garden belonged to somebody whose wealth could not be intruded upon, because he was highly respected by all). One of them picked a date and placed it in his mouth. They shouted at him loudly, “Are you intruding on your Muslim brother’s wealth?”

Imam Ali's attitude towards Kharijites

Their actions caused ‘Ali to camp in front of them. It was no longer possible to let them be free. He sent Ibn ‘Abbas to talk to them. This is when Ibn ‘Abbas returned and said, “I saw calloused foreheads because of excessive prostration. The palms of their hands were like the knees of camels. They wore old and ascetic looking clothes. Most manifest are their resolute and indomitable faces.” Ibn ‘Abbas did not manage to do anything. ‘Ali himself went to talk to them. His words were effective and from the group of 12,000; 8,000 of them rued their actions. ‘Ali raised a protection banner; whoever came under it would be safe. The 8,000 went under it. The remaining 4,000 said it was impossible and abstained. The necks of these calloused foreheaded puritans went under ‘Ali’s sword. Only 10 survived, one of whom was ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam⁴¹.

‘Ali has a saying in the Nahj al-Balaghah (‘Ali is a remarkable being, his greatness appears here substantially). He says, “It was I and I alone who removed the eye of this revolt. No one save me could have stopped them with his sword.”⁴² ‘Ali declares that only he could have pulled out the eye of this mutiny (i.e. the mutiny of the puritans). Besides ‘Ali, no Muslim dared to draw their sword against the neck of the Kharijites, because this so-called religious group could only be killed by two other groups. One group comprises of people who do not believe in Allah and Islam, for example the companions of Yazid who killed Imam al-Husayn. The other group comprises those who are themselves Muslims; however, to be Muslim and have the courage to speak against, let alone act against, the Kharijites was not in any man’s capacity. Doing this required great courage. It needed the insight that ‘Ali had to realize the danger for the Muslim World (later on I will tell you how ‘Ali felt according to his own sayings). On one side, there were they praising Allah and reciting the Qur’an, and on the other side there was ‘Ali drawing his sword to eradicate them. The insight required was something that could only be found in ‘Ali. He said, “No one except me advanced towards it.” No other Muslim, not even from amongst the Prophet’s companions had the courage to draw his sword on them. ‘But I did and I am proud that I did, after a time when the waves of

darkness had taken their toll in this murky sea⁴³ “and its madness was intense”.

This sentence is remarkable. Their disease (rabies) was spreading. Kalab means rabies. When a dog catches rabies, it is commonly known that the dog becomes wild. When this disease appears in the animal, it can no longer differentiate its owner from a stranger. It will bite whoever approaches it, bites them transferring the virus into the victim's blood causing him to contract rabies. 'Ali says, “These puritans had turned into dogs with rabies and just like such dogs, whoever they had contact with would turn into someone like them.

Just like when people give themselves the right to execute a dog with rabies so it could no longer bite and spread its disease, I saw no option but to eradicate them, otherwise it would not have been long before they had passed their disease to the Muslim World and sunk the society into an image of rigidity, petrification, idiocy and ignorance. I envisaged their danger to Islam. It was I who pulled out the eye of the mutiny. When the waves of their darkness, dubiousness and scepticism had raised and their rabies had progressed and was penetrating to others, no one save me had the courage for such a task.”

Characteristics of the Kharijites

The Kharijites had a number of distinguishing characteristics such as tremendous bravery and devotion. Because they worked on the foundations of their belief, they remained extraordinarily devoted. There are amazing stories about their devotions. However, other characteristic that we can name include their dogmatism and excessive worshipping. Their excessive prayers were the cause of other people's scepticism about them. This was also the reason why 'Ali had said that no one but him would have had the courage to kill them.

The third characteristic which can be mentioned here is their ignorance and lack of knowledge. I seek refuge in Allah from that which has been done to Islam by ignorance and lack of knowledge!

Nahj al-Balaghah is an amazing book. It is amazing from every aspect including its monotheism, advice, prayers and worships, its analysis of the history of its time, etc. When 'Ali analyzes, he analyzes Mu'awiyah, 'Uthman, the Kharijites and the other events astonishingly. For example, referring to the Kharijites, 'Ali says, “You are the worst of people.”⁴⁴ Why does 'Ali claim that these puritans were the worst of all people? If it were us, we would ask, “O sir! At the end of the day, they are harmless people. They are good people.” We call such people good people. In our view they are good people. But then why does 'Ali say, “You are the worst of people?” In his next sentence he continues to say, “You are the worst of people because you are spears in the hands of the devil (Satan). Satan places you in his bow instead of his arrows and crushes his targets with you. You are definite tools in the hands of Satan.”

You must also pay attention to the fact that during 'Ali's time a group of hypocrites had appeared consisting of the likes of Mu'awiyah and 'Amr ibn al-'As. They were very wise and well informed of the facts, and by God they knew 'Ali better than others. History bears witness to the high regard Mu'awiyah had for 'Ali; nevertheless he would go to war against him (lets not forget the power of materialism and greed or other complexities of that matter). The reason for this is that after 'Ali's martyrdom when any of 'Ali's close companions went to Mu'awiyah, he would ask them, “Describe 'Ali to me!” When they began describing, his tears would pour down; he would sigh and say, “Alas! Time can never again bring a person like 'Ali.”

Therefore, there were people like Mu'awiyah and 'Amr ibn al-'As who acknowledged 'Ali and his regime and were aware of his objectives, but greed did not give a chance to the belief in their hearts. These hypocritical groups always used puritanical factions to reach their goals. This big problem of 'Ali will always carry on in the world. There will always be hypocrites. Even today, we can find the likes of Mu'awiyah and 'Amr ibn al-'As in various guises. There will always be puritans like Ibn Muljam and other instruments in the hands of Satan, who are always ready to be deceived and accuse the likes of 'Ali of being a non-believer and a polytheist.

Someone once claimed that Ibn Sina (Avicenna)⁴⁵ had become a non believer.⁴⁶ Ibn Sina then dedicated the following quatrain in response to this claim, Being a non-believer is not easy for someone like me, No belief in religion is firmer than my own.

One of my kind in the world and a non-believer?

If so, there is not a Muslim to be found anywhere in the world!⁴⁷

These puritans have claimed that almost every great scholar that Islam has had till now was

either non-Muslim or a non-believer. I will recount an event to illustrate this point. Muslims! Be alert. Do not be like the Nahrawan⁴⁸ Kharijites. Do not become arrows in the hands of Satan.

A Big Lie about Allama Dr. Iqbal

Once, a friend called me, "Sir! I am shocked. I have heard something strange. This Dr. Iqbal⁴⁹ of Pakistan you have held a celebration for has insulted and cursed Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (A.S.) in his book!" I said, "What is this nonsense?" He asked me to take a look at a certain page in a certain book to see for myself. I said, "Have you looked at it yourself?" He said that he had not but a much esteemed gentleman had told him. I was staggered. I was shocked to hear how friends, like Mr Sayyid Ghulam Reza Sa'idi, who have read the books of Iqbal from the beginning to the end failed to spot such a thing! I said, "Firstly, there was nothing said about a remembrance or a tribute. It was about objective placement. The one we did not pay tribute to was Dr. Iqbal. We placed Iqbal as an objective for a sequence of Islamic objectives. If you were not present you can see it in the book once it is published."

I immediately phoned Mr. Sayyid Ghulam Rida Sa'idi to ask him about this. He was also astonished on hearing this. He said, "No Sir! I have read the book. No such thing is possible." I said, "But such a big lie cannot be possible."

An hour or two later when he remembered he came to me and said, "I know what this is about. This is the story: there were two people in India by the names of Ja'far and Sadiq⁵⁰. When the British East India Company took over India, the Muslims rose up against them. These two people, however, made peace with the English, stabbing the Islamic movement in the back and destroying it. Dr. Iqbal has reproached them in his book. I assume this is where the mistake was made." I said, "We shall see." When I got the book, this was what was in the pages those gentlemen were referring to, "Whenever there is destruction in the world, either a Sadiq or Ja'far is present there." In the two previous pages, it says, Ja'far⁵¹ from Bengal⁵², Sadiq⁵³ from Deccan.⁵⁴

Disgrace to religion, disgrace to the world, and disgrace to the homeland.

He is referring to Ja'far of Murshidabad in Bengal and Sadiq from Mysore in Deccan. But was Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq from Bengal or from Deccan? We then conducted a historical research. After the English took over India, two great and brave Shi'ah Muslim commanders by the names of Siraj al-Dawlah ⁵⁵ and Tipu Sultan⁵⁶ (Siraj al-Dawlah was Muslim ruler in Bengal and Tipu Sultan was Muslim ruler based in Mysore, Deccan, Southern India) bravely rose (And Iqbal greatly praises these two Shi'ah heroes).

The English found Ja'far in Siraj al-Dawlah's state and allied with him. He (Ja'far) was partner with the thieves and a friend of the caravan. In Tipu Sultan's system, they allied with Sadiq. He (Sadiq) also became the partner of the thieves and the friend of the caravan. They both betrayed their people and the outcome was three hundred years of British colonization by the English.

This led the Shi'ah to have high regard for Siraj al-Dawlah and Tipu Sultan, as they were both heroes and Shi'ahs. They are also respected by the Ahl al-Sunnah because they were Islamic heroes. Hindus also respect them, as they were also native heroes. But the other two (Sadiq and Ja'far) are considered as traitors among the Shi'ah, Sunni and Hindus of India and Pakistan. They are also known for being indecent, hateful and symbols of treachery.

Now that three months have passed since that event, I have rarely been confronted with the question, "Sir! Why has the person, whose poems in praise of Imam al-Husayn (A.S.) you read, cursed Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq(A.S.)?" And the other issue that has become the laughing stock of most non-Islamic circles and is tormenting me is the reflection of this story: the great Pakistani poet Iqbal has implicated the Bengali Ja'far and the Deccani Sadiq but wherever Muslims go they say Dr. Iqbal has cursed Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq(A.S.)! Take a look at the mind of these Muslims! We feel embarrassed (in these non-Islamic meetings) about the low level of thought among our people!

Mu'awiyah performed Namaz Jumah on Wednesday

When 'Ali's messenger was in Damascus, Mu'awiyah ordered that the announcement for Friday Prayer is made, even though it was only Wednesday. They announced "Friday Prayer" and he led "Friday Prayer" on a Wednesday. No single person objected to this. He summoned 'Ali's (a) representative in private and said, "Tell 'Ali that I will come after him with one hundred thousand men who cannot tell a Wednesday from a Friday.

Tell 'Ali to gauge the situation and act accordingly." And now the Husayniyyah-ye Irshad has

become guilty because one day they discussed Palestinians and said: "People! Help the Palestinians. A group of Jews (with the Israelis spies abundant in this country and unfortunately most of them are our own Muslims) are holding a grudge against the Irshad Trust and there is not a day that goes by when a rumour is not spread about them."⁵⁷

I do not want anything from you but to open your eyes! Investigate! Be aware. Jewish agents are plentiful in all Islamic states. Their hands, spies and money are continuously active. Do not be one of the Nahrawan Kharijites. How long will we continue to draw swords against Islam in the name of Islam? If we do not want to learn from these experiences, where do we want to take advice from? Why do we gather every year and hold ceremonies in the name of 'Ali? It is because 'Ali's life is instructive, informative and educational.

Some educational aspects of 'Ali's life include his struggles with the Kharijites, his battle against puritanism, disunity and ignorance. 'Ali does not want ignorant Shi'ahs. 'Ali despises Shi'ahs who transmit false information like electricity, or for example when imposters and Jews spread the rumour that 'a Pakistani Iqbal has cursed your Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq', he spreads the rumour that a Pakistani Iqbal was, God forbid, sacrilegious (about a man who was devoted to the household of the Prophet (peace be upon him) without a shred of thought. He would not even open Iqbal's book or at least ask about the history behind it from the Pakistani embassy or other resources.

Open your eyes! Open your ears! Do not believe whatever you hear immediately. Do not be hasty to declare that, 'they say such and such'. The end of 'they say such and such' is said to be rooted in something dangerous. Investigate! Investigate (between yourselves and Allah), then say whatever you want, but do not say anything before you have done your research.

'Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam killed 'Ali. You should observe how they (the Kharijites) praised him. A Kharijites has a quatrain, the first verse of which reads, Hail the strike of this pious man who Did not consider anything but satisfaction of Allah⁵⁸

Later he says, "If the deeds of all people were placed in the divine balance as well as the strike of Ibn Muljam, you will see that no one has done anything greater than what Ibn Muljam has done."

This is what ignorance does to Islam and Muslims.

Imam Ali's (A.S.) Martyrdom

Ibn Muljam is one of the nine ascetic puritans who went to Mecca and made the famous vow saying all the riots in the Muslim World were caused by three people: 'Ali, Mu'awiyah and 'Amr ibn al-'As." Ibn Muljam was chosen to kill 'Ali. What date was set for this? The date set was the night before the 19th of Ramadan. Why did they choose this night? Ibn Abi al-Hadid says, "Do you see the ignorance! They arranged for the night before the 19th of Ramadan because they were convinced that this is an act of great worship so they agreed to commit it on the night of Qadr so that they would get more rewards for it."

Ibn Muljam came to Kufah and waited for the promised day. During this time he met and fell in love with a girl called Qutayb⁵⁹am who was also a Kharijites and a fellow believer. He may have, up to an extent, tried to fight thoughts of her. When he approached and discussed this matter with her, she responded thus, "I am willing, but my dowry [mihr] is very heavy." He was so captivated by her that he agreed without preconditions. She required three thousand dirhams from him. He told her that it was not a problem. She asked for a slave boy. He agreed. "And a slave girl," "Not a problem", he replied. She ended her requests with, "And fourth, the killing of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib." He was shocked because his thoughts of killing 'Ali had headed in a different direction at that point. He replied, "We want to get married and live happily, killing 'Ali will not leave a chance for our marriage and life together." She replied, "This is it. If you seek union with me, you must kill 'Ali. If you live, you will gain what you seek, and if you die, then nothing." He struggled with his thoughts for a while. He has a poem, two verses of which are as follows, She required these things from me as her dowry.⁵⁹

The world has never seen a dowry so high.

Later he goes on to say, Any dowry in the world, no matter how high, is not on the same level as 'Ali. My wife's dowry is the blood of 'Ali.

There has not been an assassination and there will never be another one until the Day of Judgment unless it's smaller than the one committed by Ibn Muljam.⁶⁰

And he was right. Let's take a look at what 'Ali's ('a) will. On his deathbed, 'Ali ('a) is

witnessing and leaving behind two occurrences in the ummah. One is the presence of Mu'awiyah and his followers (the hypocrites, the deviators, [qasitⁱⁿ]). The other is the issue of the puritans. These two are in contradiction to one another. How will 'Ali's companions handle these issues after him? 'Ali says, "After me, do not kill them anymore." Even though they killed me, do not kill them after me as this will be a favour to Mu'awiyah and not to truth and justice. The danger of 'Mu'awiyah' is different. He said, "After me, do not kill the Kharijites anymore, because whoever seeks truth and commits a mistake is not the same as the one who seeks falsehood from the beginning and has reached it."

'Ali does not hold grudges against anyone. He always speaks logically. As soon as they captured Ibn Muljam, they brought him to 'Ali. In a frail voice (as a result of the sword strike) the Imam spoke to him and asked him, "Why did you do such a thing? Was I a bad Imam for you?" (I am not sure how many times this was asked but whatever I have said has been taken from writings). Apparently, at one time he was influenced by 'Ali's spirituality and said, "Can you then rescue him who is in the Fire?"⁶¹

"Can you then rescue an atrocious person who has been damned to hell? I was abject for committing such an act!" They have also written that when 'Ali spoke to him, he replied in an angry voice and said, "Ali! When I bought that sword I made a vow to Allah to kill the worst of his creatures with this sword and I have always prayed and asked to kill the worst of his creatures with this sword." 'Ali ('a) responded, "It just so happens that this prayer of yours has been granted because you are going to be killed with this very sword."

'Ali passed away. He was in the big city of Kufah. Apart from the Nahrawan Kharijites, the rest of the people wished they could participate in his funeral, to cry and weep for him. It was the night of the 21st of Ramadan. People were still not aware of what was happening to 'Ali. 'Ali left the world at midnight. As soon as he passed away, his children, Imam al-Hassan and Imam al-Husayn, Muhammadibn Hanifah, Abu al-Fadl al-'Abbas, and an exclusive group of the Shi'ahs (who did not exceed six or seven) washed 'Ali's body in private, put the grave shroud on him and buried him in the darkness of the night, in a spot that had apparently been previously decided by 'Ali himself (nobody knew where his holy burial took place and according to various traditions, some of the dignified prophets are buried in the same land). His followers kept the location of his burial a secret. The next day, people found out that 'Ali had been buried on the previous night. Where was 'Ali's burial place? There was no need for anybody to know. It has even been reported that that Imam al-Hassan ('a) sent a semblance of the Imam's body to Madinah, so people would think that 'Ali had been taken to Madinah to be buried. Why? Because of the Kharijites; if they knew Imam 'Ali's burial place, they would have disrespected it. They would have disinterred the grave and exhumed 'Ali's body out of his grave. Indeed, 'Ali's place of burial remained a secret to everyone other than 'Ali's children and the children of their children (the Infallible Imams), for as long as the Kharijites were in power.

One hundred years later, when the Kharijites no longer existed and the Umayyad dynasty were overthrown by the 'Abbasids (who were not a great threat to this issue), Imam al-Sadiq, for the first time, revealed 'Ali's burial place. The famous Safwan who has been named in Ziyarat-e 'Ashura, says, "I was visiting Imam al-Sadiq in Kufah, he took us to 'Ali's grave and said, 'This is the grave of 'Ali', and ordered us (apparently for the first time) to set up a shade for the grave. Since then 'Ali's grave was made public'."

Therefore, 'Ali's big problem was not exclusive to his time. His grave was kept a secret for one hundred years after his death, only out of fear of this group. "Allah's blessings be upon you, O father of al-Hassan! May Allah's blessings be upon you, O the Commander of the Faithful!" How oppressed were you and your children! I cannot say whether Amir al-Mu'minin ('a) was more oppressed or his noble son Abu 'Abd Allah al-Husayn.

In the same manner that 'Ali's ('a) body was not in peace from his evil enemies, the body of his beloved child was also not in peace from his enemies. Maybe this is the reason why he said, "There is no day like the day of my son, al-Husayn."

Imam al-Hassan ('a) hid Imam 'Ali's body. Why? So that 'Ali's body would not be disrespected. But the situation in Karbala was different. Imam Zayn al-'Abidin could not gather the strength to immediately hide Imam al-Husayn's body. The outcome was that which I do not want to recall.

That person said, What need is there for ragged clothing after attacks, Which left not even a flesh on his battered body?⁶²

Notes:

1. Nahj al-Balaghah, sermon 91.
2. Al-Khilafah or caliphate means viceregency, successorship, representing the original position of a real president or head, the adjective form of it is khalifah which means viceregent, successor, deputy and representative. In English the word is caliph. Khalifah means the common leadership of all Muslims in the world.
3. 'Uthman ibn 'Affan (574-656), the Third Caliph.
4. The Nahj al-Balaghah (Peak of Eloquence) is the most famous collection of speeches (sermons) and letters attributed to Imam 'Ali ('a).
5. Holy City of al-Madinah al-Munawwarah is a city in the region of Saudi Arabia.
6. Hijaz or Hidjaz is a region in the northwest of present Saudi Arabia.
7. Al-Başrah is the second largest city of Iraq.
8. Al-Kufah is a city in modern Iraq about 170 km south of Baghdad.
9. Egypt or Misr is an Arab country in North Africa.
10. 'Ali ('a) has discussed the issue of 'Uthman's killing in 14 parts of the Nahj al-Balaghah.
11. The famous Idol of Bani Quraysh (the dominant tribe of Mecca. It was also the tribe to which the Prophet belonged).
12. Surat al-Isra' 17:33.
13. When the revolutionaries poured into 'Uthman's house looking for him, 'Uthman's wife threw herself over 'Uthman's body so as to protect him from the sword that was directed at him. The sword which was directed at 'Uthman slashed his wife's hand cutting off her fingers.
14. The Battle of Jamal (or the Battle of the Camel) was a battle that took place at Basrah, Iraq, in 656 between forces allied to Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and the superior forces of rebel Arabs allied to 'A'ishah (a wife of the Prophet) who opposed 'Ali's status as caliph.
15. The Battle of Siffin (657 CE) occurred during the Second Muslim Civil War. It was fought between Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and Mu'awiyah I, on the banks of the Euphrates River, in what is now Syria.
16. Nahj al-Balaghah, sermon 199.
17. The rebels.
18. Holy City of Mecca or Makkah al-Mukarramah is the holiest site of Islam, and pilgrimage to it is required of all Muslims who are able and can afford to go, at least once in their lifetime.
19. Banu Quraysh, the dominant tribe of Mecca, was the tribe to which the Prophet (s) belonged.
20. Ethiopia is a country situated in Africa. It is the second most populous nation in Africa.
21. Jihad is a war operated on the command of an infallible [ma'sum] leader or his representative, which usually takes place to defend Islam and Muslims. The Qur'an calls those Muslims who die in this way (jihad), martyrs [shahids].
22. 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas was one of the cousins of the Prophet (s).
23. Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi al-Andalusi (d. 940), Al-'Iqd al-Farid, (Beirut, 1983), vol. 2, p. 389.
24. 'Amr ibn al-'As (c. 583-664 CE): at the time of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, he was military commander. He was famous for being crafty and cunning. In the Battle of Siffin, he helped Mu'awiyah in exchange for the governance of Egypt. He killed Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr, the governor of Egypt, and finally became the governor of Egypt.
25. Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar was one of the companions of Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. He became Governor of Egypt in 658 (38 AH) when assigned by Imam 'Ali, after the Battle of Siffin had ended.
26. Abu Musa 'Abd Allah ibn Qays al-Ash'ari (d. ca. 662 or 672) was made the governor of Basrah and Kufah during the caliphates of 'Umar and 'Uthman. In the event of Battle of Jamal, he urged people not to join any side of the battlefield. After the Battle of Siffin was put on hold, Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib was forced to choose him as his arbitrator by the Kharijites.
27. Surat al-An'am 6:57.
28. The takbir is an Arabic name for the phrase Allah-u Akbar, a common Arabic expression, which can be translated as "God is Greater" or "God is the greatest".
29. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar (Beirut, 1983), vol. 73, p. 436.
30. Al-Fatihah or al-Hamd is an Arabic name for the first chapter [surat] of the Holy Qur'an and means: "the Chapter of the Opening".
31. Surat is an Arabic term. It means a "chapter of the Qur'an".

32. One of the Kharijites.
 33. Surat al-Zumar 39:65.
 34. Surat al-A'raf 7:204.
 35. Surat al-Rum 30:60.
 36. Islamic jurisprudence [fiqh] is made up of the rulings of Islamic jurists to direct the lives of Muslims. A component of Islamic studies, fiqh, expounds the methodology by which the Islamic law is derived from primary and secondary sources.
 37. Shahadatayn in Arabic means the declaration of belief in the oneness of Allah, the Glorified and Exalted, and in Prophet Muhammad as his last messenger. The shahadah means "to testify" or "to bear witness".
 38. In the Islamic law, najis are things or persons regarded as ritually unclean. There are two kinds of najis. The essential najis which can not be cleaned and unessential najis which becomes najis in contact with another najis and one of them are wet.
 39. Wajib (also fard or faridah means obligation or duty) is an Islamic Arabic term which denotes a religious duty.
 40. Haram is an Arabic word used in Islam to refer to anything that is prohibited by the faith. Its antonym is halal.
 41. 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam was the Khawarij assassin of Imam 'Ali ('a).
 42. Nahj al-Balaghah, sermon 92.
 43. That is to say, this was essentially after the situation had become skeptical and ambivalent. Even when Ibn 'Abbas went to see them, he too became hesitant. The atmosphere was foggy. He said, "The horizons are covered in fog." The situation was not one that would make a Muslim soldier certain to fight and work for the benefit of Islam. When he faced a group more religious and ascetic than himself, a group who committed less sins, prayed more and the effect of worship was more apparent in their faces than him, he would become baffled. When he raised his sword, his hands would shiver, his heart would tremble, "How can I raise my sword on them?" If it was not for 'Ali and his followers and the trust his followers had in him, it would have been impossible to raise his sword on them. The situation was extremely doubtful and rightfully so. If you and I were there too, we would also not have been able to raise a hand on them to the other side.
 44. Nahj al-Balaghah, sermon 126.
 45. Abu 'Ali al-Husayn ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Sina or Avicenna (980-1037 CE) was a Persian physician, philosopher, and scientist, born in Afshanah near Bukhara in Persia. He wrote 450 books on a wide range of subjects including philosophy and medicine. Some of his Books were the standard medical text in European universities for 7 centuries.
 46. When an ignorant person confronts a wise and knowledgeable person they are awed by the respect society has for them, consequently, they become confused. If they say that the knowledgeable know nothing, the signs of the scholar's knowledge would become apparent. If they say that the knowledgeable have no skills, their skills would be observed. If they say that the knowledgeable are unwise, their wisdom is evident. What else can they say? At the end, they claim that the knowledgeable have no religion, and that they are non-believers.
 47. کفر چو منی گزاف و آسان نبود محکمتر از ایمان من ایمان نبود
در دهر یکی چون من و آن هم کافر؟ پس در همه دهر یک مسلمان نبود
- See M. Baqir Khwansari, *Rawdat al-Jannat* (Beirut), vol. 3, p. 179.
48. Battle of Nahrawan was a battle between Imam 'Ali and the Kharijites. Nahrawan is a place twelve miles from Baghdad.
 49. Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), known as Iqbal Lahuri (Iqbal of Lahore) in Iran and Afghanistan. He was an Indian Muslim poet, philosopher and politician, who has poetry in Farsi and Urdu. He is credited with first proposing the idea of an independent state for Indian Muslims, which would inspire the creation of Pakistan.
 50. Mir Ja'far from Bengal and Mir Sadiq from the Deccan were instrumental in the defeat and the murder of Nawwab Siraj al-Dawlah of Bengal and Tipu Sultan of Mysore, respectively, by betraying them for the benefit of the British. Thus, they delivered their country to the shackles of slavery.
 51. Mir Ja'far 'Ali Khan (1691-1765) was a monarchical ruler (nawwab) of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He succeeded Siraj al-Dawlah. His rule is widely (though somewhat inaccurately) considered the start of British rule in India.
 52. Bengal, known as Bangladesh is a region in the northeast of South Asia. Today it is mainly divided between the independent nation of Bangladesh (East Bengal), and the Indian

federal republics constitutive state of West Bengal.

53. He was the Muslim prime minister of Tipu Sultan. Tipu Sultan was defeated by the betrayal of Mir Sadiq and was killed by one of Tipu Sultan's soldiers, whose name was Ahmad Khan, a short period before Tipu Sultan's fall.

54. The Deccan Plateau is an elevated area making up the whole of the southern India and extending over eight states.

55. Apparently his correct name is Mirza Muhammad Siraj al-Dawlah, more popularly known as Siraj al-Dawlah (1733-1757) was the last independent Nawwab of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

56. Tippu Sultan, also known as the Tiger of Mysore (1750-1799), ruled the Kingdom of Mysore from the time of his father's death in 1782 until his own demise in 1799. He was a Muslim Shi'ah commander.

57. Apparently, this lecture was read before the resignation of the Professor from the management team of this institution.

58. يَا ضَرْبَةً مِنْ تَقِيٍّ مَا أَرَادَ بِهَا إِلَّا لِيَبْلُغَ مِنْ ذِي الْعَرْشِ رِضْوَانًا ﴿﴾

59. ثَلَاثَةُ أَلْفٍ وَعَبْدٌ وَقَيْئَةٌ وَقَتْلُ عَلِيٍّ بِالْحَسَامِ الْمُسَمِّ ﴿﴾

See M. Baqir Khwansari, *Rawdat al-Jannat* (Beirut), vol. 3, p. 179.

60. وَلَا مَهْرَ أَعْلَى مِنْ عَلِيٍّ وَإِنْ عَلَا وَلَا فَتَكَ إِلَّا دُونَ فَتِكَ ابْنِ مَلْجَمٍ ﴿﴾

61. Surat al-Zumar 39:19.

62. Sayyid ibn Tusi, among others, has narrated that on the day of 'Ashura, Imam al-Husayn orders his aids to bring him clothes that were worthless and no man wanted, so that he could wear them under his own clothes. Therefore, when he was killed, the Imam continued, no one would want to take them off of his dead body. It has been reported that after his martyrdom even those worthless pieces of clothing were taken off of the Imam's precious body.