

Imam Ali(a.s) in the Views of Imam Khomeini (r.a)

The Diverse Dimensions of Imam Ali (A.S.)

Today is the feasting day of al-Ghadir⁸⁹, one of the greatest religious feasts. It is the feasting day of the mustadafin, the deprived, the feast of those wronged in this world. It is a day in which Allah, the Exalted, ordered His Messenger (S.A.)-by way of carrying out the divine objectives in continuing the way of the prophets in propagating His cause-to appoint (Imam) Ali (A.S.) [as his successor]. We have to be sorry because the treacherous hands which instigated the wars during his rule, the wars and the instigators of wars did not allow the features of this great man, in their different dimensions, to appear clearly. This great man had a personality with many dimensions and he was the manifestation of the divine collective name which includes all the names and attributes. All the divine names and attributes which appeared in the world, through the noble Messenger, were manifested in this personality, and the dimensions which remained hidden are much more than those which appeared. Even those dimensions which man could, or will, discover in him, gathered in a single man, a single personality, such as contradictory aspects. A man, an ascetic as he was, and a great ascetic one, was, at the same time, a fighter, a great fighter in defense of Islam. These cannot meet in an ordinary man. An ascetic, to a common thought, cannot be a fighter, and the one who is a fighter cannot be an ascetic. At a time when he was so abstinent, so self-denier and contented with the least possible, he, nevertheless, was quite strong physically, and this was another aspect of joining two contradictions. At the same time when he was acquainted with different branches of knowledge besides the ethical and spiritual and other Islamic sciences, we notice that the people of a particular branch of such sciences used to consider him one of them. Champions consider Imam Ali as a champion. The philosophers regard him to be one of them, similarly the Gnostics take him to be a Gnostic, likewise the faqihs look at him as their master. So, every walk of life regards him to be of that walk, as he possessed all the attributes and all perfections. Some of the Imam's qualities, which may not be so much obvious, can be known from his supplications and du`as [prayers]: The du`a of Komayl⁹⁰ is an amazing, a quite amazing du`a. Some expressions of this du`a can hardly be expected from an ordinary human being: "O my God, Master, Guardian and Lord, suppose I could endure Your torment, how would I endure being separated from You?"⁹¹ Who can compose such an expression? Who has such a deep love for Allah's beauty that Hell does not frighten him, but he is afraid of being degraded from his position, if sent to Hell, to such a degree depriving him from loving Allah? He moans out about his separation from Allah, the Exalted. It is a love which is kindled in the innermost of his heart forever, and all his actions stemmed from this love for Allah. The value of the acts are estimated according to the love and affection for Allah, the Exalted, according to the annihilation and monotheism which are in man. That is why "Ali's strike on the Day of the Trench [war] is more preferred than the worshipping of both the ins and the jinn"⁹². Suppose that this strike was stricken by someone else in defense of Islam, and it resulted in promoting Islam, but it was not caused by love, in this case that strike would not be "preferred to the worshipping of both the ins and jinn." The motive behind an act is its spiritual drive, not its form. Striking with a sword is merely raising it and bringing it down to kill a disbeliever. Such a strike and killing a disbeliever can be done by many people, but sometimes it will have no reward and no preference at all, and sometimes it may have preference, but it will not be "preferred to the worshipping of both the ins and the jinn." That was because of love and monotheism living in his heart, and that is why the hand was not his, and the eye was not his, it was Allah's hand and Allah's eye. These we say through chattered words, but we cannot imagine them. Actually we do believe in them, but we are unable to picture them and imagine how the situation is.

The Distance Between the Shiites and Ali (A.S.)

Sometimes it occurs to me to ask: What resemblance do we have so as to claim to be the Shiites of that great man? If the thinkers, writers and those who are well-informed, consider his spiritual and material dimensions and study the many aspects of that great man, from his early years till his martyrdom, and try to find out how we can claim that we are his followers, all of us-except a few

during the early years of Islam, like the Imams of Guidance-must confess that we are unable to justify our claim. I myself cannot, in this meeting, explain even a single one of his dimensions, I will say something just to open a way to the knowledgeable persons, the well-informed with high moralities, so that they may think and study his position and ours. As regards learning and education, the one who has read his du`as and studied Nahjul Balaghah⁹³, should recognize his high standing. That is, he would realize that the one who had known the learning of the Qur'an was he, as well as those whom he taught, such as the Imams of Guidance. Allying knowledgeability is quite easy. One may compose a poetry or a piece of prose, and then say: How learned I am! This is easy, and many have claimed it. But what is the reality? That which is there as a reality and we sincerely want to find it, when we deeply think about ourselves, we will not be able to find any resemblance between ourselves and him! One of the common things which is in Nahjul Balaghah and in the narratives quoted from other Imams, and which is an ordinary position, not a high one, is his saying that worship is of three kinds: A group of people worship Allah out of desire for reward, this is the worship of businessmen. Another group worship Allah out of fear, this is the worship of slaves. A third group worship Allah out of gratefulness, this is the worship of freemen. If we were given a definite promise that we would not be going to hell and we all would go to Paradise, and hell's doors would be closed to us, would we still worship Allah? Or if we were told to worship Allah for a truthful love for Allah, would you see in yourself that love of Allah had driven you to worship Him, not fear, hope or some psychological reason? I have said that such claims are possible. **I can allege that I love Him, but actually we love Him not. What is there is only our self-love. All that is there belongs to us. So far we have not taken even a single step out of our selves, i.e., even the primary step which the people of gnosticism describe to be an awakening one. Yet we have not woken up. The torpor of nature is still there inside us, and it may still remain there forever, unless Allah bestows a grace upon us**

We are proud to be followers of a religion whose founder has been designated by divine commandment and in which Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS), this servant of God, free of all bonds and shackles of servitude and serfdom, has been appointed to deliver mankind from all the chains of slavery and thralldom. We are honoured that the book , which is next to the Quran, is man's great manuscript for salvation, moral and material existence and the greatest instrument for just rule and government, has our Infallible Imam, Ali (AS) as its author.