

Birth of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) : Self-preservation of Imam Ali (AS) : Ghadeer Affair

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On the 13th of the month of Rajab, twenty-three years before the migration of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) a child was born in the family of Abu Talib, the light of whom kindled the whole World. Kunaab Mecci narrates about his birth: "We and Abbas (Ibne Abdul Mutalib) were sitting together when suddenly we saw Fatima bint-e-Asad moving towards the Kaabah in the condition having delivery pain and saying "Oh God I have faith in you and the Prophet (i.e., Abraham) who by your command laid the foundation of this house. O God! I swear you by the same Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and swear you by the child in my womb make this birth comfortable and easy for me."

This was the time when all of us saw with our own eyes that the wall of Kaabah broke apart and Fatima bint-e-Asad entered into the Kaabah. Then the wall again united. We ran terrified and trembling to our houses to send our women into the Kaabah for the help and assistance of Fatima bint-e-Asad. We did our best but the door did not open. This event surprised all the people of Makkah.

The women of Makkah were anxiously counting moments to meet Fatima bint-e-Asad till the time she came out of the Kaabah along with a beautiful baby, saying, "God has chosen me from among the ladies of Makkah and He made me His guest in His house and gave me meals and fruits of the heaven to eat.

The ladies who were surrounding her in the form of a circle and escorting her to her home asked her, "What name have you given to this child?"

Fatima bint-e-Asad said: "When I was in the Kaabah, I heard a hidden voice call," Name this child "ALI".

Yes! We are talking about Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) the pious man whose childhood and infancy period lasted in such a pure and chaste way that he himself stated in Nahjul Balagha, "The Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) used to pick me in his lap and embrace me and chew the ".food and put it into my mouth

Early youth of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS):

Ali ibn Abu Talib describes this enlightening period of his age as under: The Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) used to go to the Cave of Hira but nobody except he (pbuh) and I did know

about it. At the time when the religion of Islam had not yet reached the homes, he (pbuh) and his wife Khatijah (SA) were the only Muslims. I was the next person to them who saw the light of revelation and prophet hood and smelled the fragrance of the Prophet hood. When the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) of Islam was ordered by God to invite his family members to embrace Islam. Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) according to the advice of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) invited forty persons of the Prophet's family at his home. Although the food was quite little but all of them ate fully well. After the meal was over the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) spoke to those present saying, "Oh the sons of Abdul Mutalib, God has ordered me to invite you to embrace Islam and get you introduced to it." Whosoever, having believed in my Prophet hood, promises to help and assist me shall be my brother, deputy and successor and my caliph. He (pbuh) repeated this sentence thrice but no one except "Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS)" gave a positive response. As many times as the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) addressed the persons present, nobody except Imam Ali (AS) answered. Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) was rising again and again to his feet and promising help to him and announcing his faith. This is the very reason why the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) said: "This Ali, is my brother and successor listen and lend ears to what he says and obey his orders." When Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) entered from his early youth into the phase of puberty, the part of age when all the human energies and powers are strong and firm, even in this part of the life he remained closely associated to the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) like a flying moth which moves around the Candle. He defended Islam and the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) with his strong, energetic arms. When the enemy besieged and surrounded the Muslims in the battle of Hunain and they abandoned and left behind the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) running away for their lives, it was only and only Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) who defended and saved the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) and made the enemies retreat and take to their heels. Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) killed Marhab the chief of army of Jews in the Khyber battle, whose power and bravery was making everybody tremble but Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) cut him into two and pulled apart the gate of the Khyber fort which used to be opened and closed by twenty men together. Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) used it as a bridge over the trench for the Islamic army to cross over to the Khyber fort. Many such events are the specimens and evidences about the faith, and spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS).

Self-Sacrifice and Devotion of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS):

There is no doubt to it that every body loves his soul and very rarely gets ready to sacrifice it for another person but because of the fact that Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) loved the soul of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) even more than his own one, he got prepared to lay his life for him.

The event takes shape like this. When the polytheists saw that they are in danger, they jointly made a firm determination to take the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) by surprise and martyr him. So all of them gathered in "Dar un Nadva" and choose one person from each family so that every tribe gets involved in getting Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) killed and then no one could take the revenge of him.

The Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) had come to know about this conspiracy through revelation. God ordered him (pbuh) to migrate from Makkah in the darkness of the night. The Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) needed someone, prepared to sacrifice his life and must be a trustworthy secret holder.

Hence, there was no one else except Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) in whom he confided, and told him "God has informed me that the infidels will break through the house to kill me so today you sleep on my bed." Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) smilingly accepted it, because he (as) knew that the life of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) would be saved by his action. In fact, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) used to say later that the best sleep he had ever had was on that night (Shab-e-Hijrat).

Then the time came when the darkness of the night covered everything and Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) was sleeping on the Prophet's (pbuh) bed calmly and peacefully and the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) came out of his house and started proceeding towards the Cave of Saur with Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA). The infidels besieged the house and got prepared with their swords and spears to attack it. The sooner they were instructed to make it, they break through the house rushing with naked swords. But when they found Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) laying on the bed of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) they immediately moved out of the house desperate and astonished, and sent a few horsemen to search the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh). But not very long afterwards they too returned defeated and hopeless.

Allah liked this action of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) so much that HE revealed this verse in the Holy Quran: "And among men is he who sells his NAFS (self) in exchange for the pleasure of Allah..." (Surah 2: Baqarah / Verse 207)

Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) and Holy War:

Islam is the religion of peace and tranquility and does not like killing, plundering, and bloodshed. But if some one kills another without any reason then Islam has strong punishment to deal with him.

Of course, if an enemy attacks the Muslims then by the standards of wits, common sense, and religious law, self defense which as a form of Jihad/Jehad becomes essential and indispensable.

All the battles of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) in which Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) fought armed and truthfully were defensive battles.

Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) was such a brave, faithful, holy warrior who never got frustrated and upset and tired of the fighting and battles. He was afraid of no one except God. He used to say "By God if I see that on one side is the truth and on the other side all the rest of the people I, without caring and paying heed to those reproaching me, will fight all alone with my sword, on the way and path of the right, against them.

Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib's (AS) way or Training:

The city of Kufa was the capital of the Islamic Government. People from all over the World used to gather at that point to get the benefit of knowledge and learning from that great Islamic University.

One of those days two men came across each other in the vicinity of the city one of them was Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) and the other was a Christian who did not recognize him. The Christian man was moving towards the suburban area of Kufa, where as, Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) was on his way to Kufa.

They mutually agreed to accompany each other for a while, talking to each other, so that they do not get tired.

They reached a point where two ways split out, so that each one wanted to move on one of those two different roads. The Christian bade Farwell and went on his way but he observed that his Muslim companion, whose way was on the opposite side, was moving towards him. So he stopped and questioned him, "Don't you want to go to Kufa?"

Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) said, "Yes". The Christian man said, "Then why are you coming towards this direction?"

Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS) replied, "I wish to accompany you to a certain length of distance because the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) said, "when two persons are together on a way (journey companions) they get a right over each other."

"Now that you have got a right upon me, I go along with you up to a certain distance so that I

must pay you (discharge) that right of yours in this world. Then I will part off on my own way." The Christian man was much pleased and moved by this humanly attitude and conduct and he liked his talk and said, "It is befitting that I should also embrace Islam which has such a culture and students."

His amazement and astonishment was only too enhanced when he discovered that his travel companion is Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS), the ruler of Islam. So he immediately accepted and (embraced Islam at his hand. Self-preservation of Imam Ali ibn Abu Talib (AS