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## 8) Three Merits of Imam ‘Ali (‘a) in One Hadith

Ahmad bin Hanbal says:

Qutaybah bin Sa‘id has related to us from Hatam bin Isma‘il from Bukayr bin Mismar from ‘Amir bin Sa‘d from his father (Sa‘d bin Abi Waqqas) who narrated the hadith that when the Prophet on leaving for a campaign asked (Imam) ‘Ali (‘a) to stay (behind in the city) in his place, the latter said:

“Are you leaving me with the women and children?”

I heard the Prophet reply to him:

“Ya ‘Ali ama tarza ‘an takuna minni bi manzilati Harun min Musa illa annahu la nabiyya ba‘di (O ‘Ali! Are you not pleased that your position to me is similar to that of Aaron to Moses, except that prophethood will cease after me?).”

(Sa‘d bin Abi Waqqas says) I also heard (the Prophet say) on the Day of Khaybar:

“La-u‘tiyanna al-rayah rajulan yuhibbu Allaha wa Rasulahu wa yuhibbuhu Allahu wa Rasuluh” (I will give the standard to the man who loves Allah and His Prophet and who is loved (in turn) by Allah and His Prophet).”

All of us raised our necks (to see). He said:

“Call ‘Ali to me.”

On hearing this instruction (Imam) ‘Ali (‘a) was brought to the Prophet with sore eyes. The Prophet rubbed his eyes with his saliva and gave him the standard and through his hands Allah conquered Khaybar for the Muslims. And when the ayah “Call our sons and your sons, and our women and your women and ourselves and yourselves” (3:61) was revealed, the Messenger of Allah called ‘Ali (‘a), Fatimah (‘a), Hasan (‘a) and Husayn (‘a) and said:

“Allahumma haula’i ahli (O Allah these [persons] are my family).”<sup>1</sup>

The annotator of the Musnad considers the isnad of this hadith as sahih (authoritative) and writes:

This hadith has also been recorded through Qutabiyah on the same chain of authority by Muslim and Tirmidhi in their books. At the beginning of this hadith, it is mentioned in the two books (Sahih Muslim and Sahih Tirmidhi) that Mu'awiyah (bin Abi Sufyan) ordered Sa'd (bin Abi Waqqas) to curse (Imam) 'Ali ('a), saying:

What prevents you from cursing Abu Turab?

Sa'd replied:

“I remember three things which the Messenger of Allah said to (Imam) 'Ali ('a) and accordingly I will never curse him. If only one of these virtues was for me I would have considered it better than possessing red-haired camels.”

Then he related the three virtues (of Imam 'Ali) for Mu'awiyah as said before.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Al-Musnad, hadith no. 1608 (Ahmad Shakir).

2. Muslim bin Hajjaj, al-Jami' al-Sahih, vol. 2, pp. 236-237, Bulaq Press, Cairo, 1290 AH; Muhammad bin 'Isa Tirmidhi: al-Sunan (al-Jami' al-Sahih), vol. 4, pp. 329-330, printed in India, 1328.

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