

LIFE SKETCH OF ALI IBNE ALHUSAIN QUMMI

Popularly remembered as Ali ibne Babuway Qummi among the Shiite Islamic fuqaha-jurists, he was during the fourth century a leading faqih and muhaddis on whose fatwas and verdicts people of his time relied upon a great deal. He was considered such a pious erudite and man of such outstanding learning that those doubtful of any hadith or having controversial question would feel convinced with an opinion or verdict emanating from him.

For his fame and eminent status among the Shiite Ulema, it is enough to mention that the 11th Imam Hasan Askari (a.s.) in his letter addressed to him called him with such epithets as 'Sheikhena' meaning our chief or 'Moatimedena'- our trusted one. the following translated extracts from the letter of the Imam to him is worth studying;

"Praise and special blessing of Allah - the Creator be showered (upon you) Oh Sheikh - our trusted - Abul Hasan Ali ibne Al Husain Qummi - may Allah favour you with His Pleasure and Approbation. And may I give you glad tiding that Allah will bless you with such virtuous sons who are to become memorable. (at that time the Sheikh had no son).

I recommend you to exercise piety and self-restraint and to maintain prayers and settle Zakat dues, as the prayers of one who forsakes zakat is not acceptable. I invite you to forgive errors, to abstain from anger and show kindness to relatives and CO-religionists, to endeavor to solve their problems in times of ease or hardship, to seek knowledge and research in jurisprudence and to remain steadfast on them. Allah - the Creator of Universe - says "There is no good in most of their secret counsels except (in his) who enjoins charity or goodness or reconciliation between people".

"I advise you to abstain from the prohibited and beseech you to perform the mid-night prayers, to perform the midnight prayers, to perform the midnight prayers because the Prophet of Islam (s.a.) advised Ali (a.s.) (repeating it) three times and added that he who belittles the midnight prayers is not from us.

I call upon you and your Shias towards implementing the contents of this letter. Again I call upon you to exercise patience, steadfastness and INTEZARE FARAJ - awaiting the reappearance (of the 12th Imam a.f.) since the Prophet of Islam had said "The best of deed of my Ummat is to await the reappearance (of the 12th Imam). He had also said that my Ummat will always be under the state of grief and despondency until my son - whose glad tiding (of reappearing) has been foretold - will reappear and he will fill the earth with justice and equity after it became full of injustice and tyranny."

"So Oh Sheikh - the respected one make patience your habit and invite the Shiite masses to exercise patience and steadfastness. Verily earth is from that God who will entrust to those of His servants whom He chooses and in the end the pious will be in the forefront".

"Salams and blessings of Allah be upon you. And He is enough for us".

The above letter of the 11th Imam not only speaks of the elevated status of Ali ibne Baneway Qummi but also provides invaluable teaching and advice for all the followers of Ahl ul Bait.

This great erudite and man of learning died in the year 329 Hijra - the same year during which Sikatel Islam Mohamed Yakoob Kulaini had died. He was buried in Qum near the shrine of Hazrat Masooma and is visited by thousands of pilgrims.