

Sayyidna Ali (RA)

1. Discuss his early life

- i. His name was Ali bin Abu-Talib bin Abdul-Mutwalib. He bears a title “Asadullah”, the lion of Allah.
- ii. He was from the Banu Hashim clan of the Quraish. His father Abu-Talib was prophet`s uncle, hence was the first cousin of the prophet (saw).
- iii. He was born some thirty years after the birth of the prophet (saw).
- iv. He was brought up in the household of the prophet (saw). The prophet (saw) undertook to bring him up and relive his uncle of the burden of bringing up so many children.
- v. He grew up in the atmosphere of virtue and piety which no other home could provide. He never bowed down to Idols or indulged in any other immoral behaviour.
- vi. He married Fatima, the daughter of prophet (saw). Hence was a son-in-law of the prophet (saw).

2. Describe his conversion to Islam

He was ten years of age when the Holly Prophet was called to the divine mission. He was the first youth to join the fold of Islam.

3. Discuss his Companionship to the prophet (saw)

- i. He grew up under the loving care of the prophet (saw). His love for the prophet was unbounded.
- ii. On the night of the prophet's migration to Medina, the prophet asked him to lie on his bed, he gladly did so.
- iii. He married Fatima, the daughter of the prophet (saw), one year after Hijra, Ali was 21 years old while Fatima was 15 years old. She gave birth to three boys namely Hassan, Hussein and Muhsin (who died in infancy) and two girls: Zainab and Ummu-Kulthum.
- iv. Ali was one of the scribes of the revelation and letters sent out by the prophet (saw) were also written by him.

- v. He was one of the ten men who got the good news of entering the paradise from the prophet (saw).

4. Discuss his accession to caliphate

- i. There was no caliph for three days after Sayyidna Othman's murder. Medina was completely in grip of the rioters. The rioters proposed Ali's name for the caliphate. Ali (RA) refused at first, but after considering the interest of Islam he at last agreed to become the fourth caliph. So on 23rd of June 656 CE (21stDhul-Hijjah 35 AH) Ali was sworn in and declared the caliph of Islam.

5. State the achievements of Sayyidna Ali (RAA)

- i. He protected the prophet during the battle of Uhud, he slashed number of Quraish warriors.
- ii. He remained in the prophet's room on the night of migration to Medina.
- iii. He was a hero of Islam in every battle he fought against opponents of Islam during jihad (holy war).
- iv. He was instrumental in the capture of Jewish stronghold, Khyber.
- v. He was given the title "Asadullah", the lion of Allah by the prophet (saw)
- vi. He propagated Islam and Islamized people of Yemen.
- vii. He tried by all means to stabilise Islamic empire after the death of Sayidna Uthman (RA)
- viii. He fought those who withdrew from his camp, after the event of Siffin and managed to return back many of them.
- ix. After won the battle of Camel (between Ali and Aisha), he sent her to Medina and treated her with all the respect and fairness.

6. Mention the challenges faced by Ali (RA) as a caliph

- i. He was pressurised to bring to the book the assassins of caliph Uthman (RA).
- ii. Removing unsuitable governors appointed by the caliph Uthman (RA).
- iii. There was a threat caused by lady Aisha (RAA) and her group who fought Ali in the battle of Camel.
- iv. The split of his followers and emergence of the Khawarij sect. This group fought Ali at a place called Nahrawan.

- v. Some Uthman`s governors refused to acknowledge the authority of Sayyidna Ali, i.e. Muawiya this led to the battle of Siffin.
- vi. Some of his governors were killed on the way to replace, Uthman`s governors.
- vii. Consolidating the unity of Muslims especially after the assassination of Uthman.

7. State the reasons for the failure of Ali (RA) as a caliph

- i. Rebellion in the empire.
- ii. The emergence of the Khawarij.
- iii. Rebellion of Aisha, Talha and Zubeir.
- iv. Opposition of Muawiyyah and the Umayyads.
- v. The growing power of Umayyads as a clan

8. Discuss Ali`s death

- i. Kharijis were consistently dissatisfied. They met secretly in Mecca and decided to get rid of three chief characters, they thought were responsible for the disunity of Muslim Ummah.
- ii. They selected three persons to kill those three leaders. Abdurahman Ibn Muljim was to murder caliph Ali in Kufah, Burak Ibn Abdullah was to murder Muawiyah in Syria and Amr Ibn Bakr was to murder Amr Ibn Al-A`s in Egypt.
- iii. This was to be carried out on Friday seventh of Ramadhan. On the planned day, the three assassins attacked the same hour.
- iv. Muawiya escaped with a slight wound and the assassin was caught and killed.
- v. Amr Ibn Al-A`s was ill and somebody else who led the prayer in his place was killed. The assassin was caught and killed
- vi. Caliph Ali was wounded badly and died two days later. The assassin was caught and executed. At that time he was 63 years of age.
- vii. He did not appoint successor but left it to the Muslims to elect a new leader. His caliphate lasted for four years and nine months

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