

## **Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Ali, The Man**

### ***Physical appearance***

Ali was of medium height. He had a superb head with a face as noble as the man himself. His nose was straight, and his mouth was beautifully formed. His eyes were most commanding, being full of light and luster. There was a note of music in his voice. There was an aura of spirituality, and a strong personal magnetism about him. In his youth, he was handsome, and full of fiery vigor. In his latter age, he became corpulent and bulky. His gray hair of the head gave way to baldness. His beard, however, remained thick and luxuriant, and he often dyed it red. He was stout, genial, charitable, meditative, reserved-a man who towered high above the people around him because of his intellectual and spiritual attainments. Ali, the man was endowed with all qualities that make a man great. He is not only great, he is regarded as a superman, an ideal man. He was a paragon of virtue. He enjoyed fame for his piety, and religious devotions. He was an embodiment of Islamic values. In his love of God and His Messenger, he was second to none. While praying to God, his absorption was so intense that he often lost consciousness. His mind was so pure that he could hold communion with God. He had learnt the Holy Quran by heart, and he could quote appropriate verses to suit every occasion. He was most truthful and honest. He most humble he was simple in his habits. He avoided display and luxury. He lived the life of an ascetic. Even when Caliph, he lived in an ordinary house. The doors of his house remained open for all at all times. He was most generous. He was most liberal in giving charity. He always came to the help of those who were distressed and involved in any difficulty. He looked after widows and orphans as if they were the members of his own household. He was a warrior, a General, and a man conspicuous for his bravery and valor. Indeed he was braver than any other man in history. He fought hundreds of duels in his lifetime, and in all such encounters his rivals were worsted. In the various battles he killed a record number of enemy. He was a skilful swordsman. His sword would never miss its mark. In the various battles that he fought he never turned his back. He was an embodiment of patience. In the Battle of Uhud he received so many wounds that the nurses were unable to dress such wounds. He bore the pain with great patience. The people around him misunderstood him, but he did not lose patience. He was most chivalrous, and forgiving. He would forgive even his worst enemies. He was a great scholar. His book Nahj-ul-Balagha is a living proof of his scholarship and erudition. There was a sense of humor about him, and sometimes he said things in a lighter vein to bring home the point he had in view. He was a master of similes and metaphors, and when bringing home a point he always illustrated it with appropriate metaphors and similes. He was a great philosopher, and there is great depth in his thoughts expressed in his writings. He was known for his wisdom. He was indeed wiser than Solomon. Most of his wise sayings have attained the dimensions of proverbs. He was a great orator. His sermons were most impressive. He was the master of rhetoric. He is regarded as the father of Islamic learning. He has left a deep mark on Islamic theology. He was the founder of Arabic grammar. He was a great poet. He was the Father to Sufism. He was the Father of Islamic jurisprudence. He was an impartial judge His famous judgements are the most valuable assets of Islamic jurisprudence. He was a skillful administrator. He introduced numerous reforms. He was an eminent political thinker, and his political thought has an air of modernity about it. The greatness of Ali as a man is multi-dimensional in character, and after the Holy Prophet he is the greatest Muslim whose memory is honored by the Muslims, all over the world.

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