Sayyidunā ʿAlī
Amongst the Ṣaḥābah
of the Nabī ♦

Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAlī al-Aydarūs
Transliteration key

ا - a
ا - ā
ب - b
ت - t
ث - th
ج - j
ح - h
خ - kh
د - d
ذ - dh
ر - r
ز - z
س - s
ش - sh
ص - š

ض - d
ط - ŧ
ظ - ẓ
ع - õ
غ - gh
ف - f
ق - q
ك - k
ل - l
م - m
ن - n
و - w, û
ه - h
ي - y, ī
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Dedication

To the paragons of guidance, the luminaries of humankind...

Those who illuminated the path and paved the way...

The quintessential, saintly leaders of Islam...

To those who hold dear the Rasūl’s ﷺ era; an era of true union, love and affection...

To those who earnestly strive in attaining their godliness...

Aspiring to follow in their footsteps and with the ardent hope of uncovering their innermost realities...

I journey with all my thoughts and emotions to the loftiest generation, the generation of Tāhā, Yāsīn, and Nūn ﷺ
Abstract

The social milieu that existed among 'Alī and his fellow companions, the Ṣaḥābah, is an extraordinary exposition of brotherhood. This notion is clearly reflected in the attitude shown by the Ahl al-Bayt (the Family of Nabī) towards the Ṣaḥābah. The honourable rank of the Ṣaḥābah and the entire first generation of Muslims is unquestioned and a recognised tenet by all. In fact, there is an ijmāʿ (consensus) in this regard. As such, the Qurʾān and Sunnah are unequivocal in this regard.

To further expound upon this, mention will be made of the virtues of the esteemed Ṣaḥābah in light of the Qurʾān, the Sunnah, and finally, through transmitted reports from both Sunnī and Shīʿī sources; in order for the truth to manifest itself for anyone in pursuit of it.
Preface

Allah selected the Arabs from all the peoples in this world, and from the Arabs, He selected the tribe of Quraysh, and from the tribe of Quraysh, He selected Banū Hāshim, and from Banū Hāshim, He selected our beloved master, Muḥammad. Allah favoured him over all other creation. He enjoys the highest station and rank (with Allah), and as such every individuals’ station (with Allah) is in proportion to their connection and love with the Rasūl of Allah. Allah also chose for Nabī the best of faiths and He made it such that both his era and city (Makkah) were the most glorious and majestic. Allah made the Qur’ān a protector for all (previous) Books. Anyone who had the privilege and honour of meeting Nabī (with faith in him and his message), and died with that conviction in his heart, was considered to be his blessed Ṣaḥābī. It is mentioned in an authentic ḥadīth that two-thirds of the Nabī's ummah will occupy Jannah.

The virtues of the Ṣaḥābah are acknowledged by both the Qur’ān and the Sunnah. They were considered the best of generations and the most upright for one main reason: they enjoyed the company of Nabī. When they were called upon to accept the message of Allah and His Rasūl, they responded in turn by saying:

رَّبَّنَآ إِنَّنَآ سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِياً يُنَادِىْ لِلِْيْمَانِ أَنْ ءَامِنُواْ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَاٰمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّ عَنَّا سَيِّئٰـتِنَا إِنَّكَ لاَ تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الاٌّبْرَارِ - رَبَّنَا وَءَاتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلٰى رُسُلِكَ وَلاَ تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَة

Our Rabb, indeed we have heard a caller (i.e. Nabī Muḥammad) calling to faith, (saying): “Believe in your Rabb,” and we have believed. Our Rabb, so forgive us our sins and remove from us our misdeeds and cause us to die among the righteous. Our Rabb, and grant us what You promised us through Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, You do not fail in (Your) promise.¹

¹ Sūrah Āl ʿImrān: 193
This virtue (of ṣuḥbah) is something Allah grants to whomsoever He desires. This is an axiomatic fact; and only he whom Allah has misguided and blinded his eyes (from the truth) — thereby following his desires — can deny this. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd is reported to have said:

Allah looked into the hearts of His slaves and found the heart of Muḥammad to be the purest; Allah then chose him because of His knowledge of him and sent him to deliver His message. Thereafter, Allah looked into the hearts of His slaves and found the Ṣaḥābah’s hearts to be the purest and soundest; and so He selected them to be the bastions of His religion and the aides to His Rasūl. Therefore, whatever is deemed ḥasan (appropriate) by the Muslims it is also considered ḥasan by Allah. And whatever they consider inappropriate, it is also inappropriate by Allah.

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1 Imām Aḥmad: Musnad Aḥmad
Imām al-Bayhaqī: Shuʻab al-Īmān
Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālisī: Musnad al-Ṭayālisī
Virtues of the Ṣaḥābah in Light of the Qur’ān and the Benefits of Ṣuḥbah

Allah says in the Qur’ān:

لَّقَدْ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِى قُلُوْبِهِمْ وَأَنْتَ بِالْعَمَّاَدِ عَلَىٰ قَرِينٍ

Certainly was Allah pleased with the believers when they pledged allegiance to you, (O Muḥammad), under the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquillity upon them and rewarded them with an imminent conquest.¹

بَعْدِ مَا كَادَ يَزِيْغُ

لَقَدْ تَابَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى النَّبِىِّ وَالْمُهٰجِرِيْنَ وَالاَْنْصٰرِ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْهُ فِىْ سَاعَةِ الْعُسْرَةِ مِنْ قُلُوْبُ فَرِيْقٍ مِّنْهُمْ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّه بِهِمْ رَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ

Allah has already forgiven the Prophet and the Muhājirīn² and the Anṣāর³ who followed him in the hour of difficulty after the hearts of a party of them had almost inclined (to doubt), and then He forgave them. Indeed, He was to them Kind and Merciful.⁴

وَالشَّيْعُونُ الْأَوَّلُوْنَ مِنْ الْمُهٰجِرِيْنَ وَالاَْنْصَارِ وَالذِّينَ اتَّبَعُوْهُ بِإِحْسَانٍ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ

And the first forerunners (in the faith) among the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār and those who followed them with good conduct — Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment.⁵

¹ Sūrah al-Fatḥ: 18
² Those who emigrated from Makkah and settled in Madīnah for the cause of Islam.
³ The inhabitants of Madīnah who had accepted Islam and assisted Nabī and other emigrants upon their arrival there.
⁴ Sūrah al-Towbah: 117
⁵ Sūrah al-Towbah: 100
Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah. Among them is he who has fulfilled his vow (to the death), and among them is he who awaits (his chance). And they did not alter (the terms of their commitment) by any alteration.¹

Muḥammad is the Rasūl of Allah; and those with him are forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating (in prayer), seeking bounty from Allah and (His) pleasure. Their mark (i.e. sign) is on their faces (i.e. foreheads) from the trace of prostration. That is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Injīl is as a plant which produces its offshoots and strengthens them so they grow firm and stand upon their stalks, delighting the sowers – so that He (i.e., Allah) may enrage by them the disbelievers. Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among them forgiveness and a great reward.²

These verses — among many others — are a testament to Allah’s eternal honour and respect for the noble Ṣaḥābah. They showcase many of their merits including His eternal forgiveness and happiness for them, their truthfulness, selflessness, and unique praise as mentioned in both the Torah and the Injīl. These unalterable divine verses — which Allah has anointed us to recite — repudiate the beliefs of any zealot who thinks the Ṣaḥābah

¹ Sūrah al-Aḥzāb: 23
² Sūrah al-Fatḥ: 29
became apostates after the death of Nabī ﷺ. We recite them continuously so that we may recognise their high-rank and station which they enjoy with Allah ﷻ; and so that we may follow in their footsteps and be raised — Allah willing — alongside them on the Day of Judgement.
Aḥādīth Relating to the Ṣaḥābah

The Ṣaḥābī, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Masʿūd ﷺ reported that Nabī ﷺ said:

خير الناس قرني ، ثم الذين يلونهم

The best of generations is the one in which I was sent, then that which follows, then that which follows.¹

Nabī ﷺ is also reported to have said:

لا تسبوا أصحابي ، فوالذي نفسي بيده لو أنفق أحدكم مثل أُحد ذهباً ما بلغ مدّ أحدهم ولانصيفة

Do not curse my Ṣaḥābah, for by Him Who controls my life, if any of you were to spend the weight of Mount Uḥud in gold, it still would not equal a mudd² of one of them nor even one-half of it.³

Al-Sayyid Abū Bakr Shihāb al-Dīn al-ʿAlawī al-Ḥaḍramī writes:

Reverence, love, and veneration of the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ is incumbent upon all believers, especially the members of the Nabī’s Ahl al-Bayt. Not only were they Ahl al-Riwwāyah wa al-Dirāyah (people of transmission and knowledge), they were beacons of guidance and the epitomes of humanity — after the ambiyā’. Allah ﷺ Himself praises them in His book and there are also numerous authentic reports that speak to their virtue. Any fair-minded person would acknowledge their high-rank and status from the following aḥādīth:

Nabī ﷺ is reported to have said:

الله الله في أصحابي لا تتخذوهم غرضاً بعدي ، ومن أحبهم فيحبني أحبه ومن أبغضهم فيغضبني أبغضهم

¹ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim.
² Mudd: a unit of measurement equal to approximately 797 grams.
³ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim; Sunan Abī Dāwūd; Sunan ibn Mājah.
(Fear) Allah, (fear) Allah with regards to my Ṣaḥābah! Do not make them the target (of your criticism and abuse) after me. He who loves them, loves them because he loves me, and he who hates them, hates them because he hates me. He who harms them has indeed harmed me, and he who harms me it is as if he has attempted to harm Allah, and he who attempts to harm Allah will soon be taken to task by Him.¹

Nabī is also reported to have said:

إن الله اختار أصحابي على العالمين سوى النبيين والمرسلين

Allah selected my Ṣaḥābah over everyone else save the ambiyā’ and rusul.²

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2 Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī: Majmaʿ al-Zawā’id 10/16
ʿAlī’s Narrations Regarding the Ṣaḥābah

ʿAlī was raised in the household of Nabī from his early childhood days. He drank from both the ‘milk of nubuwwah’ and from the ‘cup of divine revelation’. He held an inimitable position with Nabī; not only was he a noble Ṣaḥābī, but he was also Nabī’s cousin. He was married to Fāṭimah, the pure and virtuous daughter of Nabī. He was the door to the city of knowledge and wisdom. Nabī once said to him:

أنت مني بمنزلة هارون من موسى إلاّ أنه لا نبي بعدي

You are to me the same as Hārūn was to Mūsā, except there will come no nabī after me.

Nabī attested to his love for Allah and His Nabī, and vice versa. He spent a great deal of time with Nabī, and this allowed him the opportunity to listen and understand both the words of Nabī, and waḥī (divine revelation) in a unique manner. Amicable and loved by all, ʿAlī was one to only speak the truth. He acknowledged the rights and privileges of all, including Allah, His Nabī, and the Ṣaḥābah. Often times, he would sing their praises by quoting verses of the Qur’ān and aḥādīth that pertained to them; and, at times, he would even reminisce over those among them who had passed away. Imām al-Ṭabarānī narrates that ʿAlī once said:

Fear Allah with regards to the Ṣaḥābah of Nabī! This was his direct order!

Hereunder are but a few examples of statements made by ʿAlī regarding the al-khulafa’ al-Rāshidīn:

1 The author is making reference to a famous ḥadīth in which Nabī is reported to have said: “I am the city of knowledge and ʿAlī is its door. So whoever seeks knowledge let him approach it by his gate.” [translator’s note]
1. Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib said:

I said to my father: “Who is the best person after Nabī?" He replied: “Abū Bakr.” “And then who?” I asked, he replied: “ʿUmar.” Fearing he would say ‘Uthmān’s name next I asked him: “And then you (of course)?” He said: “I am but an ordinary man from among the believers.”

2. Abū Juḥayfah said:

I heard ʿAlī say: “Shall I not inform you who the best person in this ummah is after Nabī? It is Abū Bakr. Shall I not inform you who the best person is after Abū Bakr? It is ʿUmar.”

3. ʿAlī reported that Nabī once said:

إن كلّ نبي أعطي سبعة نجباء أو نقباء ، وأعطيت أنا أربعة عشر . قلنا : من هم ؟ قال أنا وابني وJaʿfar وḤamzah وAbū Bakr وʿUmar وMuṣʿab ibn ʿUmayr وBilāl وSalmān وMiqdād وḤudhayfah وʿAmmār وʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd.

“Every Nabī was granted seven extraordinary or honourable people, but I was granted fourteen.” We asked ʿAlī: “Who are they?” He said: “Myself, my two sons (Ḥasan and Ḥusayn), Jaʿfar, Ḥamzah, Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, Muṣʿab ibn ʿUmayr, Bilāl, Salmān, Miqdād, Ḥudhayfah, ʿAmmār and ʿAbd Allāh ibn Masʿūd.”

4. Ibn ʿAsākir narrates that Ḥasan al-Baṣrī once said:

When Sayyidunā ʿAlī arrived in Baṣrah to inquire about Ṭalḥah and his associates, ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Kawā — a leader from the Khawārij — and Qays ibn ʿAbbād, stood up and said: “Why have you come, O Amīr al-Muʾminīn? Was it an instruction from the Rasūl of Allah? Or was it an obligation that the Rasūl of Allah asked you to fulfil? Or was

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1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī
2 Al-Bukhārī’s version of this ḥadīth has the following addition: “And if you will I can also inform you of the third best person.”
3 Sunan al-Tirmidhī
it simply something you chose out of your own volition because of the ummah’s fragmentation and current state of affairs?” ʿAlī responded and said: “The truth is, by Allah, Nabī ﷺ was neither killed nor did he leave this world unexpectedly. He remained ill for such a period of time wherein the mu’addhin would call for ṣalāh and then Nabī ﷺ would direct Abū Bakr to lead the ṣalāh (knowing full well that I was present). One of his wives attempted to substitute Abū Bakr (with someone else); not only did Nabī ﷺ refuse, the mere suggestion infuriated him and he said:

أنتن صواحب يوسف ، مروا أبا بكر فليصل بالناس

You are like the companions of Yūsuf ٰ! Put Abū Bakr forward, for he shall lead the ṣalāh.

When Nabī ﷺ passed away, we pondered over our affairs and decided to elect such an individual to administer our earthly affairs whom Nabī ﷺ was pleased with to regulate our religious affairs. Ṣalāh is a fundamental aspect of Islam; and Abū Bakr was upright and loyal. And so, we pledged our allegiance to him ﷺ, for he was most deserving of this position. No two of us differed (with this decision) and we neither objected nor did we behave seditiously towards him; we remained loyal

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1 This ḥadīth is making reference to Zulaykhah, the ‘Azīz of Egypt’s wife, in the time of Nabī Yūsuf ٰ. The womenfolk during this time lambasted Zulaykhah for her infatuation with Nabī Yūsuf ٰ (who was also her adopted son). After some time, she decided to prove to them how beautiful Nabī Yūsuf ٰ really was; and in doing so, she would absolve herself from blame and the predicament she found herself in. One day, she decided to entertain and invite all the womenfolk of the town for a meal, but her actual intention behind this invitation was to showcase Nabī Yūsuf’s ٰ beauty; thereby proving that they too, would have experienced the same feelings about him as she did.

As such, in the above-mentioned ḥadīth, one of the wives of Nabī ﷺ, namely, Sayyidah ʿĀ’ishah ٰ, attempted to substitute her father, Abū Bakr, with someone else to lead the ṣalāh; claiming that he has a soft-heart and an inaudible voice; and because of that, the people in ṣalāh (behind him) would be unable to hear him reciting. But her actual intention was to have someone else lead the prayer; fearing that people may begin speaking ill of her father on account of him leading the ṣalāh and taking charge of the Muslims’ affairs after the demise of Nabī ﷺ. For this reason, Nabī ﷺ referred to his wives as “the companions of Yūsuf”. [translator’s note]
to him and continued to uphold his honour. I fulfilled his due rights and acknowledged his right to be obeyed and followed. I served as a foot soldier in his army and would accept any proposition he proposed. I remained ever-ready (for battle) whenever he called. In his presence, I even executed the ḥudūd (legal punishment) with my whip. When he passed away, ʿUmar followed in his footsteps. He oversaw, governed, and administered matters in the same manner as his predecessor. And so, we pledged our allegiance to him, for he was most deserving of this position. No two of us differed (with this decision) and we neither objected nor did we behave seditiously towards him; we remained loyal to him and continued to uphold his honour. I fulfilled his due rights and acknowledged his right to be obeyed and followed. I served as a foot soldier in his army and would accept whatever proposition he proposed. I remained ever-ready (for battle) whenever he called. In his presence, I even executed the ḥudūd (punishment) with my whip. When he passed away, I began reminiscing about my (close) relationship (with Nabī ʿH), my own virtues, and the fact that I was of the first (people) to embrace Islam. I was almost certain that they (the Muslims) would elect me (as his successor). ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf and I took an oath to listen and obey the person who was going to be elected as ʿUmar’s successor. Not soon thereafter did I notice him (ʿAbd al-Rahman) pledging his allegiance to ʿUthmān. After introspecting, I realised that the promise I made to obey the newly-elected successor was more important than my own desire of being the next khalīfah. And so, we pledged our allegiance to ʿUthmān. I fulfilled his due rights and acknowledged his right to be obeyed and followed. I served as a foot soldier in his army and remained ever-ready (for battle) whenever he called. In his presence, I even executed the ḥudūd (punishment) with my whip. Eventually, when he was martyred, I began introspecting (again); and no sooner did I realise that everyone had pledged their allegiance to me, the people of Makkah, Madinah, Kūfah, and Baṣrah. 1

1 Ibn ʿAsākir: Tārīkh Dimashq, 2/352

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī: Al-Maṭālib al-ʿĀliyah 4/294-296, after quoting this narration, Ibn Ḥajar remarks: “Al-Būṣrī says that this has been narrated by Ishāq with an authentic chain of narration; and both Abū Dāwūd and Nasāʾī also narrate it, albeit an abridged version.”
In *al-Ṣawāʾiq al-Muḥriqah fī Radd ‘alā Ahl al-Bidaʿ wa al-Zandaqah*, Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī writes the following:

Al-Bazzār narrates in his Musnad (with his chain of transmission) that ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (addressing a group of people) one day said: “Tell me, who do you think is the most courageous person?” The people exclaimed: “You!” He replied: “That is (partially) true; never have I duelled with anyone except that they were vanquished. But that alone does not make me the most courageous. So, I ask again: who is the most courageous?” They replied: “If that is the case, then we do not know! Please, you tell us!” He answered: “It is Abū Bakr. On the Day of Badr, we (the Ṣaḥābah) decided to make a hut for Nabī (to protect him from the enemy). We asked around if anyone was willing to stand-guard by the hut so as to protect the Rasūl of Allah. By Allah, not a single one of us was prepared to do so except Abū Bakr. With his sword unsheathed, Abū Bakr stood next to the blessed head of Nabī; if anyone tried to attack (the hut) he would first have to go through Abū Bakr. This person (referring to Abū Bakr) is the most courageous. Once, I saw Nabī being assaulted by the Quraysh. They were saying: “Are you the one who made (our) gods into one god?” By Allah, no one was brave enough to stand up to the Quraysh except Abū Bakr; he was the only one fending off the Quraysh and saying: “Woe unto all of you! Are you attacking a man for the (simple) reason that he says, ‘my Rabb is Allah’?” (The narrator continued) ʿAlī lifted the mantle he was wearing and began crying until his beard was sodden with tears. Thereafter, ʿAlī asked (everyone present): “Who do you think is better: the believer from the family of Firʿown or Abū Bakr?” Everyone remained silent. ʿAlī continued: “Why is nobody answering? By Allah, A sheer moment in the glorious life of Abū Bakr is better than a family member of Firʿown becoming a believer. The latter, surreptitiously brings faith (in Allah) and conceals it (out of fear of Firʿown), and the former (Abū Bakr), openly proclaims his faith (without fearing any ramifications from the Quraysh).”

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1 Ibn ʿAsākir also narrates that when Abū Bakr accepted Islam, he openly proclaimed his new faith and (immediately) began calling people to Allah and Nabī.
Imām Ahmad, Abū Ya’la al-Mowṣilī, and al-Ḥākim al-Nishāpūrī all narrate that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib said: “On the Day of Badr, Nabī said to Abū Bakr and I:

One of you has the angel Jibrīl on your side, and the other has Mīkā’īl; and Isrāfīl, a great angel, will be present in the ranks alongside you, overseeing and assisting you (in battle).\(^1\)

Dr. Mūsā al-Mūsawī writes in his book *al-Shī‘ah wa al-Taṣḥīḥ*:

… Let us see what Imām ‘Alī himself has to say regarding ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. (ʿAlī says :) “How great of a man was ʿUmar! He set the crooked straight; treated the ill; avoided strife at all costs; established the sunnah (of Nabī). He had very few shortcomings and left this world with a clean slate. He obeyed Allah and feared Him as He ought to be feared. When he died, he left everyone bewildered; and as such, people found themselves in different conditions: those already misguided had no hope of discovering the truth (i.e. after Umar’s death), and those already on the straight path could no longer embrace his own faith with full conviction and certitude as before (i.e. after Umar’s death).”\(^3\)

ʿAlī once mentioned that Nabī said:

اتقوا غضب عمر، فإن الله يغضب إذا غضب

Beware of upsetting ʿUmar; lest it causes Allah to become upset!\(^4\)

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1 *Al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Muḥriqah fī al-Radd ʿalā Ahl al-Bidaʿ wa al-Zandaqah*, p. 77
2 Dr. Mūsā al-Mūsawī is a Shī‘ī who follows the doctrine of Imāmah.
4 Al-Daylamī: *Musnad al-Firdows* 1/94
The Ṣaḥābī Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah once said:

After ʿUmar was buried, I so desired to hear ʿAlī speak about ʿUmar, so I went to him. It so happened that one day, he came out (of his house), wiping his head and beard (he had just taken a shower), wearing a robe; I had no doubt in my mind that the news of ʿUmar’s death reached him. He said: “May Allah’s infinite-mercy be with Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb! How truthful was Ḥantamah when she said: “He (referring to ʿUmar) left this world after acquiring the best thereof and abstaining from its evils.” By Allah, this statement of hers was not something she thought up on her own accord; rather, it was divine intuition (directly) from Allah!”

Imām Aḥmad narrates (with his chain of transmission) from Umm ʿUmar bint Hassān ibn Yazīd ibn Abī al-Ghusn; who narrates from her father (Ḥassān) who said:

I entered the Grand Masjid — the masjid of Kūfah — and ʿAlī was delivering a sermon before the people. Three times, he exclaimed at the top of his voice:

O people! O people! O people! You have transgressed the limits with regards to ʿUthmān. We are unto each other just as Allah says in the Qur’ān:

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِىْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلّٰ إِخْوَانًا عَلٰى سُرُرٰ مُّتَقٰـبِلِيْنَ

And We will remove whatever is in their breasts of resentment, (so they will be) brothers, on thrones facing each other.

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1 Ḥantamah was the mother of ʿUmar. Her full name is Ḥantamah bint Hishām ibn al-Mughīrah. [translator’s note]

2 Ibn al-Athīr: Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh 2/437

3 Umm ʿUmar bint Ḥassān was an old, truthful Muslimah.

4 Sūrah al-Ḥijr: 47

5 Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal: Faḍāʾil al-Ṣaḥābah 1/453
Al-Nazzāl ibn Saburah al-Hilālī, a famous senior-ranking Tābiʿī, says:

Once, we said to ʿAlī: “O Amīr al-Muʿminīn, tell us about ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān.” He replied: ‘He was that special individual, known as Dhū al-Nūrayn (the possessor of two lights) in the al-Mala’ al-ʿAlā (the Highest Heaven). He was the son-in-law of Nabī for two of his daughters. Nabī even guaranteed a house for him in Jannah.”

1 Ibn ʿAsākir:  Tārīkh Dimashq p. 42-43
‘Alī’s Reminiscence of the Ṣaḥābah and His Love and Affection Towards Them

Allah endowed the hearts of the Ṣaḥābah with a special form of love and affection for one another. Allah says in the Qur’ān:

وَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا نَفَقْتَ مَّآ أَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللّٰهَ أَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِنَّه عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ

And He brought together their hearts. If you had spent all that is in the earth, you could not have brought their hearts together; but Allah brought them together. Indeed, He is Exalted in Might and Wise.¹

The extent to which Allah united their hearts knew no bounds. For this reason, we find (in our history) the likes of ‘Alī, every now and then, reminiscing about those same Ṣaḥābah who passed on. He once said:

Observe, pay attention, and hold firmly onto the mannerisms of your Nabī’s family. Follow in their footsteps; for you shall neither be misguided therein nor will you ever return to ruin (through their guidance). If they sit, then sit; and if they jump, then jump (with them)! Do not transgress their limits; lest you be led astray, and do not lag behind them; lest you be destroyed.

I also saw the Ṣaḥābah of Nabī, and none amongst you can ever match them. They would awake in the morning dusty, with their hair dishevelled and unkempt after spending their nights standing (in ṣalāh) and prostrating before Allah; only to take rest by slightly tilting their cheeks (while in prostration) on to the ground. Their uncertainty about their final abode and end-result was such that it was as if they were standing on hot coals. Between their eyes and on their foreheads were protruding, blackened marks because of their lengthy prostrations; similar

¹ Sūrah al-Anfāl: 63
to the marks found on the knees of (white) goats. Whenever the name of Allah was mentioned, their eyes would fill up with tears, causing their chests to become soaked. They would tremble and shudder out of fear of Allah’s punishment and hope of His mercy like a tree would shake while being hit with fierce and violent winds.¹

In the same book, describing the Ṣaḥābah, ʿAlī once said:

By Allah, the outlook and farsightedness of the Ṣaḥābah was truly blessed! They were the epitomes of forbearance, champions of the truth; they never transgressed anyone’s rights and never did they desire rebellion. They marched forward in the path of Allah and they attained complete goodness and the everlasting bliss of the hereafter.²

In yet another place (in the same book), ʿAlī said after the events of Laylat al-Ḥarīr³:

Where have those (ref. to the Ṣaḥābah) gone who when invited to Islam accepted it sincerely; who read the Qur’ān and whole-heartedly, followed the commands it contained; who loved Islam as a she-camel loves her young one and when ordered to fight in defence of Islam, they willingly left their homes and families. Some of them died like martyrs and some survived the ordeal. Success never overjoyed them and death never made them despaired. Sites of human misery saddened their lives, constant absorption of their minds and bodies in performance of the duties towards Allah and men had made them look pale and haggard; and humility manifested itself from their behaviour (as against the vanity of pseudo-pious people). They were brethren unto me. They have gone (are dead). I am justified in desiring to meet them once again and to be sad at separation from them.⁴

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1 Al-Sharīf al-Rāḍī: *Nahj al-Balāghah* p. 132
3 Laylat al-Ḥarīr refers to a specific night in which an intense fight ensued during the Battle of Ṣiffīn. [Translator’s note]
4 *Nahj al-Balāghah* p. 91
On the Day of Ṣiffīn, after ʿAlī ordered his people to implement a ceasefire, he described the Ṣaḥābah of Nabī in the following way:

We (referring to the Ṣaḥābah together with Nabī used to (at times) be in battle with our own fathers, children, brothers, and uncles; and this did nothing to us but increase us in īmān and to strive (even) further. It also renewed our spirits in fighting the enemy. We also learnt ṣabr (patience), despite our anguish and suffering (at times). One of us would face-off with the enemy; like two stallions, they would compete with one another, each one trying his utmost to deliver the lethal blow; at times, we would get the better of our enemy, and at times, they would get the better of us. Once Allah recognised our sincerity (in fighting for His sake) He granted us His succour and the enemy was left in complete ignominy; thereby allowing Islam to completely establish its identity. I swear by my life, if we (the Ṣaḥābah) behaved like you people, no pillar of Islam would have been raised and the tree of īmān would not bear leaves. By Allah, you will exploit our blood and, as a result, face nothing but disgrace!

Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad narrates from his father (Muḥammad) that a man once said to ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib:

O Amīr al-Muʿminīn! Who was it that you were referring to in the khutbah (sermon) when you said: “O Allah! Reform us and mend our ways as You did with the (previous) rightly-guided khulafā’”? With teary-eyes, he exclaimed: “They are my beloveds, your uncles, Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. They were (leading) men from Quraysh and paragons of guidance. They were to be followed after the Rasūl of Allah. Whosoever emulated them was protected, and whoever followed in their footsteps was guided unto the ṣirāṭ mustaqīm (straight path). Whoever clung onto them and their normative practices was considered to be from Allah’s ḥizb (special) group and Allah’s group are truly the successful ones.”

1 Al-Sharīf Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥusaynī al-Wāṣṭī: Majmaʿ al-Aḥbāb wa Tadhkirat Ulu al-Bāb (Mukhtaṣar Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’) p. 162-164
It has been reported that ‘Alī  one day, passed by some masājid in the month of Ramaḍān that were lit with candles. Upon seeing the candles, ‘Alī  remarked:

May Allah illuminate the grave of ʿUmar just as He has illuminated our masājid.¹

Saʿīd ibn Zayd reported that ‘Alī  wept on the occasion of ʿUmar’s death. He was asked about it, to which he responded by saying:

My weeping is on account of my worry for Islam. The death of ʿUmar has left such an indelible gap in Islam that will remain unfilled until Qiyāmah.²

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¹ Al-Mizzī: Tahdhīb al-Kamāl 2/6-12
² Ibn Saʿd: Ṭabaqāt ibn Saʿd 3/372
ʿAlī’s Acknowledgement of the Previous Khulafā’

Dr. Mūsā al-Mūsawī writes in his book *al-Shī‘ah wa al-Taṣḥīḥ*:

Legitimate administration matters, shaping of the earthly Muslim community, and succession to Nabī Ḥ are among the many issues that ʿAlī addressed. ʿAlī acknowledged that the continuance of the Muslim polity with the acquiescence of the ummah after the demise of Nabī Ḥ was based on *shūrā* (mutual-consultation) and not divine revelation per se. He once said: “The reasons the community pledged their allegiance to me are based on the same ambit as Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān. The (legislative power) of *shūrā* belonged solely to the Muhājirīn and Anṣār. Such was their authority that if they decided upon a leader to administer the community’s affairs, it would be bona fide and sanctioned by all. If anyone defected or rebelled, all measures would be taken to restore order.”

ʿAlī was once asked about Abū Bakr and so he said:

Allah referred to him with the epithet *al-Ṣiddīq* (the truthful) via the blessed tongue of Nabī Ḥ and Jibrīl. He was the deputy of Nabī Ḥ. Nabī Ḥ was pleased with him to administer our religious affairs, and thus we are all pleased with him to administer our worldly affairs.

ʿAlī also said:

Nabī designated Abū Bakr to lead the congregation in ṣalāh. I was present that day – and in my full senses (fully aware of what was happening around me). Had Nabī willed he could have appointed

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1 Al-Sharīf al-Rāḍī: *Nahj al-Balāghah* 3/7
me (in place of Abū Bakr ʿABB), but he chose not to. Just as Allah ʿAL and His Rasūl ʿH are pleased with him (Abū Bakr ʿABB) to administer our religious affairs, we too, are pleased with him to govern our worldly affairs.1

In the Mustadrak of al-Ḥākim al-Nisāpūrī, the Ṣaḥābī — ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn ʿAwf ʿAWF — narrates the following incident:

During his khuṭbah he (Abū Bakr ʿABB) said: “By Allah, never once have I asked — publicly or in secret — Allah ʿAL for this position; nor did I ever aspire to be here. I have been entrusted with such a weighty affair and I possess neither the strength nor will-power to fulfil its obligations, save with Allah’s ʿAL succour.” ʿAlī and Zubayr replied: “We have no objections to the decision reached. Despite the fact that we were delayed2

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1 Op. cit. 1/159
2 Much has been made — primarily by the Rāfiḍah — concerning narrations which describe how both Zubayr ibn ʿAwwām and ʿAlī ʿA returned delayed pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr ʿABB. Almost all of those narrations, however, are not authentic; the one exception is a narration that was related by Ibn ʿAbbās ʿA, who said: “Verily ʿAlī, Zubayr, and others who were with them stayed behind in the house of Fāṭimah ʿSA. “ (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Towthīq fi Sīrah wa Ḥayāt al-Ṣiddīq pp. 98) They were there for a reason: they were in charge of making preparations for the burial of the Rasūl of Allah ʿH. Their primary duties involved washing Nabī ʿH and wrapping him in a shroud. This information is based, not on mere conjecture, but on a narration that was related by Sālim ibn ʿUbayd ʿA. According to that narration, Abū Bakr ʿABB said to ʿAlī ʿA and to the other members of Nabī’s ʿH household: “Busy yourselves with [the burial preparations of] your companion.” Abū Bakr ʿABB then ordered them to wash Nabī’s ʿH body. (Ibid)

It is important to understand that the Nabī ʿH had just died, and so, yes, some people had to concern themselves with the future course of the Muslim nation; but others had to busy themselves with making preparations for the Nabī’ s ʿH burial. As a result, it was on the day after Nabī’s ʿH death, which was Tuesday, that Zubayr ibn ʿAwwām and ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib ʿA pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr ʿABB. Abu Saʿīd al-Khudrī ʿA said:

When Abū Bakr climbed the pulpit, he looked at the faces of the people who were before him. Not finding Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām anywhere among the crowd, Abū Bakr summoned for him to come. When Zubayr came [a short while later], Abū Bakr said to him: “O cousin and helper of the Rasūl of Allah, do you want to break the stick of the Muslims... continued
in attending the consultation; we still regard Abu Bakr to be the most adept and deserving of this position; for was he not Nabī’s companion in the cave; did Nabī not appoint him to lead the congregation in ṣalāh while he was still alive? We fully acknowledge his excellence and superiority.”

... continued from page 28

[i.e. do you want to be the cause of disunity]?” Zubayr said: “There is no blame upon you [for what you say], O Khalīfah of the Rasūl of Allah.” after which he stood up and pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr. Abū Bakr then looked in the faces of the crowd, and, not finding Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit anywhere among them, summoned for him to come. When Ḥabīb came [short while later], Abū Bakr said: “O cousin of the Rasūl of Allah, do you want to break the stick of the Muslims [i.e. do you want to be the cause of disunity]?” Ḥabīb responded: “There is no blame upon you [for what you say], O Khalīfah of the Rasūl of Allah.” after which he stood up and pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr. (Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah 5/249, Ibn Kathīr ruled that this ḥadīth is authentic.)

This authentic narration was deemed so important by Imām Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj — the compiler of the second most authentic ḥadīth compilation, Ṣaḥīh Muslim — that he went to his teacher, Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq al-Khuzaymah, and asked him regarding it. Ibn al-Khuzaymah wrote out the ḥadīth for him and read it for him. Speaking figuratively, Imām Muslim said: “This ḥadīth is worth a badanah (a large cow that is slaughtered in Makkah, i.e. this ḥadīth is something of great value).” Ibn Khuzaymah responded: “This ḥadīth is not only equal to a badanah; instead, it is equal to a badarah (a bag that contains 1000 or 10 000 gold coins; or in other words, this ḥadīth is a priceless treasure of great importance). Commenting on Abū Saīd’s above-mentioned narration, Ibn Kathīr remarked: “This chain of narration is both authentic and correctly memorised.”

And the ḥadīth imparts very important information: Either one or two days after Nabī’s death, Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr. And this is certainly true, for (throughout the duration of Abu Bakr’s khilāfah), Ḥabīb always remained in the close company of Abū Bakr; in fact, he never missed performing a single ṣalāh behind him. (al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah 5/249)

According to another narration, Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit said:

‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib was in his house when a man came to him and said: “Abū Bakr has sat down in order for people to pledge allegiance (to him).” At that very moment, ‘Alī was dressed casually, wearing only a long shirt, with no lower garment, or robe above it. But he was in a rush, for he did not want to delay pledging allegiance to Abū Bakr; and so, without bothering to put on the rest of his attire, he went out the masjid. Once there, he sat down and asked someone to bring his robe for him. Some people brought it for him, and he wore it over his shirt. (Al-Khulaṣah’ al-Rāshidūn, al-Khālidī p. 56)

1 Al-Ḥākim al-Nisāpūrī: Mustadrak al-Ḥākim
The renowned Shīʿī scholar, Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭūsī recounts the following incident:

After the Battle of Jamal, 'Alī’s opposition assembled together and he said to them: “Everyone (here), including me, pledged their allegiance to Abū Bakr. Similar was the case with 'Umar, everyone (here) pledged their allegiance to him and I followed suit. This was also the case with 'Uthmān; I pledged my allegiance to him — while seated in my house — like everyone else. Now, without any hankering or imposition whatsoever, you have pledged your allegiance to me. The only request I have from everyone is that I be given the same deference and regard as they were given.”

Another famous Shīʿī scholar, Abū Jaʿfar al-Ṭabarsī transmits from Muḥammad al-Bāqir the fact that ‘Alī too, consented to Abū Bakr’s khilāfah; and that he also pledged his allegiance to him.

He continues and mentions that when Usāmah ibn Zayd, the beloved of Allah’s Rasūl, was on the verge of leaving (for an expedition), the news of Nabī’s death reached him and so he, and whoever was with him, immediately headed back to Madīnah. Upon arriving in Madīnah he noticed a huge throng gathered around Abū Bakr. He turned to ‘Alī and asked: “What is happening?” ‘Alī replied: “It is exactly as you see it.” So Usāmah asked: “Have you also pledged your allegiance (to him)?” ‘Alī replied: “Yes.”

‘Alī abolished the apocryphal claim of Waṣiyyah by saying:

I am better suited as a wazīr (minister) for you than as an amīr (leader).

1 Al-Ṭūsī: Al-Amālī 2/121
2 Muḥammad al-Bāqir is considered to be the fifth Imām according to the Shīʿī doctrine of Imāmah.
3 Al-Ṭabarsī: Al-Iḥtijāj p. 50.
4 The claim of Āṣiyyah is an integral concept within the Shīʿī tradition. It is claimed that Nabī, on his deathbed, appointed ‘Alī as his successor. [translator’s note]
‘Alī: A Counsellor and Advisor

High-ranking or otherwise, ‘Alī ﷺ would not shy away from offering people advice — even before being requested to do so — so as to assure Allah’s religion would remain in order. His valiant nature was such that he remained ever-ready to express his views with regards to matters that required consultation. He was an exemplary exhibition of the verse:

وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورٰى بَيْنَهُمْ

And whose affair is (determined by) consultation among themselves...¹

especially among the Ṣaḥābah ( μ charismatic who regarded him as ‘the door to Nabī’s city of knowledge.’

The following are a few examples which shed light on ‘Alī’s as both a counsellor and advisor:

1. When Abū Bakr became the khalīfah, and a faction within the Muslim ranks had apostatised, immediately, with his sword unsheathed, he headed for Dhū al-Qaṣṣah. ʿAlī ﷺ grabbed a hold of the reins of Abū Bakr’s horse and said: “O khalīfah of the Rasūl of Allah where are you headed? I will reiterate what Nabī said to you on the Day of Uḥud, “O Abū Bakr! Put your sword away. Do not cause us any distress; for by Allah, if anything (bad) happens to you Islam will become structure-less.”³

2. Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ² often used to seek ‘Alī’s advice in political matters, and other general affairs. Imām al-Ṭabarī mentions that when the Persians amassed at Nahāwand to launch an attack against the Muslims, ⁴

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1 Sūrah al-Shūrā: 38
2 One of the infamous tribes who withheld their zakāh after the demise of Nabī .
3 Ibn Athīr: Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh 2/264
4 Nahāwand is an area close to Hamadan, in Iran. The ensuing battle resulted in a decisive victory for Muslims and was the eventual cause for the Sassanid Empire’s collapse. [translator’s note]
ʿUmar 

gathered the Muslims and sought their counsel whether or not he should go out (and confront the enemy). Some of the Muslims (including some from the Electoral Shūrā) felt he should join the Muslims. He reiterated the question, to which ʿAlī answered:

O Amīr al-Muʿminīn! If you join (us) in fighting the people of Shām, the Romans will (also) set out and capture them. And if you join us against the people of Yemen, the people of Ḥabashah will (also) set out and capture them. And, if you partake in the battle with us here, the Arabs will attack you from all angles; thereby causing you to focus more attention on the ungeuarded places you left behind more than those before you. Maintain (these soldiers) in their respective cities and write a letter to the people of Baṣrah advising them to divide themselves into three groups: the first should be grounded in their home territory (nearby their families), the second should remain close to those who have an agreement with the Muslims so as to make sure they do not fall back on their agreement, and the third group should proceed ahead and assist their brethren in Kūfah; for if the Persians see you tomorrow they will surely say: “This is the chief of the Arabs...” and this will incite them even more! As for what you mentioned about them setting out against the Muslims, know very well that Allah detests their coming out more than you; and He is more capable (than you) to change that which He dislikes. With regards to their numbers, in the past, we never engaged (the enemy) based on numbers; rather, we fought on the basis of Allah’s support and assistance.

After hearing this, ʿUmar said: “This is the opinion I favour.”

3. At times, ʿUmar would seek rulings from ʿAlī pertaining to some of the more complex sharʿī rulings. He was also his political advisor par excellence. In fact, Imām al-Bukhārī narrates in his Ṣaḥīḥ on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās that ʿUmar said:

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1 The Electoral Shūrā consisted of six individuals: ʿAlī, ʿUthmān, Ṭalḥah ibn ʿUbayd Allāh, Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, Abd al-Rahmān ibn ʿAwf, and Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām. [translator’s note]

2 Al-Ṭabarī: Tārīkh al-Rusul 3/480
‘Alī ʿaṣma is our most knowledgeable person with regards to legal and judicial matters and Ubay ʿaṣma is our most knowledgeable with regards to the Qur’an.

Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī mentions in al-Riyāḍ al-Nādirah on the authority of Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī ʿaṣma, who asked ʿAlī ʿaṣma a question. Thereafter, Abū Sa‘īd ʿaṣma remarked:

O Abū al-Ḥasan (ref. to ʿAlī ʿaṣma)! I seek refuge with Allah ʿālum from living amongst a people in which you are not present.¹

Yaḥyā ibn ʿAqīl ʿaṣma said that whenever ʿUmar ʿaṣma would ask ʿAlī ʿaṣma a question, and ʿAlī ʿaṣma would provide a solution for him, ʿUmar ʿaṣma would say:

After you leave (this world) O ʿAlī, Allah ʿālum will not keep me alive.²

Ibn Saʿd ʿaṣima narrates on the authority of Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib ʿaṣima who said:

ʿUmar ʿaṣma used to seek protection (with Allah ʿālum) from a problem that should arise in such circumstances that ʿAlī ʿaṣma is not present (to assist).³

4. On one occasion, ʿUmar ʿaṣma consulted ʿAlī ʿaṣma about taking part in the march towards the Roman Empire. He (ʿAlī ʿaṣma) said:

Allah ʿālum has taken the responsibility for the followers of this religion to secure it from the enemy. He ʿālum assisted and defended the faithful when they were few (in number) and unable to protect and defend themselves. He ʿālum is Ever-Living and will never die! If you proceed

¹ Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: Al-Riyāḍ al-Nādirah 3/166
² Op. cit. 3/166
³ Ibn Saʿd: Ṭabaqāt ibn Saʿd 2/339
towards the enemy and clash with them and, Allah forbid, fall into some trouble, there will be no place or refuge for the Muslims to return to other than their remote cities. Therefore, you should send an experienced man and send with him capable people who are well-intentioned. If Allah grants you victory, then this is what you desired. If otherwise, you can serve as a support for the people and you can act as recourse for the Muslims.

5. Quoting *Nahj al-Balāghah*, the book *al-Shīʿah wa al-Taṣḥīḥ* records the following incident:

On another occasion, the khalīfah ʿUmar sought the advice of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib whether he should — among others — go out and confront the Persians. ʿAlī advised him against it and said: “The Arabs today, even though small in number are strong because of Islam and strong because of (their) unity. You should remain their leader and rotate the ‘mill’ (of government) with (the assistance of) the Arabs, and be their foundation. Avoid (direct) battle; for the Persians, if they see you tomorrow they will say: “This is the chief of Arabs. If we do away with him (today) we will be in peace.” In doing so, this will provoke them and they will be even more eager to attack you. As for what you mentioned with regards to their (large) numbers; in the past, we did not fight based on the strength of numbers; rather, we fought on the basis of Allah’s support and assistance.”

6. One day, ʿAlī approached ʿUthmān and said to him:

The people are behind me and they have made me to represent between you and themselves; but, by Allah, I do not know what to say to you. I know nothing (in this manner) which you do not know, nor can I lead you to any matter of which you are not aware. You certainly know what we know, we have not come to know anything before you which we can tell you;

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1 *Nahj al-Balāghah* 192
2 Mūsā al-Musawī: *Al-Shīʿah wa al-Taṣḥīḥ* p. 39
nor did we learn anything in secret which we should convey to you. You have seen as we have seen and you have heard as we have heard. You sat in the company of Nabī just as we did. Ibn Abī Quḥāfah (Abū Bakr) and Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (ʿUmar) were no more responsible for acting righteously than you; since you are, through kinship, nearer to Nabī than both of them; and you also have a relationship with him — through marriage of his daughters — which they do not hold. Fear Allah; for, by Allah, you are not being shown anything as if you are blind or being apprised of anything as if you are ignorant. The path is clear and the signposts of this dīn are (clearly) visible…”

1 Ibn Athīr: Al-Kāmil fi al-Tārīkh 2/522
Alī: A Defender on All Fronts

Allah made ʿAlī a defender on all fronts. Not only did he help Allah’s religion, he aided Nabī and defended his brothers, the Ṣaḥābah from anybody who attempted to denigrate their lofty rank and provoke civil strife. He detested disunity (among the believers); thereby completely shutting the door on Shayṭān and his army, and cutting the possibility of them slipping in (and causing disunity). He was the epitome of all good qualities for the simple reason that he always kept the community’s interests at heart, over and above everything else. He expended all his efforts to maintain unity and reunite people (whenever the need arose); his position in defending ʿUthmān is but one example that clearly illustrates this point. Al-Sayyid ʿAlawī Balfaqīh mentions in his book, Min Aʿqāb Biḍʿah al-Muḥammadiyyah al-Ṭāhirah:

Abū Jaʿfar al-Anṣārī says: “I entered upon ʿUthmān together with the adamant and obstinate others. When they killed him, I immediately exited and found myself extremely frustrated, so much so that my entire insides became full of hatred and anger (towards the killers of ʿUthmān). I entered the masjid and found a man sitting with a group of people around him. He was wearing a black turban. He said to me: “Woe unto you! What is with you?” I said: “By Allah, they have just finished killing him (i.e. ʿUthmān).” He immediately remarked: “May destruction be their lot right until the end!” When I took a closer look at the man I realised it was ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib. When the news had reached him, in a stupor, he grabbed his son, Muḥammad, by the waist, exited the masjid, and headed straight for ʿUthmān’s house. He told his son: “Leave! You are not safe here!” Upon entering ʿUthmān’s house, he found his body slain. After reading “To Allah do we belong and unto Him shall we return,” he exclaimed to his two sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn: “How could he have possibly been killed when you two were right by the door? Return to the door and stand guard with your swords. Do not allow anyone to enter!” A group of Ṣaḥābah also sent their children to stand guard by the door of ʿUthmān’s house preventing anyone from entering and requesting
from ʿAlī ʿa.s. to bring Marwān out of the house. Upset and annoyed with the people around him, ʿAlī ʿa.s. decided to go home. Upon entering his house, he closed the doors behind him and locked the doors shut (to be alone and not entertain anyone).”

In the same book, Shaddād ibn Aws ʿa.s. is reported to have said:

When the siege around the house of ʿUthmān ʿa.s. precipitated, I saw ʿAlī ʿa.s. outside of the house. He was wearing Nabī’s ʿa.s. turban and his sword was unsheathed. In front of him were a group of Ṣaḥābah ʿa.s. (both Muhājirūn and Anṣār), namely: Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar ʿa.s., they were all trying to break up the people and curb the chaos. They (the Ṣaḥābah ʿa.s.) entered the house and ʿAlī ʿa.s. said to ʿUthmān ʿa.s.: “Al-Salām ʿalaykum, O Amīr al-Muʾminīn! Verily, Nabī ʿa.s. did not undertake this matter except that he encountered hostility and aggression from all angles. What I see is these people will (eventually) try to kill you; will you not allow us then, to confront them (first)?” ʿUthmān ʿa.s. replied: “By the rights that Allah ʿa.s. has over you and by the authority I have been vested with (over you), I beg of you not to spill any blood for my sake or in my name!” ʿAlī ʿa.s. repeated his request and ʿUthmān ʿa.s. responded to him in the same manner (as the first time). Thereafter, I saw ʿAlī ʿa.s. outside the house and he was saying: “O Allah! You know very-well that we tried our utmost best (to persuade ʿUthmān ʿa.s.).” After uttering this statement he returned back to the masjid.2

When ʿAlī ʿa.s. entered Kūfah, a man approached him and began rebuking ʿUthmān ʿa.s. for the (simple) reason that he ordered for everyone to follow one muṣḥaf (Qur’ān). ʿAlī ʿa.s. retorted:

Keep quiet! He only did so after consulting us! If I were in his position, I would have treaded the same path!3

1 Al-Sayyid ʿAlawī Balfaqīh: Min Aʿqāb Biḍʿah al-Muḥammadiyyah al-Ṭāhirah 1/190
2 Ibid, 1:194.
It has been narrated that Muḥammad ibn Ḥāṭib, a Ṣaḥābī of Nabī, said: “The people will ask us about ʿUthmān tomorrow what shall we say (to them)?” ʿAlī told him:

ʿUthmān was from those people who “…believed in Allah and carried-out virtuous actions; thereafter had fear in Allah and believed; thereafter he feared Allah further and did good.”

In another place, Muḥammad ibn Ḥāṭib said:

I heard ʿAlī saying: “ʿUthmān was from those (people) whom Allah says about them in the Qur’ān:

وَأَمَّنَّا وَعَمَّلُوا الصَّلَحَتِ وَمِنْ أَنفَقَ وتَأَمَّنُوا وَأَنفَقُوا وَأَمْهَضُوا وَأَحْسَنُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ المُحْسِنِينَ

(they) believe and do righteous deeds, and then fear Allah and believe, and then fear Allah and do good; and Allah loves the doers of good.”

1 ʿAlī referred to ʿUthmān by quoting verse 93 of Sūrah al-Mā‘īdah.
2 Ibn ʿAsākir: Tārīkh Dimashq 475
Imām Aḥmad: Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah 1/474
3 Sūrah al-Mā‘īdah: 93
'Alī’s Respect for Umm al-Mu’mīnīn, Sayyidah ʿĀ’ishah

After Sayyidah ʿĀ’ishah’s camel had stumbled and fallen down during the Battle of Jamal, both Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr and ʿAmmār picked up the howdah. ʿAlī approached her and asked: “Are you okay, O Mother (of the Believers)?” She replied: “I am okay.” They supplicated for each other and departed ways shortly thereafter:1

Another report mentions that ʿAlī disrobed two men and who were cursing Sayyidah ʿĀ’ishah. He sentenced them to one hundred lashes each (for blasphemy).2

After the Battle of Jamal, ʿAlī prepared for Sayyidah ʿĀ’ishah all her essentials for travelling back to Madīnah. He sent back with Sayyidah ʿĀ’ishah all individuals who had come out in support of her, excluding those who wanted to remain behind (in Baṣrah). He sent her back to Madīnah under military escort headed by her brother, Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr, one of ʿAlī’s commanders, alongside forty well-known ladies of Baṣrah to accompany her. On the day of departure, ʿAlī stood by Sayyidah ʿĀ’ishah — as the people watched — and after bidding everyone farewell, she said:

O my son! Let us not criticise or accuse one another. Whatever occurred in the past between us was simply like a relationship between a lady and her in-laws. Despite our differences, he (referring to ʿAlī) is an exceptional individual.

ʿAlī responded:

She has spoken the truth. There was nothing between us save that; and she, after all, is the wife of your Nabī in this world and the hereafter.3

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1 Ibn al-Athīr: Al-Kāmil fi al-Tārīkh 2/610
2 Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī 4/540; Al-Kāmil fi al-Tārīkh 2/614
3 Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī 4/544; Al-Kāmil fi al-Tārīkh 2/614
ʿAlī’s Disassociation From Anyone Who Curses the Ṣaḥābah

The Ṣaḥābī Nu‘mān ibn Bashīr narrates the following incident:

Whilst sitting in the masjid of Kūfah, ʿAlī overheard us one day speaking about ʿUthmān, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr. He immediately turned his attention to us and asked: “What is it that you speak about?” We replied: “We were speaking (out) about ʿUthmān, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr. We thought you were asleep.” ʿAlī then recited unto us the following verse:

أُوْلٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُوْنَ
ۙ
إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِّنَّا الْحُسْنٰٓى

Indeed, those for whom the best (reward) has preceded from Us – they are from it far removed.¹

“This verse applies to ʿUthmān, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr; and I am also from their party,” said ʿAlī. He then recited the verse:

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِىْْ صُدُوْرِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلٰى سُرُرٰ مُّتَقٰـبِلِينَ

And We will remove whatever is in their breasts of resentment, (so they will be) brothers, on thrones facing each other.²

“This, too, applies to ʿUthmān, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr; and I am also from their party,” said ʿAlī.³

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¹ Sūrah al-Ambiyā’: 101
² Sūrah al-Ḥijr: 47
³ Tārīkh Dimashq p. 472; Musnad Aḥmad 2/618
⁴ In another narration (also narrated by Aḥmad in his Musnad), after hearing ʿAlī recite these verses, a man stood up and said: “O Amīr al-Muʾminīn, surely Allah is more just than that!” Thereafter, the narrator says that ʿAlī exclaimed: “If they [the verses] do not apply to us, then to whom do they apply?”
Mutual Love Among the Khulafā’

As is the wont of bosom friends, ‘Alī - as the leader of Nabī’s family - readily accepted gifts from the other khulafā’, including Abū Bakr who once gifted him with Ṣahbā, a concubine who was captured during the battle of ‘Ayn al-Tamr. The khulafā’ were the epitome of mutual-love and harmony and they shared an unbreakable bond of brotherhood, as illustrated by the many examples in history.

Ibn ‘Asākir narrates (with his chain of transmission) that ‘Alī entered upon the shrouded corpse of Abū Bakr and said:

There is no one who has left this world to meet Allah more beloved to me than this shrouded corpse (referring to Abū Bakr).²

Imām al-Ṭabarānī (with his chain of transmission) narrates that ‘Alī once said:

By Him who controls my life, never once did we (the Ṣaḥābah) vie with one another in acts of good except that Abū Bakr beat us.³

‘Alī was somewhat also indebted to Abū Bakr, since he assisted ‘Alī and even acted as a mediator for him in his marriage with Fāṭimah. He was also of those present — upon the Nabī’s request — at his wedding.

Shaykh al-Ṭā’ifah, Abū Ja’far al-Ṭūsī — a famous Shīṭ scholar — describes this event as follows, on the authority of al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Mazāḥim:

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¹ Ṣahbā, also known as Umm Ḥabīb bint Rabīah, was one of the concubines that were captured from Taghlib. She was captured during Abū Bakr’s khilāfah, under the administration of Khālid ibn al-Walīd. She had two children (from ‘Alī) — as mentioned in the books of the Shīṭ: ʿUmar and Ruqayyah. See Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah 2/718.
² Imām al-Sūyūṭī: Tārīkh al-Khulafā’
³ Tārīkh al-Khulafā’, al-Sūyūṭī references this narration to al-Ṭabarānī in his Mu’jam al-Awsaṭ and al-Hindī in Kanz al-’Ummāl.
I heard 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib saying: “Abū Bakr and 'Umar came to me (one day) and said, ‘Only if you could go to Nabī and mention Fāṭimah to him (i.e. for the sake of marriage).’ So I went to Nabī. When he saw me he immediately smiled and said, ‘O 'Alī! Why have you come, how can I help you?’ I began mentioning to him some of my (exclusive) merits, such as: my familial bonds with him, the fact that I was of the first to accept Islam, the assistance I provided (for the sake of Islam) and my fighting in the cause of Allah. He responded to me by saying, ‘O 'Alī! Everything you said is true; in fact, you are even more valued and cherished than all those things that you have just mentioned.’ I said to him, ‘Please accept my proposal for Fāṭimah.’”

Not only did Abū Bakr mediate the marriage between 'Alī and Fāṭimah, he also encouraged him and even assisted him with whatever was required for him to get married. Abū Ja’far al-Ṭūsī narrates the following:

'Alī sold his armour and with the money earned after selling it he brought it to Nabī. Nabī took hold of the money with both of his hands. Thereafter, he gave it to Abū Bakr and said to him, “Purchase some clothes and household furniture for Fāṭimah with this money.” Nabī sent 'Ammār ibn Yāsir and some other Ṣaḥābah with him. They went to the market and whatever they wanted to buy they would first show it to Abū Bakr. If he approved, only then would they go ahead and purchase the item. When they finished, Abū Bakr carried a few things back (to show Nabī) and the other Ṣaḥābah carried the rest.

Abū Bakr and a group of others were also present at the nikāh, as indicated in the following incident narrated by al-Khawārizmī, Mullā Bāqir al-Majlisī and al-Arbilī:

After Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and Sa’d ibn Mu‘ādh sent ‘Alī to the Nabī (to propose for his daughter), they waited patiently in the masjid for his

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1 Abū Ja’far al-Ṭūsī. *Al-Amālī* 1/38
2 Op. cit. 1/39
return. They anticipated a positive response from Nabī ﷺ. To their delight, ’Alî returned (after Nabī ﷺ) accepted his proposal) and said: “I jubilantly left the Nabī’s presence and soon thereafter I met up (on the way back) with Abū Bakr and ’Umar. They asked me: “What happened?” I replied: “Nabī ﷺ accepted my proposal!” Upon hearing the news, the two of them became overjoyed and returned back to the masjid with me. With his blessed face glimmering out of happiness, Nabī ﷺ arrived. He called Bilāl (who was nearby), to which Bilāl responded: “Labbayk (at your service), O Nabī of Allah!” Nabī ﷺ said to him: “Gather the Muhājirīn and Anṣār.” After everyone was gathered, Nabī ﷺ ascended the mimbar (pulpit). After praising Allah ﷻ, he announced: “O people! Jibrīl came to me and informed me that Allah ﷻ gathered His angels at al-Bayt al-Maʿmūr (the Kaʿbah of the Heavens) and made them witness that He married His slave, Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Nabī, to ’Alî ibn Abī Ṭālib. Allah ﷻ then commanded me to marry her off here (i.e. in this world) in front of you (as witnesses).”

’Alî ﷺ did not forget everything the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ did for him. He even named his children after (some of) them, including: Abū Bakr, ’Umar, and ’Uthmān. In fact, ’Alî ﷺ was not the only ‘imām’ to have named his children after the four rightly-guided khulafā’; In fact, the other ‘A’imah’, including Ḥasan and Ḥusayn ﷺ, also named their children after Abū Bakr and ’Umar ﷺ.

’Alî and ’Umar ﷺ also had a very close relationship with each other. As mentioned earlier, ’Umar would, at times, consult ’Alî ﷺ with regards to certain judicial matters. Imām al-Bukhārī narrates in his Ṣaḥīḥ from Abū Mulaykah, who heard Ibn ’Abbās saying:

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3 Al-Ṭabarsī. Iʿlām al-Warā, p. 213.
* This tradition of members from the Ahl al-Bayt naming their children after the four rightly-guided khilafahs has continued up until today.
ʿUmar had been placed on his bed and the people gathered around him supplicating and praying for him before he was removed (for burial). I was among them. I was startled when a man took hold of my shoulders; it was ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib. He asked Allah to show him mercy and said: “You have not left behind anyone I would prefer to encounter with the like of your actions. By Allah, I used to think that Allah would put you with your two companions. I thought this because oftentimes I heard Nabī say, ‘Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and I entered, and Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and I left...’”

ʿAlī even married his daughter, Umm Kulthūm, to ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Imām Aḥmad narrates in his Musnad, as well as al-Ḥākim (with an authentic chain — as agreed upon by al-Dhahabī) on the authority of Jābir ibn ʿAbd Allāh who once heard ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb saying to the people, after having married the daughter of ʿAlī:

Will you not congratulate me? For I heard Nabī saying:

بِتَعْطِيلِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ كُلُّ سَبْبٍ وَنَسْبٍ إِلَّا سَبْبِي وَنَسْبِي

On the Day of Judgement, all worldly avenues and family ties will be cut-off except for those avenues by which I was imitated, and anyone that holds family ties with me.

ʿUthmān also played a major role in assisting ʿAlī with his marriage to Fāṭimah. He even provided him with all necessary spending. ʿAlī himself mentioned one day:

When I approached Nabī to propose to Fāṭimah, he said to me: “Sell your armour and whatever you get from it, give it to me so I can purchase for you and Fāṭimah whatever is required.” I took my armour to the marketplace and ended up selling it for four hundred dirhams to ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān. When the two of us exchanged the goods (i.e. the armour for the dirhams) ʿUthmān said to me: “O Abū al-Ḥasan! Please

accept this (armour) as a gift (even though I just purchased it from you)."
I left to meet Nabī ﷺ with both the four hundred dirhams and my original armour. After I presented it (both the dirhams and the armour) to Nabī ﷺ and explained what ʿUthmān ﷺ did, Nabī ﷺ supplicated for him.¹

Nabī ﷺ also made him a witness — among others — to ‘Alī’s ﷺ marriage to Fāṭimah ﷺ. The Shīʿah narrate from Anas ﷺ who said that Nabī ﷺ told him:

انطلق فادع لي أبا بكر وعمر وعثمان ... وبعددهم من الأنصار

Go and call Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, and ʿUthmān ﷺ and a group from the Anṣār.

Anas ﷺ said: “I went and called them. After they arrived, Nabī ﷺ said (to those present):

إني أشهدكم أني قد زوجت فاطمة من علي على أربعمائة مثقال من فضة

I make everyone (here) a witness that I have married off Fāṭimah to ʿAlī for the weight of four hundred mithqāls² of silver.³

Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq ﷺ is also on record for explaining the distinct position ʿUthmān ﷺ held; his trustworthiness, sincerity, and loyalty (in serving) Nabī ﷺ. He even acknowledges that ʿUthmān ﷺ had certain distinct privileges or honours that no one else had; specifically, the fact that Nabī ﷺ represented ʿUthmān ﷺ on his behalf in the famous story of Nabī’s settlement (with the kuffār) at Ḥudaybiyyah.

¹ Al-Khawārizmī: Al-Manāqib p. 252, 253
Al-Arbīlī: Kashf al-Ghummah 1/359
Al-Majlisī: Biḥār al-Anwār 10/39, 40

² Four hundred mithqāls of silver is equal to approximately 1457 grams of silver. [translator’s note]

³ Al-Manāqib p. 252, Kashf al-Ghummah 1/358, Biḥār al-Anwār 10/38
Ja'far al-Ṣādiq ٍ says:

So Nabī ﷺ sent for him (i.e. ʿUthmān ʿ) and said: “Go to the believers among your people and give them glad tidings about what Allah ṣ has promised me on the Conquest of Makkah.” When ʿUthmān ʿ left he met Abān ibn Saʿīd and this caused him to delay slightly. ʿUthmān ʿ armed himself and found them involved in a scuffle. Suhayl ibn ʿAmr was seated next to Nabī ﷺ and ʿUthmān ʿ was near the barracks of the mushrikīn. The Muslims pledged their allegiance to Nabī ﷺ and he ʿ placed one of his (own) hands on top the other to indicate ʿUthmān’s ʿ pledge as well. The Muslims rejoiced: “Congratulations to ʿUthmān! He made ṭawāf around the Kaʿbah, completed saʿī of Ṣafā and Marwah and (successfully) completed his ʿumrah. Nabī ﷺ said: “He could not have done so.” When ʿUthmān ʿ (eventually) arrived, Nabī ﷺ asked him: “Did you make ṭawāf?” ʿUthmān ʿ answered: “How could I make ṭawāf and Nabī ﷺ has yet to do so?” ʿUthmān ʿ then went on and mentioned the entire story (to Nabī ﷺ).¹

¹ Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī: Rowḍat al-Kāfī 8/325, 326
Examples From the Khulafā’ of Love and Veneration for the Ahl al-Bayt

Maḥmūd Saʿīd Mamdūḥ writes in Ghāyat al-Tabjīl wa Tark al-Qaṭ’ bī al-Tafḍīl in the chapter concerning Abū Bakr:  

He was an ardent-admirer of the Ahl al-Bayt and would hold them in high-esteem. It is narrated in the Ṣaḥīḥ of Imām al-Bukhārī that once ʿAlī completed his prayer and said to Abū Bakr (who was seated in close proximity to him): “O Abū Bakr, we fully acknowledge your virtue,” thereafter ʿAlī began mentioning their (the Ahl al-Bayt’s) due-rights and connection with Nabī. Abū Bakr responded by saying: “By Him whose hand holds my soul, upholding a relationship with the Nabī’s family is dearer to me than upholding relations with my own family.”

In another narration (also in al-Bukhārī’s Ṣaḥīḥ) on the authority of ibn ʿUmar, Abū Bakr is reported to have said:

“Take care of Muḥammad by looking after his family.”


When Fāṭimah became ill, Abū Bakr came to visit her. Upon arrival, he sought permission to enter her house. ʿAlī (who was also in the house) told Fāṭimah: “Abū Bakr is at the door; he is requesting to come in and visit you.” Fāṭimah responded: “Is it ok if I grant him permission (to enter)?” ʿAlī said: “Of course!” And so, after Fāṭimah permitted him to enter, Abū

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī
2 Ibid
3 Maḥmūd Saʿīd Mamdūḥ: Ghāyat al-Tabjīl wa Tark al-Qaṭ’ bī al-Tafḍīl p. 271
Bakr began conciliating with her, saying: “By Allah, I did not sacrifice my home, wealth, family, and relatives except for the pleasure of Allah، His Rasūl، and his family.” He continued until she became pleased.

The relationship between the Ahl al-Bayt and the khulafā’ was a closely-knit one. In fact, even their extended families were close to each other. Abū Bakr’s wife, Asmā’ bint ʿUmays, attended to the Nabī’s daughter, Fāṭimah, during her sickness that eventually led to her demise. Asmā’ was with her until she breathed her last. Even the books of the Shī‘ah affirm this fact. We find, for example, Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭūsī narrates:

‘Alī himself used to tend to her (i.e. Fāṭimah) and Asmā’ bint ʿUmays would assist him.

In Jilā’ al-ʿUyūn the following narrations are to be found:

1. Fāṭimah directed Asmā bin ʿUmays with regards to the procedure of her (eventual) burial and shrouding. Once the funeral took place, Asmā’ performed the burial and shrouding as per her directions.

2. She (referring to Asmā’ bint ʿUmays) was with Fāṭimah until her final breath. In fact, she informed ‘Alī when she passed away.

It is mentioned in Kashf al-Ghummah — another Shī‘ī source — that “Asmā’ bint ʿUmays was (also) involved in washing her body.”

In the book Rashfat al-Ṣādī min Baḥr Faḍā’il Banī al-Nabī al-Hādī, Abū Bakr Shihāb al-Dīn al-ʿAlawī al-Ḥaḍramī narrates on the authority of Yaḥyā ibn Sa‘īd; who

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1 For an explanation of this incident, see footnote 44.
2 Majma’ al-ʿAḥbāb wa Tadhkirat Ulu al-Albāb – Mukhtāṣar Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’ 1/265
3 Al-Ṭūsī: Al-Amālī 1/107
4 Jilā’ al-ʿUyūn p. 235, 242
6 Kashf al-Ghummah 1/503
narrates from ʿUbayd ibn Ḥusayn:

(One day) Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī sought permission to enter the house of ʿUmar ʿAbd Allāh. Permission was not granted and so he waited for him (outside). Sometime later, ʿUmar’s son, ʿAbd Allāh came and also sought permission to enter (his father’s house), but permission was also not granted to him. Ḥusayn remarked: “If ibn ʿUmar was not given permission (to enter) I surely will not be granted permission.” And so he also left. Sometime later, ʿUmar came out and said: “I need to see Ḥusayn!” He was called in the presence of ʿUmar ʿAbd Allāh and said: “O Amīr al-Muʾminīn! I sought permission to enter (your house) and permission was not granted; and so I sat down, waiting. Soon thereafter, your son, ʿAbd Allāh also sought permission to enter (your house) and permission was not granted to him as well. But he left immediately thereafter I said to myself: ‘If ibn ʿUmar was not given permission (to enter) I surely will not be granted permission,’ and so I left.’ ʿUmar said: “You have more of a right to enter than he does! After Allah, who else causes peoples hair to stand except for you (referring to the Ahl al-Bayt). Whenever you come (to visit), do not take permission to enter!”

In the same book (Rashfat al-Šādī min Baḥr Faḍāʾil Banī al-Nabī al-Hādī) the following incident is mentioned:

Some wealth was brought to ʿUmar that required distribution. He distributed the wealth by giving to both Ḥasan and Ḥusayn first. Surprised, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar, ʿUmar’s son, turned to his father and said: “I deserve to be given a share (from this wealth) before anybody else because of my familial relation with you, as the khalīfah (i.e. because I am your son).” ʿUmar said: “Do you have a father similar to theirs (referring to ʿAlī), or a grandfather similar to their grandfather (referring to Nabī) so that I may give preference to you over others?”

Ibn ʿAbbās is reported to have said:

ʿUmar loved Ḥasan and Ḥusayn and he would give preference to them over his own son (ʿAbd Allāh).¹

ʿUmar once said to Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwām:

Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī is ill; will you not visit him? Do you not know that to visit (the ill) from Banū Hāshim is obligatory and to visit others voluntary.²

ʿUmar held in high-esteem the Ahl al-Bayt; even more than member of his own family (including himself). Whenever there was something available to be distributed, he would prefer them over his family. Historians mention that ʿUmar, whenever any gifts or earnings came to the bayt al-māl and required distribution, he would commence with the Banū Hāshim because of their close familial relationship with Nabī and because of his added respect for the Ahl al-Bayt.

The Shīʿī historian al-Yaʿqūbī mentions the following incident in his book, Tārīkh al-Yaʿqūbī:

After ʿUmar established a department of registration (wherein the names of the entire populace was kept) and, in the year 20 A.H he stipulated the various allowances that people would be eligible for, he remarked: “The wealth has accumulated.” He then called ʿAqīl ibn Abī Ṭālib, Makhramah ibn Nowfal, and Jubayr ibn Muṭʿim ibn Nowfal ibn ʿAbd Manāf (all relatives of ʿAlī) and said to them: “Write everyone’s name according to their positions, and begin with the tribe of ʿAbd Manāf.” ʿAlī’s was the first to be written and he was allotted five thousand; thereafter his two sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, they were each allotted three thousand; and he stipulated four thousand for himself...


² Ibn ʿAdī: Al-Kāmil 2/155
The first wealth that was used in this new scheme was the money Abū Hurayrah brought back from Bahrain. It totalled seven hundred thousand dirhams. Upon receiving this money, ʿUmar said: “Write everyone’s name down according to their positions, and begin with ʿAbd Manāf; thereafter Abū Bakr and his people; and thereafter ʿUmar and his people.” Eventually, when ʿUmar looked at the register he remarked: “By Allah, I only wish that my familial relationship with Nabī ﷺ was similar to the way these names on this register are written. But alas, the order cannot change; keep the order of the register according to those closest to Nabī ﷺ, then the next closest, until you eventually put ʿUmar’s name according to where Allah ﻪ ﻪ has placed him.”

1 Al-Yaʿqūbī: Tārīkh al-Yaʿqūbī 2'/153
2 Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd narrates that when ʿUmar ṣallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam was contemplating the order in which the people should receive their respective allowances, he said: “I will begin with the immediate family of Nabī ﷺ; then those closest to him; and then those closest to him.” And so he began (distributing) with Banū Hāshim first, and then Banū ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, and then Banū ʿAbd Shams and Nowfal, thereafter the remaining tribes of Quraysh.
See Nahj al-Balāghah 3/113, 114


The Ahl al-Bayt and the Khulafā’

Imām al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī narrates that Nabī said:

إن آيا بكر مني منزلة السمع

The position of Abū Bakr to me is like the ears (on a body).

Muḥammad ibn Ḥāṭib said:

One day, ʿUthmān’s name was mentioned in the presence of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. They replied: "Alī himself is coming (now) and he will inform you about him.” Soon thereafter, ‘Alī appeared and said (about ʿUthmān): “He was from those who fear Allah and believe and do righteous deeds, and then fear Allah and believe, and then fear Allah and do good; and Allah loves the doers of good.”

Ḥasan used to hold both Abū Bakr and ʿUmar in the highest regard; to such an extent that when he abdicated his khilāfah and pledged allegiance to Muʿāwiyah, one of the conditions he imposed upon Muʿāwiyah was that he should deal and judge both according to the tenets of the Qur’ān, Sunnah, and the normative practices of the previous rightly-guided and pious khulafā’.

In al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Muḥriqah fī al-Radd ʿalā Ahl al-Bidaʿ wa al-Zandaqah of ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī the following incident is narrated by Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib:

When Abū Bakr was on his last, he called for his daughter ʿĀ’ishah and said: “O ʿĀ’ishah! Please have a look at all of the things we used since we were put in charge of the Muslims’ affairs: the clothes we used to wear, the camels we used to drink from, the cooking utensils, etc. These were things that we used to take benefit from; be sure to return them all to ʿUmar.”

1 Ibn Bābūwayh al-Qummī: ʿUyūn al-Akhbār 1/313
2 ʿAbbās al-Qummī: Muntahā al-Ᾱmāl 2/212
When Abū Bakr passed away, ‘Ā’ishah carried out her father’s bequest and returned all of the goods they used to use to ‘Umar. Immediately upon receiving the goods ‘Umar exclaimed: “May Allah have mercy on you Abū Bakr! You left an indelible legacy behind you!”

Imām al-Dāraquṭnī narrates from Imām Ja’far al-Ṣādiq, from him father Muḥammad al-Bāqir that one day; a man came to his father (i.e. Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn) and asked him: “What do you think about Abū Bakr?” Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn replied: “Are you asking about al-Ṣiddīq (the truthful one)?” Astonished, the man remarked: “Do you (also) refer to him as al-Ṣiddīq?” Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn replied: “Woe unto you! The Rasūl of Allah, the Muhājirīn, and the Anṣār all referred to him as al-Ṣiddīq! Whosoever does not consider Abū Bakr to be al-Ṣiddīq then Allah will attach no credibility to him in this world and the next.” The man said: “After that, I left and there remained no more rancour and hatred in my heart for both Abū Bakr and ‘Umar.”

Ḥāfiẓ ‘Umar ibn Shabbah narrates from Kathīr:

One day I (Kathīr) asked Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī: “Did Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ever usurp any of your rights?” Astonished, he replied: “Of course not! Not even the amount equal to a mustard seed!” I then asked: “May Allah sacrifice me for your sake! Should I then entrust them (i.e. with my affairs)?” He replied: “Entrust them with your affairs of this world and the next.”

In another narration (also with the same chain of transmission from al-Daraquṭnī) Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn is reported to have reprimanded a group of people who were speaking ill of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān. He asked them:

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1 Al-Ṣawāʿiq al-Muḥriqah fī al-Radd ʿAlā Ahl al-Bidʿah wa al-Zandaqah p. 248; also see al-Ṭabaqāt, al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr, Tārīkh al-Khulafā’.  
2 Tārīkh Dimashq, Siyar ’Alām al-Nubalā’, al-Hujjah  
3 Ṭabaqāt ibn Saʿd 5/321, Mīzān al-ʿItidāl 4/161
Are you of those Muhājirīn described by the verse:

“For the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and their properties, seeking bounty from Allah and (His) approval and supporting Allah and His Rasūl. Those are the truthful.”?¹

They replied: “No, we are not.” Then are you perhaps from those Anṣār who were described by the verse:

“And those who were settled in al-Madīnah and (adopted) the faith before them. They love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their breasts of what the emigrants were given but give (them) preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.”?²

You disassociated yourselves from being one of these two groups and I bear witness that you are not those (of the third group) mentioned in the verse:

“Our Rabb, forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the faith, and leave not, in our hearts, rancour against those who have believed. Our Rabb, Thou art indeed Most Kind, Most Merciful.”?³

¹ Sūrah al-Ḥashr: 8
² Sūrah al-Ḥashr: 9
³ Sūrah al-Ḥashr: 10
⁴ Kashf al-Ghummah fi Ma‘rifat al-A’immah p. 78
Imām al-Daraquṭnī also reports with his chain of transmission from Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad al-Bāqir:

Someone narrated to me (Muḥammad al-Bāqir) that Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn (his father) said that the verse:

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِىْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلٰى سُرُرٍ مُّتَقٰبِلِينَ

And We will remove whatever is in their breasts of resentment, (so they will be) brothers, on thrones facing each other.¹

referred to Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿAlī (enquiring whether this interpretation is correct or not).

Al-Bāqir replied:

By Allah, it refers to them!

The questioner enquired:

What ‘malice’ was within their breast?

He answered:

The malice of Jāhiliyyah; before Islam, Banū Tamīm, Banū ʿAdī, and Banū Hāshim² held certain sectarian differences between each other. Once they embraced Islam, all ill-will and malice disappeared and they had nothing but love and affection for one-another.³

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¹ Sūrah al-Ḥijr: 47
² These were three of the most notable Makkan tribes in Nabī’s time.
³ Tārīkh al-Khulafā’, al-Durr al-Manthūr, the same narration also gives an example of the type of love and affection they held with one-another. For example, one day, Abū Bakr was holding his hip in agony (due to some pain). Seeing this, ʿAlī began rubbing his hands together and placing them on Abū Bakr’s hip, trying to relieve him of his pain.

Imām al-Daraquṭnī narrates (with his chain of transmission) from Sālim ibn Abī Ḥafṣah who said: “I asked Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī and Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad about Abū Bakr and ‘Umar. He said: ‘Entrust them with your affairs and rid yourself of any ill-will or enmity towards them; for they are true epitomes of guidance.’”

Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Juʿfī narrates from ‘Urwah ibn ‘Abd Allāh:

Imām Muḥammad al-Bāqir was once asked whether it was permissible to ornament a sword with jewellery (i.e. gold, silver, etc.). He replied: “There is no problem in doing so. In fact, Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq used to also decorate his sword with jewellery.” The questioner asked: “Do you (too) call him al-Ṣiddīq?” Astonished by the question, Muḥammad al-Bāqir shot up, faced the qiblah and proclaimed: “Yes of course, he is al-Ṣiddīq! Whosoever does not refer to him with the title al-Ṣiddīq then Allah will offer no credibility to such a person; not in this world, nor the next.”

The reason why he referred to Abū Bakr as “al-Ṣiddīq” is quite clear; his grandfather, the Rasūl of Allah also used to refer to him as “al-Ṣiddīq”. And, it goes without saying that Nabī used to only speak with waḥī (divine revelation). In actual fact, Imām al-Baḥrānī, the famous Shīʿī commentator on the Qur’ān, narrates in his *al-Burhān*, on the authority of ʿAlī ibn Ibrāhīm; who reported that Imām Ja‘far said:

٤٧٠ لما كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم في الغار قال لأبي بكر: كأني أنظر إلى سفينة جعفر وأصحابه تعود في البحر، وأنظر إلى الأنصار محبتين (مختتين خ) في أفيتهم، فقال أبو بكر: وتراهم يا رسول الله؟ قال: نعم! قال: أرنيهم، فمسح على عينيه فرأهما، فقال له رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: أنت الصديق

1 *Al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqah fī al-Radd ‘alā Ahl al-Bid‘ah wa al-Zandaqah* p. 158
2 86 *Kashf al-Ghummah* 2/148; *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’; Al-Hujjah
When Nabī Muhammad ﷺ was in the cave (of Thowr), he said to Abū Bakr: “It is as if I can see Ja’far and his Ṣaḥābah sailing in the sea; and it is as if the Anṣār are waiting in their homes.” Abū Bakr said: “Can you really see them, O Nabī of Allah?” He replied: “Yes!” Abū Bakr said: “Show me!” Thereafter, Nabī Muhammad (gently) wiped over his eyes; and, as a result, he was also able to see them. Nabī Muhammad remarked: “You (truly) are al-Ṣiddīq!”

Al-Ṭabarsī narrates that Imām al-Bāqir ﷺ once said:

Neither do I deny the virtue of Abū Bakr nor ʿUmar, but what I do say is that Abū Bakr is more virtuous than ʿUmar.²

Zayd ibn ʿĀlī was once asked about Abū Bakr and ʿUmar ﷺ. He replied:

I have nothing but good to say about them, just as the members of my family — the Ahl al-Bayt — had nothing but good to say about them. Neither did they oppress us nor anybody else. They acted according to the (teachings) of the Qur’ān and the Sunnah of Nabī Muhammad ﷺ.

When the Shīʿah heard this, they completely rejected and discarded it. On hearing about this, Zayd ibn ʿĀlī proclaimed:

They have indeed rejected us today.

and it is for this reason that they are known as the Rāfiḍah (the Defectors).³

Zayd ibn ʿĀlī ﷺ is also reported to have said:

Disavowing Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān is disavowing ʿAlī, and disavowing ʿAlī is disavowing Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān.⁴

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1 Al-Baḥrānī: Al-Burḥān 2/125
2 Al-Iḥtijāj p. 230
3 Mirzā Muḥammad Taqiyy Siphr: Nāsikh al-Tawārīkh 2/590
4 See al-Asbahānī’s al-Ḥujjah
Al-Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq was once asked:

O son, (i.e. family) of Nabī! What is your opinion about Abū Bakr and ʿUmar?

He replied:

They were just and righteous leaders who lived and died following the truth. Allah’s mercy will embrace them on the Day of Judgement.¹

Imām al-Daraquṭnī narrates that Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said:

In as much as I have hope in the intercession of ʿAlī (on the Day of Judgement) I have just as much hope in the intercession of Abū Bakr. My relationship with him (i.e. Abū Bakr) is twofold.²

Imām al-Daraquṭnī also narrates that Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq said:

Some of the envious zealots of Iraq claim that we speak ill of both Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. How can that ever be, they are my fathers!³

Sayyid al-Murtaḍā narrates in his book, al-Shāfī, that Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq would associate himself with both Abū Bakr and ʿUmar. He would visit the grave (of Nabī) and with his greetings to Nabī, he would also greet the two of them. In another narration it is mentioned that he would encourage others to do the same as well.⁴

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¹ Al-Shostarī: Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq 1/16
² Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq’s mother was Farwah bint al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr and Farwah’s mother was Asmā’ bint ʿAbd al-Raḥmān. In other words, Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq is related to Abū Bakr through both his mother and maternal grandmother.
³ Al-Lālikāʾī: Sharḥ al-Sunnah
⁴ Sayyid al-Murtaḍā: Al-Shāfī p. 238
Al-Dāraquṭnī narrates from ʿAbd Allāh al-Maḥḍī who was once asked: “Do you make mash (wipe) on your Khuffayn (leather socks, for wuḍū’)?” He replied: “Yes. (Because) ʿUmar would make mash.” The questioner reiterated his question and said: “I am asking whether you make mash (not ʿUmar).” He responded to the questioner by saying: “I am telling you ʿUmar would do it and you still have the audacity to ask about my personal practice! ʿUmar is not only better than me, he is better than a whole world full of the likes of me!” The man asked: “Is this Taqiyyah?” ʿAbd Allāh al-Maḥḍī exclaimed: “We are currently sitting between the grave and mimbar (of Nabī Muhammad). O Allah! This is what I believe in secrecy and in open. Do not listen to anyone (wrongfully) attributing anything to me after my demise. Who has the audacity to claim that ʿAlī was coerced into something he did not want to do (i.e. pledge allegiance to the other khulafā’) and that Nabī Muhammad ordered him to do something which he did not execute?! That, in actual fact, only shows his weakness and nothing else.”

The hijrah is described in the following way in Tafsīr al-ʿAskarī:

After Nabī Muhammad appointed ʿAlī to sleep in his place on his bed, he said to Abū Bakr:

أريضت أن تكون معي يا أبا بكر تطلب كما أطلب ، وتعرف بأنك أنت الذي تحملني على ما أدعه فتحمل

عند أنواع العذاب ؟

Are you pleased (with the fact) that you will be sought after and wanted like me? After all, it was you who believed in me and carried me through;

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1 He is ʿAbd Allāh (al-Kāmil) ibn Ḥasan (al-Muthannā) ibn Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī, the grandson of Imām Ḥasan al-Askari.

2 The term Taqiyyah among the Shīʿah refers to the practice of dissimulation in which the individual intentionally avoids answering a question posed to him or he answers the question in such a manner that pleases the questioner, but he himself does not actually believe it to be true. The rationale behind Taqiyyah — according to the Shīʿah — is to make inroads with any non-Shīʿī in the most covert and unassuming way possible. [translator’s note]

3 Tārīkh Dimashq
therefore, will you not be prepared to face the consequences and help defend me?

Abū Bakr exclaimed: “O Nabī of Allah! If I lived an entire life having to undergo constant punishment and suffering, and experiencing no pleasure, all for your sake, this would be more beloved to me than possessing the entire world and disobeying you (in that)! My life, wealth, and possessions; are they not but for you?!” Upon hearing this, Nabī said:

لا جرم إن اطلع الله على قلبك ، ووجد موافقا لما جرى على لسانك جعلك مني بمنزلة السمع والبصر ، والرأس من الجسد ، والروح من البدن

Allah certainly knows that whatever is on your tongue is in accordance to what is in your heart! He has made your position (with me) like the ears, eyes, head, and soul of a body.¹

¹ Tafsīr al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī p. 164, 165
Members of the Ahl al-Bayt Who Held Identical Names as the Ṣaḥābah

Those Who Kept the Name Abū Bakr

» Abū Bakr ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib

He was martyred alongside Ḥusayn at Karbalā’. His mother’s name was Laylā bint Masʿūd al-Nahshaliyyah.¹

» Abū Bakr ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib

He too, was martyred alongside his uncle, Ḥusayn at Karbalā’.²

» Abū Bakr ʿAlī Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn

Abū Bakr was also the kunyah (agnomen) of Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn.³

» Abū Bakr ʿAlī ibn Mūsā al-Kāẓim ibn Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq

The kunyah of ʿAlī al-Riḍā was Abū Bakr. Al-Nūrī al-Ṭabarsī says: “Abū Bakr was one of the kunyahs of ʿAlī al-Riḍā, as mentioned by Abū al-Faraj al-Isfahānī in Maqātil al-Ṭālibīn.”⁴

» Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Mahdī al-Muntaẓar ibn al-Ḥasan al-ʿAskarī

One of the names of the alleged al-Mahdī al-Muntaẓar — whom the Shīʿah believe was born over eleven hundred years go — is Abū Bakr.⁵

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¹ Shaykh al-Mufīd: Kitāb al-Irshād p. 186, 248, Muntahā al-Āmāl 1/261, the author mentions that his name was actually Muḥammad and his kunyah was Abū Bakr.
² Kitāb al-Irshād p. 248, Muntahā al-Āmāl 1/541
³ See al-Jazāʾīrī’s al-Anwār al-Nʿumāniyyah for a list of Shīʿah Imāmiyyah scholars that have mentioned this.
⁴ Al-Nūrī al-Ṭabarsī: Al-Najm al-Thāqib fi Aḥqāf wa Aṣmāʾ al-Ḥujjah al-Ṣāhi’i, no. 14
⁵ Ibid
Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ja’far ibn Abī Ṭālib

Abū Bakr was martyred with Ḥusayn. His mother was Khawṣā’ (from the tribe Rabī’ah).¹

Those Who Kept the Name ‘Umar

‘Umar al-Aṭraf ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib

His mother was Umm Ḥabīb al-Ṣahbā’ al-Taghlabiyah. She was captured during the wars of apostasy.²

‘Umar ibn al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib

He was martyred alongside his uncle, Ḥusayn, at Karbalā’.³ Al-Ya‘qūbī writes in his al-Tārīkh: “Ḥasan had eight sons: Zayd, Qāsim, Abū Bakr, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, Ṭalḥah, ‘Abd Allāh, and ‘Umar (from various wives).”

‘Umar al-Ashraf ibn ‘Alī Zayn al-Ābidīn ibn al-Ḥusayn

His mother was an Umm walad (a slave woman, who bore the child of her master).⁴

‘Umar ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Zayd al-Shahīd ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib

Muḥammad al-A’lamī al-Ḥā’irī mentions his name in Tarājim A’lām al-Nisā’ under the biography of Bint al-Ḥasan ibn ’Ubayd Allāh ibn Ja’far al-Ṭayyār.

¹ Aḥmad ibn Yahyā al-Balādhurī: Ansāb al-Ashrāf p. 68
² Under the lineage of ‘Umar al-Aṭraf, see: Sirr al-Silsilah al-Alawiyah of Abū Naḍr al-Bukhārī p. 123; Muntahā al-Āmāl 1/261; and Bihār al-Anwār 42/120
³ ‘Umdat al-Ṭālib of ibn ‘Anbah p. 116; and Tārīkh al-Ya‘qūbī p. 228
⁴ Kitāb al-Irshād p. 261; and ‘Umdat al-Ṭālib p. 223
ʿUmar ibn Mūsā al-Kāẓim ibn Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq

Ibn al-Khasshāb writes: “He (ref. to Mūsā al-Kāẓim) had twenty sons, including: ʿAqīl and ʿUmar and eighteen daughters.¹

Those Who Kept the Name ʿUthmān

ʿUthmān ibn ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib

He was martyred alongside Ḥusayn at Karbalā’. His mother’s name was Umm al-Banīn bint Ḥizām al-Waḥīdiyyah, then al-Kilābiyyah.²

ʿUthmān ibn ʿAqīl ibn Abī Ṭālib

Al-Balādhurī mentions in al-Ansāb: “ʿAqīl had the following sons: Muslim... and ʿUthmān.”³

Those Who Kept the Name ʿĀ’ishah

ʿĀ’ishah bint Mūsā al-Kāẓim ibn Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq

One of daughters of the seventh Imām, Mūsā al-Kāẓim, as mentioned by the Shīʿī scholars, including: Shaykh al-Mufīd in al-Irshād; ibn ʿAnbah in ‘Umdat al-Ṭālib; and Niʿmat Allāh al-Jazā’irī in al-Anwār al-Nuʿmāniyyah.

Mūsā al-Kāẓim had thirty seven or thirty eight children. A clear sign of the Ahl al-Bayt’s love for Umm al-Muʾminīn is that from all of these children, he only had one daughter (the rest were sons) and he named her ʿĀ’ishah.⁴

¹Muḥammad Taqī al-Tastarī: Tawārīkh al-Nabī wa al-Āl
²Muḥammad Riḍā al-Ḥakīmī: Aʿyān al-Nisā’; Kitāb al-Irshād; Tārīkh al-Yaʾqūbī; Muntahā al-Āmāl, 1/544; Tawārīkh al-Nabī wa al-Āl p. 115
³Ansāb al-Ashrāf p. 70
⁴This is the view of some of the scholars. There is a difference of opinion as to how many children Mūsā al-Kāẓim actually had; some say thirty seven, some say thirty eight, and some say forty. Abū Naḍr al-Bukhārī once said: “Mūsā al-Kāẓim had eighteen sons and twenty two daughters.” There is no difference of opinion with regards to one fact: he (Mūsā al-Kāẓim) named one of his daughters ʿĀ’ishah. Sīr al-Silsilah al-ʿAlawiyyah of Abū Naḍr al-Bukhārī p. 53.
Niʿmat Allāh al-Jazā’irī writes in al-Anwār al-Nuʿmāniyyah:

With regards to the number of children he had (ref. to Mūsā al-Kāẓim), it was thirty seven (both sons and daughters). From them was: ʿAlī al-Riḍā (the eighth Imām)... and ʿĀʾishah.

Al-Tastarī mentions Mūsā al-Kāẓim in Tawarikh al-Nabī wa al-Āl as having seventeen daughters:

Fāṭimah al-Kubrā, Fāṭimah al-Ṣughrā, Ruqayyah, Ruqayyah al-Sughrā, Ḥakīmah, Umm Abī Ḥakimah, Umm Kulthūm, Umm Salamah, Umm Jaʿfar, Lubānah,ʿAliyyah,Āminah,Ḥasanah,Barīhah,Zaynab,Khadījah,andʿĀʾishah.

» ʿĀʾishah bint Jaʿfar ibn Mūsā al-Kāẓim ibn Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq

Al-ʿUmarī mentions in al-Majdī:

Jaʿfar ibn Mūsā al-Kāẓim ibn Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, also known as al-Khawārī, had eight daughters: Ḥusnah,ʿAbbāsah,ʿĀʾishah,Fāṭimah al-Kubrā,Fāṭimah al-Ṣughrā,Ḥakīmah,Umma,ʿĀminah,Ḥasanah,Barīhah,Zaynab,andʿĀʾishah.¹

» ʿĀʾishah bint ʿAlī al-Riḍā ibn Mūsā al-Kāẓim

Ibn al-Khasshāb mentions in his book Mawālid Ahl al-Bayt:

ʿAlī al-Riḍā had five sons: Muḥammad, al-Qānī, al-Ḥasan, Jaʿfar, Ibrāhīm and Ḥusayn, and one daughter: ʿĀʾishah.²


Shaykh al-Mufīd mentions:

ʿAlī al-Hādī (the tenth Imām) left the following children behind: Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, Muḥammad, Jaʿfar and ʿĀʾishah.³

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¹ Sirr al-Silsilah al-ʿAlawīyyah p. 63 (see marginal notes from the editor).
² Muntahā al-Ᾱmāl p. 128
³ Kitāb al-Irshād p. 334
ʿAlī’s Clear Prohibition Against Cursing and Maligning

The Arabic word *sabb* (cursing) is defined as:

Such strong language which asserts ideas forcefully and often contains cursing.

Both Nabī ʿalā  and the Ahl al-Bayt did not have this quality; rather, they had the purest of speech, they were the most eloquent and maintained the highest level of decorum. In fact, ʿAlī narrates that Nabī ʿalā was the most generous-hearted of men, the most truthful of them in speech, the most mild-tempered of them, and the noblest of them in lineage. Whoever saw him unexpectedly was in awe of him. And whoever associated with him immediately fell in love with him.

Heṣan ibn ʿAlī said:

> And then I asked my father (ʿAlī) about how the Nabī ʿalā conducted himself among his close associates and servants.” He (ʿAlī) said: “The Rasūl of Allah was unfailingly cheerful, easy-going by nature, and mild-mannered. He was neither crude nor obstinate. He was neither a clamorous loudmouth nor a repeater of obscenities.”

In *Nahj al-Balāghah*, Ṣubḥī al-Ṣāliḥ relates:

> Whosoever is able to meet Allah without having spilt the blood of a fellow believer, or traduced his honour and dignity should try and do so.

During the Battle of Ṣiffīn, it was brought to the attention of ʿAlī that some of his companions were cursing the people of Shām. He responded to them by

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1. *Al-Tirmidhī*
2. Al-Nabahānī: *Wasāʾil al-Wuṣūl ilā Shamāʾil al-Rasūl*
3. *Nahj al-Balāghah* p. 254
saying:

I dislike the fact that you curse others; even though, your position (today) is more correct than the others. Instead of cursing them, you should have rather supplicated for them by saying: “O Allah! Spare our blood and theirs! Reunite us and remove their confusion with Your divine guidance so that the truth can manifest itself among all and hostilities can cease."¹

¹ Op. cit. p. 323
Abū al-Qāsim Sa’d ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Qummī writes that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ was the first person to criticise and disclaim his association with Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and

1 Sa’d ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Qummī was a famous Shī‘ī scholar from the city of Qumm, in modern-day Iran. He died in the year 301 AH.

2 Also known as Ibn al-Sowdā’, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ was a Jewish zealot from Ṣan‘ā’ — the capital city of Yemen. He claimed to have professed his Islam during ‘Uthmān’s khilāfah. He held an active presence in Iraq, Egypt, and the Levant (modern-day Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan). He would contrive and proclaim fallacies so as to turn the Muslims away from Islam. He was a mischief-maker and a charlatan; he even tried to create a state of anarchy and social-upheaval during ‘Uthmān’s khilāfah. Imām al-Ṭabarī (d. 320 A.H) in Tārīkh al-Rusul, Ibn ‘Asākir in Tārīkh Dimashq and Ibn Kathīr in al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah have all written extensively about him. He is mentioned by both the Sunnī and Shī‘ī scholars in their respective books. In fact, there is a narration from the ḥadīth scholar al-Sha‘bī (d. 103 A.H) affirming that the first person to resort to lies and fabrications was in fact ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’.

Hereunder are but a few examples of what the scholars (both Sunnī and Shī‘ī) have said about him:

• Imām al-Ṭabarī in his famous history book, Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī, cites narrations about ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ and the controversy around him.

• Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī (d. 328 A.H) writes that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ and his followers, the Saba’īyyah, completely transgressed their limits by stating that ʿAlī is actually God-incarnate — May Allah safeguard us from such blasphemy — similar to what the Christians believe about Nabī ʿĪsā.

• Abū al-Ḥasan al-ʿAsharī (d. 330 A.H) also mentions that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ and the Saba’īyyah are an extremist faction because one of their many claims is that ʿAlī never actually died, and, in fact, he will return to this world and fill it with equality and justice, just as it was filled with inequality, tyranny, and injustice [before his return].

• Al-Khāṭib al-Baghdādī (d. 429 A.H) mentions that the Saba’īyyah sect disclosed their heresy in the time of ʿAlī. He actually ordered for them to be burnt alive, and even sent him into exile to Asbāt.

• Imām al-Isfārayīnī (d. 471 A.H) writes that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ claimed that ʿAlī was, in fact, a nabī of Allah. Later on, he went on to claim that ʿAlī is God-incarnate, – May Allah safeguard us from such blasphemy.

• Ḥasan ibn Mūsā al-Nowbakhtī (d. 310 A.H) writes that when the news of the death of ʿAlī reached al-Madā’in, he (‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’) exclaimed to the one who reported the news: “If you bring before us his brains in a hundred bags, we will still not be convinced that he has died. He cannot die until he gathers them with his staff.” ... continued
ʿUthmān. He claimed that ʿAlī himself ordered him to do so.¹

The motive for these deviant sects (whose beliefs are based on falsehood and superstitions) coming into existence is quite clear; that is, to try and dismantle the Muslims from within and to provoke civil strife and disunity amongst one another by spreading disinformation and myths. After failing to attack Islam openly, the enemies of Islam — especially the Jews with their rancour and hatred for Islam and Muslims — turned to these conniving tactics. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ began promulgating his false creed and even attempted to motivate the people of Egypt to revolt against ʿUthmān, claiming that he usurped the khilāfah from ʿAlī, citing as evidence Nabī’s bequest to ʿAlī.

Sayyid ʿAlawī ibn Muḥammad Balfaqīh writes in Min Aʾqāb al-Biḍʿah al-Muḥammadiyyah al-Ṭāhirah:

A certain group² has treaded a path of (pseudo) love for ʿAlī. It is a dangerous path indeed! They accuse the previous khulafāʾ; Abū Bakr, ʿUmar and ʿUthmān of having usurped ʿAlī’s khilāfah. In doing

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¹ Referring to the Shīʿah

² For a detailed synopsis of the events, see Muḥammad Amḥazūn’s, Tahqīq Mawāqif al-Ṣaḥābah fī al-Fitnah min Riwāyāt al-Imām al-Ṭabarī al-Maqālāt wa l-Firaq no: 20
so, they have effectively shattered the ijmāʿ of the best of generations, a consensus of paramount importance in the eyes of all. The implications of such a claim are colossal: viz. ʿAlī employed Taqiyyah when he pledged his allegiance to the previous three khulafā’. How could this be? ʿAlī was neither a coward nor would he ever shy away from the truth; rather, he was a bold and courageous leader. When he spoke, people listened, and when he gave a command, they obeyed.¹

Speaking about the perception people have of ʿAlī, the author of *Nahj al-Balāghah* writes:

ʿAlī said: “Two groups of people will be destroyed in my name: the first will be those who have excessive love for me, such love that will lead them astray, and the second will be those who have excessive hatred for me, such hatred that will lead them astray. Therefore, act moderately (with regards to me) and follow the *al-sawād al-ʿaẓam* (the vast majority). For verily, Allah’s help is with the majority. And beware of disputation and dissention.”

¹ *Tārīkh ibn ʿAsākir*
Conclusion

It goes without saying that love and veneration for all the Ṣaḥābah of Nabī ﷺ is a prerequisite for every Muslim’s īmān. Every Muslim — even faintly concerned with his īmān — should therefore completely abstain from attacking or criticising the honour and dignity of the noble Ṣaḥābah ﷺ. In doing so, he prevents the door of war from being opened upon himself; for did Allah ﷻ not declare war on anyone who harms His friends?

The Ṣaḥābah ﷺ reached the pinnacle of wilāyah (sainthood); they read ṣalāh behind Nabī ﷺ, fought alongside him in battle, spent their days and nights in his blessed company, assisted him in times of need, and were the first to witness and receive revelation as it descended unto Nabī ﷺ. If such people are not considered the friends of Allah ﷻ, then who will be? The verses of the Qur’ān and the ḥadīth of Nabī ﷺ that speak to the virtues of the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ are far too many; therefore, it is only appropriate that a Muslim should love them for the sake of Allah ﷻ and His Rasūl ﷺ; he should try to emulate their way of life, and work towards spreading their doyen lifestyle throughout the world.

Maḥmūd Saʿīd Mamdūḥ in his book, Ghāyat al-Tabjīl, writes:

It is incumbent upon every believer to show love and respect to the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ, insofar as even looking for excuses on their behalf (for whatever disagreements may have occurred between them). Wretched is the one who speaks about them in a profane manner! How many a scholars have written on the harms of cursing the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ! Among them:

1. Qāḍī ʿAyyāḍ and the commentators of his al-Shifā’
2. Ibn Qudāmah

1 This treatise is to be found among his fatāwā.
It is as if the enormity of this sin (cursing the Ṣaḥābah) is so great, that all other sins seem relatively inconsequential. Included in this is attacking (the personality of) ʿAlī. This has been established by Saʿīd ibn Zayd in both the Musnad of Imām Aḥmad and Sunan of Abū Dāwūd.
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