

THE LOYAL ONES

Book 1



ایسے ہوتے ہیں علی کے نوکر

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*“Indeed these are what the followers
of Ali are like”*

Written by,

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Prepared by ‘ASR’

May Allah swt bless us with an opportunity to be a
true follower of our Imam (as), Inshallah!!!

Introduction:

Malek-e-Ashtar was one of the most loyal companions of Imam Ali (a.s). It would not be an exaggeration to call him the right hand of Imam Ali (a.s) especially during his rule.



About:

- **Name:** Malek-e-Ashtar bin Hareth Nakha'i.
- **Tribe:** Nakha'i-an, old Yemenite tribe.
- **Father:** Hareth.
- **Children:** One of his sons, Ibrahim ibne Malek-e-Ashtar was an ally of Ameer Mukhtar in revenge of Karbala.
- **Appellation:** al-Ashtar, which means cut, torn or rip (he earned it from 'Battle of Yarmook' from a scar on his lower eye lid).
- **Companionship:** After embracing Islam in times of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), he became one of the most loyal companions of Imam Ali (a.s).

Life History:

- Malek-e-Ashtar was a disciple and companion of Imam Ali (as).
- He was the head of Banu Nakha'i clan.
- He attained the title of 'al-Ashtar' because of a scar on his lower eyelid, as a result of a wound during the battle of Yarmook.
- The battle of Yarmook was fought between Romans and Muslims.
- Malek was an exceptionally brave warrior who was trained by Imam Ali (as) in the principles of administration and jurisprudence (fiqh).
- On normal days he wore simple clothing and walked humbly, thus many didn't recognize him.
- Being devoted to Imam Ali (as), he earned Muawiyah's enmity, who was in power at that time.

- He was a steadfast and determined man who constantly invited people to follow Imam Ali (as).
- Just like his master, he did not kill the wounded and did not chase those who ran away from the battlefield.
- He was trusted by Imam Ali (As) on several occasions.
- Imam's (as) famous letter to him is an excellent set of rules for human administration related to Allah (swt).
- Malek-e-Ashtar lived a life committed to the Imam of the time.

**Extracts from the letter that Imam Ali
(as) sent to Malek-e-Ashtar:**

**‘In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate,
the Merciful’**

**‘This is what Allah's servant `Ali, Amir al-
Mu`minin, has ordered Malik ibn al-Harith al-
Ashtar in his instrument (of appointment) for
him when he made him Governor of Egypt.’**

**‘...He has ordered him to fear Allah, to prefer
obedience to Him, and to follow what He has
commanded in His Book (Qur'an)...’**

**‘...The best collection with you should be the
collection of good deeds...’**

**‘...Habituate your heart to mercy for the
subjects...Since they are of two kinds, either
your brother in religion or one like you in
creation...’**

'...Extend to them your forgiveness and pardon, in the same way as you would like Allah to extend His forgiveness and pardon to you...'

'...Do not act hastily during anger if you can find a way out of it...'

'...Do justice for Allah and do justice towards the people. Allah hears the prayer of the oppressed and is on the lookout for the oppressors...'

'...The worst minister for you is he who has been a minister for mischievous persons before you, and who joined them in sins...'

'...the virtuous and the vicious should not be in equal position before you...'

'...Refer to Allah and His Prophet in the affairs which worry you and matters which appear confusing to you...'

‘...Take care of the orphans and the aged who have no means (for livelihood) nor are they ready for begging...’

‘... Devote to Allah some of your physical activity during the night and the day...’

‘...do not keep yourself secluded from the people for a long time...’

‘...You should avoid self-admiration...love of exaggerated praise because this is one of the most reliable opportunities for Satan to obliterate the good deeds of the virtuous...’

‘...Self-praise takes away the light of truth, and breaking promises earns the hatred of Allah and of the people...’

(Nahjul Balagha – Letter 53)

Personality traits:

1) Unconditional obedience to Imam Ali:

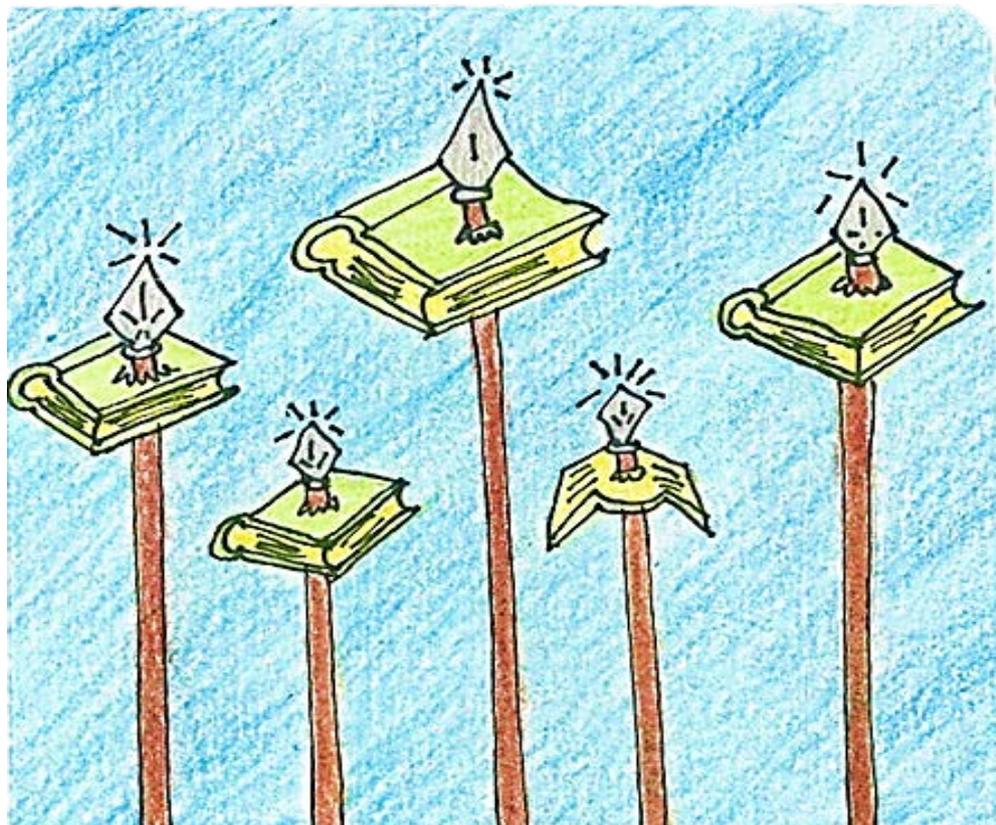
Malek's life and companionship with Imam Ali (as) was largely based on commitment and loyalty. He showed at various times that Imam's will was before his own.

In battle of Siffin which began on 1st Safar, Malek was the commander of Imam's army on the first day of the wars. It was a very fierce battle fought between Imam Ali (as) and Muawiyah.

Kharijites were a group of so called 'muslims' who were created in the battle of Siffin. They were people who recited salat and Quran in abundance, and were part of Imam Ali's (as) army, initially.

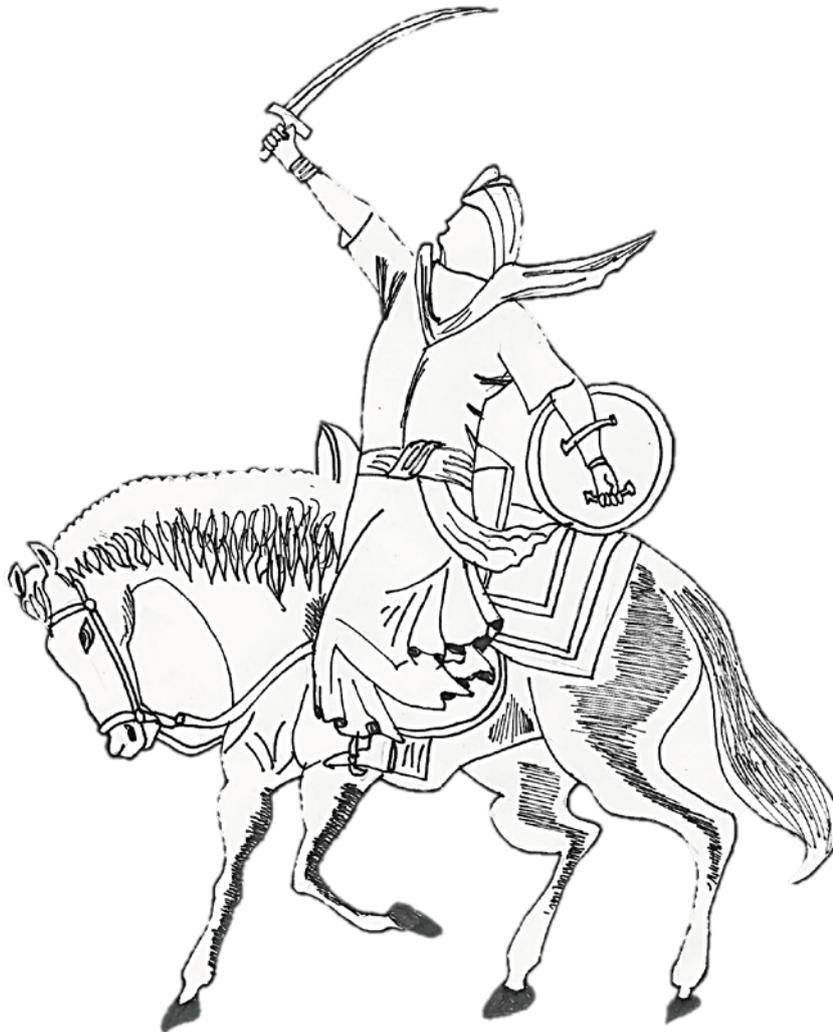
When Muawiyah created the fitnah of raising Quran on the spears as he was about to lose the battle, these people fell right into his trap.

In spite of insistence from Imam Ali (as), they refused to fight against the enemy.



They forced Imam Ali (as) to settle for arbitration. This disobedience made Imam (as) very sad. Malek was among the few who were loyal to Imam (as). The Kharijites threatened Imam Ali (as) to force Malek to withdraw from the battlefield, when he was close to killing the enemy. In spite of an extreme will to finish the task, Malek

returned and withdrew from the battlefield because for him, Imam (as) had to be obeyed.



2) Bravery:

- If there was one word to be selected to explain Malek's personality, it would be brave.
- Malek was known for his extraordinary skills in swordsmanship, combined with courage.
- This made him very intimidating for the enemy.
- Muawiyah nicknamed him, 'lion of the army'.
- He fought multiple battles and was the commander in chief of Imam Ali's (as) army.
- This position was of extreme value and high status.

3) Kindness:

Malek was walking in the streets of Kufa, when a mad person threw a stone on his back.

Malek ignored it and continued walking. A man who witnessed the event, went to the mad man and asked,

“Are you mad? Do you know who you’ve thrown this stone on? You threw it on Malek-e-Ashtar Nakha’i!”

The man ran to the mosque and apologized to Malek. Malek forgave him.



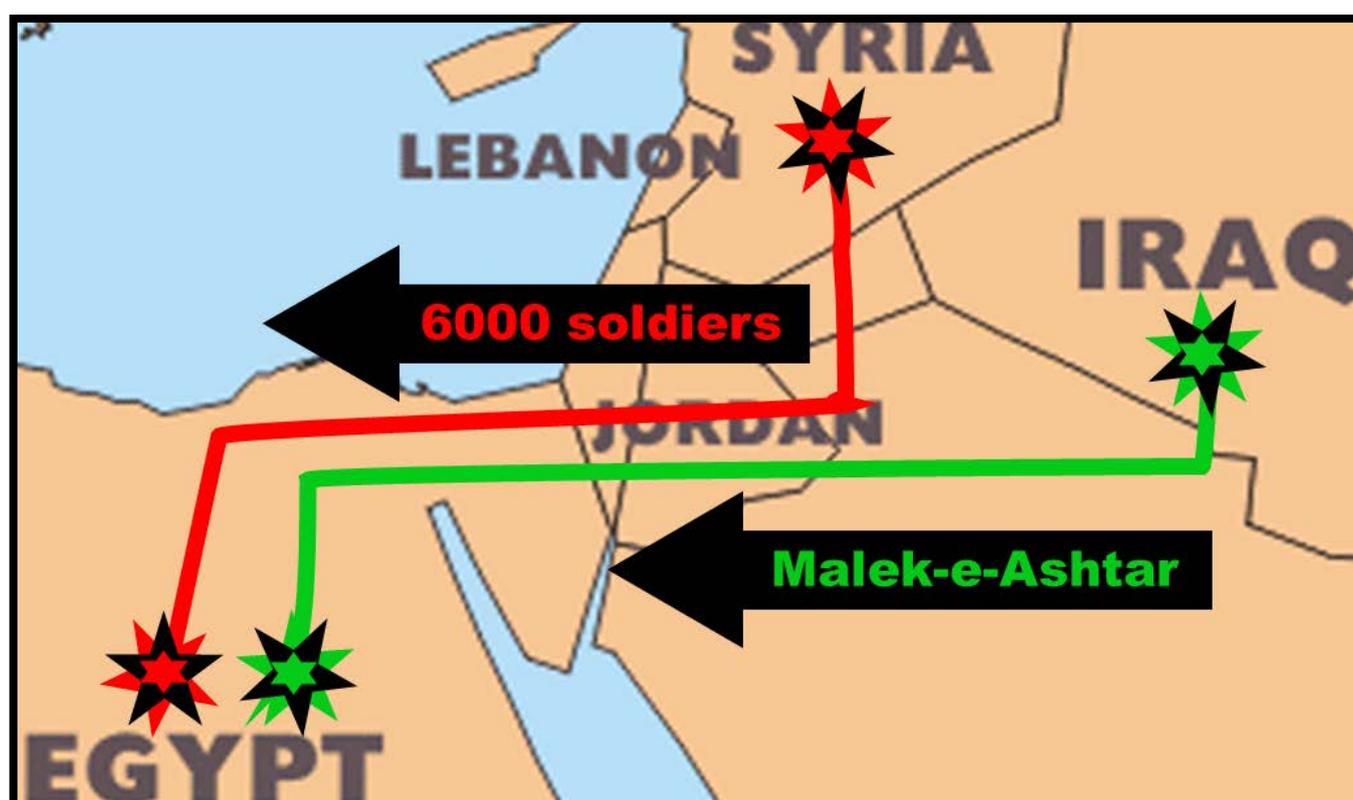
4) Loyalty:

There are endless stories portraying the loyalty of Malek-e-Ashtar towards Imam Ali (as). He constantly motivated people to follow the Imam (as). He once addressed the people,

“People, this is the Prophet Muhammad’s (pbuh) regent. He has learnt the Prophet Muhammad’s (pbuh) knowledge. Allah’s Book, Noble Quran has mentioned his belief. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) has mentioned that he will enter Al-Ridhwan Garden. His personality is perfect. The people in the past and present are certain of his behaviour and his knowledge.”

5) Relationship with the Imam:

- Malek-e-Ashtar had a very beautiful relationship with Imam Ali (as) which was a mixture of love, loyalty, trust and friendship.
- In the times when Muawiyah sent an army of 6000 warriors to conquer Egypt, Imam Ali (as) chose Malek-e-Ashtar. He deemed him as the most appropriate person who could save Egypt from the clutches of Muawiyah and Amr ibne Aas.



- Once after a war, Malek told Imam Ali (as),
“I nearly killed as many kafirs as you did.”

Imam (as) responded with a smile,

“Malek, you killed any kafir you saw, but I looked at the next seventy generations of a person, and if there was even one mo’min, I wouldn’t kill him.”



6) Leadership:

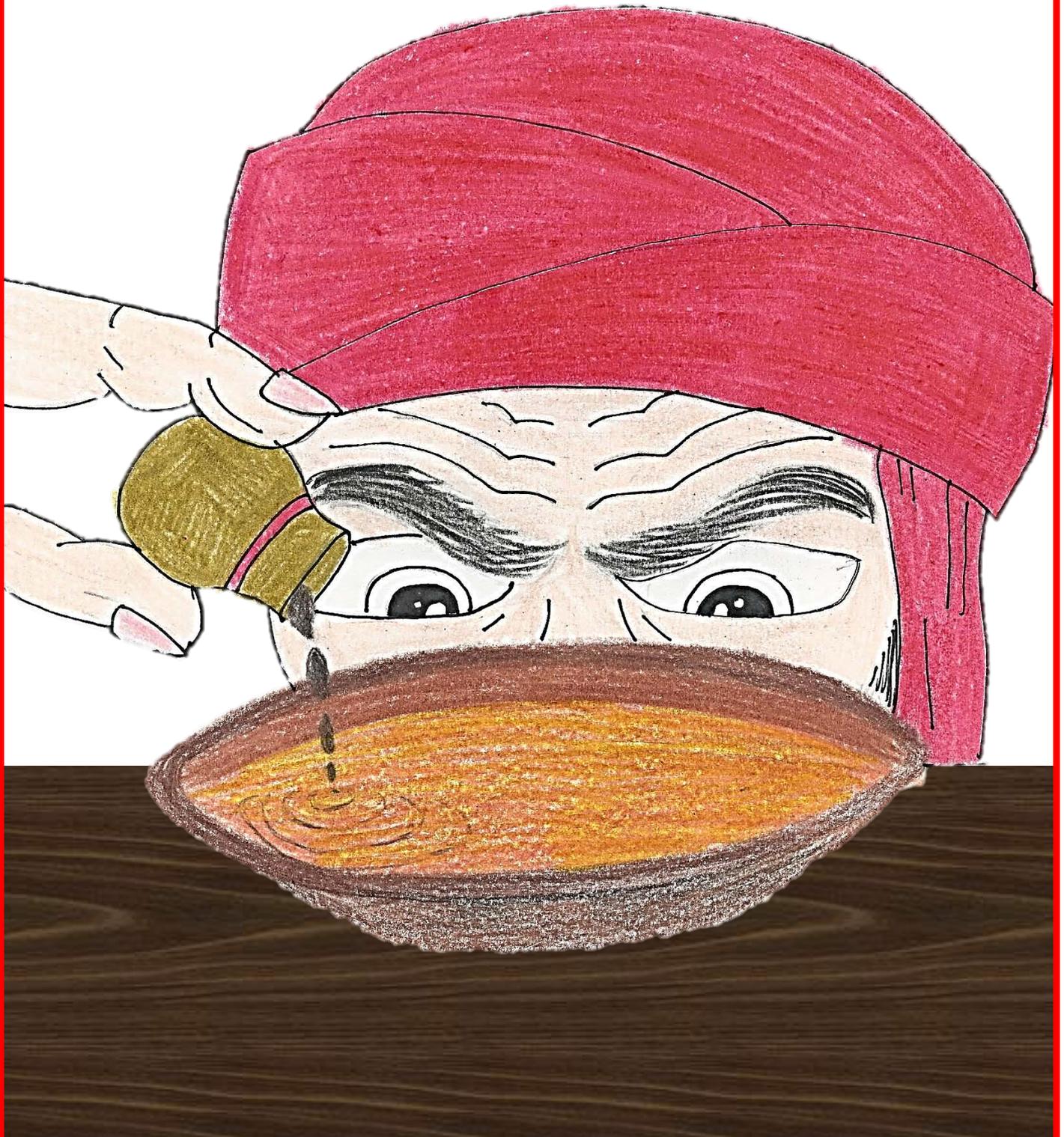
- Malek-e-Ashtar was the commander in chief of Imam Ali's (as) army.
- He was always chosen for leading positions by the Imam (as).
- He was dispatched to Djazira (including Mosul, Nasibayn, Dara, Sinjdar, Amid, Hit and Anat). This region was specifically a key region because it was situated near Damascus and Dhahak Ibn Qays was in power there, on behalf of Muawiyah.



Martyrdom:

- Appointed for the second time as the governor of Hijaz after Seffein, Malek received a letter to go to Egypt.
- Muawiyah hatched a conspiracy and martyred Malek with poisonous honey.
- This happened on a place called Ayn Shams.
- Upon learning about Malek's murder, Muawiyah said, "Ali had two arms; one of which was Ammar, cut off in Siffin, and the other was Malik, cut off now.
- When Imam (as) heard the news, sorrow was visible on his face for a number of days.
- Malek was an irreparable loss for Imam Ali (as) and Imam was deeply grieved at his martyrdom

- Malek died after consuming honey which had been poisoned by one of Muawiyah's agents



A few quotes about his status:

- When Imam (as) was forced to withdraw in the battle of Seffein by the Kharijites, Imam's (as) loyal companions were not pleased. Imam was told that Malek is not satisfied. He (as) said,

“When I will be satisfied, Malek will be so as well; and I am satisfied.”

- Upon knowing about Malek's martyrdom, Imam (as) said,

“What good features Allah (swt) had granted Malek. Who Malek really was! If a mountain, a great mountain he was. If a rock, a solid rock he was! By Almighty Allah (swt), over your demise many are grieved while many are thrilled. For such a person, tears should be shed. Shall anyone ever be reborn like Malek?”

Conclusion:

Malek was one of the loyal followers of Islam. His exemplary behaviour has earned him a status of a role model for all generations to come.

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