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Entrusting caliphate to 'Umar

Abu-Bakr's rule did not last for a long time. Hardly two years had passed when illness beset him and he decided to transfer the caliphate to his confidant and supporter 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab. However, this was severely opposed by many companions. Among them, Talhah addressed him saying, 'What would you say to your Lord when you are making a hard-hearted and ill-tempered man as a ruler over us? Everyone hates him and all people are fed up with him.'1

Abu-Bakr could do nothing more than keeping silent, while Talhah proceeded with his objection, saying, 'O successor of Allah's Messenger, we did not bear that ill-tempered man in your lifetime, while you used to restrain him. Then, what shall our condition be when you die and he becomes the caliph?'2

However, Abu-Bakr did not pay the least heed to Talhah's words.

Numerous persons from the Muhajirun and the Ansar rushed to Abu-Bakr and announced, 'We see that you have appointed 'Umar as the ruler over us while you know about him and you are aware of his ill deeds among us and that was in a period when you were among us. Then, what will happen to us when you are no more among us? You are proceeding to meet Allah the Blessed and the Sublime. What will you say in reply?'

Abu-Bakr replied, 'If the Almighty asks me, I will say that I have appointed as caliph over them one who was the best of them in my view!'3

According to many scholars, it would have been better if Abu–Bakr had taken into consideration the feelings of the overwhelming majority of Muslims and he should only have followed the opinion of the majority. After consulting the experienced persons, Abu–Bakr should have formed a consultative committee so that it might select one as a caliph.

However, he surrendered to his personal feelings that were imbued with an unprecedented loyalty to, love, and regard for 'Umar. In order to gauge the view of the people, he asked Mawqib Al-Dusi, 'What do the people say regarding the appointment of 'Umar as the next caliph?'

He replied, 'Some oppose it and some support it.'

Abu-Bakr further inquired, 'Are those who oppose more or those who support it?'

He replied, 'Those who oppose it are in majority.'4

Thus, Abu–Bakr ignored the opposition of the majority to his appointment of 'Umar as the next caliph and he imposed him upon them against their wills. He did not leave them free to choose a candidate for caliphate.

Anyway, 'Umar always stuck to Abu-Bakr during the latter's final illness lest someone might try to influence his decision.

'Umar further strengthened the statement and view of Abu-Bakr with regard to his appointing him as caliph, saying, 'O people, listen to and obey the commands of the successor of Allah's Messenger.'5

Abu-Bakr commanded 'Uthman ibn 'Affan to write down a document ensuring the appointment of 'Umar as the next caliph. In response, 'Uthman wrote down the following:

'This is the will of Abu-Bakr the son of Abu-Quhafah. It is his last will in his lifetime while he is leaving this world and receiving the other world. Know that I have appointed 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab as the next caliph upon you. Thus, if you find him equitable, it is what I expect and hope from him. If he does otherwise and changes it, I have only intended good and I am not aware of the unseen: "And they who act unjustly shall know to what final place of turning they shall turn back."

However, no one had the dare to say that Abu–Bakr was hallucinating! No one prevented Abu–Bakr from writing down that document about appointing 'Umar as the next ruler, like what they did when they prevented the Holy Prophet (S) from writing a document about appointing Imam Ali ('a) as his successor to the position of leadership, claiming that the Holy Prophet (S) was hallucinating! 7

Abu-Bakr signed the document and gave it to 'Umar, who took it and rushed to the mosque in order to read it to the public. A person, who was amazed at his condition, asked, 'O Abu-Hafs! What is written in this document?'

'Umar expressed ignorance about its content, but he emphasized that it was for his personal benefit. He said, 'I do not know! However, I will be the first to listen and obey!'

The man glanced at 'Umar, realized the reality of the matter, and said, 'However, by Allah, I know what it contains. Last year, you made him the ruler, and he is giving you the sovereignty this year!'8

'Umar rushed to the mosque and read the commandment to the people. This way, caliphate became established for him without any problem or opposition. This matter aggrieved Imam Ali ('a) very much. Describing his distress, Imam Ali ('a) later said,

When the first one (i.e. Abu-Bakr) went his way, handed over the caliphate to the son of Al-Khattab after himself.

The Imam then quoted Al-A'sha's poetic verse:

My days are now passed on the camel's back (in difficulty) while there were days (of ease) when I enjoyed the company of Jabir's brother kayyan.

It is strange that during his lifetime, he wished to be released from the caliphate but he confirmed it for the other one after his death. No doubt these two shared its udders strictly among themselves' 9

The above words describe the level of sorrow and pain of Imam Ali ('a) regarding the trespassing of his rights and their removing him from his position. This position of succeeding the Holy Prophet (S) was usurped frequently by these men; it was once allotted to the Banu–Taym clan and then to the Banu–'Adi clan. They completely disregarded the struggle of Imam Ali ('a) in support of Islam and they ignored his status with the Holy Prophet (S).

The illness of Abu–Bakr took a serious turn and it herded him towards his imminent end where every man has to ultimately go. He confessed of his regret and pain regarding his unjust acts towards the beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet (S)

In the last moments of his life, his daughter 'A'ishah came to visit him. She found him in the throes of death; so, she said this poetic verse:

By your life (I swear), the wealth of one does not benefit one who is involved in the throes of death.

Abu-Bakr became angry and said to her, 'You should have rather said this:

'And the stupor of death will come in truth. That is what you were trying to escape." 10

Not much time passed but that Abu–Bakr reached his imminent end. His friend 'Umar performed his funeral rites; he gave him the funeral bathing and performed the funeral prayer on his dead body. Then, he buried him in the house of the Holy Prophet (S) and attached his grave to the Holy Prophet's grave.

Shi'ite theologians, criticizing this issue, say: If this house was part of the heritage of the Holy Prophetsince there is no tradition stating that the Holy Prophet (S) had bequeathed the house to his wife 'A'ishah-then this house must have been possessed by Lady Fatimah Al-Zahra' ('a) and this possession must have then transferred to her husband and children. As a result, the permission of Lady Fatimah's heirs should have been obtained before burying Abu-Bakr in the place that was owned by them.

Accordingly, Abu–Bakr's burial in that house was not lawful except with the permission of the Holy Prophet's Progeny. As for 'A'ishah's permission, it is of no avail according to the Islamic laws of inheritance, because she does not have a share in the inheritance of lands; rather, she is only entitled to

a share in the constructed house.

As long as the Holy Prophet's house was added to the public treasury, because Abu–Bakr announced that he had heard the Holy Prophet (S) saying, 'We, the prophets, do not leave any inheritance; rather; we leave only the Book and the Divine Wisdom,' then the permission of all Muslims should have been taken before burying Abu–Bakr's dead body in the Prophet's house. However, the permission of neither the Holy Prophet's heirs nor the Muslims was taken.

To sum it up, the short reign of Abu–Bakr opened the door to the invention of numerous political trends and religious factions. The most awful of all these acts was the keeping away of the Ahl Al–Bayt ('a) from their right to succeed the Holy Prophet (S), after the Holy Prophet (S), by the command of Almighty Allah, had announced them as the next leaders of this nation.

The members of the Holy Prophet's household were thus removed from the sphere of respect and reverence that the Holy Prophet (S) had designated for them and they were subjected to all sorts of atrocities and hardships while the ruling authorities considered themselves as representatives of the Holy Prophet (S) and thought that they were more qualified for this position than others were.

This controversy of Abu–Bakr with the Ahl Al–Bayt ('a) created differences and spread mischief and disunity among Muslims. It also founded backgrounds for such tyrannical dynasties like the Umayyad and the 'Abbasid to rule over Muslims in the name of the Holy Prophet (S) and Islam.

All the persecutions and suppressions that the Ahl Al-Bayt ('a) and their followers had to encounter during the reigns of the Umayyad and 'Abbasid rulers were originally founded by Abu-Bakr and 'Umar when they usurped the Ahl Al-Bayt's right of holding the position of leadership of the Muslim community.

Of course, the most terrible and most astounding calamity that afflicted the Ahl Al-Bayt ('a) all over ages was the massacre of Imam Al-Husayn ('a) and his family members in Karbala'.

'Umar' s reign

Abu-Bakr prepared caliphate after him for 'Umar and assumed it with utmost ease and facility without the least amount of difficulty or hardship. He caught the rule with a firm grip and administered the government with an iron hand so much so that even the senior Companions could not dare to say anything against him, because, as it is said, his walking stick was more terrible than the sword of Al-Hajjaj (ibn Yusuf Al-Thaqafi, the most tyrannical ruler of Iraq during the reign of Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwan).

Even Ibn 'Abbas, in spite of his status and lofty position, could not express his view about the legality of the temporary marriage (*mut'ah*) in the lifetime of 'Umar. Even the family members of 'Umar, especially his sons, were incapable of having their way with him. Here, we shall discuss some policies of 'Umar during his reign:

Internal Policies Of 'Umar

'Umar tried to impose his influence by force and harshness. Neither his close friends and relations nor were the other people at ease because of 'Umar's coarseness and crudeness. Such was the level of his ferocity that a pregnant lady approached him to ask about a particular matter. But she became so much terrorized in his presence that she had miscarriage. 11

'Umar was extremely rude and harsh, especially to one who accorded some importance to himself. Narrators say, 'One day, 'Umar was distributing some funds among the people who were crowded around him. Then, Sa'd ibn Abi- Waqqas arrived. Sa'd, one of the prestigious personalities, was well-known for his exploits in the conquest of Persia.

He pushed the people aside and succeeded in reaching to 'Umar. When 'Umar saw how Sa'd brought himself to the fore, he sarted thrashing him with his stick, saying, 'Do you not fear the power of Allah on the earth? I wanted to show you that the power of Allah is also not fearful of you.'

Hence, 'Umar smashed Sa'd's supremacy and injured his dignity and self- respect. 12

'Umar had a similar rule and harsh situation with Jabalah ibn Al-Ayham, one of the prominent personalities among the Arabs. When Jabalah and his folks embraced Islam, an event that delighted the Muslims, he came to perform the ritual Hajj pilgrimage in the holy city of Makkah. While he was circumambulating the Holy Ka'bah, a man from the tribe of Fazarah stepped on his lower garment and stopped him. Jabalah was so furious that he slapped the man.

This news reached 'Umar who had summoned the man of Fazarah and ordered Jabalah to let the man either take revenge or be compensated. In this matter, 'Umar was very harsh to Jabalah that the man apostatized from Islam and fled to Hercules. Hercules welcomed Jabalah warmly and presented him some gifts. However, Jabalah later on regretted his having abandoned the faith of Islam.

'Umar had intended to put a chain of camel tethers around the neck of Jabalah in order to humiliate him.

'Umar's harshness was not only restricted to his subjects, but he was also harsh with his family members. Historicists say that whenever 'Umar was infuriated at one of his family members, he would bite him so heavily causing the hand to bleed; otherwise, fury would not leave him. 13

Describing 'Umar's coarseness, 'Uthman ibn 'Affan said to the Muslims who revolted against him, 'The son of Al-Khattab used to trample you below his feet, hit you with his hands, and humiliate you by his tongue; therefore, you feared and accepted him as your ruler"14

Expressing the suppressive policies of 'Umar and the hardships people had to encounter during his reign, Imam Ali ('a) says,

After that, he (i.e. Abu-Bakr) transferred the caliphate to a harsh condition, (i.e. to 'Umar, who was) rude

in speech, unapproachable and full of mistakes. He put forth many excuses. And its owner was like the rider of a ferocious beast that if he pulls at the reins it would rent the mouth of the beast and if he lets him free it would have thrown him into hardships; and by Allah, people fell into mistakes, hardships, indecisiveness and controversies" 15

This policy was opposed to the practices and policies of the Holy Prophet (S) that were based on lenience, clemency, and avoidance of all forms of violence and coarseness. The Holy Prophet (S) lived among the people with kindness and affection and dealt with them with utmost mercy.

He was for them a loving father and he used to encourage people not to have any fear or reservations from him so much so that a man, once, came to him while he was in a fearful condition. The Holy Prophet (S) told him not to be afraid, saying, 'Indeed, I am a son of a lady from the tribe of Quraysh; she used to eat dried meat.'16

The behavior of the Holy Prophet (S) with his companions was just like the behavior of a brother to his brother. He always hated to be distinguished from them. He participated with them in building the Prophet's Mosque. Addressing the Holy Prophet (S) and praising him for these traits, the Holy Quran says,

Most surely, you conform yourself to sublime morality. (68:4)

In brief, coarseness was never compatible with any of the Holy Prophet's mannerisms that were characterized by high morality and well-regarded politeness.

Placing The Companions Under House Arrest

One of the articles of 'Umar's policy was that he put the Prophet's companions under house arrest and restricted their movements. He did not allow them to leave Al-Madinah without a special permission obtained from him personally. Scholars of Islamic affairs consider this procedure of 'Umar to be against the spirit of Islam, since this religion has guaranteed freedom to all people.

People in Islam are accorded the freedoms of thought, expression, faith, and work. Islam has secured human rights and the Islamic government is duty-bound to support and respect these rights and provide people with freedom. The ruling powers do not have the right to oppose people or to restrict this freedom, subject to the condition that man does not use wrongly this freedom to harm others or create mischief on the earth.

However, Dr. Taha Husayn, trying to justify this procedure of 'Umar, says,

'Umar, by doing so, feared lest these Companions would be exposed to sedition. Hence, he had them under surveillance at Al-Madinah that they would not leave it without his permission. Besides, they were prohibited to go to areas not conquered yet, because he feared that people there would probably

become devoted to them and this would cause them to become vain and arrogant. He anticipated bad effects on his government due to such excessive devotion to the Companions. 17

Actually, this justification is absolutely lacking any impression of sound research and profundity. If the Companions who intended to travel from Al– Madinah to the newly conquered places had been righteous and religious, they would indeed have proved to be source of true guidance and goodness for the people who were eager to accept Islam.

From this aspect, they would certainly have spread the religious laws and Islamic manners among these people and tried to spread knowledge among them. On the other hand, if these Companions had been seduced by worldly pleasures and deceived by the aspects of the Islamic conquests, then to prevent them from traveling as a custom but not as a religious law would certainly have achieved maintenance of the government and protection of people from being deceived by them.

However, no report has informed that 'Umar prevented some of these Companions and allowed others to leave the capital. Thus, it was natural that this rule imposed by 'Umar was very much unpleasant for the Companions and an obstacle was imposed between them and their freedom.

Officials And Governors Appointed By 'Umar

Patterning after the procedures of Abu–Bakr, 'Umar continued to keep away the members of the Banu–Hashim clan from holding any governmental office and he did not accord them any share in his government. Rather, he confirmed those whom had been appointed by Abu–Bakr and kept them on their former positions.

It is surprising that 'Umar did not give any official position to well-known Companions like Talhah and Al–Zubayr. One day, he was asked, 'You bestowed governorship to Yazid ibn Abi–Sufyan, Sa'id ibn Al-'As, and other persons from the group known as *Al–mu'allafah qulubuhum* (i.e. those non– Muslims whose hearts are made to incline to Islam) from the infidels whom the Holy Prophet (S) set free on the day of the Conquest of Makkah, but you paid no attention to Ali, Al–'Abbas, Al–Zubayr, or Talhah. Why is that?'

'Umar replied, 'As for Ali, he is above such things. As for these people from Quraysh, (i.e. Talhah and Al–Zubayr), I fear that if they go to the cities, they will create corruption therein.'

Commenting on this statement of 'Umar, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid says,

How strange statement this is! If 'Umar anticipated that if he would give governmental offices to these persons, they would seek sovereignty and each one of them would declare himself the absolute ruler, then how did he not anticipate such dangers when he made them among the six persons whom he had nominated to be the next caliphs and whom he had regarded equal to the others in the issue of *shura* (i.e. consultation)? Verily, there is nothing closer to mischief than such a nomination. 18

To explain, before his death and in his last will, 'Umar nominated Talhah and Al–Zubayr for the next caliphate and made them members of the so-called shura committee, professing that the Holy Prophet (S) died while he was pleased with them. How is it then possible that persons who enjoy such qualifications can be sources of mischief in the land if they would be given governmental offices?

Supervision Of Governors

'Umar maintained strict supervision over his governors and administrators and he did not appoint anyone for a governmental office before he had had their wealth and property valued. When he dismissed one from such office, he would again have his assets valued. If he then found any increase therein, he would have the half of his wealth confiscated and deposited in the public treasury. 19

'Umar appointed Abu-Hurayrah Al-Dusi as the governor of Bahrain. When he was informed that Abu-Hurayrah had misappropriated the wealth of Muslims, he summoned him. When Abu-Hurayrah was present before him, 'Umar scolded him and said, 'You should know that I appointed you as the governor of Bahrain while you did not have slippers to wear. Now it has been reported to me that you have sold some horses for one thousand and six hundred dinars (i.e. golden coins). How did you amass such a fortune?'

Abu-Hurayrah tried to explain the matter, saying, 'We had some horses that multiplied continuously and we received so many successive gifts!'

'Umar did not accept any excuse; rather, he chastised Abu-Hurayrah a great deal, saying, 'I have already specified your income and allowances and this is the excess that you must refund.'

Abu-Hurayrah refused and said, 'You do not have the right to do so.' 'Umar said, 'Yes, by Allah. I will moreover give you pain in your back.' 'Umar became infuriated; he stood up and hit Abu-Hurayrah with his walking stick causing him to bleed. Abu-Hurayrah had no option but to return the money he had misappropriated. So, he said at last, 'I shall return it and present the account to God.'

'Umar, in that same weak logic of his, replied, 'It is in case that it be obtained through lawful means and you have paid it on your own. Have you brought them from the distant areas of Bahrain? People have brought them for you and not for Allah or the Muslims. Umaymah (Abu–Hurayrah's mother) had brought you forth only for grazing donkeys.'20

After that, he halved all the assets of Abu–Hurayrah. 'Umar had also confiscated half of the assets of his following officials: (1) Samarah ibn Jundab, (2) 'Asim ibn Qays, (3) Mujashi' ibn Mas'ud, (4) Juz' ibn Mu'awiyah, (5) Al–Hajjaj ibn 'Atiq, (6) Bashir ibn Al–Muhtafaz, (7) Abu– Maryam ibn Muhrish, and (8) Nafi' ibn Al–Harth.

In spite of 'Umar's strict supervision over his officials, continuous complaints reached him and some people complained about these governors, especially those who were responsible for collecting land

taxes.

'Umar dealt strictly with all of his governors except Mu'awiyah ibn Abi- Sufyan. He rather accorded him special honor and did not subject him to any sort of accounting and inspection.

Many complaints reached 'Umar about Mu'awiyah's embezzlement and irresponsible disposition of the public treasury; nevertheless, 'Umar used to find excuses for Mu'awiyah and he would instead praise him, saying, 'You always talk of Khosrow (the king of Persia) and Caesar (the king of Rome) while there is Mu'awiyah among you.'21

Of course, this is in violation of the Prophetic tradition that reads,

Khosrow has perished; and there will be no other Khosrow after him. Similarly, Caesar will soon perish; and there will be no other Caesar after him. I swear this by Allah: the treasures of these two kings will be spent in the cause of Allah.22

'Umar used to defend Mu'awiyah beyond reasonable limits and he never criticized him. Some Companions mentioned to 'Umar that Mu'awiyah was going against the Prophetic practice; he wore silk and brocade and used gold and silver utensils. He never refrained from violating all of the Prophetic traditions.

'Umar objected to and scolded them, saying, 'Leave it! Do not find faults with a young man of Quraysh who smiles even if he is angered and nothing he possesses can be obtained except by means of his pleasure. Besides, nothing can be taken from above his head but that which he himself discards.'23

Historicists say that 'Umar went to greater lengths to elevate the position of Mu'awiyah and imbued him with a lofty soul. The members of the so-called shura committee that 'Umar instituted for selecting the caliph after him were warned about Mu'awiyah when 'Umar added this paragraph:

'If you resort to jealousy among yourselves and if you begin to oppose each other and if there is mutual enmity among you, Mu'awiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan will take over you in this matter.'24

When Mu'awiyah became sure that 'Umar the caliph would not take any action against him and would continue to defend him, he initiated such steps in Syria that a power-hungry king takes in order to strengthen his rule and power.

Economic Policy Of 'Umar

Historicists of Islam have unanimously agreed that, in his policies, 'Umar turned away from the practice of Abu–Bakr and, in distributing allowances among the Muslims, he did not follow the principles of equity. Rather, he preferred some people to others. He had proposed the same policy to Abu–Bakr, but he had declined to accept it, saying, 'Almighty Allah has not preferred anyone over others. He rather said, 'Charities are for the poor and the destitute and He has not considered any people superior to

others."25

When caliphate was transferred to him, 'Umar began to enforce the policy that he had proposed to Abu-Bakr and he justified it saying, 'Abu-Bakr had an opinion regarding this matter and I have another opinion. I shall not consider at par one who has fought against the Prophet and one who has fought to his side.'26

He sanctioned five thousand units of currency for the Muhajirun and the Ansar who participated in the Battle of Badr. However, those who had accepted Islam like the fighters of the Battle of Badr but those who did not take part in this battle were sanctioned four thousand dirham. For the widows of the Prophet, he specified twelve thousand dirham each except for Safiyyah and Juwayriyyah, whom were sanctioned only six thousand dirham each.

They did not accept it. Al-'Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet (S), was given twelve thousand, Usamah ibn Zayd four thousand, and Abdullah, 'Umar's son, three thousand. Abdullah thus expressed his displeasure at this and said, 'O father, why did you sanction him one thousand dirham more than me? His father had no superiority over my father and he is not superior to me "

'Umar answered, 'Usamah's father was more preferred to the Messenger of Allah (S) than your father and Usamah was dearer to him than you were" 27

'Umar gave preference to the Arabs over the non-Arabs and the free men over the slaves.28

This policy created class differences in the Muslim society and people were discriminated according to their tribes and groups. Experts of genealogy became active in their field <u>29</u> to write down lineages and to classify the tribes according to their origins. As a result, a rift was caused among the Muslim community; the non-Arabs began to bear malice towards the Arabs, and patriotism and nationalism found themselves spacious areas in the inner selves of Muslims.

The fact is that Islam put an end to such tendencies and considered the relation of faith stronger than family relationships. It commanded the rulers to practice non-partisanship among the people in spite of their family and class differences and emphasized that no bias must be exercised, as no sort of rift must be allowed in the social fabric of the Muslim community.

'Umar's Arguments

Trying to justify his scrapping of equitability and the creation of social class system, 'Umar states that some of the Companions, on the basis of their seniority in Islam and participation in military activities, were superior to others.

However, this justification lacks validity, because the Holy Prophet (S) had under no circumstances never taken into consideration anything from the public wealth to the exception of a particular

Companion due to seniority in Islam or exceptional efforts and hardships. Persons like 'Ammar ibn Yasir, Bilal Al-Habashi, and Abu-Dharr were not held superior to other Muslims in the respect of distributing the public treasury.

Besides, the Holy Prophet (S) did not take into consideration the unique contribution of his cousin Imam Ali ('a) who was of the valiant fighters of Islam and who defended the faith at every stage and every time. Rather, he entrusted the reward of those warriors and their recompense with Almighty Allah in the Hereafter.

The economic policy of the Holy Prophet (S) specified absolute equality in grants and allowances so that the society would remain integrated and united and all types of class differences and mutual jealousies would be destroyed.

'Umar's Regret

When 'Umar witnessed the extreme accumulation of wealth with some of the Companions, he was extremely regretful and helpless. He thus said, 'If I had followed the policy that I adopted in the end, I would have taken the excessive wealth from the rich and restored it to the poor.'

In my conception, 'Umar's word requires some consideration. If the excess wealth accumulated by the rich class had been from the bestowals they received in excess, all of them must have belonged to the public treasury and he should have ordered them to be repaid to the state so that economic balance would be created.

If the wealth had been business profits-yet I do not think it was so-taxes should have been collected from them rather than having them confiscated.

Anyway, the monies obtained in war booty, the Jizyah taxes, and the land taxes belong to the public treasury, which is for all Muslims and it was not permitted that some people be given preference over others; i.e. they should have been equally distributed among all Muslims, as the Holy Prophet (S) used to do.

Seclusion of Imam Ali

During the reign of 'Umar, Imam Ali ('a) was highly aggrieved due to the usurpation of his rights, the deliberate negligence of his position, and the misappropriation of his inheritance. The ruling authorities worked on disregarding his status and treating him as an ordinary person. They completely and intentionally forgot his relation to and his status in the view of the Holy Prophet (S).

He became aloof from them and he did not participate in any of their affairs related to government and power. In turn, they did not allow him to participate in their governmental issues. He thus secluded himself from them and, as a result, they alienated him.

Muhammad ibn Sulayman, in his reply to Ja'far ibn Makki with regard to what happened between Imam Ali and 'Uthman, says, 'The first two caliphs (i.e. Abu–Bakr and 'Umar) set against Ali, brought him down from his position, and destroyed his honor in the view of the people. Thus, he became a forgotten thing.'30

Imam Ali ('a), in his conversation with Abdullah ibn 'Umar, mentioned that all hardships that befell him were related to Abdullah's father. Among these hardships was giving precedence to 'Uthman over him.31

Anyway, Imam Ali ('a) kept himself totally aloof and secluded from people, just as he had maintained aloofness during the tenure of Abu–Bakr. He ('a) confined himself to his residence and devoted himself to explaining the Holy Quran. He did not contact anyone except for his sincere companions who recognized his actual status, such as 'Ammar ibn Yasir, Abu–Dharr, Salman, Al–Miqdad, and the other virtuous companions of the Holy Prophet (S).

Historians unanimously reported that 'Umar used to consult Imam Ali ('a) in some very important matters, taking the answers to the questions that were posed to him. This is because 'Umar had very little knowledge with religious and mundane affairs. He used to refer these queries to Imam Ali ('a) who would not refrain from giving sincere answers and advices.

Probably, Imam Ali ('a) wanted to spread the true commands of Almighty Allah by this way so that the knowledgeable ones would learn and then propagate these commands and laws among people. It is widely reported that 'Umar, on many occasions, used to say, 'Had it not been for Ali, 'Umar would certainly have perished.'

In other words, through authentic reports, it has been proven that 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab, during his reign, used to ask and adopt the rulings issued by Imam Ali ('a). Al-Khawarizmi, in Al-Manaqib, has recorded the following incident:

When two men asked him about the rulings of the divorcement of bondmaids, 'Umar turned to a bald man to his side and asked the same question. As he received the answer from the man, 'Umar said it to the two men verbally. Wondering at 'Umar, the two men asked, 'We asked you because you are the caliph! But you referred to a man to take the answer from him!'

'Woe to you,' said 'Umar, 'Do you know who the man to whom I referred the question is? He is Ali ibn Abi Talib! I have heard the Messenger of Allah (S) saying: If the heavens and the earth are put in one scale of a balance and the faith of Ali is put in the other, the faith of Ali will certainly exceed in weight.'32

In addition, 'Umar is quoted to have said,

"Ali is the most experienced of all of us in the field of judicature." 33

'Without Ali, 'Umar would have perished.'34

'May Allah take my soul before I face a problem while Abu'l-Hasan (Imam Ali) is not present.'35

'May Allah never keep me to face a problem while Abu'l-Hasan is not there to solve it. 36
It is an established fact that 'Umar was often confronted with legal matters that he could not solve.
Hence, he used to rush to Imam Ali ('a) and other Companions. Too famous is this word of 'Umar: 'All people are more informed than 'Umar, including women in their private rooms.'37

One day, a difficult problem came to 'Umar and he was very keen to solve it. He presented it to his companions and said to them, 'What do you say about this matter?'

They replied, 'You are the point of reference and you are the position to remove the difficulties.'

This did not please him; he therefore recited this holy verse:

'O you who believe! Be careful of (your duty to) Allah and speak the right word. (33:70)'

After that, he said to them, 'By Allah, you and I know for sure where the point of reference and knowledge regarding the matter is.'

They said, 'It seems that you are thinking about the son of Abu Talib.'

'Umar said, 'Except for him, where should I go? Has any free woman given birth to any one like him?'

They said, 'O Amir Al-Mu'minin, why do you not call him?'

'Umar replied, 'The Hashimites are characterized by highness, precedence in knowledge, and proximity to Allah's Messenger (S). All must be visited, since he is too reverent to visit any. Let us go to him.'

Together with 'Umar, they hastened to Imam Ali ('a) and found him working in a garden he owned, putting on a short pair of trousers, resting on his spade, reciting these holy verses: 'Does man think that he is to be left to wander without an aim? (75:36)' to the end of the Surah (i.e. Quranic chapter), and his tears shedding on his cheeks.

Upon seeing him in this condition, all people also started weeping. When they stopped, 'Umar asked him for an answer to the question about which he had come to him. The Imam ('a) immediately answered.

After that, 'Umar said to the Imam ('a), 'By Allah, the truth wanted you, but your people did not want.'

Imam Ali ('a) answered, 'O Abu-Hafs, do not produce untruthful justifications from here and there.'

The Imam ('a) then recited this holy verse:

'Surely, the day of decision is (a day) appointed.'(78:17)

This answer astounded 'Umar so heavily that he put one of his hands on the other and left so

Imam Ali advises 'Umar

Concealing his feelings about the usurpation of his right, Imam Ali ('a) advised 'Umar on two occasions in order to safeguard Islam.

When 'Umar was determined to head for invading Rome, Imam Ali ('a) warned him against so, saying,

Allah has taken upon Himself for the followers of this religion the strengthening of boundaries and hiding of the secret places. Allah helped them when they were few and could not protect themselves. He is living and He will not die. If you will, your self proceed towards the enemy and clash with them and fall into some trouble, there will be no place of refuge for the Muslims other than their remote cities, nor any place they would return to.

Therefore, you should send there an experienced man and send with him people of good performance who are well-intentioned. If Allah grants you victory, then this is what you want. If it were otherwise, you would serve as a support for the people and a returning place for the Muslims. 39

'Umar sought the advice of Imam Ali ('a) regarding leading a campaign to invade the Persians. Imam Ali ('a) advised him not to go by himself, saying,

In this matter, victory of defeat is not dependent on the smallness or greatness of forces. It is Allah's religion, which He has raised above all faiths, and His army, which He has mobilized and extended, till it has reached the point where it stands now, and has arrived its present positions. We hold a promise from Allah, and He will fulfill His promise and support His army.

The position of the head of government is that of the thread for beads, as it connects them and keeps them together. If the thread is broken, they will disperse and be lost, and will never come together again. The Arabs today, even though small in number are big because of Islam and strong because of unity.

You should remain like the axis for them, and rotate the mill (of government) with (the help of) the Arabs, and be their root. Avoid battle, because if you leave this place the Arabs will attack you from all sides and directions until the unguarded places left behind by you will become more important than those before you.

If the Persians see you tomorrow, they will say, 'He is the root (chief) of Arabia. If we do away with him we will be in peace.' In this way, this will heighten their eagerness against you and their keenness to aim at you. You say that they have set out to fight against the Muslims.

Well, Allah detests their setting out more than you do, and He is more capable of preventing what He detests. As regards your idea about their (large) number, in the past, we did not fight on the strength of

large numbers but we fought on the basis of Allah's support and assistance. 40

During the reign of 'Umar, the Holy Ka'bah was decorated with heavy ornaments, which were presented to this House as gifts. The consultants of 'Umar suggested that he should sell all the ornaments and dedicate the price to developing the Muslim army, because the Holy Ka'bah did not obtain its sacredness and beauty from ornaments. Before he implemented this suggestion, 'Umar had sought Imam Ali's opinion.

Hence, Imam Ali ('a) said to him,

When the Quran was descended on the Prophet, peace be upon him and his descendants, there were four kinds of property.

One, the property of Muslims, which he distributed among the successors according to fixed shares.

Second, the tax which he distributed to those for whom it was meant.

Third, the One-fifth (Khums) levy for which Allah had fixed the ways of disposal.

Fourth, amounts of charity (Sadaqah) whose disposal was also fixed by Allah.

The ornaments of the Ka'bah existed in those days but Allah left them as they were, but did not leave them by omission, nor were they unknown to Him. Therefore, you retain them where Allah and His Prophet placed them.

Thereupon, 'Umar said, 'If you had not been here, we would have been humiliated.' He thus left the ornaments as they were.

Assassination of 'Umar

Brevity has been intended in our discussion of 'Umar's reign without reference to such incidents like 'Umar's personal opinions in the face of religious texts in some issues about which clear–cut texts from the Holy Quran and the Prophetic traditions are available, such as the verdicts issued by 'Umar regarding forbidding the temporary marriage 41 and the temporary marriage during the Hajj season, 42 canceling a paragraph in the ritual adhan (call to prayer) and adding another, 43 making amendments to the laws of divorce, 44 inventing a congregational, recommended prayer known as Salat Al–tarawih, 45 changing some laws of inheritance, 46 changing the ritual funeral prayer, 47 changing the waiting period (i.e. 'iddah) of the pregnant, 48 allowing the selling of the bondmaids who gave birth to a child, 49 deciding that one who cannot find water is not required to perform the (obligatory) prayer, 50 warning against offering a two–unit voluntary prayer after the Afternoon Prayers (Salat Al–'Asr) and beating the Muslims who would offer such prayers, 51 changing the place of the sacred monument known as Maqam Ibrahim (Prophet Abraham's Standing–place)' 52 etc.

These unfounded laws decreed by 'Umar will not be discussed here, for fear of lengthiness and also because Shi'ite master scholars, such as Sayyid Sharaf Al-Din Al-Musawi, in his famous book entitled Al-Nass wa'l-Ijtihad, and Shaykh Abd Al-Husayn Al-Amini, in his famous encyclopedic book entitled Al-Ghadir, have dealt with these matters and their likes in details.

However, what is important here is that we should describe the events connected to the assassination of 'Umar and the important incidents following it, such as the invention of the so-called shura system. Some researchers however ascribed the process of assassinating 'Umar to the Umayyads as an attempt to get rid of him and have full control over Muslims. 53

Providing many points of evidence, those researchers referred to the fact that Abu– Lu'lu'ah, the assassinator of 'Umar, was a slave of Al–Mughirah ibn Shu'bah, one of the intimate friends of the Umayyads.

In my view, this is not a theory that can pass the test of research, because 'Umar's connection with the Umayyads was very close and stable, and there occurred no sort of rivalry or hard feelings between the two. Besides, 'Umar was more inclined to them than anyone else, in his capacity as the one and only opponent of Imam Ali ('a) whose archenemies were none but the Umayyads.

Moreover, 'Umar had appointed their chiefs as rulers of many Muslim territories. He also exempted them from the processes of halving the wealth of his officials who had been accused of financial corruption, although he had received many complains against them.

'Umar also paid much attention to the problems of the women of the Umayyads in such a way that he granted four thousand units of currency from the public treasury to Hind, the daughter of 'Utbah and the mother of Mu'awiyah, so that she would invest it in business.54

In his own house, 'Umar dedicated a special place that was furnished with the best furniture to Abu–Sufyan. When he was blamed for such deed, 'Umar said, 'This is the chief of Quraysh!' 55

Based on all these ties between 'Umar and the Umayyads, it becomes improbable to believe that they arranged to assassinate him.

However, it is confirmed that Abu–Lu'lu'ah decided to assassinate 'Umar of his own and not at the behest of the Umayyads. The reason was that Abu– Lu'lu'ah, the Persian, was a young man angered and aggrieved for the sake of his community after he had seen his homeland conquered by force, losing its glory and dignity and had seen 'Umar exaggerate in despising the Persians, declaring that he wished if there were an iron mountain separating him from them (i.e. the Persians).

'Umar thus detested the Persians so much that he used to keep them at a distance and he had even issued orders that they, except for their children, should not enter the capital, Al-Madinah. 56 He had also issued a verdict that only the Arabs should be entitled to inheritance and Persians and non-Arabs

should not inherit from their predecessors except those who were born in the lands of the Arabs.57

'Umar used to call them 'ilj (a non-Arab infidel). On day, Abu-Lu'lu'ah himself went to 'Umar to complain to him about the hardships he had to bear at the hands of his master Al-Mughirah and the heavy land taxes that his master had imposed on him. However, 'Umar scolded him and said, 'I think that the land tax imposed on you is still little if compared to the professions you master.'

This reply of 'Umar created animosity and malice in Abu-Lu'lu'ah's heart towards 'Umar, causing him to carry a grudge against 'Umar. On another occasion, 'Umar passed by him and said, 'I hear that you have claimed that you can construct a mill that can run on the wind?'

This ridicule made Abu–Lu'lu'ah very displeased and he replied at once, 'I will most certainly make such a mill for you about which all people will talk.' The next day, he went on to kill 'Umar <u>58</u> and hit him three strikes one of which was under the navel that it could tear the interior skin. Abu–Lu'lu'ah then attacked the people who were present in the mosque and could stab eleven men. He then killed himself. <u>59</u>

Bleeding from the places of the injuries, 'Umar was carried to his house. He asked the people around him, 'Who has attacked me?'

They replied, 'It was the slave of Al-Mughirah.'

He said, 'I have told you not to bring any of these non-Arab infidels to us, but you did not obey me.'60

His family summoned the physician who promptly arrived and asked his patient, 'What is your favorite drink?'

'Umar answered, 'It is wine.'

So, they gave him wine to drink but it came out through the wounds. People said, 'There is dirt in the blood.' After that, they gave him milk to drink, but that also came out from his wound. Then, the physician became hopeless about him and said, 'I do not think that you will survive the late afternoon.'61

When he became certain that his end was near, 'Umar told his son Abdullah to calculate how much he owed. When they checked, they found that he had owed the public treasury about sixty thousand (either dirham or dinar).

'Umar thus instructed his son Abdullah, saying, 'If the property of the family of 'Umar is sufficient to cover this amount, then you must pay it from your property. If it is not sufficient, you must ask the Banu-'Adi folks to settle the amount. If their money also does not cover the amount, then you must take it from the people of Quraysh. Beyond that, you must not ask anyone else.'62

This instruction is subject to many points of criticism some of which are as follows:

1. The huge sums of money that 'Umar had taken as loans from the public treasury were utilized for his

family expenses exclusively. If he had spent it on public affairs of Muslims, there would not have been any need to recover it from his family. Without any doubt, this is not at all in accordance with the character of 'Umar that historians have portrayed, saying that he used to be very strict and austere regarding the public funds and he did not use anything of it for his personal needs.

2. 'Umar asked his son Abdullah to repay his debts from his own family funds and if that was not enough, it should be supplemented by the funds of his clan. This shows that he had also spent some of the public money on the Banu-'Adi clan. If not, he would not have asked that his debts should be covered by the members of this clan, because he had no right on other people's wealth even if they were his relatives.

In my opinion, 'Umar had given them the money from the pubic treasury, which is in contrary to the claims that he was strict towards his family and clan members so much so that he subjected them to poverty and hardship, he used to deal with them with so much austerity, and he deprived them of luxury to such an extent that he considered his relatives at par with other Muslims!

3. 'Umar then asked his son Abdullah to collect the amount from the members of the Quraysh tribe. This shows a deep and firm attachment of 'Umar to these people. As historians state, 'Umar was the sole representative of the Quraysh clan in his activities and he used to fulfill their desires and aspirations.

Back to the developments of 'Umar's assassination, when Abdullah his son became assured that his father would very soon die, he requested him to nominate one to succeed him to the position of caliphate so that he would not leave the affairs of the community without a manager.

He thus said, 'O father, appoint someone as the next caliph over the community of Muhammad, because if the herder of the camels or sheep leaves his flock without a caretaker, you will consider him to have abandoned his trusts. With greater reason, you must not leave Muhammad's community without a caretaker. Therefore, you are required to appoint someone as your successor in this matter.'

'Umar glanced at his son and said, 'If I appoint one as caliph over them, then Abu-Bakr did the same; and if I neglect, then the Messenger of Allah did leave them without appointing a leader.'63

How strange this statement is! 'Umar, having been bedridden, seemed to have forgotten, due to hallucination, that the Holy Prophet (S) appointed Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib('a) as the next leader and as his successor to the position of leadership on that day at Ghadir Khumm and ordered all Muslims to pay homage to him.

'Umar himself was one of those who swore allegiance to Imam Ali ('a) as their next leader, saying his famous word: 'Congratulations to you, O Ali! You have become my master and the master of all believing men and women.'

Once more, was Abu-Bakr more caring for the Muslims than the Holy Prophet (S) was, so that he

appointed the next caliph while the Prophet (S) neglected this critical issue and refrained from nominating any one for this sensitive position?

In any case, 'Umar's wounds troubled him in such an intensifying way that he declared, 'If whatever I have on the earth had been of gold, I would have given all as penalty in lieu of my release from the divine chastisement before I meet Him.'64

'Umar then asked his son Abdullah to put his cheek on the ground. Abdullah did not pay any heed to 'Umar's request, believing that his father had lost his mind. 'Umar repeated the same request, and Abdullah did not respond. In the third time, 'Umar shouted at his son, 'Put my cheek on the ground! May you lose your mother!'

This time, Abdullah came forward and put the cheek of 'Umar on the ground. 'Umar began to weep bitterly and repeat these words: 'Woe to 'Umar! Woe to 'Umar if Allah will not forgive him.'65

Probably, 'Umar, in the last moments of his lifetime, recalled the maltreatments and crises he had brought to the Holy Prophet's Household ('a).

'Umar requested his son to take permission from 'A'ishah to allow 'Umar to be buried alongside the Holy Prophet (S) and Abu-Bakr. 'A'ishah did.66

Commenting on this request, Shi'ite theologians express the same objection they raised against the burial of Abu–Bakr next to the Holy Prophet (S), saying: If whatever was left by the Holy Prophet (S) was not to be inherited by his family members; rather, it should be given to the man in authority as a public treasury or alms, according to what Abu–Bakr had reported from the Holy Prophet (S), it would then be senseless for 'Umar to ask permission from 'A'ishah to allow him to be buried there.

On the other hand, if the heirs of the Holy Prophet (S) have the right to inherit him according to the laws of inheritance, as is confirmed by the Ahl Al-Bayt ('a), then 'A'ishah had no share in this inheritance, because widows do not inherit lands; rather, they inherit constructions only. Such being the case, 'Umar should have asked permission from the actual heirs of the Holy Prophet (S). However, 'Umar did not.

The shura system

Just like the biased system of Saqifah, 'Umar's invention of the so-called shura system was the foundation of all these terrible circumstances and calamities that have befallen the Muslims and was the basic event that has created great mischief in the Muslim world and subjected them to everlasting difficulties and hardships.

Actually, the shura system was a notorious plot purely intended for nothing other than eliminating Imam Ali ('a) from holding the position of leadership of the Muslim community. It was also purposed for enabling the Umayyads to come to power, as an attempt from 'Umar to please the emotions of the

people of Quraysh whose hearts were still filled with malice and hatred towards Imam Ali ('a).

In this discussion, we will describe analytically 'Umar's innovative shura system away from traditional sentiments, since this issue is strongly related to the life course of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib ('a).

When 'Umar despaired of survival and saw his imminent end, he began to think about the one who would take over the command after him from those leaders who had taken part in preparing the ground for Abu–Bakr. He then mentioned them one by one and saw that death had come upon all of them.

At that moment, he wailed and expressed regret saying, 'If Abu-'Ubaydah were alive, I would make him the caliph, because he was the most trustworthy of the community. If Salim, the manumitted slave of Abu-Hudhayfah, were alive, I would appoint him as the caliph as he loved God too much"

In fact, Abu-'Ubaydah had nothing to do with serving Islam and fighting for its sake. Likewise, Salim the slave of Abu-Hudhayfah was not a prominent personality who had done any favor to Islam; rather, he was an ordinary Muslim. His one and only favor was that he contributed positively to the plot that was hatched under the Saqifah and could protect the members of that plot.

We wonder why 'Umar did not mention any one of those who were alive and who had participated in serving and reinforcing Islam, such as Imam Ali ('a) and the other prominent Companions like 'Ammar ibn Yasir, Abu-Dharr, and the Ansar so that he may have nominated them for this position!

He only searched in the list of the dead Companions and wished that he would have appointed Abu-'Ubaydah or Salim as caliphs if they had been alive!

'Umar's friends asked him to appoint one to succeed him to this position and to govern the affairs of the community. However, 'Umar refused, saying, 'I do not like that I should take the responsibility for this position after my death after I have taken it in my lifetime.'

Not much time passed but that 'Umar defeated his intention and named the six members of the Shura committee and entrusted them to elect one of them for the leadership of the community. In this way, he imposed his choice on the Muslims and made himself take *the responsibility for caliphate after his death after he had taken it in his lifetime!*

Commenting on this procedure, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, in Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 12:260, says, 'What picture can taking responsibility for caliphate be clearer than this? What is the difference in taking such responsibility between appointing a certain person for this position and restricting it to such procedure?'

'Umar then ordered Suhayb to lead the congregational prayers. So, Suhayb did. About this incident, Al–Farazdaq, a famous Arab poet, says, 'Suhayb led the congregational prayers for three times after which he entrusted caliphate with the son of 'Affan to change it into monarchy, yet unintentionally.'67

'Umar With The Members Of The Shura Committee

'Umar selected six persons, made them the members of the Shura committee, and ordered them to select one of them to assume leadership. These six persons are namely Imam Ali ('a), Sa'd ibn Abi–Waqqas, Al–Zubayr ibn Al– 'Awwam, Talhah ibn 'Ubaydullah, 'Uthman ibn 'Affan, and Abd Al–Rahman ibn 'Awf.

'Umar also claimed that the Holy Prophet (S) was pleased with these six persons up to the termination of his lifetime and that they were given the good tidings that they would be in Paradise. 68

It is noticeable that 'Umar did not give any share to the Ansar who had supported and received the Holy Prophet (S) and the first Muslims of Makkah warmly. This may be because the Ansar took sides with Imam Ali ('a). Hence, the six-member shura committee was restricted to the people of Quraysh exclusively.

'Umar ordered that these six persons should be summoned. When they presented themselves before him, he addressed them in a very sarcastic and critical manner and ascribed ill–favored descriptions to them that made them unqualified to hold the position of leading the Muslim community.

Historicists have recorded 'Umar's conversation with each one of them. Let us now present some of these conversations:

When 'Umar glanced at these six persons, he said, 'Are all of you desirous for holding caliphate after me?'

None of them answered him; therefore, he repeated the same question. Here, Al–Zubayr answered, 'What makes us aloof from it? When you held it, you managed it adequately. We are not less than you are with regard to our family ties to Quraysh, our precedence to this religion, and our relation to the Prophet.'

'Umar could not refute Al-Zubayr's claim, because it was perfect. Then, he turned his face towards them and said, 'May I tell you what you are?'

'Yes, you may. If we ask you to accept our resignation, you will not,' they all answered.

'Umar then began to explain each one's menTalibty and tendency. Addressing each one of them separately, 'Umar said to Al–Zubayr, 'As for you, O Zubayr, you are swiftly bored and fickle. You are secured only when you are pleased, but you cannot be secured when you are infuriated. One day, you are human, but the other day you are devil.

If this caliphate reaches you, you will spend your day quarreling in the desert for even the most trivial amount of barley (i.e. out of niggardliness). If you hold this position, who will then save the people from

you on the days when you are devil? Whose soul will you spare on the days when you are infuriated? Allah will never consent to giving you the administration of the affairs of this community while you are so.'69

Turning his face toward Talhah, 'Umar said, 'Shall I say or I would better keep silent about you?' Reproaching 'Umar, Talhah said, 'Do you ever say anything good?'

Hence, 'Umar said, 'I know you since the day when your finger was hit in the Battle of Uhud. Since that day, you are showing off. Verily, Allah's Messenger departed life while he was angry with you, because of what you had said when the Verse of Veiling was revealed.'70

Turning his face toward Sa'd ibn Abi–Waqqas, 'Umar said, 'You master nothing but cavalry, hunting, and using arrows and lances. Besides, the tribe of Zuhrah cannot manage caliphate and the affairs of people.'71

Turning his face toward Abd Al-Rahman ibn 'Awf, 'Umar said, 'If the half of the faith of all Muslims is weighed to your faith, your faith will preponderate. However, this matter is not suitable to one who is as weak as you are. Besides, the tribe of Zuhrah has nothing to do with such affairs.'72

Finally, 'Umar turned his face toward Imam Ali ('a) and said, 'You would be the most qualified for this position unless you had sense of humor! By Allah I swear this: If you assume this position, you will most certainly lead people to the brightest truth and the straightest path.'

We wonder at which situation Imam Ali ('a) had a sense of humor due to which he was unqualified to rule over people. It is known for everyone that Imam Ali ('a) was always serious and steadfast on the truth throughout his lifetime. However, 'Umar confessed that Imam Ali ('a) would lead people to the brightest truth and guide them to the straightest path. Of course, one who is so cannot be unserious and dismissive.

As long as 'Umar confessed that Imam Ali ('a), if he assumed leadership, would apply thorough truth to people and lead them to follow the straight path, then why did he make him one of the members of the shura committee rather than appointing him as the next leader directly?

Turning his face toward 'Uthman ibn 'Affan the chief of the Umayyad family and the one who wrote down Abu–Bakr's decision of appointing 'Umar as the next caliph, 'Umar said, 'It is really yours! I see coming that the people of Quraysh will entrust this position to you because they love you, and you will certainly place the sons of Umayyah and the sons of Abi–Ma'it on the shoulders of people.

You will also give them the allowances exclusively. Then, a group of the wolflike ferocious Arabs will march toward you and slaughter you on your bed. By Allah, if you do that, they will do so; and if they do so, you will have done that.'

'Umar then took 'Uthman from the neck and said, 'When this will take place, then remember these words

It goes without saying that the people of Quraysh did not give the position of caliphate to 'Uthman; rather, 'Umar did. Besides, 'Umar selected 'Uthman for this position a long time before his final ailment. In this respect, Al-Hasan ibn Nasr reported that when he once went on Hajj pilgrimage in the company of 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab, the cameleer was singing, 'The Emir after 'Umar will be 'Uthman ibn 'Affan.'74

The 'Umar-invented **shura** system would inevitably lead to 'Uthman's winning the caliphate. 'Umar made 'Uthman one of the six members of the shura committee while the majority of the other members enjoyed strong ties with the Umayyads and they would never select anyone save 'Uthman for this position.

The other narration, which has been reported by Ibn Qutaybah, reads as follows:

When the members of the Shura committee met with 'Umar, they said to him, 'Say something about us so that we may use your opinion as point of debate and we be guided by your views.'

'Umar, addressing Sa'd, said, 'By Allah, nothing prevented me from appointing you as the next caliph except your cruelty and hard-heartedness. Besides, you are a man of war.'

To Abd Al-Rahman, 'Umar said, 'nothing prevents me from appointing you as the next caliph except that you are verily Pharaoh (i.e. tyrant) of this community.

To Al-Zubayr, 'Umar said, 'nothing prevents me from choosing you except that you are secured in your pleasure but not in your anger.'

About Talhah, 'Umar said, 'nothing prevents me from appointing Talhah for this position except that he is arrogant and proud. If he becomes the caliph, he will put the ring of his seal on his wife's finger.'

To 'Uthman, 'Umar said, 'Nothing prevents me from deciding on you except your bigotry and your favoritism toward your clan.'

To Imam Ali ('a), 'Umar said, 'Nothing prevents me from selecting you except your greed for it. In fact, you are the most qualified of all people for this position, and if you come to it, you shall act on the manifest truth and the straight path.'75

'Umar thus associated the members of the Shura with undesirable qualities. He labeled Abd Al-Rahman ibn 'Awf as Pharaoh of the community. If Abd Al-Rahman was such a tyrannical person, how could 'Umar nominate him for the next leadership? However, in the last chapter of his will, 'Umar surprisingly authorized the final decision of caliphate to Abd Al-Rahman and made his opinion binding on all.

In the same way, he alleged that Imam Ali ('a) was greedy for caliphate. This is inaccurate! Imam Ali's biography testifies to the opposite of this accusation. Greed did not find any way to Imam Ali's heart,

especially for mundane affairs and worldly positions. He ('a) neither desired for power nor did he ever wish to rule over people.

Imam Ali ('a) only argued the caliphs and proved with overwhelming points of evidence that he was more entitled to this position than any one of them was, in order that he would be able to put into practice the laws of the Holy Quran and the justice of Islam, as he was more qualified and worthier of holding this position than they were. He did not fall prey to selfish desires and did not expose himself to fondness of worldly pleasures.

Expressing this fact more than once, Imam Ali ('a) is reported to have said,

O Allah! You know that what we did was not to seek power nor to acquire anything from the vanities of the world. We rather wanted to restore the signs of Your religion and to usher prosperity into Your cities so that the oppressed among Your creatures might be safe and Your forsaken commands might be established.

O Allah! I am the first who leaned (towards You) and who heard and responded (to the call of Islam). No one preceded me in prayer except the Prophet.

You certainly know that he who is in charge of honor, life, booty, (enforcement of) legal commandments and the leadership of the Muslims should not be a miser as his greed would aim at their wealth, nor be ignorant as he would then mislead them with his ignorance, nor be of rude behavior who would estrange them with his rudeness, nor should he deal unjustly with wealth thus preferring one group over another, nor should he accept a bribe while taking decisions, as he would forfeit (others) rights and hold them up without finality, nor should he ignore a Prophetic practice as he would ruin the people. 76

In his conversation with Ibn 'Abbas about the level of his distaste for power and his considering valueless the rulership, Imam Ali ('a), while stitching his sandals, glanced at Ibn 'Abbas and asked, 'O Ibn 'Abbas, what is the value of this sandal in your view?'

Ibn 'Abbas replied, 'O Amir Al-Mu'minin, it is of no value.'

Imam Ali ('a) said, 'To me, it is better than your caliphate unless I may establish the truth and remove falsehood.'

The third narration about 'Umar's conversation with the members of the **shura** committee was reported by Ibn Abi'l–Hadid, as follows:

'Umar looked at the members of the shura committee and said, 'Each one of you has come to me giving movement to his devil and aspiring to become a caliph.'

He then turned his face toward Talhah and said, 'As for you, O Talhah, is it not you who said, 'If the Prophet passes away, I will marry his widows?' The Almighty Allah has not considered Muhammad to

have the priority to marry our cousins over us. Thus, the Almighty Allah has revealed about you:

'It does not behove you that you should give trouble to the Apostle of Allah, nor that you should marry his wives after him ever.' (33:53)

Then, 'Umar, addressing Al–Zubayr, said, 'As for you, O Al–Zubayr, by Allah, your heart never softened even for a single day or a single night, and you have always been cruel and sharp–tongued.'

Addressing 'Uthman, 'Umar said, 'As for you, O 'Uthman, by Allah, a heap of dung is better than you are.'

Turning his face towrd Abd Al-Rahman, 'Umar said, 'As for you, O Abd Al- Rahman, you are so weak and you prefer your folks to all others.'

About Sa'd, 'Umar said, 'As for you, O Sa'd, you have an angry disposition and you are a mischief-maker.'

'Umar then addressed his words to Imam Ali ('a), saying, 'As for you, O Ali, by Allah, if your faith is weighed against the faith of all the people of the earth, your faith shall be heavier.'

Imam Ali ('a) arose and departed from there. 'Umar then turned his face toward the attendants and said, 'I do recognize the status of this man. If you entrust him with your affairs, he will bring you on an illuminated path.'

They all asked, 'Who is he?'

He replied, 'He is this man who has just left us.'

They asked, 'What prevents you from appointing him (as the next leader)?' 'Umar replied, 'No, this is impossible.'77

Let us wonder why it is impossible to appoint Imam Ali ('a) as the next caliph, especially after the Holy Prophet (S) had appointed him as the next leader of the Muslim community and the successor of him to this position on that day at Ghadir Khumm. Is there any defect in Imam Ali's personality that makes him unqualified to hold this position?

Actually, there is one defect in the views of these people: their minds are suffocated with malice and hatred toward the Imam ('a) after he had killed their heroes and chiefs.

Verily, Imam Ali ('a) is the true successor of the Holy Prophet (S), the door to his knowledge, and the only one who would judge between the servants of Almighty Allah with justice in all of their affairs.

'Umar thus criticized each one of these members of the shura committee except for Imam Ali ('a) whom he considered great and confessed his eligibility and suitability for caliphate, confirming that if he took

the affairs of the community in his control, he would lead them on the true path. However, 'Umar did not consider it worthwhile to appoint him as the caliph.

The supervising body over elections

Probably, I have not seen any other procedure as baseless as the procedure of the Shura committee. It did not have any sort of originality and balance. It was very far from the fact that it should be representative of all views of the community. Different groups should have been represented therein, because in this Shura, 'Umar had given the view of a particular group precedence over the opinion of the people who only represented their own views.

'Umar established a supervising body over the process of election. The members of this body had nothing else to do but to supervise over the process. 'Umar summoned the members of the shura committee and said to them, 'Bring with you some chiefs of the Ansar; rather, nothing from your affair should be in their hands.

Along with you, bring also Al-Hasan ibn Ali and Abdullah ibn Al-'Abbas, for they enjoy close relation with the Holy Prophet (S) and I hope that their presence will endue you with blessings. However, there will be no share in your affair for them.'78

'Umar distanced the Ansar and did not allow them any share in the processes of nomination and selection. Rather, he made them responsible for supervision, which amounted to their deprivation of rule and implied that they were not worth much, since this issue, in 'Umar's conception, was for the members of the Shura committee and others were of no consequence.

Thus, 'Umar broke the covenant that Abu–Bakr had made when he promised the Ansar of obtaining senior offices in his government, saying, 'Rulers are from us, and assistants are from you, the Ansar.' In fact, 'Umar did not give any office to any one of the Ansar; rather, he made them policemen and soldiers to guard his government.

Moreover, we do not know what blessings existed in the presence of Al-Hasan ibn Ali ('a) and Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, while they did not have any say in the matter of selecting the caliph.

Intending to strengthen his plan of shura, compact the articles of his will, and impose it on Muslims, 'Umar turned to Abu-Talhah Al-Ansari, who was the chief-in-command of 'Umar's police, and said to him, 'O Abu-Talhah, Allah has fortified Islam through you and your people, the Ansar. So, select fifty persons from you and bind them to put this matter into effect as soon as possible.'

After that, 'Umar turned to Al-Miqdad and ordered him, saying, 'If five out of these six members agree on one person and one of them disagrees, then you must behead the one disagreeing! If four of them agree and two disagree, those two must be beheaded, too. If three of them agree on one man and the other three agree on another, then you must support the three among whom Abd Al-Rahman ibn 'Awf

will be, while the other three must be killed if they will refuse the one about whom the people agree.'79

How strange these commands are! However, I will discuss the matter in further details in a coming chapter.

Warning the companions

The most critical matter in this issue was that 'Umar warned the members of this committee and threatened them with Mu'awiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan the governor of Syria and with 'Amr ibn Al-'As if they would not reach an agreement. So, he said to them, 'O companions of Muhammad! Act sincerely toward each other; otherwise, 'Amr ibn Al-'As and Mu'awiyah ibn Abi- Sufyan will dominate you in the matter of caliphate.'

Shaykh Al-Mufid, the master scholar of the Imamiyyah Shi'ah, commenting on this statement, says: 'By this statement, 'Umar only intended to instigate Mu'awiyah and 'Amr ibn Al-'As to obtain the power of caliphate and he encouraged them to do so, because Mu'awiyah was his agent and deputy governor in Syria and 'Amr ibn Al-'As was his agent and deputy governor in Egypt.

'Umar anticipated that caliphate would be gained by Imam Ali ('a) if 'Uthman would be too weak to gain it. He therefore issued this statement in the hope that people would convey it to these two men who were in Syria and Egypt; and in case caliphate would return to Imam Ali, these two would seize power in the Muslim territories they were ruling.'80

This analytical commentary is so accurate. 'Umar wanted Mu'awiyah and 'Amr to rebel and go up against Imam Ali ('a) once he would come to power. 'Umar's desire was fulfilled completely. When Imam Ali ('a) held the position of caliphate, Mu'awiyah and 'Amr were the first to revolt and defy his government.

Imam Ali's reaction

Without any doubt, Imam Ali ('a) had full awareness of 'Umar's attitude to him, since 'Umar had never desired that Imam Ali ('a) would assume caliphate and undertake the mission of running the affairs of the Muslims. He also knew for sure that 'Umar designed this so-called shura committee to keep caliphate away from him and to pave the way for 'Uthman, the chief of the Umayyad family, to come to power.

One day, Imam Ali ('a) met his uncle Al-'Abbas and without any preface said,

'O Uncle, caliphate has gone away from us.'

Al-'Abbas, said, 'Who has informed you about this?'

Imam Ali ('a) replied, 'He (i.e. 'Umar) has equated me to 'Uthman and then ordered them to be with the

majority. He then ordered them to be with Abd Al-Rahman! Of course, Sa'd will not oppose his cousin Abd Al-Rahman, 'Uthman's son-in-law, and these two never disagree. Hence, it will be that either Abd Al-Rahman selects 'Uthman or 'Uthman selects Abd Al-Rahman' 81

Imam Ali's prediction was soon proved true; Abd Al-Rahman, seeking his personal interest and hoping that caliphate would be then given to him, voted for 'Uthman and entrusted the position of caliphate to him.

The so-called shura system was an obvious plot purposed for eliminating Imam Ali ('a) from the position of caliphate.

Shaykh Kashif Al-Ghita', a Shi'ite master scholar, commenting on the devising of this system, says, 'In its reality and essence, the shura system was a real plot and a facade which was capable of bringing out the selection of 'Uthman as caliph over Muslims. Although it might seem to be for the benefit of Muslims, it brought for them an inescapable calamity that affected them forever.'

After a few years, Imam Ali ('a) talked sadly about this shura of 'Umar that was designed to eliminate him from the position of leadership, saying,

Nevertheless, I remained patient despite length of period and stiffness of trial. When he (i.e. 'Umar) went his way of death, he put the matter of caliphate in a group and regarded me to be one of them. But good Heavens! What had I to do with this consultation? Where was any doubt about me with regard to the first of them (i.e. Abu–Bakr) that I was now considered akin to these ones?

But I remained low when they were low and flew high when they flew high. One of them turned against me because of his hatred and the other got inclined the other way due to his in-law relationship and this thing and that thing, until the third man of these people stood up with heaving breasts between his dung and fodder.

With him his children of his grandfather (i.e. Umayyah) also stood up swallowing up Allah's wealth like a camel devouring the foliage of spring, until his rope broke down, his actions finished him and his gluttony brought him down prostrate.82

Yes, by Allah! Who, be he Muslim or non-Muslim, may have misgivings that Imam Ali ('a) was the best of all Muslims in knowledge, struggle for Islam, and piety? Nevertheless, it was nothing but the rancor of the people of Quraysh that impeded Imam Ali ('a) from holding his natural position of leadership and deprived the Muslim community of his talents and geniuses.

It may be wondered why Imam Ali ('a) agreed to be one of the members of this *shura* plot although he was at variance with the other members.

Answering this question, Imam Ali ('a) himself replied that he did so in order to expose the contradiction in 'Umar's arguments, because 'Umar had said many a times that Prophethood and caliphate should

never come together in the same family. If so, why did 'Umar nominate Imam Ali ('a) as a member of this shura committee for selection of a caliph?

Objections to 'Umar's shura system

Old and recent researchers have criticized the shura system, arguing unanimously its artificial nature. This shura system was not sound at all; it is full of points of criticism, objections, and contradictions. In fact, it has created many difficulties and seditious matters, some of which are the following:

First: This setup was very distant from the reality of shura (consultation) and it lacked all of the factors that could have made it successful. Therefore, it should have had the following requisites:

- A. It should have represented all classes of the community.
- B. The government should not have had any interference in the matter of selection directly or indirectly.
- C. General freedoms should have been granted for those who were to take part in the selection.

However, 'Umar's so-called shura lacked all these qualities and none of them were present in that setup, because it prevented the Muslim community from selecting a candidate of their choice and no one was accorded the freedom to select a caliph of his choice. Rather, the matter was entrusted with only six persons and their view was decreed to dominate the view of the entire community.

'Umar, by devising this system, banned such prominent personalities like 'Ammar ibn Yasir, Abu-Dharr Al-Ghifari, and Malik Al- Ashtar not to mention the ordinary people, who should have been given a role in this process of election, from having any share in it. This is in fact a sort of uncontested recommendation that some regimes impose on their peoples so as to pay no attention to their wills.

In addition, 'Umar ordered the police to interfere in this matter and gave them free hand to kill any of the members of the shura committee who would disagree with the others.

In the same way, 'Umar restricted the period of election to three days only, giving them no chance to think of the matter without stinting, because he anticipated that situations would take another course and the popular sectors would interfere to vote for the fittest. If this would take place, 'Umar's purpose behind the devising of this shura system would certainly fail.

Second: This shura system included people who were at variance with Imam Ali ('a) and who harbored malice against him. For instance, it contained Talhah who belonged to the Taym clan, the clan of Abu–Bakr, and who competed with Imam Ali ('a) for the post of caliphate.

It also contained Abd Al-Rahman ibn 'Awf the son-in-law of 'Uthman. This man was the most inimical to Imam Ali ('a) among the Muhajirun. To historicists, Abd Al-Rahman was one of those who had helped Abu-Bakr force Imam Ali ('a) to pay him the oath of allegiance.

It also included Sa'd ibn Abi-Waqqas who was full of enmity and jealousy toward Imam Ali ('a), because the Imam ('a) had killed his maternal uncles, the polytheists of Umayyah. Sa'd's mother is Hamnah the daughter of Abu- Sufyan. When Muslims paid allegiance to Imam Ali ('a) and unanimously selected him as the caliph, Sa'd refrained.

The shura committee also included 'Uthman ibn 'Affan, the chief of the Umayyad clan. The Umayyads' opinion about Imam Ali ('a) is known for everybody; they antagonized him openly and secretly. Hence, 'Umar selected such persons for the shura committee, because they were the vehement enemies of Imam Ali ('a) so that he would not be elected as the next caliph.

Remarking about the factors that influenced the process of election, Imam Ali ('a) said,

However, I spread my wings when they spread their wings and when they began to fly I also took to the air. Thus, one of them gave ear to his animosity and the other one inclined towards his son-in-law along with the other problems.

In brief, the one and only reason beyond devising this shura system was to keep Imam Ali ('a) away from power and to entrust caliphate to the Umayyads.

This is the opinion of historicists and researchers. In this respect, Dr. Abdullah Al-'Ala'ili says,

The appointing of six persons in the shura system prepared the ground for the Umayyads to come to power and to raise the castle of their authority on the shoulders of Muslims.

The same conclusion was made by Sayyid Mir Ali Al-Hindi who says,

'Umar's lack of attention to the interests of Muslims made him select these six persons from among the best people of Al-Madinah without following the policy of his predecessors. The Umayyads had a strong lobby in Al- Madinah. Based on this fact, 'Umar's selection of these persons paved the way for the prevalence of the plots and conspiracies of the Umayyads who harbored animosity toward Islam. Then, they had to find themselves a place in this religion in order to fulfill their greed and build the castle of their greatness on the shoulders of Muslims.

It does not require very much effort to understand that the invention of the *shura* system was only intended to eliminate Imam Ali ('a) from holding the leadership of Muslims and to hand over dominion to the Umayyad dynasty.

Third: Deliberately, 'Umar tried to keep the Ansar away from this shura. Taking no heed of the Ansar, 'Umar did not allow them any share in rule although their contributions to the triumph of Islam were too great to be neglected. It was they who gave refuge to the Holy Prophet (S), supported Islam in times of difficulties and helplessness, and sacrificed their sons for the religion.

Confessing of their favors, the Holy Prophet (S) instructed Muslims to pay much attention to them and

treat them as perfectly as possible.

In the same way, 'Umar did not reserve any position in the shura for important personalities like 'Ammar, Abu–Dharr, and other senior Companions. Most probably, 'Umar took into deep consideration the inclination of these personalities towards Imam Ali ('a). He knew for sure that these persons would elect none but Imam Ali ('a); therefore, he eliminated them from the process of election and restricted this process to the persons who were known for their animosity towards the Imam ('a).

Fourth: Among the curious aspects of this shura system is that 'Umar testified in favor of the shura committee members that when the Holy Prophet (S) departed life, he was pleased with these six persons and that he (S) gave them glad tidings that they would be in Paradise. On the other hand, 'Umar gave orders to his policemen to kill any one of these six persons who would delay in selecting a caliph from among them!

Criticizers of the shura system arouse the following wonderment:

How was it possible for 'Umar to order of killing these persons after he had confessed that the Holy Prophet (S) was pleased with them to the last moment of his lifetime? Besides, to delay in nominating a person for the next caliphate is not that grand sin due to which one deserves death penalty in the law of Islam and it does not tantamount to apostasy, the penalty of which is sentencing to death penalty.

In fact, Islam has deemed unlawful to shed the inviolable blood and deemed necessary to think thousand times before passing a judgment of death penalty. Excluded from this law are some certain cases whose details can be found in books of religious laws. However, none of these cases was applicable to the issue of these six persons.

Fifth: 'Umar restricted the membership of the shura to these six persons on the basis of the claim that the Holy Prophet (S) was pleased with them to the last moment of his lifetime. However, this claim cannot stand as convincing evidence on restricting the shura membership to these six persons, because the Holy Prophet (S) was pleased with many more Companions when he passed away.

Hence, favoring these six persons to all the others enters under the jurisprudential rule of unfounded preference, which is, in the view of the scholars of 'ilm Al-usul (Principles of Muslim Jurisprudence), is decided as unfavorable act.

Sixth: Of the objections leveled against the shura system is that 'Umar gave precedence to the choice of the group of Abd Al-Rahman ibn 'Awf and considered it superior to the group of Imam Ali ('a). This partiality clearly shows 'Umar's leaning toward the Umayyad powers who were inimical and unjust to Imam Ali ('a).

Besides, we cannot find any peculiarity in Abd Al-Rahman due to which he deserved such superiority. It is well-known that Abd Al-Rahman, as well as Al-Zubayr and Talhah, confiscated the public properties

and donations and possessed incalculable amounts of money that they did not know where and how to spend them.

Historicists state that Abd Al-Rahman amassed so much gold that they had to use hammers to break it into pieces. It is thus well-known that Abd Al- Rahman, as well as his matches among the capiTalibsts of the family members of Umayyah, embezzled these money and gold from the public treasury.

Can such a person be given precedence over Imam Ali ('a) whose situations in supporting Islam, talents, geniuses, asceticism, refusal of nepotism and special interest, and thoughtful consideration in all affairs that pertained to the religion are too famous to be ignored even by his enemies? Almighty Allah says in His Book,

Say: Are those who know and those who do not know alike? (39:9)

Seventh: The shura system created feelings of rivalry and competition among the members in such a way that each of them considered himself to be equal to and as important as the others while such a scenario did not exist previously. Sa'd was subservient to the command of Abd Al-Rahman and Abd Al-Rahman was obedient to 'Uthman and one of his sincere friends and supporters.

However, after the shura process, a strange rift developed between them so much so that Abd Al–Rahman began to conspire against 'Uthman. He asked Imam Ali ('a) to be with him and take up arms to fight against 'Uthman. In his last will, Abd Al–Rahman willed his people to prevent 'Uthman from offering the ritual Funeral Prayer to him after his death.

As for Al–Zubayr, he was a sincere follower of Imam Ali ('a). He stood to the side of the Imam ('a) during the conspiracy of the Saqifah and bore many hardships and difficulties in this regard. During the reign of 'Umar, Al–Zubayr once declared, 'By Allah, if 'Umar dies, I shall give the oath of allegiance to Ali.'

However, the shura process imbued him with such a feeling of superiority that he began to consider himself at par with the Imam ('a). Finally, during the Battle of the Camel, Al–Zubayr took up the sword against Imam Ali ('a).

In the same way, the shura system created mutual animosity among its members, because each one of them considered himself the most qualified for caliphate and thought that he was better than the others. This animosity and conflict that developed among them became the cause to harm the unity of Muslims and it rendered them disunited.

One day, Mu'awiyah said to Abu'l– Husayn whom Ziyad had sent as his delegate to meet Mu'awiyah, 'I have received information that you are clever and intelligent; so, answer this question of mine.'

'Ask whatever you like,' Abu'l-Husayn said.

Mu'awiyah asked, 'What was the very matter that destroyed the unity of Muslims and created discord

among them?'

Abu'l-Husayn answered, 'It is the assassination of 'Uthman.'

'You have done nothing, (because this answer is wrong),' Mu'awiyah said. 'Was it Ali's action against you and his battle with you?' asked Al-Husayn. 'This is wrong, too,' said Mu'awiyah.

'Was it the uprising of Talhah, Al-Zubayr, and 'A'ishah and Ali's war on them?' said Abu'l-Husayn.

'This is wrong, too,' said Mu'awiyah.

Abu'l-Husayn then said, 'I do not know anything else.'

Explaining the matter, Mu'awiyah said, 'I will tell you the reality of the matter. Nothing has destroyed the unity of the Muslims and divided their views except the shura system through which 'Umar restricted the process of election to six persons. To explain, Almighty Allah sent Muhammad with true guidance and true religion so that the religion would prevail over all the other religions even though polytheists may be averse.

Thus, Muhammad acted upon what the Almighty Allah had commanded him. Then, Allah took him to Himself. Muhammad advanced Abu-Bakr to lead the congregational prayers; therefore, people accepted Abu-Bakr to lead their worldly affairs after the Messenger of Allah (S) had selected him to run the religious affairs.

Thus, he acted upon the practice of the Messenger of Allah (S) and followed the same manners and behavior until Almighty Allah raised him up. Abu–Bakr appointed 'Umar in his place and he ('Umar) also continued his (Abu–Bakr's) practice and manners.

After that, 'Umar formed a committee of six persons each one of whom hoped that he would be the caliph and each one's folks wanted him to be the next caliph, looking forward to holding this position. If 'Umar, just like Abu–Bakr, had appointed a certain person to be his successor to this position, there would not have been any controversy in this matter.'83

Mode of selection

When 'Umar departed from this world and he was buried in his final abode, the police officers surrounded the members of the shura committee and froced them to meet and select a caliph from among themselves to run the affairs of the Muslims, so that the will of 'Umar would be put into effect.

They held a meeting in the center of the public treasury or, according to another report, in the house of Masrur ibn Makhramah, under the supervision of Imam Al-Hasan ('a) and Abdullah ibn 'Abbas. Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah and 'Amr ibn Al-'As hastened to that place and sat at the doorstep, but Sa'd scolded them and said, 'Do you want to say that you were present and you were among the shura

members?'84

The shura members argued with one another, each one canvassing his own candidature and trying to prove himself as one most eligible for the post; therefore, a great clamor and argument arose.

In the midst of this clamor, Imam Ali ('a) set out to warn them against the future mischief and destruction that would attack them if each one of them would follow his selfish interests and would not give any importance to the interests of the community.

He ('a) thus said,

No one preceded me in inviting people to truthfulness, giving consideration to kinship, and practicing generosity. So, hear my word and preserve what I say. Maybe you will see soon after today that over this matter, swords will be drawn and pledges will be broken, so much so that some of you will become leaders of the people of misguidance and followers of people of ignorance.85

If they had paid heed to the Imam's warnings, they would have saved the community from future upheavals and calamities and would have ensured peace and prosperity for it. However, they followed selfish desires, proving true the prophecy of the Imam ('a). Not much time passed when swords were unsheathed, conflicts spread, mischief prevailed, and some of them became leaders of misguidance and others followed the ignorant ones.

Arguments and debates took place in that place. These members did not reach a desirable decision, and the meeting ended without achieving its aim, while people were impatiently waiting for a decisive result. The meeting convened for a second time but again its purpose was defeated.

Then, Abu-Talhah Al- Ansari addressed them with warnings, threats, and promises, saying, 'No, by the One in Whose hands is the life of 'Umar! I shall not give you more than the period of three days that is fixed for you.'

On the third day, which was their last opportunity, the meeting was convened. A severe communal aspect became obvious when Talhah surrendered his right to 'Uthman, which was absolutely against the interests of the community. He took this step as a result of a deep animosity he had harbored toward Imam Ali ('a), because Imam Ali ('a) had taken a stand against Abu–Bakr, the cousin of Talhah, in the matter of caliphate.

Al-Zubayr also came forward and surrendered his vote to Imam Ali ('a), because he was closely related to him. Sa'd also stood up and gave up his vote in favor of his cousin Abd Al- Rahman ibn 'Awf so that he would support him in his choice.

The choice of Abd Al-Rahman was binding on all and his position was very strong because 'Umar had assured him about it and given him the final say in the matter of caliphate. However, he had a very weak personality and determination and he was unfit to bear the responsibility for choosing a caliph.

Therefore, he decided to nominate someone else for this position. He was inclined to 'Uthman, his father-in-law. Meanwhile, he responded to the advice of the people of Quraysh who had recommended him to vote for 'Uthman against Imam Ali ('a) who had killed their heroes and chiefs, since 'Uthman would respond to their aspirations.

At last, the terrible moment arrived that changed the course of history and Abd Al-Rahman ibn 'Awf told his nephew to call Imam Ali ('a) and 'Uthman to him.

Musawwar, the nephew, asked, 'Whom should I summon first?' Abd Al-Rahman replied, 'Whomsoever you like.'

He thus went out to bring these two persons while the groups of the Muhajirun, the Ansar, and other people crowded in that place. Then, Abd Al– Rahman came forward and presented to them the matter of caliphate, saying, 'O people! People have gathered from different areas and localities to which they will return. So, please give me advice.'

At that time, 'Ammar ibn Yasir the pure Companion came forward and gave his counsel, which was in the interest of the community against disunity and conflict. He said, 'If you want that there should be no discord among the Muslims, you must give allegiance to Ali.'

Al-Miqdad also came forward and supported the statement of 'Ammar. He said, 'Ammar is right. If you give allegiance to Ali, we shall accept and follow him.'

It was the time when the oppressive and malicious powers of Quraysh gained momentum against Islam and the statements of 'Ammar and Al-Miqdad were denounced and the senior members of the Umayyad clan demanded the appointment of 'Uthman. Abdullah ibn Abi-Sarh cried at Abd Al-Rahman ibn 'Awf, 'If you want the people of Quraysh not to rise in opposition, you must pay allegiance to 'Uthman.'

Abdullah ibn Abi-Rabi'ah also spoke up and seconded his companion, saying, 'If you pay allegiance to 'Uthman, we shall accept and follow him.'

The prominent companion 'Ammar ibn Yasir replied to Ibn Abi-Sarh saying, 'Since when have you been a well-wisher for Muslims?'

'Ammar was right; Abdullah ibn Abi–Sarh was never a well–wisher for Muslims. He never wished good of Islam. He was of the most inimical persons to the Messenger of Allah (S) who, after the conquest of Makkah, ordered that Abdullah should be killed even if he hung himself to the curtains of the Holy Ka'bah.86

If the proper method and procedure had been followed, these infidels and their likes would not have been able to interfere in the affairs of Muslims, because the Umayyads and other minor tribes of Quraysh were always at the rear and they were not accorded any importance. This was so because they had opposed the Messenger of Allah (S) and instigated other tribes against him. They had to accept Islam only in order to save themselves from being killed. How were such persons allowed to present their views about the leadership of the Muslim community?

Debates and arguments increased between the Umayyads from one side and the Hashimites and 'Ammar ibn Yasir from the other. 'Ammar then came forward in order to invite Muslims to their wellbeing. He said, 'O people, the Almighty Allah has bestowed greatness to us through His Prophet and favored us with His religion. Then, how long will you keep caliphate away from the Household of the Prophet?'

'Ammar's logic was full of the spirit of Islam and its true guidance, because Almighty Allah endued the people of Quraysh in particular and the other Arabs in general with honor through His religion and made them successful through His Prophet, who was the object of honor and respect for the Arabs.

Hence, it was incumbent on them to reciprocate this favor by not keeping caliphate away from the Prophet's family, since the members of this divinely chosen family were the protectors of knowledge and repositories of the revelation that had descended on the Holy Prophet (S). It was unfair to try to oppress and subjugate them.

Then, a man from the tribe of Banu–Makhzum interrupted 'Ammar and said, 'O son of Sumayyah, you have exceeded your limits! What do you have to do with Quraysh selecting their chief?'

What can be greater blindness than this from the light of Islam and its guidance that this man of Makhzum addressed 'Ammar in this way and called him by his mother's name who was such a respected lady in Islam and whose sacrifices are unsurpassed that Islam is proud of her? She, her husband Yasir, and her son 'Ammar were in the forefront in the strengthening of the faith of Islam in the initial stages. They bore all sorts of hardships and calamities in this course.

The matter of caliphate is related to all Muslims. That is why the son of Sumayyah and the others, whom Almighty Allah had bestowed power and honor after they had been oppressed, participated in it, while the devilish people of Quraysh had no right to interfere in the affairs of Muslims, if the proper procedure and logic had been followed.

Arguments arose between the powers of Islam and the infidels of Quraysh. Sa'd feared that the matter would go out of their hands; he therefore turned to his cousin Abd Al-Rahman and said, 'O Abd Al-Rahman, you should complete the job given to you before people become involved in mischief.'

Abd Al-Rahman glanced at Imam Ali ('a) and asked, 'Will you agree to follow the Book of Allah, the traditions of the Messenger of Allah (S), and the system of Abu-Bakr and 'Umar if we give allegiance to you?'

Imam Ali ('a) glared at him and understood what he wanted. With the logic of Islam and the manners of noble men, Imam Ali ('a) replied, 'Rather, I will follow the Book of Allah, the traditions of the Messenger

of Allah (S), and my own judgment.'

The sources of law in Islam are these very things; namely, the Book of Allah, the traditions of the Messenger of Allah (S) through whom the problems of the people are solved and through which the system of government works. While the actions of Abu–Bakr and 'Umar had no connection with the sources of Islamic law, because the two of them had wide differences in their policies.

Abu-Bakr's economic policy was nearer to equality than that of 'Umar who cancelled equitable distribution of allowances and brought into effect a class system. He preferred some Muslims to others. 'Umar also imposed many of his personal views that were in violation of the clear-cut laws of Islam.

As a result, Imam Ali ('a) who was brought up in the lap of Prophethood, would not act according to the actions of these two men, especially they were contradictory to each other in most of actions.

Abd Al-Rahman ibn 'Awf definitely and without any doubt knew that Imam Ali ('a) would accept caliphate according to the divine law and manage the affairs of the Muslims on the basis of truth and justice. He would not give any sort of preference to the people of Quraysh and he would consider them equal to all other people. If he would act so, then the gang of Quraysh would be deprived of any privilege and they would not be able to be in command of the government.

If the Imam ('a) had agreed to the condition specified by Abd Al–Rahman ibn 'Awf, it would not have been possible for him to follow any policy that establishes justice on the earth. Moreover, if the Imam ('a) had just apparently accepted the conditions, the people of Quraysh would have laid hurdles in his way and would not have left for him any venue to establish social justice.

In that case, they would have been justified in rebelling against him since he would have failed to fulfill his promises.

Imam Ali's refusal to respond to the conditions of Abd Al-Rahman is the best proof on the wide-ranging scope of his recognition of the truth and his real personality. If he was one of those who craved after authority and power, he could respond to these conditions; and when he would come to power, he would change his policy and apply whatever he would like. If Abd Al- Rahman then objected to him, he could put him behind bars.

Anyway, when Abd Al-Rahman despaired of any change in the attitude of Imam Ali ('a), he turned to 'Uthman and presented him with the same proposal. 'Uthman immediately gave a positive reply and expressed his complete willingness to fulfill those conditions.

In my conception, there existed a confidential agreement among these two that they had not revealed to anyone and under no circumstances would they have appointed Imam Ali ('a) to caliphate even if he had agreed to accept the conditions. He had only offered the allegiance in order to conceal their plan; that is why he resorted to this political maneuver.

Some western historians believe that Abd Al-Rahman had used the method of opportunism and deception rather than free election.

Historians say that Abd Al-Rahman rushed to 'Uthman and, keeping his hand on 'Uthman's hand, said to him, 'O Allah, I hereby transfer the responsibility that I had to 'Uthman.'

Abd Al-Rahman's homage to 'Uthman came to be like a thunderbolt on the virtuous powers who only intended to establish the rule of God among the people.

Censuring Abd Al-Rahman, Imam Ali ('a) said,

By Allah, you did so only because you hoped what your acquaintance ('Umar) hoped from his acquaintance (Abu-Bakr). May Allah create enmity between you two!

Imam Ali ('a) meant that Abd Al-Rahman had paid homage to 'Uthman as the next caliph hoping that 'Uthman would nominate him as his successor.87

Addressing the people of Quraysh, Imam Ali ('a) then said,

This is not the first day you ally each other against us. I shall observe a goodly patience and I shall plead for divine help regarding what you say.

The Imam's logical statement stung Abd Al-Rahman who therefore replied in a threatening manner, saying, 'O Ali, do not bring an argument against yourself!'

Imam Ali ('a) then left the venue of the gathering, saying,

This will also reach its end.

As for 'Ammar ibn Yasir, he pined away with grief, saying to Abd Al- Rahman, 'By Allah, you have abandoned him while he is the only one who establishes the truth and spreads justice among people.'

As for Al-Miqdad, he was devastated by these developments. He thus said, 'By Allah, I have not seen anything like that which befell the members of this family after the passing away of their Prophet. Surprisingly, the people of Quraysh left a man such that none was seen or heard to be fairer, wiser, and more pious than he is, if they had only supported him.'

Abd Al-Rahman interrupted Al-Miqdad's statement and warned him of mischief, saying, 'O Miqdad, fear Allah, for I fear mischief upon you.'

In this way, the powers of Quraysh overcame the other virtuous powers that wanted to give back the truth to its proper people; namely, the Prophet's Household and the core of wisdom who contributed greatly to the construction of Islam and presented as sacrifices for the sake of this religion such great persons like Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, Hamzah ibn Abd Al-Muttalib, and 'Ubaydah ibn Al-Harith, not to

mention the peerless efforts of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib.

- 1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 1:164.
- 2. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 6:343.
- 3. Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:25; Tarikh At-Tabari 3:433.
- 4. Al-Maqdisi, Al-Adab Al-Shar'iyyah wa'l-Minah Al-Mar'iyyah 1:49.
- 5. Tarikh At-Tabari 4:52.
- 6. Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:19; Ibn Sa'd, Al-tabaqat Al-Kubra 3:429;

Tarikh At-Tabari 3:429.

7. This horrible claim was made by 'Umar against the Holy Prophet (S). The statement of

'Umar ibn Al-Khattab is too famous to be denied. He first said it while the Holy Prophet (S)

was bedridden taking his final breathes. For more details, see Sahih Al-Bukhari Chapter: Recording of Knowledge (Kitabat Al-'Ilm), Chapter: Jihad (Hal Yustashfa' Ila Ahl Al-

Dhimmah), Chapter: the Campaigns, (Maras Al-Nabiy) Chapter: the Ailed (Qawl Al-Maris

Qumu 'Anni), Chapter: Adherence (Karahiyyat Al-Khilaf). See also Ibn kajar: Fath Al-Bari fi SharhSahih Al-Bukhari 1:185, Al-Qastalani, Irshad Al-Sari Ii-SharhSahih Al-Bukhari

1:169, Al-'Ayni, 'Umdat Al-Qari ila SharhSahih Al-Bukhari 1:575, SharhAl-Nawawi 'Ala Sahih Muslim 2:43, Abd Al-

Razzag: Al-Mu•annaf 5:438-9, Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal

1:90, 22, 29, 32, 336, 3:346, 6:106, 116 and 476, Al-Bayhaqi, Dala'il Al-Nubuwwah 7:181 and 283.

- 8. Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:25.
- 9. Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 3 (Al-khutbah Al-shaqshaqiyyah).
- 10. Ibn Al-Athir, Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 2:422.
- 11. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahi Al-Balaghah 1:74.
- 12. Ibn Sa'd, Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra 3:206.
- 13. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahi Al-Balaghah 6:342.
- 14. Tarikh Al-Tabari 4:339.
- 15. Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 3.
- 16. Al-Sarkhasi, Al-Mabsut, 16:79.
- 17. Taha Husayn, Al-Fitnah Al-Kubra 1:17.
- 18. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 9:29-30.
- 19. Taha Husayn, Al-Fitnah Al-Kubra 1:20.
- 20. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahi Al-Balaghah 3:163.
- 21. Tarikh Al-Tabari 6:114.
- 22. Muhammad ibn Idris Al-Shafi'i, Kitab Al-Umm 4:180; Sahih Al-Bukhari 4:24; Al-Bayhaqi,Al-Sunan Al-Kubra 9:177;

Abd Al-Razzaq Al-San'ani, Al-Musannaf 11:388.

- 23. Ibn Abd Al-Barr, Al-Istiab 3:1418 (printed in the margin of Al-Ieabah fi Tamyiz Al-Sahabah).
- 24. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 1:187.
- 25. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahi Al-Balaghah 8:11.
- 26. Ibn Abi-Shaybah, Al-Musannaf 7:615.
- 27. Al-Rawandi, Al-Khara'ij wa'l-Hara'ij, pp. 148-149.
- 28. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 8:111.
- 29. Ihsan Al-Nass, Al-'Asabiyyah Al-Qabaliyyah (Tribalism), pp. 190.
- 30. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahi Al-Balaghah 9:98.
- 31. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 9:54.
- 32. Al-Khawarizmi, Al-Manaqib 13:77; Ibn Al-Maghazili, Manaqib Ali, pp. 289 No. 330; Muhibb Al-Din At-Tabari, Al-Riyad Al-Nasirah 42:167; Ibn 'Asakir, Tarikh Dimashq 42:34; Al-Firdaws bi-Ma'thur Al-Khitab 3:363 H. 7294; Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi, Kanz Al-'Ummal 11:616 H. 32992.
- 33. Al-Hakim Al-Nayshaburi, Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Al-Sahihayn 3:345, Ibn Abd Al-Barr, Al-

Isti'ab 3:38; Ibn 'Asakir, Tarikh; Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal 5:113 H. 21123; Ibn Abi- Shaybah: Al-Mu●annaf 6:138; Ibn Taymiyah: Majmu' Al-Fatawa 16:482.

- <u>34.</u> Al-Amini, Al-Ghadir 6:101, 105-6 as quoted from Al-Kinji, Al-Kifayah 96; Fays Al-Qadir 4:357; Ibn Abd Al-Barr: Al-Istiab 3:1103; Fath Al-Malik Al-'Aliy 71; Ta'wil Mukhtalaf Al-Hadith 1:126.
- 35. Al-Amini, Al-Ghadir 6:106 as quoted from Al-Shabalnaji, Nur Al-Ab•ar 79 with a little difference from the text mentioned in Al-Hakim Al-Nayshaburi's Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Al- Sahihayn 1:628 H. 1683; Muhibb Al-Din At-Tabariy: Al-Riyad Al-Nasirah 3-4:166; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid: Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 1:18; Subul Al-Salam 2:206.
- <u>36.</u> This saying of 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab has been so famous because it was repeated on various occasions and in different forms such as the following:
- 'May Allah never keep me alive to face a problem while Abu'l-Hasan is not there to solve it.'
- 'O Allah: please do not keep me alive to face a problem while Abu'l-Hasan is not there to solve it.'
- 'I seek Allah's protection lest I may face a problem while Abu'l-Hasan is not there to solve it.'
- 'May I never live to face a problem while Abu'l-Hasan is not there to solve it.' 'May Allah never keep me alive after you (Ali).'
- 'I pray to Allah to protect me against any problem while Ali is absent.'

Besides, there are numerous similar statements of 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab about Imam Ali ('a). See Dala'il Al-Imamah by At-Tabari (died in the early fourth century of Hijrah), pp. 22; SharhAl-Akhbar by Al-Qasi Al-Nu'man Al-Maghribi (died in AH 363), 2:317, H.651, pp.565, H.651; Kitab Al-Irshad by Shaykh Al-Mufid (died in AH 413), 1:204; Manaqib Al Abi Talibby Ibn Shahr Ashub (died in AH 588), 1:311, 2:182; Al-'Umdah by Ibn Al-Bitriq Al-Asadi Al-killi (died in app. AH 600), pp. 257; Wasa'il Al-Shi'ah by Al-Hurr Al-'Amili (died in AH 1104), 28:108, H.34333, Section: thubut Al-zina bi'l-iqrar arba'a marrat (Provability Of Fornication By Four-Time Self-Confession), No. 7; Al-tabaqat Al-Kubra by Ibn Sa'd (died in AH 230), 2:239; Al-Manaqib by Al-Khawarizmi (died in AH 568), pp. 96-97, H.97, 98; Tarikh Madinat Dimashq by Ibn 'Asakir (died in AH 571), 25:369, 42:406; Usd Al-Ghabah by Ibn Al-Athir (died in AH 630), 4:23; Dhakha'ir Al-'Uqba fi Manaqib Dhawi'l-Qurba by Ahmad ibn Abdullah At-Tabari (died in AH 694), pp. 82; Tahdhib Al- Kamal by Al-Mazzi (died in AH 742), 20:485; Nusum Durar Al-Simtayn by Al-Zarandi Al- kanafi (died in AH 750), pp. 131–132; Al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah by Ibn Kathir Al-Dimashqi (died in AH 774), 7:397; Al-I•abah fi Tamyiz Al-Sahabah by Ibn kajar Al-'Asqalani (died in AH 852), 4:467, No. 5704: Biography of Ali ibn Abi Talib; Fath Al-Bari SharhSahih Al- Bukhari by Ibn kajar Al-'Asqalani (died in AH 852), 13:286; Yanabi' Al-Mawaddah Ii- Dhawi'l-Qurba by Al-Qanaduzi Al-kanafi (died in AH 1294), 1:227; H.57, 58; Fays Al-Qadir SharhAl-Jami' Al-Saghir by Al-Mannawi (died in AH 1331), 4:470, H.5594.

For more information, the reader may kindly refer to the book of Al-Imam Ali fi Ara' Al- Khulafa' (Imam Ali in the Views of the Caliphs) by Mahdi Faqih Imani (contemporary), pp. 93 and on. The author of this book has referred to tens of reference books and chains of authority in this respect. [Translator: Quoted from The Faith of the Shi'ah Imamiyyah (the translation of 'Aqa'id Al-Shi'ah Al-Imamiyyah by Muhammad Risa Al-Muzaffar); translated by Badr Shahin; published by the Ahl Al-Bayt World Assembly, pp. 329–331]

- 37. 'Allamah Al-Amini, in Encyclopedia of Al-Ghadir 6:83, has discussed this issue if prolonged, comprehensive details.
- 38. Ibn Abi'-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 12:79-80.
- 39. Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 133.
- 40. Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 145.
- 41. Al-Dhahabi, Tadhkirat Al-Huffaz 1:366.
- 42. Al-Daraqutni, Al-'llal Al-Waridah fi'l-Ahadith Al-Nabawiyyah 2:156.
- 43. Al-Zargani, SharhAl-Muwatta 1:25.
- 44. Sahih Muslim 1:575; Al-Bayhaqi, Al-Sunan Al-Kubra 7:336.
- 45. Ibn Shabbah Al-Numayri, Tarikh Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah 2:714.
- 46. Al-Hakim Al-Nayshaburi, Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Al-Sahihayn 4:339.
- 47. Ibn Al-Athir, Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 3:31.

- 48. Al-Hakim Al-Nayshaburi, Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Al-Sahihayn 5:166, H. 3376.
- 49. Ibn Sa'd, Al-tabaqat Al-Kubra 3:281.
- 50. Al-'Ayni, 'Umdat Al-Qari 2:172; Sahih Muslim 1:193.
- 51. Al-Haythami, Majma' Al-Zawa'id 2:222.
- 52. Ibn Al-Athir, Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 2:376; Tarikh At-Tabari, Chapter: Events of AH 17.
- 53. Among those who support this view is Shaykh Abdullah Al-'Ala'ili as is mentioned in his precious book Sumuww Al-Ma'na fi Sumuww Al-Dhat (Highness of Meaning in Self- Highness), pp. 34 (Second edition).
- 54. Ibn Al-Athir, Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 3:33.
- 55. Al-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam Al-Nubala' 3:341.
- 56. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahi Al-Balaghah 12:185.
- 57. Malik ibn Anas, Al-Muwatta' 2:520.
- 58. Al-Mas'udi, Muruj Al-Dhahab 2:320.
- 59. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 12:185.
- 60. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 12:187.
- <u>61.</u> Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:26; Ibn Abd Al-Barr, Al-Istiab (printed in the margins of Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalani, Al-Isabah fi Tamyiz Al-Sahabah) 2:461.
- 62. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 12:188.
- 63. Al-Mas'udi, Muruj Al-Dhahab 2:321.
- 64. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 12:192.
- 65. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 12:193.
- 66. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 12:190.
- 67. Al-Marzubani, Nur Al-Qabas, pp. 1.
- 68. Ibn Al-Athir, Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 3:66.
- 69. If 'Umar had known about these bad qualities of Al-Zubayr, how could he nominate him for caliphate?
- 70. 'Umar declares that the Holy Prophet (S) was angry with Talhah. If so, how could 'Umar nominate him for caliphate?

Commenting on this word of 'Umar, Al–Jahis, an Arab man of letters, say, 'If one had had the dare to say to 'Umar, 'You claimed that the Holy Prophet departed life while he was pleased with these six persons. Now, how come that you say that the Holy Prophet departed life while he was angry with Talhah because of what he had said?' If one had had the dare to say this to 'Umar, 'Umar would most certainly have shot him with arrowheads! However, who had the dare to say to 'Umar a less effective word than this one?' (Ibn Abi'l–Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al–Balaghah 1:62 & 3:170)

The word of Talhah that made the Holy Prophet (S) angry with him up to his passing away is that Talhah once declared, 'If the Prophet dies, we will marry his wives after him.' This world upsetted the Holy Prophet so much that a holy Quranic verse was revealed to him scolding Talhah and saying,

'It does not behove you that you should give trouble to the Messenger of Allah, nor that you should marry his wives after him ever. (33:53) [Translator]

- 71. As long as this was 'Umar's opinion about Sa'd who was man of war and military affairs, how could be nominate him for caliphate?
- 72. Thus was the example of Abd Al–Rahman's faith in the conception of 'Umar. A sign of this alleged faith is that Abd Al–Rahman refused to select Imam Ali ('a); rather, he delivered caliphate to the Umayyad dynasty who swallowed the wealth of people and enslaved them! However, if 'Umar considered Abd Al–Rahman to be weak, how could he nominate him for caliphate?
- 73. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahi Al-Balaghah 1:185-6.
- 74. Ibn Al-Dimashqi, Jawahir Al-MaTalibb 1:290.
- 75. Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:24.
- 76. Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 132.
- 77. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 12:159.

- 78. Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:28.
- 79. Al-Buladhari, Al-Ansab 5:16-8; Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:23; Ibn Abd- Rabbih, Al-'Iqd Al-Farid 2:257.
- 80. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 3:99.
- 81. Tarikh At-Tabari 5:35.
- 82. Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 3.
- 83. Ibn Abd-Rabbih Al-Andalusi, Al-'Iqd Al-Farid 3:73-4.
- 84. Ibn Al-Athir, Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 3:68.
- 85. Nahj Al-Balaghah, Sermon No. 138.
- 86. Ibn Abd Al-Barr, Al-Istiab 3:918.
- 87. The Imam's prayer was answered; enmity in its most vehement form was created between 'Uthman ibn 'Affan and Abd Al-Rahman ibn 'Awf that the latter, in his last will, instructed his family members not to let 'Uthman offer the ritual funeral prayer on his dead body.

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