

Part 2: The Imam During The Era Of The Three Caliphs

16. Abu Bakr Succeeds

Finally the inevitable came to pass. The Prophet Muhammad died and his death was the greatest loss mankind ever suffered. The Heavenly revelation to the people of the earth came to an end. He was the Final of the Prophets and no prophet will come after him.

The Muslims were so overwhelmed by the death of the Prophet that it was difficult for an outstanding companion to conceive it.

['Umar Denied the Prophet's Death](#)

'Umar stood at the Mosque saying: "Some hypocrites allege that the Messenger of God died. The Messenger did not die. He only went to his Lord as Moses son of Imran went to his Lord. He left his people for forty nights then he returned to them after it was said that he died. By God the Messenger of God will return as Moses returned. He will sever the hands and legs of men alleging that he died."¹

[Abu Bakr's Speech](#)

Abu Bakr was more realistic and present-minded than 'Umar. He stood up and said:

"O people whoever was worshipping Muhammad should know that Muhammad has died. Whoever was worshipping God should know that God is living and never dies." Then he recited the following verses:

"And Muhammad is but a Messenger. The Messengers before him passed away. Should you turn on

your heels if he will die or be killed? And whoever turns on his heels will not harm God in the least. And God will reward the thankful."²

Hearing these words ‘Umar realized that the Prophet was dead and fell to the ground.

Preoccupied With Holy Funeral

The crushing weight of the tragedy was felt by no one as it was felt by ‘Ali and the rest of the members of the House of the Prophet. The death of the Prophet made them unconscious of other things in the world. The sadness of this bereaved family was indescribable. They wished to depart from this world when he departed.

The Prophet confided in his daughter Fatima Al-Zahra twice during his ailment. He once informed her of his death and she cried. Then he informed her that she will be the first member of his family to follow him and she laughed.

She was joyful to know that she would not be separated from him for long.

Her husband ‘Ali spent twenty-three years with the Prophet offering his life for the protection of the Prophet against danger. Suddenly he beheld that that precious life had ended while he was unable to redeem it. The death of the Prophet was more painful to ‘Ali than if he himself had met his own death.

Political Conference

The tragedy however did not prevent the rest of the companions Meccans and Medinites from political thinking and doing while the Prophet was not yet buried.

As previously mentioned the Messenger attempted but could not write a will in which he was expected to name a successor. He tried to name a man whose leadership represented a security to the nation against straying. A group of companions led by ‘Umar objected to recording such a document and the method of their objection rendered the Prophet's proposed document useless.

The Declaration of Ghadir Khum and the rest of the statements of the Prophet on various occasions concerning ‘Ali were ignored. The best that can be said about the attitude of the companions towards these statements is that they did not see in them compelling evidence for ‘Ali's appointment. The Meccans and the Medinites started and ended their competition for leadership before the Prophet was buried.

‘Umar Spoke of the Conference

‘Umar during the last year of his reign spoke of what took place after the death of the Prophet. He informed his audience that when the Prophet died the Medinites led by Saad Ibn Abadah separated

themselves from the Meccans and their prominent men conferred at Saqifat Banu-Saidah trying to select a caliph from among themselves. 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib Al-Zubayr Ibn Al-Awam and others with them shied away and the Meccans went with Abu Bakr.

Abu Bakr 'Umar and Abu Obediah Ibn Al-Jarrah went to the conference of the Medinites to thwart their attempt.

Abu Bakr said to the Medinites that the Arabs would not accept a leader from other than the clans of Quraish (people of Mecca) who were the most prominent among the Arabs and from the most honorable city. It is reported that Abu Bakr told them that the Holy Prophet one time declared that the Imams are from Quraish.[3](#)

"I am satisfied he told them with the leadership of any of these two men ('Umar and Abu Obediah). Give your allegiance to whomever you choose of the two." Some of the Medinites suggested having a leader from them and another from the Meccans. The argument was heated and 'Umar said to Abu Bakr: "Extend your hand." Abu Bakr did and 'Umar shook his hand and pledged to him his allegiance. The attending Meccans followed him and the conferring Medinites with the exception of Saad Ibn Abadah and his strong supporters accorded.

On the following day people gathered at the Mosque.

'Umar stood up and told the audience: "God has enabled you to agree on your best the companion of the Prophet who accompanied him at the Cave (of Thaur at the time of the Hijrah). Rise up and give your allegiance to him." And they did.[4](#)

Legal And Historical Questions

The succession of Abu Bakr raises these questions:

1. Did Abu Bakr ever claim that the Messenger of God made him his successor?
2. If the Prophet did not appoint him did he desire to appoint him?
3. Was the election of Abu Bakr legal from the Islamic point of view?
4. Did the Messenger say: "The Imams are from Quraish?" and what did he mean by that?

History answers the first question in the negative for Abu Bakr never claimed that the Messenger made him his successor. Nor did any of the companions who worked diligently for the establishment of his caliphate ever claim that the Messenger made Abu Bakr his successor.

The reader may remember that the argument of Abu Bakr which he introduced at the Medinite's conference did not contain any hint to any appointment by the Prophet. He only told the conferees that

Arabs would not recognize any leadership that was not a Qureshite.

For Quraish he said are the most respected people among the Arabs and they are from the most honorable city. Had the Prophet expressed his desire to make him his successor Abu Bakr would have made the Prophet's statement his sole argument without resorting to the distinction of Quraish. 'Umar also would have quoted such a statement to support his argument for Abu Bakr's election.

The Sunni scholars unanimously agree that the Holy Prophet never appointed a successor. This means that they agree that he did not make Abu Bakr his successor.

However it is reported that a contemporary Medinite scholar from the Wahabis claimed that the Messenger of God appointed Abu Bakr as his successor.[5](#)

He supported his claim by a hadith which reported that the Messenger said: "And God and the believers reject (any leadership) except that of Abu Bakr." He also claimed that this hadith is "Mutawatir" (reported through numerous channels which makes it certain)

This hadith is what Muslim in his Sahih recorded through his channel to Urwah who reported that Ayesah said: "The Messenger said to me: Call for me your father Abu Bakr and your brother so that I can write a directive.

I fear that a wisher may wish and a sayer may say: I have more right (to the leadership than Abu Bakr) and God and the believers reject (any leadership) except that of Abu Bakr."[6](#)

Al-Bukhari recorded it in a similar way but it contained the word: "I almost attempted to call Abu Bakr and his son and write a directive...."[7](#)

It is worthy to note that this hadith is not mutawatir as this Wahabi scholar claimed for it was not reported by numerous companions. As a matter of fact it was reported only by Ayesah.

However introducing this hadith as evidence for the appointment of Abu Bakr as a successor is evidence of the lack of profound knowledge of the hadiths for this hadith is opposed by three authentic hadiths which are reported by Ayesah herself:

Ayesah Reported the Opposite

Muslim recorded through his channel to Masrooq that Ayesah said: "The Messenger of God did not leave behind him a dinar or a dirham or a sheep or a camel nor did he will anything."[8](#)

Had the Prophet appointed Abu Bakr as his successor Ayesah would not have said: "Nor did he (the Prophet) will anything." For if he had appointed Abu Bakr he would have willed a very important thing.

Muslim also recorded through his channel to Al-Aswad Ibn Yazeed that he reported that people

mentioned in the presence of Ayesah that 'Ali was the executor (of the Holy Prophet). She said: "When did he (the Prophet) make him his executor? I was supporting the back of the Messenger by my chest or she said by my lap. He called for a basin then he collapsed on my lap and I did not think that he died. When did he make him his executor?"⁹

This hadith explains the previous hadith in which Ayesah said: "Nor did he will anything." In both hadiths she was trying to disprove that the Messenger made 'Ali his executor. This by itself indicates that the idea of the executorship of Abu Bakr was not in circulation among people.

What was in circulation is that the Messenger made 'Ali his executor. Therefore she was trying actively to disprove it.

Had she known that the Messenger appointed Abu Bakr she would have said to those who mentioned 'Ali's executorship that her father rather than 'Ali was the executor.

Muslim also recorded through his channel to Abu Maleekah that he reported the following: "I heard Ayesah and she was questioned: Had the Prophet wanted to appoint a successor whom would he have appointed? She said Abu Bakr. They said to her: Then whom would he have appointed after Abu Bakr? She said: 'Umar. Then she was asked: Whom would he have appointed after 'Umar? She said: Abu Obeidah Ibn Al-Jar-rah. Then she stopped there."¹⁰

Had the Messenger said: "and God and the believers reject (any leadership) except that of Abu Bakr she would have rejected the hypothetical question concerning the Prophet's appointment of a successor. For the appointment would be a fact rather than a hypothesis and Abu Bakr would be the actual appointee. But Ayesah treated the matter hypothetically because the Prophet made no such statement concerning Abu Bakr.

Obvious Prejudice

The prejudice of Ayesah against 'Ali is clear in the last three hadiths. In Abu Maleekah's hadith she tried to tell us that Abu Obeidah was more beloved to the Prophet and was more deserving to be caliph than 'Ali. No one subscribes to this for the Muslims unanimously agree that 'Ali was higher and more beloved to the Messenger of God than Abu Obeidah.

In Al-Aswad Ibn Yazeed's hadith the mother of believers tried to disprove the executorship of 'Ali through no proof. Granting that the Messenger died while he was reclining on her chest and that he did not make 'Ali his executor at that hour this does not disprove 'Ali's executorship.

The Holy Prophet spoke publicly at Ghadir Khum in 'Ali's behalf saying to thousands of Pilgrims that 'Ali was the "Mawla" (Guardian) of the believers and that he is like the Prophet in having more right to them than they have to themselves.

Furthermore Omm Salemah reported what contradicts the claim of Ayesah. Al-Hakim through a channel which he and Al-Thahabi considered to be authentic reported that Omm Salemah (wife of the Prophet) said: "By the One in Whose Name I swear 'Ali was the last one in contact with the Messenger of God. We visited the Prophet before noon and he was saying repeatedly: "Did 'Ali come?"

Fatima said: "It seems that you have sent him for a mission." She (Omm Salemah) said: "'Ali came and I thought that the Prophet had something to tell him confidentially. We left the room—and sat at the door and I was the nearest to the door. The Messenger leaned upon 'Ali confiding in him and speaking to him secretly. Then the Messenger of God died on that day. Thus 'Ali was the last one who was with the Prophet."¹¹

The Story of Maghafeer

Ayesah used to allow herself to report some events which never took place if the report would serve the interest which she favored. The story of Maghafeer (a thick secretion which comes out of some particular trees) is well known in the Islamic history and mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in Chapter 66 of "Al-Tahreem."

She and Hafssah (daughter of the Second Caliph) conspired that each one of them individually was to say to the Prophet: "I smell on you the odor of Al-Maghafeer " while both of them knew that this was untrue.

Al-Bukhari recorded in his Sahih that Obeid Ibn Omeir reported that Ayesah said: "The Messenger of God used to drink honey at the house of Zeinab daughter of Juhsh (another wife of the Prophet) and stay with her. Hafssah and I conspired to tell the Prophet when he comes to either one of us: "You have eaten Maghafeer. I smell the odor of Maghafeer."

He said: "No but I was drinking honey at Zeinab's house and I will not do it again. And I swear that you shall not inform anyone about this."¹²

Ayesah betrayed the trust of the Prophet by revealing what he commanded her not to reveal. God informed him of that and this made the Prophet angry. The chapter of Al-Tahreem was revealed for this event. It contains the following:

"When the Prophet disclosed a matter in confidence to one of his wives and she then divulged it to (another) and God made it known to him he (the Prophet) told (her) a portion of it and mentioned not another portion. When he told her thereof she said: Who told thee this? He said:

The One who knows and is well acquainted (with all things). If ye (both) were to turn in repentance to the Al-mighty your hearts would be indeed so inclined. But (if ye collaborate) with each other against him (the Prophet) truly God is his protector; and Gabriel and the righteous believers and furthermore the angels will assist him."¹³

Al-Bukhari reported also through his channel to Obeid Ibn Hunein that he said: I heard Ibn Abbas saying: I stayed a whole year trying to ask 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab about a Qur'anic verse and I could not ask out of apprehension until he set out for pilgrimage and I was with him.

While we were on the road coming back to Medina he deviated to some trees to relieve himself. Ibn Abbas said: I waited for him until he finished then I walked with him.

I said: Amir Al-Mumineen (Commander of Believers) who are the two of the wives of the Holy Prophet that collaborated against the Prophet? 'Umar said: They are Hafssah and Ayeshah. [14](#)

'Umar Considered the Election as "Faltah"

If any one asks for more evidence on the fact that the Holy Prophet did not make Abu Bakr his successor the following statement of 'Umar concerning the election of Abu Bakr is sufficient to clear the matter completely: Al-Bukhari in his Sahih [15](#) Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet [16](#) and Imam Ahmad in his Musnad [17](#) reported that 'Umar said in a sermon he delivered during the last year of his caliphate:

"...I am informed that a man from among you says: By God if 'Umar dies I will elect "Fulan" (an x person whose name 'Umar did not want to mention). No man should be deceived by saying to himself that the election of Abu Bakr was "Faltah " and it passed. Certainly the election of Abu Bakr was a "Faltah" (a hasty action without due deliberation)....".

This indicates that the Holy Prophet never expressed his desire to make Abu Bakr his caliph. Had the Prophet expressed such a desire or said what was reported through Ayeshah the election of Abu Bakr would not have been a hasty action and without due deliberation. It would have been rather of the best planned action for it would have been planned by God and His Messenger.

'Umar's Last Statement

However the Second Caliph made this completely clear after he was stabbed. Muslim in his Sahih [18](#) and Ibn Saad in Al-Tabaqat [19](#) and Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet [20](#) reported that Abdullah Ibn 'Umar said that he advised his father to name a successor and 'Umar said: "If I do not name a successor the Messenger of God did not name a successor; and if I name a successor Abu Bakr named a successor."

Al-Bukhari in his Sahih reported that Abdullah Ibn 'Umar said: "It was said to his father: Why do you not name a successor?" He said: "If I name a successor one better than myself Abu Bakr did name a successor. And if I do not name a successor one better than myself the Messenger of God did not name a successor." [21](#)

Did the messenger of god desire to appoint abu bakr as his successor?

The events of the last days of the life of the Holy Prophet clearly indicate that the succession of Abu Bakr was not on the mind of the Messenger. Nothing substantiates that like the expedition of Osamah.

The Messenger of God made Osamah Ibn Zayd Ibn Harithah a commander in chief of an army and issued a directive in which he commanded him to overrun the borders of Al-Balqa and Al-Daroom in the land of Palestine. People prepared themselves and the early migrants from Mecca joined the army of Osamah.[22](#)

From the well-known events of history in Osamah's expedition are the following:

1. Abu Bakr 'Umar and others from the early migrants were in Osamah's army.[23](#)
2. 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib was not in that army.

It seems that the Messenger did not want 'Ali to participate in more battles after the Islamic state was established in the Arab Peninsula as a result of the defensive battles in which 'Ali was the outstanding hero.

He did not allow (or at least did not order) him to attend the Battle of Muthah where he sent a Muslim army under the leadership of Zayd Ibn Harithah (father of Osamah) to the borders of Syria where Zayd Jaafar Ibn Abu Talib and Abdullah Ibn Rawahah were killed. Nor did he allow 'Ali to join him in the campaign of Tabuk. He chose to keep him in Medina to succeed him in his absence.

The foundations of the Islamic state were already established and it became unnecessary to expose 'Ali's life to more dangers. Therefore he did not send him with the army of Osamah. Had 'Ali been in that expedition the expedition would have been under his leadership rather than the leadership of Osamah.

The Prophet never put 'Ali under any leadership in any battle. He was the bearer of the banner of the Holy Prophet in all the battles which were led by the Prophet.[24](#) And he was the Commander in Chief of every expedition in which the Holy Prophet sent 'Ali.

The readers of the history of Islam knew that the Prophet gave Abu Bakr and 'Umar the command of the army at the Battle of Kheibar on two consecutive days. 'Ali was at that time suffering from inflammation of his eyes which prevented him from participating in the battle.

When his eyes were miraculously cured on the third day 'Ali became the Commander in Chief and the two sheikhs Abu Bakr and 'Umar and the rest of the companions were under his leadership.

Ibn Saad reported that the Messenger of God made Osama commander of the army. When Wednesday

came the ailment of the Messenger began; he had fever and a headache. On Thursday morning he gave the banner to Osamah: Osamah carried the banner then delivered it to Buraidah Al-Aslami and camped at Al-Jurf.

All distinguished companions from the Meccans and Medinites including Abu Bakr 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab Abu Obeidah Ibn Al-Jar-rah and Saad Ibn Abu Waqass joined Osamah's army."[25](#)

3. The Messenger fell ill after he gave the banner to Osamah. The army was still near Medina and did not begin its journey yet. The Messenger was alarmed by the slowness of the army's motion and reluctance of the soldiers to leave Medina.

Therefore he went to the Mosque twice while he was ill commanding them to begin their journey and to move quickly. He repeated his order three times in one sermon."[26](#)

He did all this while he was aware of the nearness of his death. His awareness of his death is reported in the following hadiths:

A. Ibn Hisham recorded that Abu Muwaihibah reported that the Prophet accompanied him to Al-Baqee cemetery at night before the beginning of his illness. The Prophet stood in the graveyard and congratulated its dwellers for being spared future faith-testing crises. Abu Muwaihibah reported that the Messenger said to him:

"Abu Muwaihibah I have been given the keys of the treasures of this world and the eternal life in it along with Paradise (in the Hereafter). I was given the choice between that and meeting my Lord and Paradise. Abu Muwaihibah said: May my father and mother be your redemption. Take the keys of the treasures of this world and the eternal life in it along with Paradise. He said: "No Abu Muwaihibah I have chosen to meet my Lord and Paradise."[27](#)

B. And when he sat on his pulpit delivering a sermon while he was sick he according to Ibn Hisham concluded the sermon by saying: "Certainly God has given a choice to one of His servants (the Prophet was referring to himself) between this world along with the Hereafter and what the Lord has. The servant chose what the Lord has (he chose to meet his Lord)."[28](#) Thus he was informing his audience that he was about to depart from this world.

C. Muslim recorded in his Sahih that the Holy Prophet said to his daughter Fatima while he was suffering from his ailment by which he died: "Gabriel used to review the Holy Qur'an with me once or twice a year and now he has reviewed it with me twice." Then he said to her: "I sense that my death is drawing nigh. Be obedient to God and patient I am a good ancestor of yours.... "[29](#)

D. Al-Bukhari through his channel to Ayesah recorded that she said: "The Prophet called upon Fatimah (peace be upon her) in his ailment in which he died and confided in her on a matter and she cried:

Then he confided in her on another matter and she laughed. When we asked her about that she said:

'He informed me that he will die in his present ailment and I cried. Then he informed me that I shall be the first among the members of his House to follow him and I laughed.'[30](#)

All these hadiths testify that he was fully aware of the nearness of his death.

Had the Messenger been desirous to appoint Abu Bakr as his successor while he knew the nearness of his death he would not have ordered him to leave Medina quickly.

Instead of urging Abu Bakr along with the others to leave Medina the Prophet should have prevented Abu Bakr from joining the expedition.

For the expedition of Osamah to reach the land of Palestine fight and return to Medina it would take two months or more. The Prophet on the other hand might have died a few days after the departure of the army and he himself was expecting to die soon.

He did not appoint Abo Bakr before the departure of the army. He could not appoint him after his return with the army from Palestine because Abu Bakr would not be able to see the Prophet alive.

He would not appoint him while he was absent from Medina for it would be inconceivable that the Messenger would allow the capital to be without a caliph after his death for two months or more while he knew the dangers which were threatening Medina and the Faith of Islam.

Furthermore Abu Bakr could have been killed while he was in the expedition. The death of a caliph at a battle during that serious period would lead to the worst consequences for the Muslims and Islam.

Had the Messenger been desirous to appoint Abu Bakr as a successor he would not have allowed him to be in that army. But the fact is that the delay of Abu Bakr and other companions in Medina was against the will of the Prophet which he made clearly known. He emphatically urged them to execute the mission of Osamah repeating that several times while he was on the pulpit and on his deathbed.

Thus Abu Bakr in spite of his high position and the love of the Prophet to him was not meant by the Prophet to be his successor.

Was the Election Of Abu Bakr Legal?

The Muslims had the right to elect Abu Bakr if the Messenger did not choose another person to succeed him. And Abu Bakr had the right to accept the election. Such an election constitutes a contract which exacts from both sides its fulfillment according to the conditions on which the election was based.

When the conditions of the election demand from the elected to follow the Book of God and the teaching of the Prophet and that the elector should obey his elect in what is considered to be an obedience to God and His Messenger the election would be sound and binding to both sides.

However such an election in spite of its legality had two negative sides:

1. The right to disagree with the majority. Since the succession of Abu Bakr came by a popular election rather than by the Prophet's selection a good Muslim could have refused to join his electors without sinning. Every Muslim is entitled to political freedom and no one has the right to force any one to do what he does not want or to impose on him a restriction that did not come from God. He should not be forced to elect a person whom he does not want to authorize.

It is equally true that the minority has no right to stand in the way of the majority and to prevent it from administering the affairs of the country as long as there is an explicit or implicit agreement that the majority rules the country.

Even in the absence of such an agreement the majority has the right to run the country. This is because the minority has no right to administer the affairs of the majority and if the majority is to be obstructed the country would be ruined.

Since every individual has the right to disagree with the majority it would be an injustice on the part of the majority to force a minority to agree with it. For this we think it was an injustice to force Al-Zubayr Ibn Al-Awam to elect Abu Bakr though he was qualified for leadership.

Abu Bakr was not appointed by God and His Messenger and Al-Zubayr's refusal to elect him did not constitute a violation of any Divine commandment. Abu Bakr and the majority of the companions entered into a pact and Al-Zubayr had the right not to be a part of that pact. Forcing him to enter into such a pact was an encroachment on his rights.

It was more than unfair to try to force 'Ali to join the electors after the Prophet declared him the "Mawla" (Guardian) of every Muslim including Abu Bakr. The right of an individual or a minority to disagree with the majority is sacred and observed in all democratic elections.

When more than one nominee compete for a high office and one of the nominees wins the majority's votes the majority does not attempt to force the electors of the loser to join them in electing the winner.

Even in a nation with one political party where the government asks people to cast their votes by saying yes or no; when the result becomes known the government never forces those who said "no" to say "yes." This is the attitude of Islam the religion of justice.

Forcing people to do what they do not have to do is an aggression and God does not love the aggressors.

When the Imam 'Ali was elected after the death of Uthman Abdullah Ibn 'Umar Saad Ibn Abu Waqass Osamah Ibn Zayd and other companions refused to elect him. The Imam did not force them to join the majority nor did he consider them transgressors He only demanded from them not to hinder his administration.

The companions who lived at the time of Abu Bakr's election had the right to elect or refuse to elect him and they had the right to believe or disbelieve in his qualification. If so the Muslim generations who were born after that election had the same right. They would not be sinning by taking a positive or a negative attitude towards the caliphate of Abu Bakr.

From this it becomes evident that the mutual incrimination by the Muslims of today for their positive or negative attitude toward the caliphate of Abu Bakr is erroneous and represents extremism.

2. The second negative aspect of this kind of legitimate leadership is that it does not make the word or the deed of the caliph a sacred law. Before his election he was like any other companion unimmunized of error; and he would remain so after the election.

The election does not change his personality nor does it increase his knowledge. It does not elevate him in the eyes of God above other good believers nor does it make all his words or deeds right. At best he would be a righteous "mujtahid" (a scholar who is capable of forming an independent opinion about the Islamic law)

Other scholars have the right to disagree with him and the non-scholars from among the Muslims have the right to follow scholars other than him.

When another mujtahid believes that such a caliph is erroneous in word or deed he should not follow him. To demand from the Muslims to follow a wrong verdict is to demand from people what God did not demand and to add to the religion what is not from the religion.

The Prophet's Appointee

These two negative sides of an elective leadership would not exist in a leadership based on an appointment by the Prophet. If the Prophet chose a leader his decision would be binding on every Muslim and according to the Holy Qur'an no one would have the right to defy it:

"And it is not permitted for believing man or believing woman to make a choice after God and His Messenger have decided in an affair. And whoever disobeys God and His Messenger would be in manifest error." The Holy Quran Chapter 33 verse 36.

When the people pledge allegiance to the Prophet's appointee they would be in fact pledging the same to the Messenger. And whoever pledges to the Messenger would be pledging to God. The Holy Qur'an declares:

"Certainly those who pledge allegiance to thee in fact they do that to God. The hand of God is above their hands. And whoever breaches a covenant he breaches against himself and whoever fulfills what he promises God God will grant him a great reward." The Holy Quran Chapter 48 verse 10.

A caliph appointed by the Messenger possesses a holiness that issues from the holiness of the Messenger. His contemporary Muslims have to follow his order and rules and so do the generations after them. To a certain degree he has jurisdictions that resemble those of the Prophet except that he is not a Prophet. He is not expected to add to nor subtract from the Islamic rules. There shall be no

Prophet after Muhammad and the rules of Muhammad are eternal and will continue until the Day of Judgment. A caliph appointed by the Prophet represents him and because of that he is supposed to be the most knowledgeable of the Holy Qur'an and the teaching of the Prophet.

Whatever he declares legal is legal and whatever he declares illegal is forbidden. No Muslim has the right to disagree with him. He is the most knowledgeable and his obedience is as that of the Messenger.

Quraish And The Caliphate

Did the Prophet say that the Imams are from Quraish? And if he did say that did he mean that the caliphate is by election or by inheritance or by appointment from the Prophet?

Many hadiths on this subject are recorded in the Sahihs and other books of which are the following: Muslim recorded that Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of God said: "People are followers of Quraish.

Their Muslim follows their Muslim and their Kafir (unbeliever) follows their Kafir."[31](#)

He recorded also that Jaber Ibn Abdullah reported that the Prophet said: "People are followers of Quraish in good and in evil."

Muslim also recorded that Abdullah reported that the Messenger said: "The Islamic authority (Caliphate) will stay in Quraish as long as two men exist in this world."

He reported also that Jaber Ibn Samorah reported that the Messenger of God said: "This religion will continue until the Day of Judgement comes or 12 caliphs from Quraish rule you."

Al-Bukhari recorded that Ibn 'Umar reported that the Messenger of God said: This Islamic authority will stay in Quraish as long as two persons from Quraish remain alive."[32](#)

He recorded through his channel to Jaber Ibn Samorah that he said: "I heard the Prophet saying: 'There shall be twelve rulers.' Then he said a word I did not hear and my father said that the Prophet said: 'All of them are from Quraish.' " Al-Tirmidhi recorded the same except that he said that the Prophet said: "There will be twelve rulers after me " and that the father of Jaber said: "The Messenger said: 'All of them are from Quraish.'" [33](#)

Al-Hakim through his channel to Masrouq recorded that he said: "While we were sitting with Abdullah (Ibn 'Umar) a man asked him: 'Abu Abdul-Rahman did you and other companions ask the Messenger of

God how many caliphs will rule this nation?' Abdullah replied: 'No one before you asked me about this since I came to Iraq.' Then he said: 'We asked the Messenger of God and he said: Twelve the same number as the representatives of the children of Israel with Moses.'"34

Imam Ahmad reported that Abu Bakr said: (to Saad Ibn Abadah) "And you Saad knew that the Messenger of God said while you were sitting: 'Quraish are the people of this authority. The righteous of the people are followers of their righteous and the wicked of the people are followers of their wicked.'"35

It is clear that the first hadith does not speak about the caliphate. For Quraish at the time of the caliphate was not divided into Muslims and non-Muslims. All the Qureshites were confessing Islam at that time. It seems that the hadith came at a time when the majority of the Qureshites were pagans.

The hadith speaks of the influence of Quraish over the Arab tribes. For they were opposed to Islam when Quraish was fighting it. When Quraish entered the new faith the rest of the Arabs rushed into the faith. The Prophet in this hadith was not trying to announce an Islamic law or issue an order to the Muslims. He was speaking of a matter of fact: That is the influence of Quraish and its effect on the rest of the Arab tribes.

The second hadith like the first one does not speak about the caliphate nor about who should be the caliph. It is an information of a situation that existed at the time of the hadith.

As to the last six hadiths they clearly speak of the caliphate. These hadiths vary in their contents without contradiction. Some of them state that the caliphate is in Quraish.

Some of them add that the caliphate shall continue in Quraish until the end of the world. And some of them add that the caliphs are 12 and some of them mention that the number of the caliphs is 12 but do not mention that they are from Quraish.

To understand these hadiths we have to put together the two hadiths of Abdullah Ibn 'Umar in one of which he reported that the caliphate shall continue in Quraish to the end of the world and in the other in which he reported that the number of caliphs is 12 like the representatives of the children of Israel. The two hadiths explain each other and agree with the hadith of Jaber Ibn Samurah which is the most specific among all these hadiths and capable of explaining the non-specific of them.

Thus these hadiths inform us that the non-Qureshites shall not be caliphs and that the caliphs are only twelve and that the caliphate will stay in Quraish as long as two people remain in this world.

These statements could be interpreted in one of the following ways:

[Was the Prophet Predicting?](#)

The Prophet was not trying to instruct the Muslims and inform them of what they ought to do after him

concerning the caliphate. He was rather speaking to them about the future forecasting that the caliphate shall stay in Quraish forever until the Day of Judgement.

Thus he informs us that the caliphate will never be interrupted as long as the people are living on the face of this earth and that every caliph shall be a Qureshite and that the caliphs are to be twelve.

Of course this would not be true because the caliphate was interrupted and discontinued and because many of the caliphs such as the Osmanites were neither Qureshites nor Arabs.

In addition to this stating that the caliphs are twelve cannot be true whether it meant only the righteous caliphs or all of the caliphs including the non-righteous. For the number of righteous caliphs did not reach twelve and if we add to them the number of non-righteous their number is much higher than twelve.

Is the Qureshite Rule Hereditary?

The second way of interpreting the above hadiths is that the Prophet was trying to issue instructions and communicate to the Muslims a religious command so he told his nation that the caliphs after him have to be from Quraish and no one deserves to be a caliph except the Qureshites.

This is because the Qureshites are related to the Messenger closely or remotely for they join the Holy Prophet through their great-grandfather "Fihir Ibn Malik." By this a Qureshite Muslim would be qualified to be a caliph and a non-Qureshite would not qualify.

If we adopt this interpretation we would be admitting that the Islamic authority is by inheritance and that the right of inheritance would not be exclusive to the close relatives of the Holy Prophet. It is rather broad enough to include all the Qureshite clans who are descendants of "Fihir Ibn Malik."

To believe that the Qureshite Muslims are qualified for the caliphate for being close or remote relatives of the Prophet is to subscribe to a theory of inheritance with which the Islamic law of inheritance does not agree. If the Islamic authority can be inherited through blood relationship the close relatives bar the remote relative from inheritance according to the Islamic law.

Furthermore the restriction of the number of caliphs to twelve becomes unjustifiable for the righteous among the Qureshite caliphs did not reach the number of twelve and non-righteous among them were many more than twelve.

Are the Qureshites Superior?

The third interpretation of the hadiths is that the Prophet through these statements was announcing a religious law which makes the caliphate an exclusive right of the Qureshites. This is not because they are related to him but because God preferred them to the non-Qureshites.

If we take this interpretation we have to accept two contradictory concepts:

(a) The caliphate is not to be by the choice of the Muslims. It is rather by appointment from God because He is the One Who decreed that the caliphs are to be Qureshites whether people accept or reject.

(b) The faith of Islam invites its followers to believe in a tribal superiority and a Qureshite aristocracy whose members regardless of the extent of their faith are preferred by God to others even if the others were more religious wiser and more knowledgeable.

We say these two ideas are contradictory because if the caliphate is by a Divine decree the Almighty is expected to choose for the leadership of the believers their wisest and most knowledgeable and righteous. It would be illogical to say that God prefers Abu Sufyan to Ammar Ibn Yasir because Abu Sufyan fought Islam and the Prophet for twenty-one years and Ammar fought with the Prophet for more than twenty-one years.

History remembers that the Holy Prophet stood on the day of conquest of Mecca and declared the following:

"O people of Quraish certainly God has done away with the boastfulness of the pre-Islamic mentality and its pride of ancestors. People are from Adam and Adam was from soil." Then he recited the following verse: 'O mankind certainly We have created you from a male and female and made you people and tribes that you may recognize each other. The noblest among you in the eyes of God is the most righteous of you."

Thus placing the Qureshites above others not for anything except being Qureshites is opposed to the Book of God and the teaching of the Holy Prophet in words and deeds.

Again the restriction of the number of the caliphs to twelve would be unjustifiable for the same reason we mentioned before.

Were the Men Chosen Only for their Righteousness?

The fourth way of interpreting the hadiths is to say the Holy Prophet was trying to inform the Muslims that God had chosen men from Quraish to become caliphs. He did not choose these men because they were related to the Holy Prophet nor because they were Qureshites. He chose them because they were the best among the Muslims. These men are the legitimate caliphs whether people elect them or reject them.

The six hadiths of the Qureshite caliphate clearly indicate that God did not leave to the Muslims a complete choice in selecting their caliphs. He rather decreed that their caliphs have to come from Quraish. It would be illogical to believe that He did that because the Qureshites are relatives of the Messenger or because the Qureshites are better than the rest of the Muslims.

This would be an invitation to the belief in an aristocracy alien to the faith of Islam which calls for equality glorifies the righteous and despises the transgressor. The history of Islam attests that the majority of the Qureshites were the most hostile to the Messenger and his religion before they adopted Islam and less religious than others after they adopted Islam.

It would be only logical to say that the Qureshiteness of the caliphs is like the Qureshiteness of the Prophet himself.

God did not choose Muhammad because he was from Quraish or because he was a Hashimite or from the children of Abdul-Muttalib or from Mecca. He chose him because he was the best among the people of the earth and it happened that the best of the people of the earth was a Qureshite from the children of Abdul-Muttalib.

And so the caliphs about whom the Holy Prophet spoke were chosen by God because they were the best of the people of the earth and it happened that they were from Quraish. This logical interpretation agrees with the Shi'ite Islamic School. When God chooses a man to become Imam of the people he would be the Imam whether the Muslims accept him or reject him just as when God chooses a Prophet he would be the Prophet even if people do not believe in his Prophethood.

Qureshites and Election Are Irreconcilable

It is irreconcilable to say that God has decreed that the caliphs are to be from Quraish and that He left to the Muslims the matter of the selection of the caliphs from among the Qureshites.

God has decreed that the caliphs are to be from the Quraish in order to lead the Muslims to what is best for them. If he left the selection of the caliph from Quraish to the choice of the Muslims He would leave the future of the caliphate to chance. Election by people does not secure the best leadership for people do not know what is hidden in the hearts of individuals. God is the only One who knows that.

Since God did not leave the caliphate entirely to the choice of the people and decreed that their caliphs are to be only from a particular group (the Qureshites) the entire choice must be His. He would not divide the choice between Himself and the Muslims leaving the selection of the tribe to Himself and the selection of the man from the tribe to the Muslims.

God is expected to choose the tribe for the sake of the individual and not to choose the individual for the sake of the tribe. God has chosen Hashim and Quraish because of Muhammad and He did not choose Muhammad because he was a Hashimite or Qureshite Choosing the man rather than the clan is what secures the right leadership.

Thus when God and His Messenger informed us that the caliphs are from Quraish they were actually informing us that there are particular individuals who happened to be from Quraish and were chosen by God to be caliphs. They were chosen because of their high qualifications and not because of their being

Qureshites.

- [1.](#) Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p.655.
- [2.](#) Ibn Hisham Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p.656.
- [3.](#) Dr. Taha Hussein Al-Fitna tul-Kubra Part 1 p. 35.
- [4.](#) Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet Part 2 pp. 659–660.
- [5.](#) Sheikh Muhammad Jawad Mugneyah recorded this in his book Hathi Hiya Al- Wahabiyah (This Is the Wahabism)
- [6.](#) Muslim Sahih Muslim Part 15 p. 155.
- [7.](#) Al-Nawawi in his commentary on Sahih Muslim conveyed this.
- [8.](#) Muslim Sahih Muslim Part 11 (Book of Will) p.89.
- [9.](#) Ibid.
- [10.](#) Ibid Part 11 p. 154.
- [11.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak Part 3 p. 139.
- [12.](#) Al-Bukhari Sahih Al-Bukhari Part 6 Book of Commentary on the Holy Qur'an. It is in the comment on the chapter of Al-Tahreem p. 194.
- [13.](#) Holy Qur'an Chapter 66 pp. 1–4.
- [14.](#) Sahih Al-Bukhari Part 6 p. 195.
- [15.](#) Al-Bukhari in his Sahih Part 8 p. 210.
- [16.](#) Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p.658.
- [17.](#) Imam Ahmad in his Musnad Part 1 p.55.
- [18.](#) Muslim in his Sahih Part 12 p.206.
- [19.](#) Ibn Sa'd in his Tahaqat Part 3 p.342.
- [20.](#) Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p.653.
- [21.](#) Al-Bukhari in his Sahih Part 9 p. 100.
- [22.](#) Ibn Hisham Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p.642.
- [23.](#) This is recorded by Ibn Al-Athir in Al-Kamil and by Ibn Sa'd Al-Tabaqat Part 2 p.190; and by Al-Dahlani and Al- Tabari in his history and Al-Halabi in his Biography of the Prophet (all this was conveyed by Sharaful-deen in Al-Mur- ajaat)
- [24.](#) Ibn Sa'd in his Al-Tabaqat Part 3 p. 25 and Al-Hakim in his Al-Mustadrak Part 3 p. 111.
- [25.](#) Ibn Sa'd Al-Tabaqat Part 2 p. 249.
- [26.](#) Ibn Sa'd Al-Tabaqat Part 2 p. 249.
- [27.](#) Ibn Hisham Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p. 642.
- [28.](#) Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p. 649.
- [29.](#) Muslim in his Sahih Part 17 p. 7.
- [30.](#) Al-Bukhari in his Sahih Part 7 p. 12.
- [31.](#) This hadith and the following three hadiths are recorded by Muslim in his Sahih Part 12 Book of Al-Imarah pp. 200–202.
- [32.](#) Al-Bukhari Sahih Al-Bukhari (in the book of Al-Ahkam) Part 9 p. 78.
- [33.](#) Al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan Part 2 p. 35. (Al-Fairuzbadi in his book Fadha-il Al-Khamsah Virtue of the Five) Part 2 p. 23.
- [34.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak Part 4 p. 501.
- [35.](#) Imam Ahmad in his Al-Musnad Part 1 p. 5.

17.'Ali Views the Succession

There is a theory that claims that the civil war which took place during the reign of Abu Bakr could have been avoided if 'Ali had succeeded the Prophet. This interesting theory (which I neither confirm nor

deny) is based upon the following reasons:

1. The declaration of the Prophet at Ghadir Khum while returning from his valedictory pilgrimage made thousands of pilgrims believe that he had chosen 'Ali to succeed him.

What they understood from the declaration seemed to be consistent with their tradition which gives the authority to the closest relative of the leader. When they realized that the leadership had been handed to Abu Bakr after the death of the Prophet some of them opposed the new government and refused to pay to it the "Zakat"(the Islamic tax)

Others went further and deserted Islam thinking that the companions have disobeyed the declaration of the Prophet.

They thought that the companions were not serious in their adoption of Islam. And so the Arab tribes thought that they have the right to desert Islam and go back to paganism.

2. Had 'Ali been the ruler after the Prophet his military reputation could have deterred anyone from challenging his leadership. The stories of his heroism were on every Arab's lips. The beduins as well as the settlers of villages and cities had experienced and witnessed his military actions during the last ten years of the life of the Prophet. Why should they take a risk of confronting him in a losing war?

Whether this theory is right or wrong the civil war was decisive concerning 'Ali. It obliged him to stop his opposition to Abu Bakr and pledge his support lest the Muslim government be weakened in its struggle against the deserters of the faith. 'Ali was too pious to continue his opposition when dangers were threatening the foundation of Islam.

For several months the Imam 'Ali refused to join the electors of Abu Bakr and he was expected to continue to do so. The civil war however made it mandatory for him to reverse his position.

The view of the Imam can be presented as follows:

He believed that the leadership is his exclusive right. He was the treasurer of the knowledge of the Prophet his choice and his closest relative. It is reported that when Abu Bakr demanded from 'Ali to join his electors 'Ali replied:

"I have the right of leadership. I will not follow you when you ought to follow me." When Abu Bakr asked him: "Was not my election by the will of the people?" he replied: "But you told the Qureshites and the Medinites that you are entitled to the leadership because you are related to Muhammad and they conceded to you. I have the same argument against you."

Then he said: "We have more right in the Messenger of God alive and dead. We are the members of his House the place of his confidence the treasure of his knowledge and wisdom. No one from this nation can come close to the positions of the members of the House of Muhammad. And those who were

indebted to their favor should not be equalized with them."¹

He said also: "I am the executor of the Prophet his minister and the trustee of his secrets and knowledge... I am the first one who believed in him the most effective defender of Islam among you in combatting the pagans the most knowledgeable in the Book of God and the teaching of the Prophet and most foreseer of the consequences of the events. For how long do you deny us the leadership? Give us justice and acknowledge our rights as the Medinites did for you."²

‘Ali does not lack evidence on his executorship or ministerial posts. The Messenger conferred on him the post of executorship when he gathered his close relatives ten years before the Hijrah. At that conference the Prophet said to the members of his clan while his hand on ‘Ali's neck: "This is my brother executor and successor in you. Listen to him and obey him." To his ministerial post the authentically reported statement of the Prophet attests: "Ali would you not be pleased to be to me like Aaron to Moses but there shall be no Prophet after me?"

Aaron was the minister of Moses according to the Holy Qur'an:

"And grant me a minister from the members of my house Aaron my brother. Strengthen me by him and make him a sharer in my mission." The Holy Qur'an Chapter 20 verses 28-31.

As to his trustworthiness on the secrets of the Messenger and his knowledge it suffices to remember that the Messenger said: "I am the city of knowledge and ‘Ali is its gate.

Whoever wishes to enter the city should come through the gate."

He Believed That Abu Bakr's Election Was Unbinding.

The Imam viewed the election of Abu Bakr to be unbinding to his electors. Evidently he believed that the Messenger had chosen him to lead the nation and administer its affairs after him and that the choice of the Prophet is binding to the nation.

Thus the nation does not have the right to choose another leader. Had not the Imam believed in this he would not have allowed himself to ask the Medinites to reverse their position after they elected Abu Bakr.

A sound election is a covenant to be fulfilled and ‘Ali was too righteous to call upon people to break a legitimate covenant.

He and his wife Fatimah "Al-Zahra" (the Lady of Light) daughter of the Prophet visited the Medinite companions seeking their support and asking them to reverse their position towards Abu Bakr.

Muawiya in one of his letters to the Imam said:

... "And I remember when you used to carry your wife at night on a donkey while your hands in the

hands of your sons Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein after Abu Bakr was elected. You called upon every Badriyan and early Muslim to support you and went with your wife to them offering to them your two sons and asking them their help against the companion of the Messenger of God...."³

He Did not Want to Reach His Goal by Force

In spite of his belief that his right was usurped he did not try to regain it by force nor did he want to damage the unity of the Muslims. The Imam realized that he does not have a strong support. The absolute majority of the Meccans were deadly against him. To them he was the man who was responsible for the death of many of their fathers, brothers, sons and relatives in his defensive campaign for Islam.

The Medinites were closer to him than the Qureshites but they did not have the will to sacrifice for his leadership. They had already entered into a pact with Abu Bakr and they thought that this exacts from them their loyalty.

‘Ali had some support from some outstanding companions such as Salman the Persian, Abu Dharr, Al-Bursa, Ibn Azib, Ammar, Ibn Yasir, Al-Miqdad, Ibn Al-Aswad and Al-Zubayr, Ibn Al-Awam. But these companions did not have the following. Thus the Imam found that patience was the only open avenue for him.

He Reversed His Position for the Sake of Unity

He could have continued his opposition to Abu Bakr as long as Abu Bakr lived. Saad Ibn Abadah continued his opposition until Abu Bakr died. However, the movement of desertion of the faith by the Arab tribes was to him a decisive factor that made him reverse his attitude. His opposition to Abu Bakr was not motivated by a personal ambition. It was rather motivated by his desire to set the

Muslims on the true path of the Prophet. When Islam was threatened by the movement of desertion, ‘Ali found it unwise to be concerned with the method of leading the Muslims when the very existence of Islam became endangered.

Al-Baladhuri recorded that when the Arabs deserted the faith of Islam, Uthman came to ‘Ali saying: "Cousin, no one will fight the enemy while you refuse to reconcile with Abu Bakr."⁴ He convinced the Imam to go with him to Abu Bakr; when Abu Bakr saw the Imam, they hugged each other and cried. The Muslims were pleased with that and determined to fight the deserters of the faith.

Al-Bukhari in his Sahih reported that the Imam said to Abu Bakr when they met: We recognize your position and what God has given you but you have taken over the leadership without our consultation. We believe that we have our share and right in the leadership because of our relationship to the Messenger of God. Abu Bakr cried they promised each other to meet at the Mosque at night.

'Ali went to the Mosque and he told the people that he was not motivated in his opposition by a jealousy toward Abu Bakr nor by a denial of his position; but we believe he said that we have a right in this leadership and he took it without consulting us. Thus we felt uneasy."[5](#)

The Imam spoke of what took place in that period in a message he sent to the people of Egypt when he sent to them Malik Al-Ashtar as a governor:

"... And I withheld my hand until I found the deserters of the faith of Islam calling for the destruction of the religion of Muhammad. (As this danger emerged I reversed my position) and decided to aid Islam and its followers lest I witness a total or partial destruction in Islam then the tragedy to me becomes greater than losing your leadership which is only transitory."[6](#)

[1.](#) Abdul Fattah Abdul Maksoud Al-Imam 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib Part 1 p. 179.

[2.](#) Al-Tabersi Al-Ihtijaj Part 1 p. 95.

[3.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid his Commentaries on Nahjul-Balagha Vol. 1 p. 131.

[4.](#) Sayed Murtadha Al-Asakari conveyed this in his book: Abdullah Ibn Saha p. 73.

[5.](#) Al-Bukhari his Sahih Part 5 p. 108.

[6.](#) Nahjul-Balaghah Part 3 pp. 198-199.

18. Abu Bakr Names a Successor

Abu Bakr died and a life filled with important achievements came to an end.

1. He subdued the deserters of the faith and the withholders of the Zakat. He brought the Arab tribes back to Islam and made them soldiers of Islam after they became its adversaries.
2. Upon his order the verses and chapters of the revelations were gathered in the Book of Islam the Holy Qur'an.
3. He pushed the faith of Islam beyond the borders of the Arabic Peninsula. He died while the Muslim forces were facing the Persian armies in Iraq and the Roman armies in Syria.

As Abu Bakr's death was drawing nigh he chose to appoint a successor and this was his right. He decided not to leave to chance the leadership of the state.

Had the history been logical 'Ali would have succeeded Abu Bakr. He was by-passed after the death of the Prophet because the election was held hastily without planning and consultation. It is said that the emergency which was brought about by the conference of the Medinites at Saqifat Ranu Sa-idah and the absence of 'Ali who was preoccupied with the Holy Funeral made the companions overlook 'Ali and his qualifications.

If this were the fact 'Ali should not have been overlooked at this time. There was no emergency and the Caliph was able to appoint whomever he chose. Yet 'Ali was not chosen by the Caliph.

Quraish stood against him for many reasons and his high distinctions along with his close relationship to the Prophet were the main reason.

The Meccan clans went into costly wars against the Messenger of God because they did not want the Hashimites to have the exclusive honor of having the Prophet from among them. Having this attitude they were not expected to let the Hashimites possess another exclusive honor by allowing 'Ali to succeed the Prophet.

The Qureshite influence grew rapidly during the reign of Abu Bakr. The rapid growth of the Qureshite influence was expected to increase the distance between 'Ali and the High Office.

One might say that Abu Bakr should not have followed the unfair attitude of Quraish toward 'Ali after he heard so many statements by the Prophet which indicated that 'Ali was his choice. But Abu Bakr seemingly did not believe that the statements of the Prophet concerning 'Ali made it mandatory for the Muslims to follow him. Had he believed that he would not have allowed himself to be the First Caliph. Being of this opinion he thought he had the option to choose 'Ali or any one from the outstanding companions.

He did not choose 'Ali because he was his main opponent. He chose 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab his strongest supporter the planner of his election and his right hand in all affairs.

The reader may remember that when 'Ali reconciled with Abu Bakr he complained of Abu Bakr's failure to consult him when he was elected and that he took from 'Ali what he was entitled to have. Abu Bakr listened to his complaint and wept.

Abu Bakr's tears gave the impression that he would not repeat it. He was expected to consult 'Ali and the rest of the Hashimites along with companions who were inclined towards him. Nothing of this took place.

It is worth noting that Fatimah Al-Zahra daughter of the Prophet was not on speaking terms with Abu Bakr and she was urging the Medinites to shift from Abu Bakr to 'Ali. She was angry with Abu Bakr because of the caliphate and because he nationalized "Fadak." (a group of orchards) which she had received from her father and was supposed to keep for herself as a gift or a legacy. But Abu Bakr reported that the Messenger said: We the Prophets do not leave inheritance.

Fatimah denied that her father said that because this is opposed to the Holy Qur'an which declares that Suleiman (Solomon) received an inheritance from his father David. Both Solomon and his father were prophets.

Abu Bakr made efforts to normalize relations with her without reversing his position on Fadak but she

refused to speak to him and when she died he was not informed of her death lest he attend her funeral.¹ Abu Bakr was very concerned with Fatimah's anger because the Prophet said: "Fatimah is a portion of me.

Whoever displeases her displeases me." He also said: "Fatimah is the leader of the women of Paradise." (Both hadiths were reported by Al-Bukhari in his Sahih section of virtues of Fatimah)."

With all this the righteous Caliph would be expected to name 'Ali his successor for this would please the Prophet because it pleased Fatimah though belatedly.

Abu Bakr did not do that nor did he consult 'Ali or any of the Hashimites including Al-Abbas uncle of the Holy Prophet.

Indeed Abu Bakr did not consult any companion about whom he should choose to succeed him. He did not give them a choice between two or more candidates. He consulted a few companions about 'Umar and 'Umar only. The consultants were Abdul-Rahaman Ibn Ouf Uthman Ibn Affan and Osseid Ibn Hudheir. These were 'Umar's admirers and all of them were positive towards him. Talhah Abu Bakr's cousin was not consulted and when he criticized 'Umar Abu Bakr exploded in anger.

Why shouldn't we call the events by their names? Abu Bakr was indebted to 'Umar in his election and establishing his leadership. He was his right hand during the time of his caliphate. Abu Bakr wanted to return to his good friend his favor. We say this not trying to minimize the sincerity of the First Caliph.

While he was dying Abu Bakr commanded Uthman to write his will. When he reached the following words: "I have appointed as a successor " he fainted before mentioning the name of his appointee. When he woke up he asked Uthman to read what he wrote and to the surprise of Abu Bakr Uthman had added the name of 'Umar. Abu Bakr was very pleased with that.

Of course the new Caliph was more pleased with Uthman. He remembered this favor for Uthman. He rewarded him by a similar favor at the end of his reign.

¹. Al-Bukhari reported it in his Sahih Part 5 p. 178. Muslim also reported it in his Sahih Part 12 "Hukm of Al-Fei" (The wealth which is acquired from enemies of Islam) p.77.

19. 'Umar Succeeds

'Umar came to power as the Second Caliph 14 years after the Hijrah (635 AD). He proved to be the most effective among the caliphs in directing the policy of the Muslim World and its events.

The period of his leadership was full of spectacular accomplishments and conspicuous events. If the

policy of a head of state has domestic and foreign aspects 'Umar's policy had all that plus past and future aspects for its influence went beyond the boundaries of his own reign with far-reaching consequences.

The success of his external policy was dazzling to the eyes of the historians Muslim and non-Muslim alike. He inherited from his predecessor Abu Bakr a World-War against the two great empires of his time: The Persian and the Roman empires.

The Muslim forces during his reign faced the Persian armies and were able to place Iraq and Persia including Al-Ahwaz and Azarbaijan under the dominion of Islam.

The Muslim forces on the North Western front were able to defeat the Romans and bring Syria and Egypt into the Islamic Jurisdiction.

Thus under his leadership Muslim armies were able to disintegrate the two prominent empires of his time; the spiritual conquest which accompanied the military conquest as the greater of the two. His policy towards the non-Muslim inhabitants of the conquered lands was fair. He levied taxation on the conquered land plus a personal taxation on the adult males.

None of the followers of other religions were oppressed during his reign. He recognized their natural rights and freedoms. History recorded his word as directed to Amr Ibn Al-Aus who was his appointed governor of Egypt whose son hit a Coptic Christian: "Amr when did you enslave people after they were born free?"

His domestic policy was mostly successful. It may be summed up as follows: In relation to his family; in relation to Muslims in general; in relation to his colleagues of the companions of the Prophet; and in relation to the members of the House of the Prophet.

In relation to himself and his family his policy was ideal. Hundreds of millions of dirhams (a dirham of his time is equivalent to a dollar of our time) were pouring into the treasury of the Islamic State. Though he had unlimited authority he and his family lived in poverty. It is reported that he said: "I deal with the Muslims' treasury as I deal with a fund of an orphan. If I am in no need I will not touch it; and if I am in need I only satisfy my necessity."¹

In relation to the Muslims in general his policy was characterized as just firm and helpful. He sufficiently provided for the soldiers their families and the inhabitants of Medina plus many others.

As to his relation to the companions, he allotted to them according to the record of their participation in the defense of Islam. Trying to prevent the companions temptation of wealth or fearing the use of their brilliant record for advancing their influence he prevented the companions from residing in any city other than Medina.

"I am standing at the mouth of Al-Harrah (the entrance of Medina) he said holding the Qureshites'

throats and belts lest they fall into the fire."² Thus he kept the ambitious companions of the Prophet under his watchful eyes.

In relation to the members of the House of the Prophet his policy was mixed with admiration and caution. He did not grant any governmental post to any of them. However the tension between him and 'Ali which started after the death of the Prophet and continued during the period of

Abu Bakr abated and gradually was replaced by a friendship which grew by the passage of time. 'Umar used to resort to 'Ali's counsel in important events seeking solutions of serious problems.

When he was informed that the Persian government had mobilized an extremely huge army to fight the Muslims he wanted to attend the battle in order to strengthen the morale of the Islamic army.

When he consulted the Imam 'Ali and other companions the Imam told him: "The Islamic cause did not triumph or retreat by a great or small number. It is the religion of God Who made it prevalent and His host which He prepared and extended until it reached what it reached and appeared as it appeared.

We are promised by God and He will fulfill His promise and help His Host. The place of the leader is the place of the string in the beads. It collects them and makes them join each other. If the string breaks the beads will scatter and never rejoin each other completely.

Though the Arabs today are few compared to others they are numerous through Islam and strong by their unity. Be like an axis of a mill let the mill go around and let the Arabs participate in the war without your presence. If you leave you will leave behind you dangers which will be of more concern to you than what you will face.

"If the Persians see you on the battlefield they will say: 'This is the source of the danger. If you destroy him you will triumph.' Their war will be more intensive and their hope in defeating the Muslims will grow higher.

"As to what you mentioned of the Persian march to fight the Muslims God the Almighty hates their march more than you do and He is more capable of changing what He dislikes. As to what you have mentioned of their great number we never fought by quantity. We fought only by the help of God and His assistance."³

'Umar and 'Ali's Knowledge

'Umar was deeply impressed with 'Ali's profound knowledge. It is reported that he said: "No one should give any verdict at the Mosque (of the Prophet) when 'Ali is present." When he made wrong decisions in Islamic rules 'Ali used to correct him.

He repeatedly said: "Had 'Ali not been present 'Umar would have perished (spiritually)."⁴ He expressed

his serious need to 'Ali's knowledge by saying: "May God not keep me to a problem when Abu Hassan ('Ali) is not available."

A lady was accused of adultery because she gave birth to a child six months after she married. 'Umar decided to stone her. 'Ali said to him: "Leader of the Believers if she appeals to the Book of God contesting your decision she will prevail against you." God says: "Pregnancy and nursing periods are thirty months."

Again He says: "Mothers nurse their children two complete years for whoever wants a complete nursing." If we subtract twenty four months from thirty the balance would be six months. 'Umar reversed his position and let the lady go free.

'Ali at one time was with 'Umar while others were present. When he left one of them criticized 'Ali and accused him of pride and conceit. 'Umar said: "A man like 'Ali is entitled to be proud. By God without his sword the pillar of Islam could not have been erected. He is the highest magistrate in the nation its earliest Muslim and its most honorable."[5](#)

When the critic asked what prevented him from giving him the leadership after the death of the Prophet 'Umar replied: "We did not like his young age and his love to his clan."

However this does not mean that 'Umar used to consult 'Ali in all affairs or follow all his opinions in religion. 'Umar was extremely independent. Sometimes he appeared as if he were in disagreement with the Prophet. The Messenger made the duty of any pilgrim who did not accompany animals of sacrifice to perform a pilgrimage of "Tamattu" (in which the pilgrim takes leave of restrictions which are imposed at the start of the Pilgrimage).

The Prophet commanded such a person to make the seven circuits around the Kaaba and the seven walks between Al-Safa and Al-Marwah; then it would be legal for him to approach his wife before he resumed his pilgrimage again before leaving for Arafat.

The Prophet also legalized the temporary marriage. 'Umar chose to prohibit both and to punish severely whoever married a woman for a limited period. Muslim in his Sahih reported that Abu Nudrah said the following: "Ibn Abbass (a cousin of the Prophet) used to legalize "Muta" (temporary marriage) and Ibn Al-Zubayr used to prohibit it. When I mentioned that to Jabir Ibn Abdullah (a prominent companion of the Prophet) he said: In my presence the following took place":

We practiced the temporary marriage during the days of the Prophet.... When 'Umar came to power he said: God used to legalize to His Messenger whatever He chose through whatever He chose. The Qur'an was revealed to regulate our life. You have to complete your pilgrimage and the Omrah (which precedes the pilgrimage) as God commanded you to do (without terminating the regular restrictions before going to Arafat). Desist from marrying women for a limited time. If a man married a woman for a limited time and is brought to me I shall stone him (to death)."[6](#)

This opinion of the Second Caliph concerning pilgrimage seems to be in a clear conflict with the Holy Qur'an:

"And when you are in safety any pilgrim who at the "Omrah" (the devotional part that precedes going to Arafat) satisfies his carnal desires (after terminating the state of restriction) until the resumption of pilgrimage he should offer what is easily available of sacrificial animal. If he can not he should fast three days during the pilgrimage and seven when you have returned; that is ten in all. That is for the one whose family is not residing at the Inviolable place of worship." The Holy Quran Chapter 2 verse 196.

The hadith however clearly indicates that temporary marriage was legal during the time of the Prophet and that he did not Prohibit it after legalizing it. Had the Messenger prohibited such a marriage the Second Caliph would have reminded the companions of that prohibition. His saying:

"Desist from marrying a woman for a limited time" tells us that the companions were still practicing the temporary marriage during his time. Otherwise he would not have commanded them to stop that practice. Had the Messenger prohibited such a practice after he legalized it the companions would not have continued to practice it and the Second Caliph would not have had to admonish them and threaten to stone those who practiced such a marriage.

As to the pilgrimage of "Tamattu " the Messenger in his valedictory pilgrimage said while he was in Mecca: "Had I been at the beginning of my pilgrimage I would not have accompanied the sacrificial animals and I would have made it Omrah (separate from the pilgrimage by termination of the restrictions of the Ihram). Whoever did not accompany sacrificial animals should terminate his Ihram and make it Omrah."

Suraqah Ib Malik Ibn Jaasham stood up and said to the Messenger: Is it for our present year exclusively or forever? The Messenger put the fingers of his two hands between each other and said: "The Omrah entered into the pilgrimage (repeating that twice) It is not for this year. It is forever." [7](#)

Thus the extreme independence of the Second Caliph had made him prohibit the pilgrimage of Al-Tamattu and legalize killing the practicer of temporary marriage. Yet the Messenger commanded the Muslims to make the pilgrimage of Al-Tamattu and legalized temporary marriage.

A man so extremely independent in his opinion would not be expected to consult the Imam 'Ali in every problem or follow all his opinions. However he considered 'Ali to be the most knowledgeable among the companions and the highest authority on religion.

Dialogues About The Caliphate

The relationship between the Caliph and the Imam continued to improve and finally 'Umar married Om Kulthoum daughter of the Imam. In spite of these improvements history as far as I know does not record

any dialogue between the Caliph and the Imam concerning the caliphate.

But the Caliph had several dialogues with Abdullah Ibn Abbass (a cousin of the Prophet and the Imam) concerning the disagreement between the Imam and himself. In most of these dialogues ‘Umar appeared to be satisfied with what took place. One of the dialogues went as follows:

‘Umar: "... The Qureshite community was unwilling to let you (the Hashimites) have the honor of both the caliphate and the Prophethood lest you compromise the right of your community. Quraish chose for itself. It succeeded and made the right decision."

Ibn Abbass: "... You said that the Qureshites were unwilling to let us have the honor of both the caliphate and the Prophethood. But the Almighty described some people as "resentful" when he said: 'Because they resented what God had revealed God nullified their deeds.' You said that the Qureshite community chose for itself and that it succeeded and made the right decision. Had they chosen for themselves what God chose for them the right would have been on their side neither objected to nor envied...." [8](#)

In another dialogue ‘Umar told Ibn Abbas the following: "There were high words from the Messenger of God (concerning ‘Ali). But those words did not constitute a clear evidence for his leadership nor did they eliminate all excuses (for those who did not side with him). The Messenger was trying to give ‘Ali the leadership. He wanted to record his name when he was in his ailment but I prevented him from doing that for the interest of Islam. By the Lord of the Ka–abah Quraish will never rally around him. Had he come to power after the death of the Prophet the Arabs would have revolted against him." [9](#)

In another dialogue the following conversation took place: ‘Umar: "Son of Abbass this man has exerted himself in worship until he had become lean trying to show his piety."

Ibn Abbass: "Who is that man?" ‘Umar: "That is your cousin (‘Ali)."

Ibn Abbass: "What does he gain by showing his piety?" ‘Umar: "He wants to present himself for the caliphate." Ibn Abbass: "The Prophet nominated him for the caliphate and he did not attain it."

‘Umar: "He was in his youth and the Arabs thought that he was too young. But now he has reached the age of maturity. Did you not know that God never sent a Prophet before the age of forty?"

Ibn Abbass: "People of wisdom and good judgement regard him perfect and mature since God heightened the light of Islam. But they consider him deprived and unlucky."

‘Umar: "He will reach it after difficulties then his foot will slip and he will not reach his aim. Abdullah you will witness that. Then the dawn will appear to anyone who has two eyes. Then you will know the soundness of the opinion of the early migrant companions who diverted the leadership away from him." [10](#)

In another dialogue ‘Umar appeared to have remorse for the way in which ‘Ali was treated. He said to

Ibn Abbass while they were walking on one of the streets of Medina holding hands: ‘Umar: "I think that your man (‘Ali) was treated unjustly."

Ibn Abbass: "Amir Al-Mu'mineen (leader of the Believers) give him back his right."

‘Umar took his hand away from the hand of Ibn Abbass and left while talking to himself angrily. Then he stood and called Ibn Abbass. When Ibn Abbass came to him ‘Umar said:

"What prevented the Qureshites from giving him the leadership was his age. They thought he was too young." Ibn Abbass replied: "By God neither God nor His Messenger considered him too young when they commanded him to take the chapter of "Bara-ah" from your man (Abu Bakr) when he was setting out taking with him Bara-ah to announce it in the pilgrimage."

Upon this the Caliph turned away from Ibn Abbass and left hurriedly.[11](#)

In another conversation with Ibn Abbass ‘Umar appeared to be milder than usual. He said to Ibn Abbass: "... You may think that Abu Bakr was the first one who pushed you (the Hashimites) back. He did not mean that. Something emerged and there was no wiser way for him to take than the path he took.

Had he not had his opinion about me he would have given you your share of the leadership. Had he done that your people (the Qureshites) would not make you enjoy the leadership.... They look at you as a bull looking at his butcher."[12](#)

The Dimensions Of ‘Umar's Policy

The attitude of the Second Caliph towards Quraish and its line of thinking was far-reaching in its consequences. We can see its effects in the events that took place before and after his reign where it directed the future policies of the Muslim World to a great extent.

His influence was visible during the days of Abu Bakr. He was the man behind his election and his strongest supporter and the most effective person in establishing his leadership.

The following anecdote shows the extent of his influence during the days of Abu Bakr: Oyeinah Ibn Hissn and Al-Aqra Ibn Habis came to Abu Bakr and said: "Caliph of the Messenger of God: There is a piece of unproductive land void of herb and useless. We request that you give it to us so we may till it and plant in it. God may benefit us through it in the future."

Abu Bakr consulted the companions around him. As they counseled him positively on the matter he wrote a document signed it and the witnessing companions also signed it. Then he handed it to the two men.

Since ‘Umar was not present among the companions the two men went to him to have his signature on the document. As they found him busy applying tar on a camel they informed him that the Caliph had

given them a document and that they came to have his signature. They asked him if he would like to read it or they should read it to him.

He told them to read it to him. As he heard it he took the document spat on it and erased the writing. The two men exploded in anger and made uncomplimentary remarks.

He told them that the Messenger of God used to appease them when the faith of Islam was not in strength. God had strengthened Islam. "Go away " he said to them "and do whatever is in your power."

They went back to Abu Bakr complaining and said to him: "We do not know who is the ruler. Is it you or 'Umar?"

Abu Bakr replied: "He is if he wants to be."

When 'Umar came the following dialogue between him and Abu Bakr took place: 'Umar: "Tell me of this land which you gave to the two men. Is it yours or does it belong to all Muslims?"

Abu Bakr: "It belongs to all Muslims." 'Umar: "What made you give this land to these two men excluding the rest of the Muslims?"

Abu Bakr: "I consulted the companions around me and they agreed."

'Umar: "Have you consulted all the Muslims and acquired their consent?"

Abu Bakr: "I had told you that you are more capable—than I in handling the nation's affairs but you prevailed against me (and made me the Caliph)."¹³ It is difficult to understand how 'Umar expected Abu Bakr to consult all the Muslims in giving a piece of unproductive land while he did not consult all the Muslims in giving Abu Bakr the leadership.

The leadership was more important to the Muslims than a piece of land. However the event tells us of the magnitude of his influence during the time of Abu Bakr.

His influence extended not only to the time of Abu Bakr. It was also visible at the ailment of the Messenger himself. The readers of the Sahih know that the Prophet wanted during his ailment to write a document to assure that the nation would not go astray.

'Umar opposed writing such a document and said that the Prophet was overpowered with his ailment or that he was hallucinating. By his objection the Muslims were deprived of the Prophet's document which was expected to illuminate for the nation the path of its future and provide it with security against straying.

Pre-Arranged The Future Of The Muslims

The influence of his policy in directing the future of the Muslim world can be clearly seen in many decisions which he took while thinking that they were in the interest of the nation. But they were fraught with grave consequences.

The following are only a few of those decisions: 1. He did away with the method of the Prophet (which Abu Bakr followed) of distributing the public funds among the Muslims equally. When 'Umar was questioned about his uneven distribution he said "I will not equalize the ones who fought the Messenger with the one who fought with the Messenger."

He allocated to every companion who attended the Battle of Badr an annual salary of five thousand dirhams; and to every participant in the Battle of Uhud four thousands. He gave the child of a Badrian two thousands except Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein.

He equalized them with their father 'Ali because of their relation to the Prophet. He allotted twelve thousand Dirhams for each one of the wives of the Prophet.

To those who migrated before the surrender of Mecca he allotted three thousand dirhams and to those who adopted Islam at the time of the surrender of Mecca two thousands each. Then he made the rest of the Muslims one category giving them 25 dinars a year or according to their religious positions their reading of the Holy Qur'an and their endeavor in the defense of Islam.

He allotted to the Yemenites and the Qaisites who were in military service in Iraq and Syria salaries ranging between two and three thousands. He made the minimum of their salaries three hundred dirhams. [14](#)

The Caliph was motivated by good intentions when he preferred the early Muslims and the defenders of Islam. He had a very justifying reason in preferring the relatives of the Messenger and he should have given them more than he did because they were entitled at least to the sixth of the fifth of the spoils of war according to the Holy Qur'an:

"And know that whatever you may gain a fifth of it belongs to God His Messenger the relatives the orphans the needy and the wayfarer if you do believe in God and what We revealed to Our servant on the day of decisive event when the two forces confronted each other And God has power over everything." The Holy Quran Chapter 8 verse 41.

However it is very difficult to justify religiously his preference of the Badrians over the Ohdians and the Ohdians over those who embraced Islam before the surrender of Mecca and those who embraced Islam on the days of its surrender over those who adopted Islam later.

We cannot justify such preferences after the Messenger of God distributed the Islamic funds equally

among the Muslims.

It was a beautiful poetic statement on the part of the Caliph when he said: "I will not equalize the ones who fought the Messenger with those who fought with him" and it would have been very sound if he preferred the early Muslims by glorifying them and placing them spiritually above others.

Preference in fund-distribution could also be permitted if the funds belonged to the Caliph personally. But it was an injustice to give to one category more than others from a fund owned by all Muslims equally. The allowance with which he preferred the early Muslims was owned by the rest of the Muslims and he took it away from them without their permission.

Had the allowance been deserved by the preferred categories the Messenger would have given it to them rather than to the rest of the Muslims. Otherwise he would be distributing among all Muslims what belonged to the earlier Muslims.

Thus we should either say that the Messenger had deprived the early Muslims from what they deserved of allowance or that 'Umar deprived the majority of the Muslims from their right in the allowance with which he privileged the early Muslims. Which theory should we choose?

Undesirable Consequences

Whether inequality in distribution was legal or illegal it certainly led to the creation of a new wealthy class among the Muslims. The minority which benefited from the preference acquired much more than it needed for spending.

Thus the members of such a minority were able to invest their surplus money in purchasing and selling properties and in trade.

As a result the Muslim Society was divided into an extremely wealthy class and another class that could satisfy its needs without prosperity and a third class deprived and unable to acquire the necessary food and clothes. However the consequences of this division in the society did not appear violent during the reign of 'Umar.

In fact the Second Caliph witnessed the signs of the evils of this division at the end of his reign when he said with an obvious remorse: "Should I be given the opportunity to do it again I would take the surplus fund of the wealthy and return it to the poor." But time was not on his side. He died before he could rectify the situation.

It is worthy to note that the preferred classes enjoyed what they had acquired and believed that they were religiously entitled to what they acquired. When the Imam came to power and wanted to go back to the method of the Prophet and to return to the deprived people what belonged to them the privileged minority revolted against him.

They used all the means at their disposal in combatting him to preserve their privilege. Why not? They had enjoyed those prerogatives for over twenty years and to them they became natural rights.

Subversive Elements In The Caliph's Regime

Overlooking the obvious risks the Second Caliph placed in high positions politically ambitious and religiously unscrupulous men from Quraish. This led to many grave consequences after his death.

Ibn Al-Aws

He appointed Amr Ibn Al-Aws governor of Egypt before he professed Islam Amr was extremely hostile and harassing to the Prophet. He lambasted the Holy Prophet with seventy verses of poetry.

Belatedly Amr chose to become a Muslim after he foresaw through his williness and intelligence that the Prophet and his followers would have the upper hand.

The conspiracy of Amr appeared later when he became a leading agitator against Uthman after Uthman dismissed him and replaced him with Abdullah Ibn Sarh. He continued his malicious campaign until Uthman was assassinated.

Then he used Uthman's assassination for his own unholy goal. He became the second man in the aggressor party which fought 'Ali the Imam of the truth with the pretext of avenging the blood of Uthman whose death was brought about by the agitation of Amr and others like him.

The Umayyads In

The Second Caliph appointed Muawiya son of Abu Sufyan as the governor of Damascus. He appointed his brother Yazeed Ibn Abu Sufyan the governor of Jordan. When Yazeed died the Second Caliph added Jordan to the area of Muawiya's rule. [15](#)

By this the power of Muawiya began to grow politically and militarily. During the reign of 'Umar Muawiya became important enough to be feared and reckoned with.

When 'Umar was stabbed he said to the members of the Electoral Convention according to what Ibn Abbas reported: "... And if you exchange jealousy and hatred and refuse to co-operate with each other Muawiya will snatch the authority from your hands." [16](#)

The Hashimites Out

The Second Caliph did not put any of the Hashimites in any position of power though they had efficient men such as Ibn Abbas. 'Umar was asked why he did not give him a governorship of a province in spite of his knowledge and capability. The Caliph expressed his apprehension that Ibn Abbas might make his

own interpretation of the Islamic rule.

Evidently the Second Caliph thought that Ibn Abbas might legalize for himself or his relatives to take some of what God allotted for relatives of the Prophet in the Holy Qur'an of the fifth of the spoils.

The Caliph seemingly kept the Hashimites away from high offices of any Islamic provinces lest they gain some popularity in those areas. He thought that people of those provinces might glorify them because they were from the clan of the Holy Prophet.

With his love for God and His Messenger the Caliph was expected to keep the Umayyads out of his regime because of their opposition towards the Prophet. He was also expected to give the Hashimites substantial positions in his regime for the sake of the Prophet. Contrary to all expectations the Second Caliph kept the Hashimites out and brought the Umayyads in and kept them there.

The Caliph kept Muawiya in his position in spite of what he knew of his ambition and of what he witnessed of growth of his power. He kept him for the duration of his reign contrary to his method of dismissing his appointed governors and replacing them with others.

The Caliph seemingly was impressed with Muawiya's administrative ability and his efficiency in policing his borders which neighbored the Roman Empire. Yet 'Umar used to believe that the victory of the Muslims and their success did not depend on a person or persons regardless of their ability for God aids the Muslims by the power of Islam rather than the power of persons.

He dismissed Khalid Ibn Al-Walid from the command of the Syrian front after he became extremely popular. He replaced him by Abu Obeidah Ibn Al-Jarrah who was relatively unknown to make the Muslims realize that God would help them without need for the leadership of Ibn Al-Walid.

The Caliph might have been lulled by the obedience of Muawiya to him. Thus he wanted to benefit from his intelligence and administrative ability and Muawiya did not represent a threat to him. The Second Caliph had a very strong personality and none of the Muslims could dare challenge him.

The obedience of Muawiya to him however should not have made him forget what he knew of the danger of the Umayyads to the future of Islam; for 'Umar heard from the Messenger what should have alienated him from them.

He said to Ibn Abbas that he heard the Messenger of God saying:

"The children of Umayyad will ascend to my pulpit and I saw them in my dream jumping on my pulpit like monkeys." And about them the following verse was revealed:

"And We made the vision which We have shown thee only a faith-testing trial for the people and (the men you were shown are) the tree which is cursed in the Holy Qur'an."[17](#)

‘Umar said also to Al-Mughirah Ibn Shubah (who was one-eyed): "Mughirah have you ever seen anything through your eye after you lost it?" When Mughirah answered in the negative ‘Umar said to him: "By God the children of Umayyad will make Islam lose its eye as your eye was lost: Then they will blind Islam until it will not be able to know where to go or where to come." [18](#)

The Umayyad's Reign Was Not Inevitable

Probably what the Caliph heard from the Messenger concerning the children of Umayyad made him believe that their coming to power was pre-destined and inevitable.

Therefore he allowed himself to walk in this path which placed the Umayyads readily in power. Thus he did that while submitting to what he thought to be a pre-destined future.

Probably his belief that the arrival of the Umayyads to the high office was inevitable made him say to Ibn Abbas that ‘Ali shall arrive to the caliphate after a serious confusion then his foot will slip and he will not accomplish his aim.

Then he said to Ibn Abbas: "Abdullah you will be a witness and the morning will be clear to anyone who has two eyes then you will know the soundness of the opinion of the early migrants who diverted the caliphate from him."

Of course the arrival of the children of Umayyad to power became conceivable and expected after they became an important part of the Islamic regime and after their most intelligent became the governor of a highly important part of the Muslim State. The presence of Muawiya and his like in positions of power was expected to be an important obstacle which ‘Ali would face if he were to come to power.

As a matter of fact the difficulties and obstacles were steadily increasing and accumulating during ‘Umar's reign and continued to increase after his death until it became impossible for ‘Ali to rule peacefully.

This was not due to a weakness in ‘Ali but it was due to the events which took place before his arrival to power.

These events were not inevitable for those events were made by man and his will and were not pre-destined by God. Had ‘Umar not placed Muawiya in a position of power or had he not kept him in power Muawiya would not have become an obstacle in ‘Ali's path for without the governorship of Syria Muawiya would have been an ordinary man.

What the Prophetic Word Meant

What the Holy Messenger said about his vision in which he saw the children of Umayyad reaching the pulpit of the Holy Prophet was a warning to the nation to take a road that will not lead to this

consequence. But the nation took the road which brought the Umayyads to that pulpit.

The Holy Messenger informed the nation that his grandson Al-Hussein would be killed and that 'Ali would fight those who breached the covenant the aggressor party and the Kharijites (seceders). He also informed 'Ali that the nation would betray him.

He informed Al-Zubayr that he would fight 'Ali unjustly. He informed the mother of believers Ayesha that she would be barked at by the dogs of Al-Hou-ab while she is deviating from the right road.

He also informed the Muslims that the aggressor party would kill Ammar Ibn Yasir.

The Holy Prophet did not inform the Muslims of all these events to tell them that they were pre-destined from God. He did not mean to tell the Muslims that the predicted events were inevitable and that the will of man would not be a factor in bringing them or preventing them.

Had he meant that then the disobedients the sinners the murderers the breachers of the covenants and the aggressors would not be blamable. What the Messenger wanted to say was that these expected events which saddened him would take place as a result of wrong choices by the nation or by some of its leaders.

The attitude of the Prophet in forecasting these events is like the attitude of a physician who warns a physically weak person of what will happen to him if he does not take preventive measures which he prescribes to him.

If the patient refuses to take the preventive medicine then he becomes ill his illness would not be a result of predestination nor would it be inevitable. His illness would be the result of his own failure and mis-choice.

The Messenger forecast these ugly events which he expected and prescribed to the nation the right measure to prevent their occurrence namely the adherence to the Book of God and the teachings of the members of his House.

He told the Muslims that the adherence to these two elements represented a security for the nation against the ugly events and all deviations of any kind. The nation however did not heed the warning of the Holy Prophet nor could it appreciate the seriousness of his statements and its dimensions.

It took a different road which led to those evil events.

For this I believe that the Second Caliph was wrong when he said to Ibn Abbas that morning would appear to anyone who has two eyes and that Ibn Abbas himself would be a witness and discover the soundness of the opinion of the early migrants who diverted the caliphate from 'Ali.

The fact is that what happened to 'Ali did not prove the soundness of the opinion of the early migrants.

Rather it proved that they had committed a costly and terrible mistake. Had they not diverted the caliphate from 'Ali after the death of the Holy Prophet the clouds would not have accumulated in his horizon nor could those obstacles and difficulties have accumulated in his road.

'Ali could have arrived to a peaceful reign even after the caliphate was diverted from him twice. Had the Second Caliph used his tremendous influence in taming the Qureshites and directing them towards 'Ali 'Ali would have achieved his goal.

Had he kept the Umayyads out of his regime and avoided the creation of the preferred class of early companions through his inequal distribution of public funds 'Ali would not have had serious problems.

Even after all these events took place 'Ali could have had a peaceful rule if 'Umar had named him as a successor or formed the Electoral Convention of members with a positive attitude towards 'Ali rather than Uthman. Had 'Ali succeeded in coming to power peacefully the Muslims would have been avoided all the faith-testing crises to which the death of Uthman led.

- [1.](#) Ibn Sa'd Al-Tabaqat Part 3 p 276.
- [2.](#) Abdul-Fattah Abdul-Maksud Al-Imam 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib Part 1 p. 223
- [3.](#) Al-Sayed Al-Radhi Nahjul-Balaghah Part 2 pp. 29-30.
- [4.](#) Abdul-Fattah Abdul-Maksud Al-Imam 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib Part 1 p. 226.
- [5.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid his Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol. 3 p. 179.
- [6.](#) Muslim in his Sahih Part 8 p. 169.
- [7.](#) Muslim. Sahih Muslim Part 8 pp. 172-179.
- [8.](#) Ibn Al-Athir in his hook Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 31.
- [9.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid Commentaries on Nahjul-Balagha Part 3 pp. 97 105 and 155.
- [10.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid Commentaries on Nahjul-Balagha Part 3 pp. 97 105 and 155.
- [11.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid Commentaries on Nahjul-Balagha Part 3 pp. 97 105 and 155.
- [12.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid recorded this dialogue in his Commen- taries on Nahjul-Balagha Vol.3 p.94.
- [13.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid his Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol.3 pp. 108-109.
- [14.](#) Ibn Sa'd in his Al-Tabaqat Part 3 pp.296-297.
- [15.](#) Dr. Taha Hussein Al-Fitnat Al-Kubra Part 1 p.118.
- [16.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid in his Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol.1 p.62.
- [17.](#) Ibn Abdul-Hadid his Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol. 2 p. 376. There are more hadiths recorded by the Imatr Al-Razi in his "Commentaries on the Holy Qur'an " Chapter 17 Part 5 pp. 413-414.
- [18.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol. 2 p.277.

20. The Electoral Convention

The Second Caliph was assassinated while praying to his Lord at the Mosque of the Holy Prophet (in Medina)

By his assassination the life of one of the giants of history came to an end. His reign did not exceed a

decade yet it was filled with events that changed the course of history.

His life ended yet his influence did not come to an end. He did not die before he pushed the nation to a future pregnant with important events the key of which was the Electoral Convention which he formed while he was on his deathbed.

Muslim in his Sahih reported that Abdullah Ibn 'Umar said to his father: "They allege that you are not willing to name a successor. If you have a shepherd for your camels or sheep and he came back to you leaving them without a shepherd you would consider him negligent. Shepherding people is more important than shepherding animals."

Abdullah said: "My words seemed to appeal to him. He put his head down for a while then he raised it saying: 'If I do not name a successor I will be following the example of the Messenger. If I name a successor I will be following the example of Abu Bakr.'" [1](#)

The Caliph refused at the beginning to name anyone.

Al-Tabari and Ibn Al-Athir reported that 'Umar was advised to appoint one after him but he said: "Had Abu-Obediah Ibn Al-Jarrah been alive I would have appointed him. If God questions me I will say: 'I heard Thy Prophet saying: "Abu Obediah is the trustworthy of this nation.""

"Had Salim Mawla Abu Hutheifa been alive I would have appointed him. If God questions me I shall tell Him: 'I heard Thy Prophet saying: "Salim is a strong lover of God." 'Umar refused to appoint his son Abdullah for the high office saying: "How can I appoint a man who was unable to divorce his wife or he said does not know how to divorce his wife?"" [2](#)

Six Nominees

Once again he was urged to appoint a successor but he refused saying: "After I said my last word I decided to choose a man who is the most qualified to lead you to the right road (pointing to 'Ali). Then I fainted and in my swoon I saw a man entered a garden. He picked every fresh and ripe of its fruits taking them for himself and putting them under him. I realized that God had decreed something and He will prevail. I did not want to shoulder its responsibility dead and alive.

I recommend to you these six men for whom the Prophet testified to be from the people of Paradise: 'Ali Uthman Abdul-Rahman Saad Ibn Abu Waqass Al-Zubayr Ibn Al-Awam and Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah. These men should select a caliph from among them. If they choose one you should co-operate with him and help him."

When 'Ali and his relatives left the Caliph's house Abbas (the Prophet's uncle) advised 'Ali not to enter into that convention. 'Ali said: "I dislike dissention." Abbas replied:

"And you will have what you dislike." However the Caliph did not elaborate on the matter nor did he define the method by which the caliph should be selected from these six men.

Procedural Instructions

On the second day the Caliph defined the method of election. He said to those who were present of the six men: "When I die deliberate for three days and Suheib should lead the prayer. The fourth day should not come before you elect a leader. Abdullah Ibn 'Umar should attend your meetings as a counselor but he has no part in the caliphate.

Talhah is your partner in this affair (he was absent). If he comes during the three days have him with you. If the three days pass before he comes make your decision... I think that only one of the two men 'Ali and Uthman will be the caliph. If Uthman is selected his weakness is his lenience. If 'Ali is selected his blemish is his jolliness. And he is the most qualified to lead the people to the right road.

The Caliph commanded Abu Talhah (from the Medinites) to select fifty men from the Medinites and to stand in arms on the members of the Electoral Convention insisting that they select a caliph from among them after the burial of the Caliph.

He told them: "If five out of six agree and one disagrees kill him. If four agree and two disagree kill the two. If they are divided equally have Abdullah Ibn 'Umar as an arbiter. If they do not accept his arbitration you should side with the party of Abdul-Rahman Ibn Ouf and kill the rest if they did not agree with what people agree upon."³

It is reported also that he said: "If three days pass before they decide on a leader kill them all and let the Muslims choose for themselves."⁴

The members of the Convention met after the burial of the Caliph. They argued and disagreed. It is reported that Talhah withdrew from the race for Uthman and Al-Zubayr withdrew for 'Ali and Saad Ibn Abu Waqass withdrew for his cousin Abdul-Rahman. Whether this was or was not true it is well known that Abdul-Rahman suggested that he take himself out of the race and that he be authorized to choose one of two men: 'Ali or Uthman.

Uthman authorized him without hesitation. 'Ali did not authorize him until he made him take an oath to side with the truth follow no personal desire prefer no relative and endeavor for the interest of the nation. Abdul-Rahman was Uthman's brother-in-law (he was married to Uthman's sister Om Kulthoum)

Saad Ibn Abu Waqass advised his cousin Abdul-Rahman to choose himself. But Abdul-Rahman said: "I dislike it because I saw in my dream last night a green prairie full of grass. A beautiful camel entered it and passed through it eating none of the grass. Another camel followed and did as the first camel did. A third and huge camel followed and did what the first two did. Then a fourth camel entered the prairie and went on gluttonly eating its grass. (He interpreted the four camels to represent the Prophet and the three

Caliphs after him and the prairie to represent the public funds.)

"By God I shall not be the fourth camel " he said: "A man succeeding Abu Bakr and 'Umar will never be able to please people." Abdul-Rahman consulted his friends asking them whom he should choose.

The majority of the Qureshites were in favor of Uthman and the outstanding companions from the non-Qureshites were in favor of 'Ali. He met with 'Ali and Uthman separately. On the third day Abdul-Rahman was determined to bring the matter to a conclusion. People gathered at the Holy Mosque in the morning. They filled it to its capacity.

Abdul-Rahman stood up and said: "People the visitors have to go to their own towns. Counsel me. Ammar Ibn Yasir stood up and said to him: 'If you want to avoid the Muslims division select 'Ali." Al-Miqdad Ibn Al-Aswad another outstanding companion seconded Ammar saying:

"Ammar told the truth. If you select 'Ali we say: We listen and obey."

The two companions were contradicted by Abdullah Ibn Abu Sarh who said to Abdul-Rahman: "If you want to avoid the Qureshites division select Uthman." Abdullah Ibn Abu Rabi-ah from the clan of Makhzoom seconded him saying: "You told the truth. Should Abdul-Rahman select Uthman we say: We heard and will obey."

Ibn Abu Sarh smiled but Ammar said to him: "When were you sincere to the Muslims?" (Ibn Abu Sarh embraced Islam during the time of the Prophet. Then he deserted the faith. The Messenger ordered the Muslims to kill him wherever they find him.)

The Hashimites spoke and so did the Umayyads. Ammar addressed the multitudes saying: "O people certainly God has honored us with His Prophet and strengthened us with His religion. Where do you divert the caliphate from the members of the House of your Prophet?"

A man from Makhzoom contradicted him by saying: "Son of Sumayah who are you to tell Quraish what to do for themselves?" Saad Ibn Abu Waqass said to his cousin Abdul-Rahman: "Finish it before people fall into dissension."

Abdul-Rahman Selected Uthman

Abdul-Rahman called upon 'Ali. He offered him the caliphate with a new condition: "Will you pledge to God and covenant Him that you will follow the Book of God the teachings of the Messenger and the precepts of the two caliphs (Abu Bakr and 'Umar) after him?" 'Ali replied: "I shall follow the Book of God the teachings of the Prophet and I shall follow my best knowledge and endeavor to the maximum of my ability."

As he did not accept the offered condition Abdul-Rahman turned to Uthman with the same offer and

Uthman accepted. It is said that Abdul-Rahman offered it to the two men three times and in each time 'Ali refused the condition and Uthman accepted it.

At this point Abdul Rahman lifted his head towards the ceiling of the Mosque saying: "God be my witness I have transferred the responsibility from my neck to the neck of Uthman. Then he pledged his allegiance to Uthman.

'Ali commented on what took place saying: "This is not the first day you have collaborated against us (members of the House of the Prophet)... By God you gave him the leadership only to return it to you later. God is able to change the situation." Then he turned to both Abdul-Rah- man and Uthman saying: "May God plight you with a mutual and lasting hostility." Abdul-Rahman retorted saying: "'Ali do not incur trouble upon yourself (reminding him that the Second Caliph ordered them to kill any dissenter)."

'Ali left after he gave his pledge to Uthman saying: 'Ali left after he gave his pledge to Uthman saying:

"What is written of timed events will reach its maturity." Ammar said to Abdul-Rahman: "By God you have left out the man of truth and correct judgement!" Al-Miqdad Ibn Al-Aswad joined Ammar saying: "By God I have never witnessed anything similar to what has been done to the members of the House of the Prophet after his death. I am amazed at Quraish who left out a man unequalled in knowledge piety and justice. If I have supporters I will fight the Qureshites now as I fought them in the battles of Badr and Uhud."

Abdul-Rahman replied: "Miqdad fear God. I am afraid that you will bring about divisions among Muslims." Al-Miqdad retorted angrily saying: "The one who creates division is the one who follows his own selfish interest."⁵

Observations

As we have presented the events of the Electoral Convention briefly it would be appropriate to make the following observations: The Second Caliph stated that if Abu Obediah Ibn Al- Jarrah and Salim servant of Abu Hutheifah were living he would have appointed one of them for the Messenger said: "Abu Obediah is the trustworthy of this nation and Salim is a strong lover of God." He refused to appoint 'Ali about whom he heard from the Messenger numerous statements. None of them were made about any other companion.

Assuming the Messenger said that Abu Obediah was the trustworthy of this nation the Messenger also said: "'Ali is from me and I am from 'Ali and no one is qualified to represent me but 'Ali."⁶

The Messenger did not commission Abu Obediah nor any one else from among the companions to deliver what he had of trusts to the Meccans at the time of his Hijrah. He entrusted only 'Ali to do this on his behalf.

He entrusted him also to deliver the chapter of Bara-ah to the pilgrims and ordered him to take that chapter from Abu Bakr after he commissioned him with its delivery. Gabriel told the Prophet: "No one should deliver on your behalf except yourself or a man from the members of your House."⁷

The Messenger according to 'Umar said: "Salim is a strong lover of God " but he did not say that God loves Salim. The passing Caliph should have remembered that the Messenger said: "God has commanded me to love four persons and informed me that He loves them."

Then he said: "Ali is one of them " repeating that three times. If the Caliph did not hear this statement from the Messenger certainly he heard from him at Khaibar a much more important statement. The Islamic army under the leadership of Abu Bakr and then of 'Umar was unable to conquer the fortress of Kheibar.

At that serious moment the Holy Prophet said: "I shall give the banner tomorrow to a man who loves God and His Messenger and is loved by God and His Messenger. God will open the fortresses at his hands."⁸

'Umar used to say that he never wished the leadership except that day so that the words of the Messenger would be about him. The Messenger on the following day gave the banner to 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib after he cured his two inflamed eyes miraculously. And on that day the Almighty opened the fortresses at 'Ali's hands.

Yet neither these nor other significant statements about 'Ali could induce the passing Caliph to nominate 'Ali for the high office.

Is the Hadith Accurate?

It is very difficult to believe that the Messenger said that Abu Obediah was the most trustworthy of the nation. Abu Obediah was not more trustworthy than 'Ali or Abu Bakr or 'Umar. The Messenger might have uttered the words jokingly. He might have said that Abu Obediah is one of the trustworthies of this nation and 'Umar misheard the statement and this would not be unusual.

'Umar and his son inaccurately and inadvertently attributed to the Prophet that he said: "The deceased is to be punished for the cry of his family." Muslim in his Sahih recorded that Ayesha denied the attributed statement saying: "Umar and his son are neither liars nor discredited. But the ear sometimes mishears. The Prophet only said that God increases the punishment of the unbeliever by his family's weeping."

Then she cited the Qur'anic verse: "***And no soul shall bear the burden of another soul.***" (Part 6 pp. 230– 232)

Could a Non-Qureshite be a Caliph?

The passing Caliph was constantly advocating that the caliphate is an exclusive right of the Qureshites. He repeatedly spoke of that during his reign and the reign of Abu Bakr. Yet he wished to have Salim servant of Abu Hutheifa alive. For he would have named him his successor while Salim was neither a Qureshite nor an Arab. He was a man from Ostokhar. He was enslaved and sold several times.

Finally he came to the ownership of Abu Hutheifa and because his father was not known he was called Salim servant of Abu Hutheifa.⁹

Thus the passing Caliph was ready to appoint Salim who was neither a Qureshite nor an Arab. But he was not ready to appoint 'Ali who was the cousin of the Messenger and the Messenger made him his brother.

The Medinite Companions Out

The passing Caliph chose six companions from Quraish for the membership of the Electoral Convention. He gave them alone the right of competing for the caliphate and gave them alone the right of selecting the caliph.

He commanded all Muslims to follow them and to abide by their decision. The nation according to him had no right to disagree with them. He added to the six a seventh (Ab- dullah his son) as a consultant and arbiter and that consultant was also a Qureshite.

The Caliph did not admit any Medinite companion as a voter or as a consultant. The new caliph is not a caliph of the Qureshites only. He is the Caliph of all Muslims. The Medinites did not have the right to elect a caliph from among themselves but they had a right equal to that of the Qureshites in choosing any Qureshite caliph.

Evidently the passing Caliph excluded the Medinites for a reason: The Medinites were predominantly in favor of 'Ali.

Had he included members from them they could have given 'Ali the edge in the election and 'Umar did not want that to happen. The method which he chose for the members of the convention to follow in selecting the caliph was obviously steering the affair in a direction adverse to 'Ali.

The six members to whom he confined the right of seeking the leadership and selecting the leader had their own inclinations which were known to the Caliph. Uthman was seeking the caliphate for himself Abdul-Rahman was his brother-in-law Saad ibn Abu Waqass was Abdul-Rahman's cousin and he would not oppose him.

Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah was from the clan of Abu Bakr who were unfriendly to 'Ali because of the rivalry

between him and the First Caliph. Thus the majority of the members of the Electoral Convention were unfavorable to 'Ali.

'Ali immediately noted this when he heard the passing Caliph giving his instruction to the six members on the method of selecting the caliph. When he left 'Umar's house

'Ali told the Hashimites: "If your people (the Qureshites) are obeyed you will never reach the leadership." He told his uncle Al-Abbas: "Uncle the leadership has already been diverted away from us... 'Umar equalized Uthman with me and ordered the people to follow the majority of the six members. If the members are divided equally he told the Muslims to side with Abdul-Rahman and Abdul-Rahman is a brother-in-law of Uthman. Saad is Abdul-Rahman's cousin and they will not disagree with each other. If the other two are with me they will not avail me."[10](#)

Had the Caliph added a few more members who were not self-serving 'Ali could have won the election. While dying the passing Caliph repeatedly stated that 'Ali was the most qualified among the six to direct the nation to the right road.

This testimony is in accordance with the statements of the Prophet in which he declared that 'Ali never parted with the Holy Qur'an and that he was in complete alliance with the truth.

As the Caliph expressed his well-founded confidence in 'Ali he was expected to tip the scale in 'Ali's favor by advising the members of the convention to be on his side in case of division. Contrary to this expectation the passing Caliph commanded the members of the convention to accept his son's arbitration if they were equally divided.

Should they reject his arbitration the Caliph commanded them to follow Abdul-Rahman Ibn Ouf (rather than 'Ali). Needless to say the Caliph's action did not correspond with his professed convictions.

Abdullah Ibn 'Umar

We find in the admission of Abdullah Ibn 'Umar to the Convention as a consultant and arbiter another discrepancy. This righteous companion was according to his father's testimony incapable of making decisions about leaving or living with his wife. A man with such inability should not be made consultant or arbiter in a highly important matter such as the caliphate on which the future of Islam depends.

Abdullah's weakness and hostility towards 'Ali became evident years after his father's death. The whole Muslim World with the exception of Muawiya and his followers in Syria elected the Imam 'Ali after the death of Uthman. But Abdullah refused to cast his vote for the Imam.

The Imam's reign lasted about five years and Abdullah continued for the duration of his reign to withhold his hand from him in spite of his awareness of what the Messenger said about him. The same Abdullah was willing later to give his allegiance to Yazeed Ibn Muawiya. Muslim in his Sahih reported the

following:

"Abdullah Ibn 'Umar came to his cousin Abdullah Ibn Mutee when the Battle of Al-Harrah took place. (In this battle the sacred city of the Prophet was defiled by Yazeed's army and its righteous people were massacred.) Spread the cushion for Abu Abdul-Rahman (Abdullah Ibn 'Umar) Abdullah Ibn Mutee said to his aides.

But Ibn 'Umar said to him: "I did not come here to sit down. I came to report a hadith. I heard the Messenger of God saying: Whoever stands in open disobedience (of a caliph to whom he owes obedience) will meet God on the Day of Judgement lacking an excuse. And whoever dies owing no allegiance (to a caliph) dies in a pre-Islamic state."¹¹

By reporting this hadith Ibn 'Umar was trying to prevent Ibn Mutee from revolting against Yazeed urging him to give allegiance to the wicked caliph. This shows that Ibn 'Umar himself was thinking that he would meet a pre-Islamic death if he did not give allegiance to Yazeed.

Yet Yazeed was the killer of the Imam Hussein and the defiler of sanctity of Medina and demolisher of the Kaabah. But Abdullah was not afraid to meet a pre-Islamic death when he refused to give his allegiance to 'Ali the one whom the Messenger "brothered."

The way this companion understood the words of the Prophet is amazing. The Prophet in his reported statement prohibited rebellion against a righteous caliph to whom the rebellious had pledged loyalty. Such a rebellion of course is inexcusable by God.

But Ibn 'Umar thought that the Prophet was commanding the Muslims to obey and give their allegiance to a wicked ruler. Disobedience of such a caliph is not only excusable by God but also desirable to Him. As a matter of fact Islam commands the Muslims to overthrow their wicked rulers and forbids pledging loyalty to them. The Holy Qur'an declares:

"You will not find people who believe in God and the Last Day befriending any one who defies God and His Messenger." The Holy Quran Chapter 58 verse 32.

The attitude of Abdullah towards these events leaves little doubt that his admission to the Electoral Convention represented an additional help to Uthman and an additional problem to 'Ali.

Does Islam Forbid Opposition?

The passing Caliph instructed the Muslims to execute any of the Electoral Convention's six members that disagreed with their majority. If the members were equally divided the party of Abdul-Rahman was to be followed.

The other three were also to be executed if they persisted in their opposition. And all six members were

to be executed if they did not reach any decision within three days after his burial and let the rest of the Muslims choose a caliph.

This is astonishing for Islam does not permit killing a believer because he disagrees with the majority or with Abdul-Rahman or with the Caliph. Islam sanctifies the life of all believers. And a killer of a believer is doomed eternally.

The Holy Qur'an declares:

"And whoever kills a believer deliberately his punishment would be his eternal settlement in Hell: and the wrath of God is upon him and he is damned by God and for him God has prepared a dreadful punishment." The Holy Quran Chapter 4 verse 93.

If killing any believer constitutes a major crime killing one of the six is a much bigger crime because the Prophet (according to 'Umar's report) considered them from the people of Paradise.

By his instructions the passing Caliph implicitly recommended the execution of 'Ali if he opposed the majority of the six or Abdul-Rahman. Yet the Messenger said: "God love whoever loves 'Ali and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him." Thus hostility towards 'Ali let alone executing him provokes the wrath of God.

It is difficult to understand how 'Umar recommended the execution of outstanding companions or a member of the House of the Prophet for merely disagreeing with him or with Abdul-Rahman. The Muslims used to disagree with the Messenger and he did not punish them. 'Umar himself opposed the Prophet and prevented him from writing his will and the Messenger did not execute him nor did he penalize him. Was 'Umar's or Abdul-Rahman's desire more sacred than that of the Messenger?

The Caliph probably thought that the endorsement of his appointment received from the Muslims at the beginning of his rule had given him an absolute authority to do whatever he thought to be in the interest of the Muslims. Upon this he issued his stern measures concerning the six members. But this is obviously erroneous.

The Caliph whose appointment by another Caliph was endorsed by Muslims may have the right to choose his successor or to limit the freedom of his electors or to deprive them of some of their rights. But that endorsement certainly does not give him the right to kill an outstanding companion who was declared by the Messenger to be from the people of Paradise for merely disagreeing with his opinion.

Muslims do not have the right to authorize him to do what is forbidden to him and to them. They neither collectively nor individually have the right to kill a person whose life is sanctified by God. Election of a caliph is never absolute. It is rather conditioned by adherence to the Book of God and the teaching of the Prophet and both prohibit killing a believer.

Unheeded Warning

Two dreams took place during the time of the Electoral Convention:

1. The dream of the passing Caliph who saw in his swoon a man entered a garden and picked all fresh and ripe fruit taking them to himself and putting them under him.
2. The dream of Abdul-Rahman in which he saw a beautiful camel entered a green prairie full of grass. The camel passed through it sparing the grass. A second and a third followed and behaved as the first camel did. Then a fourth entered the prairie and went on gluttonly eating its grass.

Both dreamers understood from their visions that the coming caliph would not be scrupulous about the public wealth. The two men should have been induced by their alarming dreams to choose for the caliphate a man with high integrity who would not allow himself to take what does not belong to him.

But the two dreamers did not heed the warning. They took measures by which they excluded the most scrupulous among the companions and selected a man with a loose policy toward public wealth.

History recorded two statements by 'Umar concerning 'Ali and Uthman. To 'Ali he said: "What a great man you are! Should you be given the leadership you will drive the nation to the straight path." To Uthman he said: "I expect the Qureshites to give the caliphate to you because they love you. Then you will carry the members of your house on the necks of the Arabs giving them the public funds. Then a band of Arab wolves from various places will gather to slay you."¹²

Giving credence to this prophecy we wonder how the passing Caliph favored Uthman over 'Ali. Since he believed or suspected that Uthman would adopt a loose policy towards the public funds he should have excluded him from the Convention. Unfortunately the passing Caliph did not only include him but tipped the scale in his favor through his instructions to the members of the Convention.

Thus the Caliph did everything in his power to promote the cause of the one whom he suspected and to defeat the one whom he trusted. 'Ali's trustworthiness concerning the public funds was evident to 'Umar and the rest of the companions. He was free of greed and material wealth never attracted him. Unlike other companions such as Talhah Al-Zubayr Abdul Rahman Uthman and other companions who accumulated millions of dirhams 'Ali lived modestly. Throughout the days of the Prophet and the first two Caliphs 'Ali was noted for leading a devotional and intellectual life.

The warning which 'Umar and Abdul-Rahman received through their alarming dreams should have prompted them to select 'Ali rather than Uthman for the leadership. Unfortunately they did the opposite.

The Unwarranted Stipulation

The stipulation of Abdul-Rahman which required the would-be Third Caliph to follow the precepts of the first two Caliphs was an unjustifiable addition. The duty of every caliph is to follow the Book of God and the teachings of the Prophet.

He is not duty-bound to follow the footsteps of any predecessor unless selected by the Prophet. When the new caliph is more knowledgeable than his predecessor and finds some of his deeds or rules erroneous he would be duty-bound to disagree with him.

To put the precepts of the first two Caliphs on the same level with the Book of God and the teachings of His Prophet is a grave error. The Book of God is entirely true and the Messenger of God is immune from error in his religious instructions.

On the other hand the first two Caliphs were like the rest of the good companions subject to error. To put their words and deeds on the same level with the Holy Qur'an and the teaching of the Prophet is indeed a heresy in religion.

The caliphate can be based on an appointment by the Messenger of God in reliance on a Divine revelation. It also can be based on an election by a majority or a distinguished minority or on a selection by an elected or appointed predecessor.

The words and the deeds of an elected (or appointed by an elected) caliph do not become sacred Islamic law. Before his election he would be like the rest of the good Muslims unimmune from error. He will remain so after he is elected.

His election does not change his personality; nor does it make him profoundly knowledgeable if he had only a limited knowledge.

At best he can be a mujtahid (a scholar capable of forming an independent opinion about the Islamic law). No other Islamic scholar is required to follow him and it is permissible for laymen to follow a scholar other than him.

If the Messenger (in reliance on God's revelation) were to appoint a caliph all Muslims would be required to follow his appointee. Their disagreement with the Messenger's appointee would be a disagreement with the Messenger himself. The first two Caliphs were not appointed by God's Messenger.

The first was elected by the majority of the companions of the Prophet and the second was appointed by the first. Neither of them can be considered more than a mujtahid unimmune from error. A caliph that comes after them is not required to follow their footsteps.

This shows the baselessness and absurdity of Abdul-Rahman's condition which he imposed on the

would-be Third Caliph. The absurdity reached its maximum when Abdul-Rahman tried to exact from 'Ali adherence to the path of the two Caliphs who used to resort to 'Ali as an authority in the Islamic law.

Furthermore it was impossible for any ruler to follow the precepts of the first two Caliphs. The Second Caliph disagreed with the first on many things among which was the method of distribution of the Islamic public funds.

Abu Bakr followed the method of the Prophet and distributed the funds among the Muslims equally. 'Umar classified the companions into categories and preferred some of the categories over the others.

As the two Caliphs disagreed with each other it became impossible for any other caliph to agree with both of them even if he wanted to.

For this we think that the stipulation of Abdul-Rahman was not only an addition in religion and innovation in Islam but also a requirement the fulfillment of which is impossible.

Abdul-Rahman was in fact more kingly than the king. The First Caliph appointed the Second and did not require him to follow his way. He expected him only to follow the Book of God and the teachings of the Prophet. Nor did the Second Caliph instruct Abdul-Rahman to exact from the next caliph to follow his footsteps.

I do not think that Abdul-Rahman was unaware of the unjustifiability of his introduced condition. He was a prominent companion and he was not that naive. Otherwise the passing Caliph would not have given him such an important authority.

The fact is that he added his unwarranted condition only to get rid of 'Ali. It was difficult for him to prefer Uthman over 'Ali without an excuse. Neither Uthman nor any other companion had what 'Ali had of distinctions in knowledge endeavor in Islam and kinship to the Prophet and of being the first male Muslim.

In spite of all these distinctions Abdul-Rahman was determined to give the leadership to Uthman rather than 'Ali in spite of his unequalled record. Uthman is his brother-in-law and giving him the leadership is a profiting deal. Uthman is expected to return to him the favor by appointing him as a successor.

'Ali on the other hand is not a man of deals. His leadership will slam the door in the face of all ambitious Qureshites.

His children are expected to succeed him. They are the grandchildren of the Prophet and they are by the testimony of the Prophet the leaders of the youth of paradise.

But how can Abdul-Rahman favor Uthman over 'Ali without risking his whole reputation as a fair and righteous companion? He needed an excuse and he invented his condition as an excuse. He offered the leadership to 'Ali then to Uthman stipulating their adherence to the path of the first two Caliphs knowing

that 'Ali will reject such an unjustifiable condition.

But the veil was too thin. 'Ali immediately accused him saying: "By God you gave him the caliphate only because you expect him to return it to you later....".

[A Justification by Hadith](#)

It may be said that Abdul-Rahman's condition is justifiable by two statements attributed to the Prophet. The first is the following hadith: "Follow the example of the two men after me Abu Bakr and 'Umar..."

But the content of the hadith testifies to its unauthenticity for the following: The hadith indicates that the Messenger had appointed Abu Bakr and 'Umar to be his successors while it is a well known fact in history that neither was appointed by the Messenger.

When Abu Bakr was arguing against the Medinites at the Saqifat he said to the Medinites: "The Arabs do not acknowledge any leadership unless it is from the Qureshites and the Messenger said: "The Imams are from the Quraish." Had the reported hadith been authentic he should have used it as a decisive evidence.

Abu Bakr called upon the Muslims at the Saqifat to elect either Abu Obeidah or 'Umar. Had the Messenger called upon the Muslims to follow the example of the two men after him Abu Bakr and 'Umar it would prohibit Abu Bakr to call for the election of Abu Obeidah because only he and 'Umar were selected by the Prophet....

Abdul-Rahman was blamed and accused by 'Ali Ammar and Al-Miqdad with an ulterior motive in his introduced condition. Had this reported hadith been authentic he should have vindicated himself by citing it.

Again had the hadith been authentic 'Ali would have accepted Abdul-Rahman's condition. The Prophet according to the hadith had called upon the Muslims to follow the two Caliphs. And 'Ali was the most obedient to God and His Messenger. 'Ali's rejection of the introduced condition testifies to his unawareness of this hadith. Yet he was the most knowledgeable in the teachings of the Messenger.

Furthermore the failure of all companions to report this hadith at the time of the Convention indicates that none of the companions knew about it. This by itself makes it incredible.

It is a well known fact in history that 'Ali claimed that the caliphate was his exclusive right and that he refused to pledge his loyalty to Abu Bakr and continued his re-fusal until his wife Fatimah died. Had the reported statement been authentic 'Ali would have neither claimed such a right nor refused to give his allegiance to Abu Bakr.

The Second Hadith which may be cited for justifying Abdul-Rahman's condition is the following:

"Certainly God has put the truth on 'Umar's tongue and in his heart..." If this were true it would be mandatory for any caliph after him to follow his lead.

Probably the Holy Prophet made this reported statement on one of the occasions where 'Umar had given a sound opinion and the Prophet was attesting to the soundness of 'Umar's opinion on that occasion. Thus the attributed statement should not be taken as a general declaration for the following reasons:

If we take the hadith as a sweeping statement we have to believe that 'Umar was completely immune of error in words and in deeds whether it is on worldly or religious affairs. But the majority of the Muslims do not believe that the Messenger himself was immune of error. They believe in his immunity from error only in religious instructions.

Another reason for rejecting this hadith is that 'Umar was erroneous on several occasions:

He was not with the truth when he denied the death of the Messenger. Ibn Hisham in his Biography of the Prophet and many other historians reported that 'Umar said on that day: "Certainly there are hypocrites alleging that the Messenger of God has died. By God he shall return as Moses returned and he will sever the hands and the feet of men alleging that the Messenger of God died."

Al-Bukhari in his Sahih recorded that Abu Bakr came on that day while 'Umar was speaking to the people. He commanded 'Umar to sit down but 'Umar refused to sit.

The people left 'Umar and turned their faces to Abu Bakr and Abu Bakr told them: "Whoever among you was worshipping Muhammad should know that Muhammad has died. And whoever was worshipping God should know that He is living and never dies.

The Almighty said: "And Muhammad is but a Messenger; the Messengers before him passed away." 'Umar later said: "By God when I heard Abu Bakr reciting this verse my feet could not carry me. I fell down to earth when I heard him reciting that Muhammad had died."[13](#)

The truth was not with 'Umar when he opposed the Prophet while trying to write his will. He provoked the anger of the Prophet and by his opposition the nation was deprived of the document which was expected to illuminate the road to the nation after him.[14](#)

Certainly 'Umar was seriously erroneous on this occasion. He prevented the Prophet from writing his will and that is a major sin. He questioned the mental capability of the Prophet while the Holy Qur'an declared:

"And he (the Prophet) does not speak out of a selfish desire. It is only a revelation sent down to Him)." The Holy Qur'an Chapter 53 verses 3-4.

Again the Qur'an declares:

"O you who believe obey God and obey the Messenger..." The Holy Quran Chapter 59 verse 7.

'Umar was not with the truth on the day of Al-Hudeibayah. Historians unanimously reported that 'Umar argued with the Messenger and objected to the projected truce between the Messenger and the pagans of Quraish. 'Umar said after that "I still pay charity fast pray and free slaves as an atonement for what I had done on that day."

The Second Caliph was not right in setting up his Electoral Convention. His refusal to appoint the Imam 'Ali and his instruction to the members of the Convention in selecting the would-be Third Caliph brought Uthman to power and put the caliphate in the hands of his Umayyad relatives who transformed the caliphate into a despotic and hereditary rule.

These are only a few out of many occasions on which the Second Caliph took erroneous stands. The right word was not always on his tongue nor was the truth always in his heart. Thus the two hadiths cannot justify Abdul-Rahman's invented condition.

'Ali's Unique Dedication

The manner in which 'Ali conducted himself during the crisis of the Convention was unparalleled in the history of Islam after the Prophet. It was the high example of nobility firmness and adherence to the truth. The leadership of the Muslim World was offered to him and its price was only a promise on his part.

He refused to pay the price and turned the offer down because it demanded from him to deviate slightly from his principles. No temptation of any magnitude could influence the man of the truth. The caliphate to him was not an end by itself; it was only a means of establishing justice and realizing the ideals to which he was dedicated and for which he staked his life since his ears heard the call of Muhammad.

He was irritated by the formation of the Convention and viewed it as an ominous event fraught with dangers.

The structure of the Convention was destined to bring Uthman to power. This would put his ambitious and unscrupulous relatives in a challenging position and make them seek the high office at any cost. Foreseeing these dangers the Imam decided to try to prevent them by seeking the caliphate.

True Prophecies

History recorded that 'Ali made two prophetic statements during the crisis of the Convention forecasting the expected events as if he were reading from a book: Al-Tabari recorded that 'Ali spoke to his uncle Abbas after the Second Caliph gave his instructions about the method by which the Third Caliph would be selected. "I know that they will select Uthman "

He said "and he will bring about innovations and unaccepted changes. And if I live I shall remind you. Should Uthman die or be killed the Umayyads will make the caliphate rotate among them. And if I shall be living they will find me where they dislike."

He spoke also to the members of the Convention when they were trying to select the new caliph: "Praise be to God who from us has chosen the Prophet Muhammad and sent him to us as a Messenger. We are the members of the House of the Prophet the source of wisdom the security of the people of the earth and the haven to the seekers of security (against deviation)

"We have a right. If we are given it we will take it; if we are deprived of it we will take the back seat even if the journey will be long. Had the Messenger given us a directive we would have fulfilled his directive. Had he told us to take an action we would have fought for it until we died. No one will be faster than I in response to a righteous invitation or kindness to a kin.

"Listen to my word and comprehend my presentation. Your leadership after this Convention (if you fail to select the qualified leader) will be violently contended. Covenants will be breached and swords will be drawn until your unity will come to an end. Some of you will be imams of revisions some will be followers of men of ignorance." [15](#) Both prophecies were realized. Uthman was elected.

He brought unacceptable changes and this brought about his death. By his violent death the Islamic unity came to an end. The Imam was elected after him but prominent companions breached their covenants with him after they pledged to him their loyalty. The leadership was violently contended. Swords were drawn and many battles were fought. Leaders of revisions deviation and ignorance emerged and masses of the people followed them.

Expecting these ugly events the Imam was compelled to enter into the Electoral Convention trying his best to prevent the expected events from taking place. This is what made him disregard the opinion of his uncle Abbas who advised him to stay out of the Convention.

Membership to the Convention was below his dignity but he was duty-bound to enter the race. Had he shied away from the Convention he would have given the other members an excuse for by-passing him or they could have taken his refusal of the membership as an evidence of his disinterest in leadership.

A refusal on his part to enter into the Electoral Convention would have put the Imam in an indefensible position in the eyes of history. It may lead us to think that he deprived himself of the leadership when it was available to him. We may think that he did not do his best to avoid the ugly events which he was expecting.

Furthermore his absence from the Convention could have been considered an irresponsible stand and an encouragement to the members to elect someone else. Thus he would share with them the responsibility of their error.

It was his duty to attend the Convention and remind its members of his right to the leadership and that the members of the House of the Prophet are the source of wisdom a security of the people of the earth against straying and a haven to whoever seeks such a security. And this is what the Prophet meant when he commanded the nation to follow the Book of God and the members of his House and likened them to the Ark of Noah.

The Imam fulfilled his obligation by attending the Convention. He warned the members of the grave consequences of their wrong choice. He reminded them of the right of the House of the Prophet in leadership a right for which the Prophet did not ask his relatives to fight.

History records that a dialogue between 'Ali and the rest of the members of the Convention took place and went as follows:

The Imam: I ask you in the name of God: Is there among you anyone other than I whom the Prophet called his brother?

The Members: None other than you.

The Imam: Is there any among you other than myself about whom the Messenger said: whoever I am his "Mawla " this 'Ali is his "Mawla"?

The Members: None.

The Imam: "Is there anyone among you besides me to whom the Messenger said: You are to me like Aaron to Moses but there shall be no Prophet after me?" The Members: None.

The Imam: Is there anyone among you besides me who was trusted with the chapter of Bara-ah and the Messenger said about him: no one will deliver for me except myself or a man from me?"

The Members: None.

The Imam: "Do you not know that the companions of the Messenger deserted him at more than one battle and I never deserted him?" They said: Yes. [16](#)

The Imam told them all that and they were aware of the truth of what he said. But their personal interests were in conflict with what they knew about him.

Motives And Consequences

The Imam endeavored through his logic to prevent the members of the Convention from taking an irresponsible direction leading the Muslims to an insane turmoil which would govern the future of the nation for generations to come. Unfortunately the members were unable to rise to the level which the serious situations were demanding.

They were mostly ambitious and unwilling to forget their interest. If 'Ali came to power their personal hope in reaching the leadership in the future would fade out. If leadership returned to the House of the Messenger it would stay in it for a long time. On the other hand giving the leadership to Uthman would keep the door open for people such as Abdul-Rahman who was expecting the aging Uthman to die before him and to name him as a successor.

The members of the Convention were psychologically ready to bar 'Ali from the caliphate in spite of what the Prophet said about him. Why not? The first two Caliphs with all their righteousness did that. The rest of the companions were expected to follow them.

As diverting the leadership from 'Ali at the time of the Prophet's death was unexpected diverting it to him after the two Caliphs had become also unexpected.

The Second Caliph did not view it out of line to give the caliphate to Uthman. Probably he considered it a good deed by which he returned a favor to him.

The readers may remember that Uthman wrote Abu Bakr's will in which he named 'Umar his successor. While dictating his will Abu Bakr fainted before pronouncing 'Umar's name. Fearing the death of the Caliph in his swoon Uthman took it upon himself to write 'Umar's name.

When Abu Bakr woke up he asked Uthman to read what he wrote. Uthman did that and when he read 'Umar's name Abu Bakr happily marvelled. 'Umar of course never forgot what Uthman did for him.

A New Class

As the events which preceded the Electoral Convention brought about creation of the new classes: The Qureshites the preferred companions and the Umayyads the formation of the Convention added a new class.

Talhah Al-Zubayr Saad and Abdul-Rahman became members of a higher class among the companions. 'Umar promoted them and testified for their qualifications to the caliphate by admitting them into the Electoral Convention. This inflamed their ambition for leadership.

It made them feel that they are 'Ali's equals and competitors. This by itself brought about many dangerous consequences. It made Talhah and Al-Zubayr try to hasten Uthman's death after they pledged their loyalty to him.

They conspired against him and each one of them was an aspirant to succeed him. This led to Uthman's violent death and ended the Islamic unity. The same ambition motivated these two good companions to challenge 'Ali's leadership later breaching their covenant with him in which they pledged their loyalty and obedience to him.

The Lost Opportunity

Through the formation of the Electoral Convention the Muslims and the Second Caliph lost the last opportunity for correcting the situation and avoiding incalculable tragedies for the nation.

The passing Caliph wrote for himself and his nation brilliant and glorious pages in history. The caliphate during his and his predecessor's reigns took a righteous path inspired by the guidance of the Holy Qur'an and the precepts of the Holy Prophet.

But the goal of the Heavenly message was not the continuity of the righteous government for only twelve years to be derailed afterwards from the path of justice brotherhood and true democracy.

The leadership was diverted from 'Ali to Abu Bakr then to 'Umar and both were righteous doers. Had 'Ali taken over the leadership after 'Umar his coming to power would not have been too late.

The nation was still healthy ruled by the spirit of brotherhood and placing its religion above its worldly affairs. It was possible for the Imam with his tremendous qualifications to continue the nation on the right road and to add brighter pages to its brilliant record. It was possible for him to prevent the disunity from taking place.

The Umayyad influence started to grow during the days of 'Umar but that influence was not yet developed enough to represent a serious danger to the caliphate. Muawiya's provincial regime was not strong enough to challenge the central authority. Had 'Ali succeeded 'Umar he would have been in a position to uproot the Umayyad plant from Damascus before its roots were deepened and spread in the Syrian soil.

The preferred companions were not capable of challenging the Imam's leadership. Nor were Talhah and Al- Zubayr powerful enough to become a threat to him. They were only two out of scores of good companions.

Had 'Umar given the leadership to 'Ali he would have avoided the nation all those catastrophic events securing the continuity of the unity of the nation along with the continuity of the righteous caliphate for many generations to come.

Had 'Umar done that he would have returned to the members of the House of the Prophet their right in the Islamic leadership and protected these most righteous people from the atrocities of the Umayyads. By doing that he would have brought pleasure to the Holy soul of the Prophet.

With his great wisdom 'Umar was expected to take this righteous course. Unfortunately the Qureshite clannish attachment of this prominent companion outweighed his wisdom. This produced the tragedy of the Electoral Convention.

[1.](#) Muslim in his Sahih Part 2 p. 206.

- [2.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 34. (Printed by Dar Al-Kitab Al-Arabi Beirut Lebanon.)
- [3.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 35.
- [4.](#) Ibn Sa'd Al-Tabaqat Part 3 p. 342.
- [5.](#) Ibn Al-Athir in his Al-Kamil Part 3 pp. 32-35 and Ibn Abu Al-Hadid in his Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol. 1 pp. 63-65 taken from Al-Tabari's History.
- [6.](#) Al-Tirmidhi Sunan Al-Tirmidhi Part 5 p. 300 hadith No. 3803.
- [7.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Mustadrak Part 3 p. 51.
- [8.](#) Al-Bukhari Sahih Al-Bukhari Part 5 p. 171 and Muslim in Sahih Muslim Part 15 pp. 170-171.
- [9.](#) Taha Hussein Al-Fitnat Al-Kubra Part 1 p. 37.
- [10.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 33.
- [11.](#) Muslim Sahih Muslim Part 12 p. 40.
- [12.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid in his Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol. 1 p. 62.
- [13.](#) Ibn Hisham Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p. 656; and Sahih Al-Bukhari. Part 6. p. 17.
- [14.](#) Al-Bukhari Sahih Al-Bukhari Part 1 p. 39.
- [15.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 37.
- [16.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol. 2 pp. 198-199.

21. Uthman's Reign

The Electoral Convention produced its expected conclusion. Uthman became the Third Caliph. As a companion Uthman was not less than his two predecessors: Abu Bakr and 'Umar. He was a member of the fourth ten of the early Muslims (among the first 40 muslims).

His Islam was earlier than that of 'Umar and before his conversion he was not as violent as 'Umar in opposing Islam. He had a distinction which neither of his two predecessors had: being the son-in-law of the Messenger twice.

He married Ruqayah one of the daughters of the Prophet. The fruit of this marriage was a son named Abdullah who died at the age of six after the death of his mother. After Ruqayah Uthman married her sister Om Kulthoom. She also did not live long with him. She died during the life of her Holy father.

Non-Combatant

Uthman did not attend the Battle of Badr. He was in Medinah helping his sick wife Ruqayah who died before the return of her Holy father from the battlefield. Uthman attended the Battle of Uhud and other battles.

History does not record any physical participation on his part in a fight at any battle. Like the majority of the companions he deserted the Prophet during the Battle of Uhud. He returned to the Prophet after the battle ended and he was one of the companions who were forgiven by the Almighty according to the Holy Qur'an.

"Those who turned their back on the day the two hosts met it was Satan who caused them to fall because of some evil they have done. But God has blotted out their sin. For God is Most-Forgiving Most Forbearing." The Holy Quran Chapter 3 verse 155.

Uthman was not a warrior but he was charitable. He participated effectively in funding the army of Tabuk. It is reported that he brought to the Messenger a thousand dinars (equivalent to ten thousand dollars) to be spent in financing the military mission. He did other charities.

Uthman came to power at the end of the twenty-third year after the Hijrah (644 A.D.). His reign started after he passed seventy and continued for twelve years.

During the first six years of his reign the affairs of his administration went well. The Muslims achieved many victories during this period. They were still in a state of war with the two prominent Empires of that time: The Persian and Byzantine Empires. What was left of the Persian Empire during the reign of 'Umar came into the Islamic Dominion. North Africa was also detached from the Roman Empire to become a part of the Muslim State. The Third Caliph lifted the ban against military use of the seaways. An important Islamic fleet was built in the Mediterranean.

The last six years of the reign of the Third Caliph were full of ugly events. The class struggle between the over-paid and the under-paid started to grow rapidly until it exploded with a revolution whose first victim was the Third Caliph. The events which took place during the last six years were germinated before this period. The seeds of these events were born at the beginning of his reign or during the reigns of his predecessors.

A Bridging Personality

Uthman possessed neither the wisdom nor the determination of his predecessors. Nor did he have their non-materialistic attitude. In fact his personality had two sides opposed to each other. On the one hand he was an early Muslim. He accompanied the Messenger for a long time acquired the honor of marrying two daughters of the Messenger and was charitable for the cause of Islam.

On the other hand he was a member of the Umayyad clan. His love to them was unbounded in spite of their dark past towards the faith of Islam and its Prophet. These two sides of his personality made the outstanding companions foresee the Third Caliph's potential as a bridge over which the caliphate might pass from the righteous reign of the early companions of Muhammad to the despotic and unjust reign of the members of the clan of Umayyad.

The reader may remember that when 'Umar issued his instructions concerning the selection of his successor 'Ali said to his uncle Al-Abbas: "I know that they will select Uthman and if he is killed or dies the members of the Umayyad clan will make the caliphate rotate among themselves and if I am alive they will find me where they dislike."

It is amazing that Quraish refused to give the leadership to the Imam 'Ali fearing that the leadership might rest in the House of the Prophet because of their unequalled religious honor yet Quraish chose to make the caliphate rest in the House of Umayyad which was noted for its hostility towards the Messenger and his religion.

Early Opposition

This was probably one of the reasons which made two outstanding companions Ammar Ibn Yasir and Al-Maqqad Ibn Al-Aswad start their opposition to Uthman at the very beginning of his reign. They loudly objected to his coming to power in spite of what they knew of his righteousness.

History recorded that Ammar came out shouting after Uthman's election: "Announcer of death come forward and announce the death of Islam. Justice has died and evil emerged. By God if I find supporters I will fight the Qureshites. By God if I find one person ready to fight them I will be his second."¹

He came to the Imam 'Ali and called upon him to start war against the Qureshites. But the Imam reminded him of the lack of support. He said to him and others: "I do not like to endanger you or burden you with what is beyond your ability."

Al-Miqdad came out on the day following Uthman's election. While he was walking he met Abdul Rahman Ibn Ouf the king-maker who was responsible for Uthman's selection. A confrontation between the two companions took place and went as follows: Al-Miqdad: "Abdul-Rahman may God reward you in this world and the Hereafter if you have sought to please God by what you did. May He increase your wealth if you have sought by what you did a worldly gain."

Abdul-Rahman: "May God have mercy upon you; listen to me."

Al-Miqdad: "By God I will not listen." He pulled his hand from Abdul-Rahman's hand and left.

The two companions had another confrontation at another occasion:

Al-Miqdad: By God I have never seen anything similar to what was done to the members of this House (of the Prophet)

Abdul-Rahman: Miqdad why are you concerned with this?

Al-Miqdad: By God I love them for the love of the Messenger of God. I am amazed by the Qureshites who claim superiority over other people because of their relationship to the Prophet then allow themselves to take the authority of the Prophet away from the members of his House.

Abdul-Rahman: By God I have tried to do what is best for the interest of the people.

Al-Miqdad: By God you have left a man who is capable of leading the nation to the right road and

maintaining truth and executing justice. By God if I have supporters against the Qureshites I will fight them as I fought them at Badr and Uhud."

Abdul-Rahman: May your mother be bereaved by your death. Let no one hear those words from you. I am afraid that you may have become revisionist and devious.

Al-Miqdad: A person that invites people to follow the truth and right leadership is not revisionist. But the one who drives people to the falsehood and prefers his own interest above the truth is the man of revision and division..."[2](#)

Neither Ammar nor Al-Maqqad had any political ambitions and neither of them was seeking through his endeavor any material gain. These companions were highly commended by the Messenger.

Ibn Majah reported in his Sunan that the Messenger said: "God has commanded me to love four persons and informed me that He loves them." When he was asked who they were he said "Ali is of them (repeating that three times) Abu Dharr Salman and Al-Miqdad."[3](#)

Al-Tirmidhi reported in his Sunan that the Messenger said: "Every Prophet was given distinguished companions but I was given fourteen." Then he counted Ammar and Al-Miqdad among the fourteen."[4](#)

Al-Tirmidhi also reported that the Prophet said when Ammar Ibn Yasir asked permission to enter the house of the Prophet: "Admit him. Welcome the good the purified."[5](#)

He also recorded that Ayshah reported that the Messenger said: "Whenever Ammar is given the choice between two alternatives he chooses the more righteous of the two."[6](#)

Al-Tirmidhi reported also that the Messenger said to Ammar: "Ammar be cheerful the aggressor party will kill you."[7](#)

Implementation Of The Umayyad's Plan

What these good companions had seen through their intuition was becoming true. The signs of the future started to emerge quickly.

The members of the Umayyad clan met at the house of Uthman after he was elected. Abu Sufyan their old man who had lost his sight through aging asked them: "Are there any outsiders among you?"

When they assured him that there were none he said: "Children of Umayyad rotate it (the caliphate) among you as boys rotate a football. By the one in whose name Abu Sufyan swears there shall be neither a punishment nor requirement of account. Nor will there be a paradise or a hell or resurrection or a Day of Judgement."[8](#)

The Caliph of course chided him but this did not change the attitude of Abu Sufyan. He asked a man to

lead him to the grave of Al-Hamzah uncle of the Prophet Muhammad and the prince of the martyrs.

When he stood on the grave he said addressing Al-Hamzah: "Abu Imarah (a code name of Al-Hamzah) the matter for which we gladiated with each other has become a play in the hands of our youth." Then he kicked the grave with his foot.[9](#)

He meant that the Umayyads and the Prophet Muhammad and his family fought each other for authority. Now the authority had come into the hands of Umayyads and the members of the House of the Prophet were deprived of it.

It did not take long before these words were translated into a reality. The members of the Umayyad clan exploited the simplicity of the Third Caliph and his extreme love for them. Within the first few years of his reign they put their hands on the two sources of power: The authority of the important provinces of the Islamic state and their treasuries.

The main power and wealth of the Islamic state were in three provinces: Syria Iraq and Egypt. During the first few years of the reign of Uthman these vast areas became Umayyad princedoms.

Muawiya and Syria

We have mentioned (Chapter 19) that 'Umar appointed Muawiya governor of Damascus then he added Jordan to his authority after the death of Yazeed (Muawiya's brother). 'Umar also appointed Omair Ibn Saad (a Medinite) the governor of Homs and Qinnisrine and Abdul-Rahman Ibn Alqamah the governor of Palestine. When 'Umar died these two men were still in their posts. But Abdul-Rahman Ibn Alqamah died at the beginning of the reign of Uthman and Omair resigned because of ailment.

Uthman added Palestine Homs and Qinnisrine to the authority of Muawiya.[10](#) Thus within two years from the beginning of the reign of Uthman Muawiya became the governor of what is called today the Greater Syria.

Muawiya's influence started to grow during the days of 'Umar. Yet it remained relatively limited in size and heavily supervised by 'Umar. The size of his area was more than doubled during the reign of Uthman and his influence became almost absolute and free of any supervision.

Within a few years Syria became an autonomous state within the Islamic state and Muawiya became the strong man of the Muslim world. Within a few years he was able to put in the battlefield a huge army containing one hundred thousand soldiers. It is worthy to note that Muawiya was no more righteous than his father Abu Sufyan.

Ibn Abu Sarh In Egypt

'Umar died while Amr Ibn Al-Aws was the governor of Egypt. Uthman dismissed him during the first two years of his reign. He replaced him with his foster brother Abdullah Ibn Saad Ibn Abu Sarh who remained in his position until the end of Uthman's reign.

Ibn Abu Sarh was one of the enemies of the Holy Prophet. He professed Islam during the time of the Messenger then deserted the faith. He used to ridicule the Holy Qur'an saying: "I shall reveal equal to what God has revealed to Muhammad."

Ibn Hisham reported that Ibn Abu Sarh embraced Islam and became a recorder of the revelation for the Prophet. Then he deserted the faith and went back to Quraish. When the Messenger entered Mecca he ordered his execution. Ibn Abu Sarh took refuge at Uthman's house who was his foster brother and Uthman hid him. When the situation calmed down Uthman brought him to the Messenger asking clemency for Abdullah.

The Messenger kept silent for a good while then said: yes. When Uthman and his foster brother left the Messenger said to the companions around him: "I kept silent for a while hoping that one of you would kill him." A Medinite companion asked: "Prophet of God why did you not give me a signal?" The Messenger replied: "A Prophet does not kill by signal."¹¹

Iraq there were two important cities in Iraq: Kufah and Basra. 'Umar appointed Saad Ibn Abu Waqass to be governor of Kufah. Then he dismissed him and replaced him by Al-Mughirah Ibn Shubah.

When Uthman came to power he dismissed Al-Mughirah and replaced him by Saad Ibn Abu Waqass in response to a recommendation by 'Umar before his death.

Saad was a highly respected companion and gained a prominent position when 'Umar made him a member of the Electoral Convention. In spite of this Uthman kept him in the gubernatorial post for only one year. He replaced him with Walid Ibn Aqabah a cousin and a half-brother of the Third Caliph.

Walid was a transgressor by the testimony of the Holy Qur'an. He embraced Islam after the year of the Hudeibayah truce. The Messenger sent him to the tribe of Banu Al-Mustaliq to collect their Zakat.

Expecting his arrival Banu Al-Mustaliq rode their horses to receive him. Beholding their coming toward him he was frightened and went back to the Prophet before meeting them. He told the Prophet that Banu Al-Mustaliq wanted to kill him. Relying upon his information the Muslims considered a punitive action against the Mustaliqites.

But the Mustaliqites came to the Prophet and informed him that their intention was to receive and honor Walid rather than to kill him. A revelation concerning Walid and the Mustaliqites came down prohibiting the believers from reliance on information of unrighteous persons such as Walid because a transgressor

is unworthy of reliance. Thus we read in the Chapter of Al-Hujorat the following:

"O you who believe if a transgressor comes to you with news try to verify it lest you harm people unwittingly and afterward you would regret what you have done. And know that among you is God's Apostle:

Were he in many matters to follow your opinions you would have certainly got into misfortune; but God has endeared the faith to you and made it beautiful in your hearts and He has made hateful to you the unbelief wickedness and rebellion. Such indeed are those who walk in righteousness."[12](#)

It is evident that Walid had kept his pre-Islamic mentality for the rest of his life. He remained in the governorship of Kufah for five years until witnesses from the people of Kufah testified that he took intoxicants.

He was given the prescribed punishment and the Caliph was required to dismiss him. The situation of Walid was not unknown to Uthman and to the good Muslims especially after the Holy Qur'an called him a transgressor.

It is reported that when Walid came to replace Saad Saad asked him: "Have you become wise or have we become fools?" Walid replied: "Abu Is-Haq (the code name of Saad) neither of this is the case. It is the royal authority which some people take as lunch and then others take it as supper." Saad replied: "You (Umayyad) evidently have made the caliphate a kingdom." Abdullah Ibn Masud also said to Walid: "I do not know whether you have become good or people have become bad."[13](#)

As the Caliph was required to dismiss his foster brother after he was scandalized by his own deeds the Caliph was expected to replace him by a companion such as Saad Ibn Abu Waqass or Ammar Ibn Yasir or Abdullah Ibn Masud. But the Caliph did not do any of these. He replaced him by Sa-eed Ibn Al-Aws another Umayyad.

Although Sa-eed did not have a record as bad as that of Walid he was only one of the Umayyad youths whose governorship did not inspire people of Kufah with confidence nor rectify what needed to be rectified. We shall see later that the events took a turn from bad to worse during the days of Sa-eed.

In Basra When 'Umar died Abu Musa Al-Ashari was the governor of Basra. He remained in his post for three or five years during the reign of Uthman. A delegation from Basra came to the Caliph complaining of Abu Musa's misuse of public funds.

Abu Musa was not from the good companions. He once was accused by 'Umar of enriching himself at the expense of the Muslims and 'Umar took from him the surplus of his wealth and put it back in the Islamic treasury. Yet he kept him in his post because of his extreme loyalty to the Second Caliph.

The Third Caliph was expected to investigate the complaint of the Basra's delegation and replace Abu Musa (if proven guilty) by a better companion. But Uthman did not do that. Instead he took the word of

the complainers dismissed him and replaced him with Abdullah Ibn Amir another Umayyad youth.

Thus within a few years of Uthman's reign the three important provinces of the Muslim state became Umayyad princedoms. The majority of their rulers were enemies of the Prophet and condemned by him or by the Holy Qur'an.

The ugly impact of their appointment to such high offices could have been minimized by a firm supervision on the part of the Caliph. It was easy for the Caliph to surround himself with righteous and intelligent advisors from among the companions. He could delegate to such advisors the authority of investigating and supervising the administrations of these provinces.

Unfortunately supervision was completely absent. The chief advisor of the Caliph was his cousin Marwan Ibn Al-Hakam another unscrupulous Umayyad. The power which was given to this Umayyad youth is not available to any prime minister of our time. As a matter of fact Marwan was the actual caliph and Uthman was only a figurehead.

Thus the caliphate was transformed actually into an Umayyad kingdom. To prepare the Muslim world psychologically for the Umayyad rule the Umayyad officials advocated the superiority of the Qureshites over the rest of the Arabs and the superiority of their clan over the rest of the Qureshites. They imposed a complete silence on the distinctions of the members of the House of the Prophet in general and 'Ali in particular. They informed their subjects of the close relationship of the Umayyad to the Messenger.

Their historical hostility to him and to the members of his House was not to be mentioned to these subjects who were new Muslims unaware of the history of Islam.

Muawiya one time met Ammar Ibn Yasir in Medina. In a heated argument he told Ammar: "There are in Damascus one hundred thousands plus an equal number of their sons and servants. They receive their annual salaries and they do not know 'Ali and his kinship (to the Prophet) or Ammar and his early Islam nor Al-Zubayr and his companionship."[14](#)

Jundub Ibn Abdullah Al-Azdi once tried to inform the people of Kufah about the distinctions of the Imam 'Ali.

When he was reported to Walid Ibn Aqabah governor of Kufah he jailed him and did not free him until some important people mediated for his freedom.[15](#)

The Third Caliph And His Two Predecessors

You may remember that Abdul-Rahman Ibn Ouf offered 'Ali and Uthman the caliphate stipulating that the third caliph had to follow the path of the first two Caliphs.

'Ali lost the caliphate because he rejected the stipulation. Uthman won the caliphate because he

accepted it.

Let us see if he fulfilled his pledge to Abdul-Rahman and to the rest of the Muslims.

Neither of the two Caliphs appointed any of their relatives for any post in the Islamic provinces or cities. Uthman on the contrary put his relatives in the gubernatorial posts of all the key provinces. Was he by doing this in accord with the way of the two Caliphs?

The Third Caliph did not appear to believe that this was inconsistent with the way of his two predecessors. He vindicated the appointment of his relatives by the fact that 'Umar appointed Muawiya and men like Muawiya such as Amr Ibn Al-Aws and Mughirah Ibn Shubah for the governorship of Damascus Egypt and Kufah. 'Umar did not choose for these posts the best companions of the Prophet.

The Third Caliph could have said also that 'Umar commissioned Walid Ibn Aqabah as a collector of the Zakat in the land of Jazirah. Probably 'Umar also appointed Abdullah Ibn Abu Sarh for a minor position. The Third Caliph was right in saying this. But the fact remained that 'Umar did not appoint any of his relatives to any high or minor post. Uthman appointed his relatives to high offices and gave them authorities without any appreciable supervision.

It is justifiable to say that Uthman was not out of tune with his two predecessors by choosing his relatives to high offices for the Umayyad influence began and grew to a noticeable degree during the time of 'Umar.

It was only natural for that influence to be escalated during the reign of Uthman by the factor of time and the membership of Uthman to the Umayyad clan. Had 'Umar been unwilling to see the Umayyad influence grow to that height he should have kept the Umayyads away from his regime.

He should not have formed the Electoral Convention or at least should have excluded Uthman from the Convention. 'Umar was well aware of Uthman's extreme love for the members of his clan.

Therefore we cannot say positively that Uthman by promoting his relatives was inconsistent with the policy of 'Umar for 'Umar is the one who started the Umayyads on the road to authority and enhanced their influence by indirectly putting their relative Uthman in the highest office.

Loose Fiscal Policy the aspect in which the Third Caliph was clearly inconsistent with his predecessors was his loose fiscal policy. It is a well-known fact that the first two Caliphs had led a very simple and rugged life for themselves and their families.

Whenever 'Umar ordered people to do something he expected his relatives to be the example to the rest of the Muslims in following the order. The Third Caliph on the contrary led a very luxurious life and he was constantly showering his relatives with gifts from the public funds. He privileged his relatives with huge grants while they were less adherent to the Islamic teaching than the rest of the Muslims.

Honoring Exile of the Prophet Al-Baladhuri reported that Uthman gave his uncle Al-Hakam Ibn Abu Al-Aws three hundred thousand dirhams (equivalent to 300 000 dollars) after he brought him to Medina. [16](#)

This man was one of the worst enemies of the Messenger before he became a Muslim. After the Messenger conquered Mecca Al-Hakam came to Medina declaring Islam hypocritically and only for saving his life. Yet he continued harassing the Messenger.

He used to ridicule him by imitating his motions. The Messenger one time saw him peeping into his room from a slit in a door. The Messenger came out angrily and when he recognized him he said: "Should anyone blame me for punishing this cursed insect?" Then he exiled him and his family to Ta-if forbidding him and his children from dwelling in Medina.

By permitting Al-Hakam and his children to come back to Medina Uthman was in clear discord with the Messenger and the first two Caliphs who did not allow Al-Hakam to come back to Medina in spite of Uthman's mediation for him.

Uthman granted his foster brother Abdullah Ibn Saad Ibn Abu Sarh the fifth of the spoils from the first expedition which Abdullah led in North Africa. Marwan Ibn Al-Hakam purchased the fifth of the spoils of the second expedition in North Africa for five hundred thousand dinars (equivalent to five million dollars). Then the Caliph allowed him the whole amount. [17](#)

Khalid Ibn Abdullah Ibn Oseid (another Umayyad) received from the treasury three hundred thousand dirhams when he visited the Caliph while accompanying the delegation. The Caliph also ordered one hundred thousand for each member of the delegation.

When the treasurer Abdullah Ibn Arqam refused to pay these huge sums the Caliph proudly asked him: "Who are you to interfere with my order? You are only my treasurer." But Abdullah retorted saying: "I did not believe that I was your treasurer. Your treasurer is one of your servants. I am the treasurer of the Muslims." Then he came with the keys of the treasury and hung them on the pulpit of the Prophet at the Mosque resigning from his post.

The Caliph ordered three hundred thousand dirhams for Abdullah Ibn Arqam after he resigned; but out of pity Abdullah did not accept the grant. [18](#)

Uthman also gave Sa-eed Ibn Al-Aws one hundred thousand dirhams. And when he married three or four of his daughters to men from Quraish he gave each one of them one hundred thousand dinars. He gave his cousin Al-Harith Ibn Al-Hakam (exile of the Prophet) three hundred thousand dirhams. He appointed him as a collector of the Zakat of Qud-ah. When he brought the Zakat the Caliph allowed him what he collected. [19](#)

We ought not to forget that Abu Sufyan the old man of Umayyad also received from the Caliph two hundred thousand dirhams yet the old man fought the Prophet for twenty-one years and professed Islam

only to save his neck after he and the rest of the Meccans were completely defeated.

He rejoiced on the defeat of the Muslims by the pagans of Hawazin in Hunain saying: "Their retreat will not end before they reach the sea."[20](#)

The Third Caliph did not only shower his relatives with public funds but he also granted them vast pieces of lands from the public properties.

Fadak a land of orchards (which came to the ownership of the Holy Prophet because it was acquired by the Muslims without war) also was granted by Uthman to some of his relatives. Fadak was supposed to be inherited totally or partly by Fatimah daughter of the Prophet but was nationalized by Abu Bakr because of a Hadith in which he reported that the Prophet said that what is left by the Prophets would be charity. However Uthman granted Fadak to Marwan Ibn Al-Hakam the exile of the Prophet![21](#)

Uthman did not follow the policy of his two predecessors concerning the public funds. He used to think that he had the right to spend out of the Muslims' funds as he liked.

He was the Imam of the Muslims and he had the right to do with their funds as he pleased. This is opposite of the precise and strict policy of the Second Caliph who used to exact from his appointees a full account concerning the public funds and ask whoever acquired a wealth among them: "How did you get this?" And he used to return the surplus of their wealth to the Islamic treasury.

'Umar and Abu Hurairah

'Umar appointed Abu Hurairah to collect the taxes of Al-Bahrain. When he knew that Abu Hurairah had prospered he said to him: "I sent you to Al-Bahrain while you were barefooted unable to acquire shoes for your feet. I have been informed that you have sold horses for sixteen hundred dinars."

Abu Hurairah: "I had horses which multiplied by reproduction."

'Umar: "I shall withhold your salary and what you used to receive of food allotment or you will bring me the surplus of your wealth."

Abu Hurairah: "You have no right to do that." 'Umar: "Yes by God and I will hurt your back." Then he hit him with his rod until his back bled and ordered him to bring him the surplus fund.

When Abu Rurairah brought the demanded amount he said: "I hope that God will compensate me for this." 'Umar said: "That would be true if you had earned it legitimately and paid it willingly. By God your mother did not beget you to reach the position of collector of tax revenues from Hajar Al-Yamamah and the remote area of Al-Bahrain and to collect all that for yourself and not for God or for the Muslims. She begot you only to be a shepherd of donkeys." Then he dismissed him.[22](#)

There is a world of difference between this strict policy and that of Uthman who used to give his relatives

hundreds of thousands and sometimes millions of dirhams seeing no wrong in doing that.

Other Grants to Other People The generosity of the Caliph was not limited to his relatives. It was extended to others whom he used to pay heavily either as a reward for their loyalty or as an appeasement to some potential opponents. He gave Zaid Ibn Thabit one hundred thousand dirhams. He gave Al-Zubayr six hundred thousand dirhams and Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah two hundred thousand dirhams.[23](#)

These two companions were members of the Electoral Convention which brought Uthman to power. Neither of these two companions was in need of financial assistance. Both were wealthy with big holdings and big business. They had a great deal of real estate and of liquid funds.

It is worthy to note that history does not mention that the generosity of the Caliph was extended to the members of the House of the Prophet to whom the Holy Qur'an allotted at the least the sixth of the fifth of the spoils.

The Provincial Governors' Policy The governors of the provinces did what they were expected by adopting a policy similar to that of the Caliph in handling the Muslims' funds. It is reported that Walid Ibn Aqabah took a loan from the treasury of Kufah while he was the governor of the city. When the loan matured the treasurer Abdullah Ibn Masud asked him to pay it back but Walid did not pay it.

When the treasurer demanded the payment the governor wrote to the Caliph complaining about the treasurer. The Caliph wrote to the treasurer ordering him to leave Walid alone with the loan and telling him that he was only the treasurer of the Caliph. Upon this Ibn Masud angrily resigned.[24](#)

The Muslims of Kufah were lucky enough to find a man like Abdullah Ibn Masud who had the courage to stand up to Walid and require him to pay a loan. The Muslims of Syria were not so fortunate. Muawiya was an absolute ruler of Syria with no limit to his power.

He was living like a king handling the public funds of Syria as he was handling his own funds free of supervision. He used the public funds for purchasing loyalty and support of the chiefs of the Syrian tribes and men of influence. He was preparing himself to succeed Uthman and he had sufficient time for such a preparation.

As a matter of fact Muawiya started his preparation for his goal during the days of 'Umar. His extravagancy was evident to 'Umar himself. When the Second Caliph went to the Syrian front he was angered by the high standard of Muawiya's luxurious life. But Muawiya convinced the Caliph of the soundness of his policy using his proximity to the Roman Empire as an excuse for his extravagance.

It is amazing that the Caliph required Abu Hurairah to give a serious account for sixteen hundred dinars but he failed to ask Muawiya how he could maintain his lavish way of life.

Muawiya was not the only governor who used the public funds for his own interest. The rest of Uthman's

appointed officials followed the same method in proportion to their authority and lack of supervision. All were working for the goal of transforming the caliphate into a despotic rule and the Muslim World into an Umayyad kingdom.

This unscrupulous policy had many consequences:

(1) The growth of the wealth of the wealthy class in the Islamic society Many of the lucky individuals who received generous gifts from the Caliph and his appointed officials invested what they received of funds or portions of it in real estate and business. This yielded them enormous profits.

Many of the companions who were highly paid during the days of 'Umar became considerably wealthy through investing the surplus of their salaries in real estate and trades. The wealth of these companions was expected to grow by the passage of time. When Uthman allowed the companions to live outside Medina (ending the ban which was imposed by 'Umar on the companions) many of the prosperous companions found new avenues for multiplying their fortunes. They purchased buildings orchards and lands in Iraq and other provinces. The Third Caliph also gave vast public lands in Hijaz to many of his relatives friends and supporters.

Transactions and exchanges of real estates between wealthy owners living in Iraq and their counterparts in Hijaz and Yemen continued and the Caliph encouraged these transactions.²⁵ Thus many deals were made and the fortunes of these enterprisers were increased rapidly.

Many of the companions and others became multi-millionaires. The fortune of Al-Zubayr amounted to forty million dirhams²⁶ and that of Talhah to thirty millions²⁷ and that of Abdul-Rahman Ibn Ouf to about three millions.²⁸

(2) The other result of the Third Caliph's handling of public funds was the increase of the pressure on the tax payers of the conquered countries. The generosity of the Caliph and his appointed officials in handling the public funds and their gifts to the individuals required liquid funds which could not come but through overtaxation of the conquered nations. This aspect is not mentioned clearly in our history because the conquered nations did not have political power or voice.

A dialogue between the Caliph and Amr Ibn Al-Aws (who was once the governor of Egypt and was replaced by Abdullah Ibo Abu Sarh) reveals the mounting pressure on the conquered nations. The Caliph said to Amr: "The camels are giving much more milk after you left." (He meant that more funds were coming from Egypt after his dismissal.)

And Amr replied: "yes but their babies have perished!" (He meant that by exacting more taxes from the Egyptians the Egyptians were being impoverished.)²⁹

The Growth Of Opposition

Early opposition to the Third Caliph had started at the beginning of his reign by Ammar Ibn Yasir and Al-Miqdad Ibn Al-Aswad who were outstanding companions and free of any political or material ambitions. That opposition was calmed during the first few years of the Third Caliph's reign due to the lack of support by the public and because what they expected to happen did not happen during the early period of his reign.

However the events which took place later contributed to the rapid growth of the opposition. The motive behind the oppositions was either religious or political and sometimes it was both.

Abdul-Rahman Ibn Ouf the one who selected Uthman and brought him to power was one of the early critics of the Caliph. He was displeased to see his selected Caliph following a policy opposed to that of the first two Caliphs in spite of his pledge at the time of his selection to follow their policy.

No doubt many companions blamed Abdul-Rahman for selecting Uthman and depriving 'Ali of the caliphate. They held him responsible for the Caliph's policy in handling the public funds and imposing the authority of the Umayyads on the Muslims.

Abdul-Rahman changed his heart towards his man and turned 180 degrees from the Caliph's extreme supporter to the Caliph's hostile critic.

The road which Uthman took probably showed Abdul-Rahman that the caliphate would continue in the Umayyads after the death of Uthman. The relatives of the Caliph had become very powerful and capable of keeping the caliphate in their clan.

With their unlimited influence on the Caliph's mind they were in a position to convince him to make one of them his successor. Thus Abdul-Rahman belatedly discovered that he was maintaining a false hope of becoming Uthman's successor.

We may remember that 'Ali told Abdul-Rahman after he selected Uthman: "By God you gave him the leadership only to return it to you. May God plight you and him with a reciprocal and constant animosity!!!".

If Abdul-Rahman had a good memory he could recall the warning which he received in his dream during the days of the Electoral Convention. He dreamt of a green prairie into which a beautiful camel entered and passed through without touching it. It was followed by two camels one after another and they followed its behavior.

Then a fourth camel came and ate all he could from the grass of the prairie. Abdul-Rahman interpreted his dream by thinking that the fourth camel would be the third caliph who would not follow the precepts of the Prophet and the first two caliphs in handling the public funds.

Because of this dream Abdul-Rahman did not want to be the third caliph lest he would be the fourth camel. Had Abdul-Rahman remembered that vision he would have realized that he did not heed the warning which it contained. He would have realized that he had chosen the man whom he should have left out and left out the man whom he should have chosen. Had he selected 'Ali he would have avoided the nation all the tragic events that took place later.

You may recall that 'Umar also saw in his dream that a man entered a garden and picked every fresh and ripe fruit taking them to himself and putting them under him. The two visions resembled each other and so did the responses of the two dreamers. Both chose the picker and the gluttonous eater.

Two Other Members of the Convention Talhah and Al-Zubayr who were also members of the Electoral Convention joined the opposition. Al-Zubayr was less violent in his opposition than Talhah.

It is difficult to believe that the two companions opposed Uthman because of his mishandling of the public funds. Of course the Caliph granted his relatives huge sums of money but the two companions also had their big shares of his generosity. The share of Al-Zubayr was six hundred thousand dirhams and Talhah received two hundred thousand dirhams. They could not disallow the Caliph's grant to his relatives while legalizing it for themselves.

It seems that both men were aspirants to succeed Uthman. When 'Umar granted them candidacy to the high office in the Electoral Convention he actually qualified them for leadership. The enormous wealth of the two companions enhanced their importance in their own eyes and in the eyes of many Muslims. Tallah gained numerous supporters in Basra and so did Al-Zubayr in Kufah.

Like Abdul-Rahman the two companions were frightened by the rapid growth of the Umayyads' power which made them capable of competing with any companion for the leadership. It was disturbing to them to think that Uthman might appoint Muawiya or another Umayyad as a successor.

The turn of events indicated that the Umayyads would keep the caliphate in their clan blocking the road of other Qureshites to the high office. The two companions realized that silence would contribute to the Umayyads' success in achieving their goal. For this they decided to oppose the Caliph and try to end his reign before he chose an Umayyad successor. This would enable one of the two companions to succeed the Caliph.

Ayeshah Ayeshah wife of the Prophet also joined the opposition. She became an open critic of Uthman accusing him of taking a direction opposite to that of the Prophet. She occasionally displayed a garment of the Prophet saying that the garment of the Prophet had not yet deteriorated but Uthman had brought the precepts of the Prophet into deterioration. She used to call him Naathal (a heavily bearded Jew). The historians recorded that she used to say: "Kill Naathal because he deserted the faith."[30](#)

It seems that her motive was merely political rather than religious. She could not be angered by Uthman's violation of the Islamic Law because she allowed herself to commit a much bigger violation of

God's commandments.

She opposed 'Ali who was the most adherent to the Book of God and the precepts of the Prophet. She was more violent in her opposition to the brother of the Messenger than in her opposition to Uthman.

She criticized Uthman because he injured some of the companions and mishandled the Muslims' funds yet she waged a war in which thousands of Muslims lost their lives. Killing the Muslims is a much bigger sin than injuring them or usurping some of their funds.

Her motive in opposing Uthman was identical to that of Talhah and Al-Zubayr. She wanted her cousin Talhah or her brother-in-law Al-Zubayr to succeed Uthman. The growth of Talhah's influence in his opposition to the Caliph was extremely pleasing to her.

Al-Tabari reported that Ayesah said to Ibn Abbas: "You are a man of understanding wisdom and expression.

I ask you by God not to detract people from Talhah. The situation of Uthman has become obvious. People from various cities have gathered for a great event which is about to take place. I am informed that Talhah is already in control of the houses of the public funds and possesses their keys. I think that he God willing will follow the path of his cousin Abu Bakr." Ibn Abbas retorted saying:

"Mother if anything happens to Uthman people will resort to our man ('Ali)." Ayesah of course did not agree with him but she said to him: "Ibn Abbas I do not want to antagonize you or argue with you."³¹

She was looking at the events with the eyes of Talhah and Al-Zubayr. Her hope that one of the two men would reach the caliphate through co-operation with Uthman was withering gradually by the rapid growth of the Umayyads' power and the continuation of Uthman in his office.

It became evident to her and the two companions that the Caliph would follow only the advice of people such as Marwan and Muawiya and that these advisers would counsel him to choose an Umayyad successor.

Ayesah and the two companions thought that their silence would render assistance to the Umayyads in fulfilling their goal. For this the two companions raised their voices against the Caliph and Ayesah called upon the Muslims to kill him.

Amr Ibn Al-Aws

Amr Ibn Al-Aws joined the opposition. This politician did not have the ambition to become a caliph. He was not from the early companions or a member of the Electoral Convention nor did he have the needed influence to make him ambitious to reach the high office. His opposition was motivated by the desire to avenge himself.

He was the governor of Egypt during the days of 'Umar. He wanted to stay in his post but Uthman dismissed him and replaced him by Adbullah Ibn Saad Ibn Abu Sarh. He came back to Medina waiting for the opportunity to jump the Caliph.

When Ayeshah and others started their campaign against Uthman Amr became a noted agitator. He used his intelligence and wiliness in instigating people against the Caliph.³²

When Uthman was killed Amr joined the seekers of the revenge for Uthman's blood because Muawiya promised him the governorship of Egypt.

Opposition From Non-Qureshite Companions

The Qureshite companions were mostly politically motivated in their opposition to Uthman. The opposition that was religiously motivated came from outstanding non-Qureshite companions. Most noted among these in the history of that period was:

Abu Dharr

When the third Caliph granted his cousin Marwan five million dirhams and Zayd Ibn Thabit one hundred thousand dirhams and Harith Marwan's brother three hundred thousand dirhams Abu Dharr raised his voice repeatedly reciting the following Qur'anic verse: "Give the news of a painful punishment to those who treasure gold and silver and do not spend them in the way of God." Uthman sent his messengers to Abu Dharr prohibiting him from such a recital.

Abu Dharr protested saying: "Does Uthman want to prevent me from reciting the Book of God and denouncing those who disobey the commandment of God? By God it is more desirable to me and better for me to please God by displeasing Uthman rather than displeasing God by pleasing Uthman."³³ This attitude angered Uthman.

It was not difficult for Uthman to solve the problem of Abu Dharr and all other critics and Abu Dharr himself prescribed to Uthman the solution of the problem. He told him one day: "Follow the path of your two predecessors and no one will criticize you."

But the Caliph was not of this opinion. He wanted to solve the problem by punishing whomever he could. Evidently he did not know that medicating the problem of sincere criticism by violence is bound to bring him bigger problems.

Abu Dharr in Exile It was difficult for the Caliph to punish the Qureshite critics. They were too powerful for him to punish. Abu Dharr and others like him in spite of their brilliant Islamic record were neither powerful nor wealthy.

The Caliph chose for these good companions a kind of punishment which was inappropriate and

inapplicable to them. He chose for Abu Dharr punishment by exile which is prescribed by the Holy Qur'an for those who are at war with God and His Messenger and the makers of mischief in the land. Abu Dharr was not one of these. He was rather a righteous companion whose motives were prohibiting evil and enjoining good. He did not challenge the authority of the Caliph nor did he call for a revolt against him.

The Messenger of God was criticized by a hypocrite who told him: "You ought to be just in distributing the spoils among Muslims." The Prophet did not exile him nor did he punish him. He only said to him: "Woe to you. If I do not execute justice who will?"

Abu Bakr said to his electors: "Obey me as long as I obey God. If I do not obey Him you owe me no obedience."

'Umar used to say: "When you see a crookedness in me try to straighten me."

Abu Dharr and Muawiya Uthman did not take the attitude of his predecessors.

He exiled Abu Dharr to Syria placing him under the authority of Muawiya who was actually a government within the government. Seeing the extravagancy of Muawiya and his mishandling of the public funds Abu Dharr raised his voice against him.

When Muawiya built his famous palace called Al-Khadra Abu Dharr said to him: "If this is from the Muslims' fund it is a theft. If it is from your own fund it is an extravagancy." Abu Dharr used to shout at the door of Muawiya saying: "God may Thou curse those who enjoin good and do not do it. May Thou curse those who prohibit evil and do it."

Permanent Exile This irritated Muawiya. He complained about Abu Dharr to the Caliph. The Caliph recalled Abu Dharr to Medina and he was returned to it in a very unmerciful way. ³⁴When he arrived in Medina the Caliph found him persisting in his critical attitude towards his regime. For this he ordered him to leave Medina. Abu Dharr asked his permission to go back to Damascus or to go to Iraq or Egypt or to Mecca according to some reports. The Caliph did not permit him to do so. He ordered him to go to the desert of Najd saying to him: "Go in this direction and do not go beyond Al-Rabathah."

The Caliph ordered people not to speak to Abu Dharr nor give him a send off. When Abu Dharr was departing Marwan went with him to prevent people from talking to him. No one dared to be with Abu Dharr at his departure except the Imam 'Ali his two sons Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein his brother Aqeel and Ammar Ibn Yasir. By doing this they actually defied the order of the Caliph. This added to the deterioration of the relation between the Imam and the Caliph. Of the Imam's valedictory words to Abu Dharr were the following:

"Abu Dharr you opposed the rulers because they disobeyed God. Put your hope in Him. The rulers feared you for personal interest and you feared they would compromise your religion. Leave in their

hands what they want to protect and run away with what you want to protect. These rulers are in a great need for the things you tried to deprive them of and you are in no need for the things they deprived you of. You will know who has the happy fate and who is more enviable.

Should the heavens and the earth close in on a righteous servant of God He will grant him an exit. Let the truth be your only friend and falsehood be your only enemy.

Had you approved their way they would have loved you; and had you shared the spoils with them they would have trusted you."³⁵

Some historians say that Abu Dharr left Medina to Rabathah willingly but it seems improbable that Abu Dharr had chosen to become bedouin living in the desert rather than being in the city of the Prophet. However it is certain that he was exiled to Damascus before he left to Rabathah then he was brought back to Medina. He was not consulted in his exile nor in his return.

Abu Dharr settled in Rabathah living constantly there in difficulty and intolerable poverty until he died. When he died there were not enough people to bury him. Had not Abdullah Ibn Masud with a few others (including Malik Al-Ashtar) passed by Abu Dharr would not have been buried.

The exile of Abu Dharr to Rabathah was a big political mistake on the part of the Caliph. The good Muslims were shocked by the exile of this outstanding companion for he was of an indomitable spirit in his endeavors for the truth.

He was a beloved of the Messenger and the Messenger said about him: "There is no one under Heaven and above the earth that is truer than Abu Dharr." The righteous Muslims felt toward what happened to Abu Dharr as they felt towards the great martyrs of the truth whose souls were filled with dedication to high ideals for which they lived and died.

Abdullah Ibn Masud

Abdullah Ibn Masud another non-Qureshite outstanding companion also joined the opposition. Like Abu Dharr Abdullah had no political or material ambition. He was the treasurer of Kufah province and he resigned angrily when the Caliph wrote to him: "... You are only our treasurer leave Walid (the Umayyad governor of Kufah) alone with what he borrowed from the treasury."

It is reported that Abdullah Ibn Masud used to deliver a weekly sermon in which he included the following words: "Certainly the truest is the Book of God and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad. And the worst deed is that which does not conform with the teaching of God and His Messenger. For every such deed is an innovation and every innovation is a heresy and every heresy leads to Hell."³⁶

Walid informed the Caliph of Ibn Masud's insinuating speeches and the Caliph summoned him. When

Ibn Masud entered the Mosque of the Prophet Uthman said to the congregation: "The one that entered the Mosque is an evil insect which causes a person to vomit and secrete when it walks on its food." Ibn Masud said: "I am not so but I was a companion of the Prophet at Badr Uhud Hudeibayah the Moat and Hunain."

Uthman ordered one of his servants to throw Abdullah out of the Mosque. The servant carried him on his shoulders and violently threw him outside the Mosque.[37](#)

Some of his ribs were broken. Then the Caliph withheld his salary. Abdullah lived two or three years after that continuing his opposition to Uthman. When he died he willed that Uthman should not pray over him and Ammar Ibn Yasir was his executor. Ammar buried Abdullah without informing the Caliph of Abdullah's death.

[Ammar Ibn Yasir](#)

Ammar was a man of the earliest opposition to Uthman. He called upon the Muslims to fight the community of Quraish because it chose Uthman for leadership and left 'Ali out. Like 'Ali Ammar saw in the personality of Uthman a potential bridge over which the caliphate would pass from the good companions of Muhammad to the Umayyads.

The sequence of the events was destined only to confirm to Ammar and others what they expected. What happened to Abu Dharr and Abdullah Ibn Masud made Ammar more serious in his opposition to Uthman. Ibn Yasir was not the kind of man who keeps silent when he sees what is in conflict with the Book of God and the teachings of the Prophet.

Such opposition was expected to put Ammar in danger of severe punishment from the Caliph. Uthman wanted to exile him as he had Abu Dharr but 'Ali and other companions raised strong objections which made him threaten to exile 'Ali himself. But 'Ali dared him to do that.

There were some gems of great value in the treasury and Uthman gave those gems to his ladies. People talked about that and Uthman was angered by their talk. He said while he was giving a sermon: "We shall take what we need from the treasury even if some people would be displeased." 'Ali replied: "Then you shall be prevented and stopped." And Ammar said: "I make God my witness that I am one of the first people who are displeased." Uthman retorted angrily: "Do you dare say that to me? Take him."

He was taken and Uthman went to the place where Ammar was confined. He beat him up until Ammar fainted and he stayed in swoon until he missed the noon afternoon and sunset prayers. When he came back from his swoon he made his ablution made up his prayers and said:

"Praise be to God. This is not the first time I was tortured for my endeavors in the way of God."[38](#)

It is reported that a group of companions (among them Talhah Al-Zubayr Al-Miqdad and Ammar) wrote

to Uthman a letter in which they criticized a number of Uthman's deeds accused him of betraying his religion and warned him that they would fight him.

Ammar delivered the letter to Uthman. When Uthman read a portion of the letter he asked Ammar: "Are you the only audacious among them to confront me with this?" Ammar answered: "I am your best advisor among them." Uthman said to him: "Son of Sumayah (Ammar's mother) you have lied. Ammar retorted "I am by God son of Summayah and son of Yasir."

Uthman ordered his servants to lay Ammar on the floor and hold his hands and his legs. Then Uthman kicked him with his foot in the stomach. This caused him to have a hernia. Ammar was old and weak and he fainted. Ammar was the most outspoken and the highest voice against Uthman. His opposition to Uthman counted heavily because of his brilliant past and because of what the Holy Prophet said about him.

Opposition Outside Medina

The Qureshite Aristocracy in the Islamic society began at the beginning of the reign of the First Caliph. In his argument for the Qureshite leadership at the "Saqifat" conference Abu Bakr said to the natives of Medinah that the Arabs would not accept a non-Qureshite leadership. For Quraish was the highest community among the Arabs and the community of the most honorable city.

Upon this the Medinites conceded the leadership to the Qureshites. Thus the majority of the Meccan and Medinite companions conceived it as tribal superiority. By this the Qureshite supremacy was established though the Faith of Islam the religion of equality denies any form of aristocracy.

This aristocracy grew during the reign of the Second Caliph and peaked during the reign of the Third Caliph.

The notion of Qureshite superiority evolved during Uthman's reign and went far enough to view the Muslim world as a Qureshite Kingdom. This was destined to have a negative reaction on the part of the enlightened men who knew that Islam is a religion of equality and brotherhood. The Message of Islam aims at elevating every Muslim and dignifying all believers in God rather than dignifying a minority at the expense of millions. The notion of Qureshite superiority evolved during Uthman's reign and went far enough to view the Muslim world as a Qureshite Kingdom. This was destined to have a negative reaction on the part of the enlightened men who knew that Islam is a religion of equality and brotherhood. The Message of Islam aims at elevating every Muslim and dignifying all believers in God rather than dignifying a minority at the expense of millions.

The righteous Muslims were disturbed by Quraish's claim of superiority in the name of religion while the Umayyads who became the leaders of the Qureshites were of the least righteous among the Muslims.

The spark of opposition outside Medina started in Kufah. Most of its people were Yemenites. It is

reported that the beginning of this opposition took place during the time of Sa-eed Ibn Al-Aws who succeeded Walid Ibn Aqabah in the gubernatorial office of Kufa. Historians disagree on the details of this event.

It is reported that some of the leaders of the city while they were visiting the governor spoke of the orchards of Kufa. A dialogue between them and the city Chief of Police Abdul-Rahman Ibn Khumeis took place and went as follows: Ibn Khumeis: "I wish all these orchards were owned by the governor and you the people of Kufah owned better than these orchards."

Malik Al-Ashtar: "Wish the governor better than these orchards but do not wish him to own our properties." Ibn Khumeis: "How did my wish harm you to make you so frown on me? By God if the governor wishes he would have these orchards."

Al Ashtar: "By God if he wants that he will not have it."

Sa-eed (angrily): "All these orchards are actually Quraish's garden." Al-Ashtar: "Do you make what we won through our spears and what God has given us a garden for you and your people?"

And others spoke supporting Al-Ashtar.

Al-Ashtar: "Is anybody here? Don't let this man get away with what he said."

They jumped Ibn Khumeis treading on him severely until he fainted. Then they dragged him by his feet. Finally his face was sprayed with water until he woke up.

Ibn Khumeis said to Sa-eed: "The people whom you selected have killed me." Ibn Khumeis said to Sa-eed: "The people whom you selected have killed me."

Sa-eed: "No one shall spend the evening with me after this."

Other historians recorded that some people spoke in the presence of Sa-eed of the generosity of Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah and that comments by the governor and his visitors went as follows:

Sa-eed: "A man that has the wealth of Talhah and his holdings ought to be generous. Should I possess what Talhah possesses I would make you live in prosperity."

A young man from the Asad Tribe: "I wish that you owned all the orchards that are on the two sides of the Euphrates."

This irritated some of the men who were present and made them speak harshly to the youth.

The father of the youth: "He is too young. Do not punish him for what he said." The irritated men: "He is wishing Sa-eed our own properties." They jumped the youth. His father wanted to defend him. They beat the father and the son until they fainted. The members of the tribe of Asad learned about the event

and came encircling the palace. Sa-eed persuaded them to leave and they left.[39](#)

Both versions of the event agree that Al-Ashtar and others with him stayed away from the governor and spoke loudly against Sa-eed and the Caliph. This was the occasion which made the opposition surface in Kufah. Whether the first or second report was the truth the occasion indicates that people during that time were fed up with Quraish its leaders their big claims and their over-reaching hands.

The event was actually the straw that broke the camel's back. The sequence of events was inevitably leading to some political explosion.

Abdullah Ibn Masud's sermons in which he criticized the policy of Uthman and his officers helped to open the eyes of the people of Kufah on the corruption in the government.

Abu Dharr's exile was also a factor in fermenting the opposition. We have advanced that Al-Ashtar and others from Kufah were with Ibn Masud at the time of the oppressed companion's burial.

What happened afterwards to Abdullah Ibn Masud was also another factor. People of Kufah had a great esteem for this outstanding companion who was violently thrown out of the Holy Mosque by order of the Caliph.

People of Kufah knew Ammar Ibn Yasir and his brilliant record in Islam. He was the governor of their city during the reign of 'Umar. They had a great respect towards this outstanding companion. What happened to him at the hand of the Third Caliph was also an additional factor which made the explosion of the opposition from the righteous people of Kufah an expected event. The fire was about to start and it found its spark at Sa-eed's occasion.

The opposition of Kufah received the same kind of punishment Abu Dharr received. Exile became the regular punishment for the criticism of the government; and Damascus became the destination of the exiled critics. There they received their discipline at the hands of Muawiya the strong man of the Islamic state.

The exiled Kufans were kept at the church of Mariam.

Muawiya met them spoke to them and lectured them. The topic of his lecture was the distinction of Quraish in the Islamic and pre-Islamic history. He tried to substantiate the superiority of Quraish by the fact that all communities were invaded except the Qureshites whom God protected. He mentioned also that God made the caliphate in the Qureshite companions of the Prophet. Thus they are the qualified ones for leadership. Then he told them that God protected Quraish while they were unbelievers. "Do you think that He will not protect them while they are following His religion."[40](#)

He told them also that Abu Sufyan (his father) was the most honorable and the son of the most honorable among the Qureshites except the Prophet then he added: "I think that if Abu Sufyan were the father of all people all people would have been wise."[41](#)

Sa-sa-ah Ibn Souhan belied him saying: "Adam was better than Abu Sufyan. God created him by His own hand breathed in him from His spirit and ordered the angels to bow to him. He was the father of mankind. Yet we see among them the good and the weak the foolish and the wise."

The logic of Muawiya was full of distortion of facts.

Re said that his father Abu Sufyan was the best man after the Messenger (including Abu Bakr and 'Umar)

He forgot that the Divine protection to the Qureshite was not for the sake of Abu Sufyan his children and their likes from the Qureshites. It was rather for the sake of the Sacred House and for the sake of the Messenger the best of the descendants of Abraham. It was also in response to the prayer of Abraham the Prophet of God of which the Holy Qur'an informs us:

"And when Abraham said: 'My Lord make this a safe town and give its settlers of fruits to those of them who believe in God and the Hereafter.' The Almighty said: 'And whoever of them disbelieves I will give them a respite. Then I will drive them to the chastisement of Fire; terrible is the fate.' "[42](#)

Muawiya did not know that the caliphate in the offspring of Abraham including the Qureshites was made by appointment from God. That appointment did not reach the unjust among them. We read in the Book of God:

"And remember when God tested Abraham by commandments and he fulfilled them. The Almighty said:

'I am making you Imam of the people.' Abraham said: 'And make imams from my offsprings.' The Almighty said: 'My covenant will not include the unjust.' The Holy Quran Chapter 2 verse 125.

History tells us that Muawiya freed the exiles and when they went back to Kufah they resumed their opposition. Consequently they were exiled to Homs. They were placed under the authority of Abdul-Rahman Ibn Khalid Ibn Al-Walid.

This was harsher on them and more violent than Muawiya. They showed him repentance and he released them. Al-Ashtar went back to the Caliph and the Caliph permitted him to go wherever he chose. He went back to Homs. When opposition grew stronger in Kufah Al-Ashtar went back to it. He and Yazeed Ibn Qais led a multitude to a place called Al-Jarah to prevent Sa-eed Ibn Al-Aws from re-entering Kufah. Sa-eed went back to Medina and the Kufans demanded from Uthman to replace Sa-eed with Abu Musa.

We may realize the bitterness which exiled men used to feel when we read a message from Malik Al-Ashtar to Uthman as an answer to the Caliph's letter to the people of Kufah reprimanding the opposition:

"From Malik Ibn Al-Harth to the tested and sinful Caliph who is deviating from the precepts of his Prophet and turning his back on the rule of the Holy Qur'an.

"We have read your message. You ought to prohibit yourself and your officers from injustice aggression and exiling our righteous men. This will make us content to obey you. You alleged that we have wronged ourselves.

This is your conjecture which caused you to perish (spiritually) and made you consider inequity a justice and the wrong right. As to what we desire we want you to change and repent and to ask God His forgiveness for incriminating our righteous men exiling our good people driving us out of our homes and ruling us by our youth. We desire that you appoint Abdullah Ibn Qais Abu Musa governor of our city. We ask you to keep your Walid and Sa-eed away from us. "[43](#)

The Caliph responded to this by appointing Abu Musa governor of Kufah.

The opposition to the Caliph's policy was not confined to Kufah. It was extended to Basra in Iraq and also to Egypt. Historians inform us that Muhammad Ibn Abu Bakr and Muhammad Ibn Abu Hutheifah went to Egypt and instigated the people against Uthman.

With the presence of Abdullah Ibn Saad Ibn Abu Sarh in Egypt as its governor the two Muhammad s did not need to bring to the Egyptians any additional evidence of the corruption in the government. It is reported that an Egyptian went to Medina complaining of the governor to the Caliph. When the complainer came back to Egypt the governor killed him.

It is reported also that a group of companions in Medina wrote to other companions at different provinces saying:

"If you want to make Jihad come to us. The religion of Muhammad is corrupted by our Caliph. By this people were turned against him."[44](#)

Now People Remembered 'Ali

The regressing developments of the political events made the non-Qureshite Muslims realize the gravity of the erroneous attitude of the Qureshites toward 'Ali. Now they could clearly see the magnitude of the mistake which the members of the Electoral Convention had committed when they diverted the caliphate from him to Uthman.

By doing that they drove the nation into a crisis which it had never experienced before. It became obvious to the people of wisdom that the nation would not have had to be confronted with such a crisis if 'Ali were the Caliph. Thus they began to think that 'Ali's leadership was the solution to the problems of the nation.

People spoke of 'Ali loudly and Uthman started to see that 'Ali's existence and his presence in Medina added to his difficulties. He asked him to leave Medina for his land in Yunbu that people might forget him; but when the crisis grew in dimension he asked him to come back to Medina that he might shield

him against danger. Then Ibn Abbas came to him with a message from Uthman asking him to leave for Yunbu hoping that people would stop circulating his name. The Imam said:

"Ibn Abbas Uthman wants to treat me like a camel going back and forth to fill the buckets with water. He told me to go to Yunbu then he asked me to come back. Now he is asking me to go to Yunbu again. By God I have defended him until I feared that I am committing a sin." [45](#)

‘Ali faced in Uthman a problem bigger than the problem which Uthman was facing. It was in the hands of Uthman to solve all his problems by changing his policy in handling the public funds dismissing his relative officials and keeping Marwan away from him. This could have regained him the confidence of the people and their satisfaction.

‘Ali on the other hand did not possess the means to solve his problem and the problem of the nation in Uthman.

He was seeing through the light of God that the future and the fate of the nation would be decided to a great extent by what would happen to Uthman. Uthman had embarked on a policy which would enable the Umayyads to rule the Muslim world for generations to come. Yet the Umayyads were noted for their lack of sincerity toward Islam. They embraced Islam only after they were completely defeated.

‘Ali knew them very well as men and as children. He is the one who broke their back and humiliated them until they adopted the faith of Islam reluctantly. He knew that if they had the authority they would devour the public fund enslave the servants of God and corrupt His religion.

Uthman had three alternatives: (1) Resign; (2) persist in his policy and refuse to resign or (3) change his policy drastically. The first two alternatives were evil and the third was not expected. If he were to persist in his policy he would be killed. His murder would be a terrible and ugly event. He would be the first imam to be killed by the Muslims. The Umayyads the relatives of the Caliph already possessed enough power to enable them to challenge the good Muslims by waging war avenging his death using it for seizing authority.

Should Uthman be forced to resign and people elect a man to succeed him the Umayyads having so much power would not surrender. They would be able to claim that Uthman was the legitimate Caliph and that forcing him out of office would not remove the legality of his leadership. By this they would arrive at what they want. And it would become easier for them to reach their goal than if he were killed.

The third alternative was not expected. There was nothing in the behavior of Uthman to indicate the possibility of the needed change. Even if he wanted to change his financial policy and dismiss his wicked relatives Marwan would dissuade him from doing that and he did not possess the will–power which would make him immune from his influence.

‘Ali knew all that. Yet he tried his best to reach the third alternative in order to avoid the evil of the other

two alternatives. Historians inform us that a group of the companions of the Messenger who were living in Medina wrote to the companions who were settling on the borders of the Muslim state saying: "Come back to Medina. The "Jihad" is here." People spoke ill of Uthman and none of the companions defended him except Zied Ibn Thabit Abu Osaid Al-Sa-idy Kaab Ibn Malik and Hassan Ibn Thabit. These were loyal to the Caliph because they had received his generous gifts.

The Imam Mediates the companions met together and spoke to 'Ali to mediate between them and Uthman. He met the Caliph and spoke to him saying:

"The people behind me asked me to mediate between you and them. By God I don't know what to tell you.

Nor do I know something which you don't know. Nor can I point to matters of which you are ignorant. You have seen heard and accompanied the Messenger of God and acquired the honor of being his son-in-law. You are not less expected to do good than Ibn Abu Quhafah (Abu Bakr) and Ibn Al-Khattab ('Umar)

You are closer than both of them to the Messenger of God and you have acquired through marriage what they did not acquire. Nor were they ahead of you in anything. I ask you in the name of God to be merciful to yourself. You are not suffering blindness nor ignorance. The right road is clear and obvious and the demarcation of religion is standing.

"Uthman remember that the best of the servants of God in the eyes of God is a just imam who is led to the truth and leads to the truth. Thus he establishes a well-known precept and abolishes an abandoned innovation. The worst of all is an unjust Imam who is erroneous leading to error. Thus he abolishes a well-known precept and revives an abandoned innovation.

"I have heard the Messenger of God saying: 'An unjust Imam will be brought on the Day of Judgement while he has no helper nor a vindicator. He will be thrown into hell.... I warn you of the wrath of God and His smite and chastisement. Certainly His chastisement is painful and severe. I warn you not to be the murdered imam of this nation. It is said that an imam will be killed and his death will open on the nation the door of killing and wars until the Day of Judgement. He will confuse the affairs of the nation and throw the Muslims into divisions that they will not be able to see the truth because of the height of the falsehood...."[46](#)

The words of the Imam did not please the Caliph. A dialogue between the two men took place as follows: Uthman: "Umar appointed and kept in office people like those whom I appointed and kept in office."

'Ali: "Umar appointed such people but he used to tread on their heads. When he knew of any minor violation by any of them he used to summon him and punish him severely. You are weakened because you are too lenient on your relatives."

Uthman: "They are your relatives also." 'Ali: "Yes they are but virtue is not in them."

Uthman: "Do you not know that 'Umar appointed Muawiya and kept him in office for the duration of his reign?"

'Ali: "I ask you in the name of God. Do you not know that Muawiya was afraid of 'Umar more than Yarfaah 'Umar's servant?"

Uthman: "Yes." 'Ali: "Muawiya makes his decisions without consulting you then he tells people: 'This is the order of Uthman.' You know it and you do not change anything. Nor do you stop him from doing what he is doing."[47](#)

Thus 'Ali unlike any other person did not take advantage of the difficulties of a Caliph whom he considered to be usurper of his right in leadership. He rose above that and was most protective of him endeavoring to correct the situation of his adversary because his fate had a bearing on the fate of the whole nation.

But Uthman considered his advice provocative. He went to the pulpit and delivered a fiery speech threatening the opposition with punishment. He was expected to do only that so long as Marwan was his chief advisor. Thus the fire of opposition became more inflamed.

[The Caliph Is Besieged](#)

The messages which were sent by the companions residing in Medinah to people of various provinces brought its expected results. Groups from Egypt Kufah and Basra came to Medinah asking the Caliph to dismiss his ruling relatives or resign. Otherwise they were ready to kill him.

When the Caliph realized the seriousness of the situation he came to 'Ali and asked him to mediate between him and his adversaries.

'Ali asked him: "What are your terms for reconciliation?" The Caliph replied: "You are fully authorized to pledge to them whatever you choose. I shall do whatever you propose." 'Ali reminded him that he spoke to him repeatedly about certain corrective measures and that the Caliph time after time promised to take those measures.

Then the promises remained unfulfilled by the Caliph who was influenced by Marwan Muawiya Ibn Amir and Abdullah Ibn Saad Ibn Abu Sarh. Uthman replied: "I will disobey them and obey you."

Accompanied by thirty men from the Qureshites and the Medinites the Imam went to meet the Egyptian group.

He convinced them not to resort to violence and promised them on behalf of the Caliph to fulfill their demands of dismissing his relatives and changing his policy in handling the public fund. When he went

back to the Caliph he advised him to go to the Mosque and pledge publicly to make the reform.

Repentance and retreat The Caliph responded positively to the good advice. He went to the pulpit and addressed the congregation saying:

"I am the first one that should obey God. I ask God to forgive me for what I did. I shall repent to him. A man like me is expected to change and repent. When I come down let your leaders come and make a decision about me. By God if justice reduces me to a slave I shall do what a slave does and I shall be as humble as a slave. There is no escape from the anger of God but through Him. By God I shall give you the satisfaction and I will keep Marwan and my relatives away from me. I shall not seclude myself from you."[48](#)

These words moved the audience. They wept until tears moistened their beards and the Caliph wept and people hoped for the good.

Marwan was waiting. As soon as Uthman came back to his home Marwan dissuaded him and brought him back to his old hard line. Marwan went out facing the multitude which were waiting for the reform. He reprimanded them and told them "... You have come to rob us of the authority which is in our hands. Go away. By God if you challenge us you will see what will displease you...".

When 'Ali knew what happened he said: "Servants of God if I sit home he says: 'You let me down in spite of my relationship to you and what I am entitled to of your respect. If I try to help him and a good comes out of my effort Marwan dissuades him and deceives him. He has become an obedient tool in the hands of Marwan after having been the companion of the Prophet." He went to Uthman and spoke to him angrily saying:

"You couldn't satisfy Marwan but by your deviation from your religion and wisdom. You have become like a ridden camel led by his rider to wherever he pleases.

By God I foresee that he will bring you to danger but he will not be able to take you out of it. I will not come back to you after this. You have ruined your honor and lost the power of judgement."[49](#)

'Ali ceased to mediate between Uthman and the rebels.

When Uthman was besieged he came to him and told him: "I have the right of brotherhood of Islam relationship to you and of being a son-in-law of the Prophet. If none of these things existed and we were in pre-Islamic days it would be shameful to the children of Abd Munaf (the great grandfather of the Hashimites and the Umayyads) to let a man from Tyme (Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah) rob us of our authority."

Talhah was strongly supporting the rebels. He helped them and approved their siege of Uthman. Probably their invasion of Medina was the result of his communication and instigation.

'Ali went to Talhah and found people gathering around him. He asked Talhah: "What are you involving

yourself in?" Talhah replied: "It is too late." (He meant that Uthman is coming to his end.) 'Ali went to the treasury and asked that it be opened. When the keys were not found he broke the door and distributed some of what was in the treasury among people who were gathering around Talhah.

They left him and Uthman was pleased with that. Talhah came to Uthman and said: "Amir Al-Muminine (Commander of the Believers) I wanted something and God barred me from it." Uthman replied: "By God you did not come repenting; you are only defeated. May God hold you accountable for what you did."[50](#)

Ibn Al-Athir reported that Ibn Abbas said: "I came to Uthman when he was besieged. (This was before Uthman sent Ibn Abbas as a leader of the pilgrims during that year.) He (Uthman) held my hand and led me to the door ordering me to listen to the words of the besiegers. Some of them were saying: 'What are we waiting for?'

Others said: 'Let us wait. Probably he will change.' While we were standing. Talhah came and asked about Ibn Odais (One of the leaders of the Egyptian rebels) Ibn Odais went to Talhah confiding in him. When Ibn Odais returned he ordered his followers not to let anyone go into or come out of Uthman's house.

Uthman said to Ibn Abbas: "This is the order of Talhah. God take care of Talhah. He instigated these people against me. By God I hope that his share of the caliphate will be zero and that his blood will be shed." Ibn Abbas said: "When I wanted to leave the house they prevented me until Muhammad Ibn Abu Bakr interceded for me."[51](#)

As to Al-Zubayr it is said that he left Medina before Uthman was killed. Some historians reported that he was present in Medina when Uthman died. Ayeshah went on pilgrimage and while in her devotional duty she was urging people to repudiate Uthman.

When Uthman was besieged the rebels cut off his water supply. 'Ali came with a skin of water and spoke to Talhah saying: "This water has to be allowed to Uthman " then it was allowed. He attempted another time to bring him water and spoke to the rebels saying: "What you are doing does not resemble the deed of the believers or unbelievers! Cut not this man from his water supply. The Romans and the Persians feed and give water to their prisoners." But the rebels refused to allow the water in.

The siege of the Caliph continued for forty days. The rebels were trying to force him to change his policy or resign. He refused to resign saying: "I Will not take off a shirt which God put on me."

Probably Uthman was right in his refusal to resign. But he was wrong in saying that the caliphate was a shirt which God had put on him for his leadership was not by an appointment from God or His Messenger. The one who put the shirt on him was Abdul-Rahman Ibn Ouf and behind him the Qureshites; or we may say that the Second Caliph was the one who put the shirt on Uthman.

It seems that the rebels were not determined to force the Caliph to resign nor were they willing to kill

him. All they wanted from him was to change his policy in handling the public funds dismiss his relative governors and keep Marwan away from him.

He promised to do that but he never fulfilled his promise. Thus they asked him to resign and he refused. Now some of the rebels resorted to violence.

Muawiya Let the Caliph Down It is amazing that Muawiya and the rest of the Umayyad governors did not seriously attempt to rescue their relative Caliph. They did not send armies to break the siege around him or to prevent the invaders from killing him.

Yet the Caliph asked their help. It is reported that Muawiya sent an army which came near Medina but did not enter it while the Caliph was besieged. Muawiya ordered the commander of the army not to do anything until he received his order. He told him: "Say not that the present sees what the absent does not see. You are the absent and I am the present."

And So the Medinites

The other thing which can be easily noticed in the recorded events of those days is the absence of any resistance on the part of the Medinites. They neither challenged the invading rebels nor did they prevent them from killing the Caliph. It seems that the Qureshites from the inhabitants of Medina (with the exception of Umayyads) were not in sympathy with Uthman.

They were fed up with the Umayyads and the extreme growth of their influence in the Muslim world. The majority of the Qureshites in Medina were sharing with Ayeshah Talhah and Al-Zubier their feelings towards the Caliph.

The majority of the Medinites were displeased with Uthman's policy of glorifying the Qureshites and putting the Umayyads the least religious clan among the Qureshites on the necks of the Muslims. The natives of Medina evidently did not feel that they owed the Caliph a serious support because they did not receive what the Qureshites received of his generosity. By their nature the natives of Medina were more religious than the Qureshites.

Thus the majority of the inhabitants of Medina let Uthman down and did not defend him though they were much more numerous than the invading rebels.

The Imam 'Ali was the companion most opposed to the murder of Uthman and the most sincere in trying to correct the Caliph's policy. He did not only show his sympathy toward him by word; he tried to defend him by arm. He endangered the lives of his two sons Al-Hassan and Al-Hussein who were to him more valuable than his two eyes.

He sent the two young men to protect Uthman and ordered them to stand in arm at his door to prevent the rebels from entering his house. Finally the rebels were informed that armies from various cities were

on their way to Medina to rescue Uthman.

Some of the rebels felt that the only solution was to kill the Caliph. Since they could not enter the door they climbed up to the house from over the wall and killed him while the guards at the door did not know what took place.

Thus what 'Ali tried fervently to prevent occurred and all his efforts to prevent it from happening failed. The murder of the Caliph was an ugly event whose consequences were dangerous to the future of Islam and Muslims. This was not necessary to happen had the Caliph listened to 'Ali's advice by purging his regime from the wicked officials and purifying the state from corruptions.

Had he listened to 'Ali's advice by following the policy of his two predecessors Abu Bakr and 'Umar Uthman would not have been killed. But Uthman was not in control of the affairs. Marwan son of the exile of the Prophet was the actual ruler of the Muslim world and the chief advisor of the Caliph. He was able to steer him in any direction he chose.

However I doubt that Uthman was able even if he wanted to dismiss Muawiya who had become stronger than the Caliph. Suppose that Uthman told Muawiya to leave his post and he refused to do that. Would Uthman attempt to force him out of office? And had he enough power to do that?

- [1.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid his Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol. 2 pp. 411-412.
- [2.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid in his Commentary on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol.2 pp. 411-412.
- [3.](#) Ibn Majah his Sunan Part 1 p. 53 (hadith No. 149)
- [4.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his Sunan Part 5 p. 329 (hadith No. 149)
- [5.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his Sunan Part 5 p. 332.
- [6.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his Sunan Part 5 pp. 332-333.
- [7.](#) Al-Tirmidhi his Sunan Part 5 pp. 332-333.
- [8.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid in his Commentaries of Nahjul-Balaghah Vol.2 p. 411.
- [9.](#) Obd Al-Fattah Abd Al-Masqood Al-Imam 'Ali Part 1 p. 287.
- [10.](#) Ibn Al-Athir in Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 57.
- [11.](#) Ibn Hisham Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p. 409.
- [12.](#) Chapter 49 verse 6-7 Ibn Hisham recorded the event in his Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p. 296.
- [13.](#) Ibn Al-Athir in Al-Kamil Part 3. p. 40.
- [14.](#) Abdul-Fattah Abd Al-Maqsud in Al-Imam 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib Part 2 p. 120.
- [15.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid in his Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol.2 p. 412.
- [16.](#) Al-Baladhuri Ansab Al-Ashraf Part 4 p. 28.
- [17.](#) Ibn Al-Athir in Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 49.
- [18.](#) Taha Hussein Al-Fitnat Al-Kubra Part 1 p. 193.
- [19.](#) Dr. Taha Hussein in his Al-Fitna tul-Kubra Part 2 p. 193.
- [20.](#) Ibn Hisham recorded this in his Biography of the Prophet Part 2 p. 443.
- [21.](#) Abu Dawood Sunan Abu Dawood Part 2 p. 127.
- [22.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid in his Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol.3 p. 104.
- [23.](#) Taha Hussein Al-Fitnat Al-Kubra Part 1 p. 77.
- [24.](#) Al-Baladhuriin Ansab Al-Ashraf Part 4 p. 31.
- [25.](#) Ibn Al-Athir in Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 52.
- [26.](#) Ibn Sa'd in his Al-Tabaqat Part 3 p. 110.

- [27.](#) Ibn Sa'd Al-Tabaqat Part 3 p. 222.
- [28.](#) Ibn Sa'd Al-Tabaqat Part 3 p. 126.
- [29.](#) Al-Fitnat Al-Kubra Part 1.
- [30.](#) Al-Tabari History of Messengers and Kings about the events of the year 36 p. 3112 and Ibn Al-Athir in Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 102.
- [31.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol.2 p. 506.
- [32.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 82.
- [33.](#) Ibn Abu Al-Hadid Commentaries on Nahjul-Balaghah Vol. 1 p. 240.
- [34.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 56.
- [35.](#) Nahjul-Balaghah Part 2 pp. 12-13.
- [36.](#) Dr. Taha Hussein Al-Fitnat Al-Kubra Part 1 p. 160.
- [37.](#) Dr. Taha Hussein Al-Fitnat Al-Kubra Part 1 pp. 160-161.
- [38.](#) Dr. Taha Hussein Al-Fitnat Al-Kubra Part 1 p. 167.
- [39.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Vol.3 pp. 71-72.
- [40.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Vol 3 p. 70.
- [41.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Vol.3 p. 71.
- [42.](#) Chapter 2 verse 127.
- [43.](#) Al-Baladhuri Ansabul-Ashraf Part 4 p. 46.
- [44.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil. Vol.3 pp. 73 and 83.
- [45.](#) Nahjul-Balaghah Part 2 p. 233.
- [46.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 76.
- [47.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 76.
- [48.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 82.
- [49.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 82.
- [50.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 84.
- [51.](#) Ibn Al-Athir Al-Kamil Part 3 p. 87.

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