

## The Battle Of The Camel

Historicists and narrators of the Prophetic traditions have unanimously agreed that the Holy Prophet (S) foretold Imam Ali ('a)–his successor and the door to his city of knowledge–that he would fight against the breakers of their pledges (*nakithun*), the wrongdoers (*qasitun*), and the apostates (*mariqun*).<sup>[1](#)</sup>

The 'breakers of their pledges' are those who broke out the Battle of the Camel against Imam Ali ('a) and paved the way for Mu'awiyah and his faction to wage wars against the Imam. Mu'awiyah and his faction are the *qasitun* (*wrongdoers*) in the prophecy of the Holy Prophet (S), as they were wrongdoers.

The 'apostates' are the Khawarij who abandoned their faith of Islam and fought against Imam Ali ('a). All Muslim scholars have unanimously decided these people as sinful, faithless, and absconders from the straight path of Islam.

On more than one occasion, the Holy Prophet (S) declared,

**Whoever carries a weapon against us is not one of us (i.e. does not belong to us).**<sup>[2](#)</sup>

**After my departure, do not return to atheism by beheading each other.**<sup>[3](#)</sup>

Nevertheless, these people went along with their fancies and responded to their personal greed.

Let us now put forward the first of these battles:

The War of the Camel was waged by persons who breached their homage to Imam Ali ('a) and contravened the covenant they had made with Almighty Allah Who took their pledge of obedience to and compliance with Imam Ali ('a). Referring to them, Imam Ali ('a) is reported to have said,

*Whoever breaches his homage, will meet Allah mutilated and handless.*<sup>[4](#)</sup>

By breaking out this war, they aroused sedition among Muslims and gainsaid Almighty Allah's command of holding fast by the covenant of Allah and not being disunited. In fact, these people detached themselves from the community of Muslims, shed the blood of Muslims wrongfully, and spread grief and

mourning among them. Almighty Allah will then settle account with them for the grave sins they had committed.

The most prominent personalities who led this war will be introduced hereinafter:

## **'A'ishah The Daughter Of Abu-Bakr**

Before delving into the details of 'A'ishah's role in the Battle of the Camel and her mutiny against Imam Ali's government, let us point out a very important issue; namely, 'A'ishah's attitude to 'Uthman and his government.

'A'ishah was on the top of those who detested and criticized 'Uthman ibn 'Affan relentlessly. Historicists have narrated many situations of her harsh condemnations of 'Uthman's personality and policy.

(1) Muhammad ibn Ishaq has reported Hakim ibn Abdullah as narrating this incident:

One day, I visited Al-Madinah and went straightly to the Holy Prophet's Mosque where I saw someone holding in his raising hand something and shouting, 'This is the slipper of the Messenger of Allah and this is his shirt. However, Pharaoh (*i.e. tyrant*) of this community is still among you.'

The shouter was 'A'ishah, while 'Uthman was shouting back at her to keep silent. He then said to the audience, 'She is only a woman and her brain is the brain of women. So, do not listen to her.'

(2) Al-Hasan ibn Sa'd has reported that 'A'ishah, once, from behind a curtain, raised a paper of a copy of the Holy Quran with two pieces of wood while 'Uthman was standing up. She then said to him, 'O 'Uthman, put into effect what is mentioned in this Book.'

Answering her, 'Uthman said, 'Keep on doing such deeds and I will right now lead the heat of fire towards you!'

'A'ishah replied, 'If you do this to the women of the Prophet, you will most surely be cursed by Allah and His Messenger. This is the shirt of Allah's Messenger; it has not been yet spoiled, while 'Uthman has spoiled the Messenger's practices. O Na'thal!'

(3) Al-Layth ibn Abi-Salman has reported on the authority of Thabit Al-Ansari on the authority of Ibn Abi-'Amir Al-Ansari who narrated the following incident:

I was near the Mosque when 'Uthman passed by. Immediately, 'A'ishah shouted at him, 'O cheater! O sinful! You have breached your trust and led your subjects to waste! Had it not been for the five prayers, men would certainly have advanced towards you to slaughter you as same as they slaughter a sheep!'

'Uthman however recited this holy verse before her:

***Allah sets forth an example to those who disbelieve the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot: they were both under two of Our righteous servants, but they acted treacherously towards them so they availed them naught against Allah, and it was said: Enter both the fire with those who enter. (66: 10)***

## **'A'ishah's Attitude To The Pledge Of Allegiance To Imam Ali**

On her way back from Makkah to Al-Madinah, 'A'ishah had reached a region called Surah when she met 'Ubayd ibn Umri-Kilab. She hurried towards him to ask about the latest news. 'Ubayd informed her about the assassination of 'Uthman. However, this news did not attract her attention, because she was waiting for the news of the next caliph.

She thus said, 'So, what did they do next?' 'Ubayd said, 'The people of Al-Madinah took upon themselves the issue of appointing the new caliph, but they swerved to an unpleasant path. They all thus agreed on handing over this position to Ali ibn Abi Talib.'

Losing her nerves and solemnity, 'A'ishah looked at the sky and said, 'If this matter is consummated for the one whose name you have just mentioned, then let the sky fall on the earth! Woe to you! What have you just said?'

When 'Ubayd confirmed his first news, 'A'ishah howled, lost her patience, and absentmindedness attacked her. Astounded by this situation, 'Ubayd said, 'What is the matter with you? In fact, I do not know any other person in this city worthier and more entitled than Ali to hold this position. I also cannot see any one to match him in all of his affairs. Which one of his qualities do you then abhor?'

Embarrassed, 'A'ishah went on searching any justifiable reason. Finding nothing, she stuck herself to the weakest point, saying, 'By Allah, 'Uthman has been killed wrongly. I will now demand with vengeance on the shedding of his blood!'

'Ubayd answered sarcastically, 'This is indeed weak reason!'

However, when 'A'ishah arrived in Makkah, she was received by the people of Quraysh. She thus declared before them, 'O people of Quraysh, 'Uthman has been assassinated. Ali ibn Abi Talib assassinated him. By Allah (I swear confirmedly)! To spend a single night under the (persecuting) rule of 'Uthman is better than spending the whole lifetime under the (fair) rule of Ali.'[5](#)

When the people of Makkah surrounded her, she delivered a political speech in which she held the rabble responsible for killing 'Uthman after he had quitted his sins and returned to the truth! Therefore, there was no reason for killing him, as 'A'ishah claimed.[6](#)

Of course, these words were not accurate. 'Uthman was killed by the armed forces of the Egyptians and the people of Iraq not to mention such prominent personalities like 'Ammar ibn Yasir, Malik Al-Ashtar,

Talhah, and Al-Zubayr. Besides, 'A'ishah herself used to encourage people to kill 'Uthman, describing him as infidel.

As for 'Uthman's repentance, 'A'ishah confessed that he retreated from it when the Umayyad surrounding people put him under pressure.

In brief, 'A'ishah's speech in Makkah was the first voice that opposed Imam Ali's government.

## Motives For Mutiny

Of course, 'A'ishah's mutiny against Imam Ali's government was not spontaneous; rather, there were many reasons behind it.

'A'ishah had aspired that caliphate would be given to her cousin Talhah so that it would be given back to the clan of Taym. However, she could not succeed, despite her big efforts, because Talhah did not have any popular foundation to rest upon. This reason may be the most positive.

Another reason is that 'A'ishah had already hated Imam Ali ('a) in person, because the Holy Prophet (S) used to praise him and consider him superior to all others. Of course, this act would never please 'A'ishah, because women generally have an aversion to the relatives of their husbands, especially when these relatives are held dearer to the husband than his wife.

A third reason is that 'A'ishah could not stand Lady Fatimah ('a), Imam Ali's wife. On frequent occasions, the Holy Prophet (S) used to show remarkable love for his daughter. He honored her with such points that no woman else had at all. Besides, there was mutual dislike between 'A'ishah and Lady Fatimah ('a) because of many incidents that took place between the two.

Lady Fatimah ('a) used to complain to her father against 'A'ishah. This of course created hatred and animosity between the two.

'A'ishah's hatred towards Lady Fatimah ('a) attained its climax when Lady Fatimah ('a) gave birth to sons and daughters while 'A'ishah did not. The Holy Prophet (S) then treated the children of Lady Fatimah ('a) with extraordinary love and affection. He used to say that they were his children.

As a sign of her revulsion towards Lady Fatimah's children, 'A'ishah spared no effort to prevent burying Imam Al-Hasan's dead body near his grandfather the Holy Prophet (S). She thus declared, 'Do not let those whom I do not like enter my house!'

The last reason for 'A'ishah's mutiny against Imam Ali ('a) was that the Holy Prophet (S) used to mention Imam Ali's mother-in-law; namely, the great Lady Khadijah, with the best words of praise and appreciation to the degree that 'A'ishah, once, said to him, 'What do you remember from that red-mouthed aged woman after Allah has give you women better than her?'

Angrily, the Holy Prophet (S) answered,

**Nay, by Allah! He has never given me any woman better than Khadijah. She believed me when all other people gave the lie to me. She gave me her entire wealth when all other people deprived me of their money. Only from her, I was given a child (i.e. Lady Fatimah Al-Zahra') while none of my other wives has given birth to a child for me.'**

Back to the sequence of events, 'A'ishah then hurried towards Ummu-Salamah, the virtuous widow of the Holy Prophet, asking her for taking part in 'A'ishah's efforts to depose Imam Ali ('a). In fact, this step of 'A'ishah is very strange. She must have learnt about Ummu-Salamah's devotion and loyalty to Imam Ali ('a). This means that 'A'ishah lacked any profundity in the doctrinal and political attitudes of people.

When 'A'ishah met Ummu-Salamah, she tried to cheat her with soft words. She thus said, 'O daughter of Abu-Umayyah, you were the first to migrate with Allah's Messenger from among his wives. You are the eldest mother of the believers.<sup>7</sup> Allah's Messenger used to run our affairs at your chamber.

Gabriel used to be at your chamber to reveal the Divine Revelations more than any other wife's chamber.'

Suspiciously, Ummu-Salamah glanced at 'A'ishah and said, 'There must be something important behind these words of you.'

'A'ishah said, 'The people had ordered 'Uthman to repent, and he did. Then, they killed him while he was observing fasting in the sacred month. I thus made my mind to go to Al-Basrah accompanied by Talhah and Al-Zubayr. So, I ask you to come out with us perchance Allah will fix this issue at our hands.'

Ummu-Salamah, condemning 'A'ishah's words and giving her an advice to deter her from committing this matter, said, 'O daughter of Abu-Bakr, are you really demanding with vengeance on 'Uthman's blood? In fact, you have been the most vehement enemy of 'Uthman among all these people.

You used to name him Na'thal. So, what do you have to do with 'Uthman's blood? At least, 'Uthman is from the clan of Abd-Manaf while you are from the clan of Taym ibn Murrah. Woe to you, 'A'ishah! Do you want to mutiny against Ali who is the cousin of Allah's Messenger and homage to whom was made by all the Muhajirun and Ansar?'

Moreover, Ummu-Salamah went on reminding 'A'ishah of the supreme position that Imam Ali ('a) enjoyed in the view of and with regard to the Holy Prophet (S).

Present in this meeting was Abdullah the son of Al-Zubayr who was one of the bitterest enemies of Imam Ali ('a). When he feared lest his maternal aunt 'A'ishah would respond to Ummu-Salamah and spoil the entire conspiracy, he shouted at Ummu-Salamah, 'O daughter of Abu-Umayyah, we have already learnt about your enmity with the family of Al-Zubayr.'

Reproaching him, Ummu–Salamah said, ‘By Allah, you will pull her feet into this problem, but neither your father nor will you be able to pull her out of it. Do you aspire that the Muhajirun and the Ansar will accept your father Al–Zubayr and his acquaintance Talhah as their leaders while Ali ibn Abi Talib is still full of life, while the Holy Prophet (S) had described him as the chief of every male and female believing Muslims?’

Abdullah answered, ‘We have never heard such a thing from Allah’s Messenger!’

Proving the untruth of Abdullah and speaking with the logic of truth, Ummu–Salamah said, ‘If you personally have not heard this from Allah’s Messenger, your aunt ‘A’ishah must have heard it. Go on and ask her. As for me, I did hear Allah’s Messenger saying, ‘Ali is my successor among you in my lifetime and after my death. Whoever disobeys him has in fact disobeyed me.’ Do you, ‘A’ishah, testify to this or not?’

‘A’ishah could not deny this truth; she therefore said, ‘Yes, by Allah, I do.’

Ummu–Salamah then went on giving more advices to ‘A’ishah, saying, ‘O ‘A’ishah, fear Allah for yourself! Beware lest you will be the one barked by the dogs of Al–Haw’ab, as Allah had informed and His Messenger had predicted. Do not be deceived by Al–Zubayr and Talhah, because they will not then avail you against Allah.’

Unfortunately, ‘A’ishah did not pay any attention to Ummu–Salamah’s advice; rather, she responded to her emotions that were full of hatred and animosity towards Imam Ali (‘a).

Immediately after this meeting, Ummu–Salamah wrote a letter to Imam Ali (‘a), informing him of the details of the meeting and of the rebellion of these people.<sup>8</sup>

It was expected that Ummu–Salamah would refuse totally the proposal of ‘A’ishah and, instead, go on praising Imam Ali (‘a) and mentioning his unmatched excellences.

## **The Makkah Conference**

‘A’ishah held a conference with Talhah, Al–Zubayr, and other persons who hated Imam Ali (‘a) and decided to breach their allegiance to him. In fact, Makkah was a good place for these conferees, because it was full of the individuals of the clans of Quraysh who were known for their revulsion towards Imam Ali (‘a) and their long–termed mental and practical antagonism to the Holy Prophet (S). As a result, the conferees could find positive reaction to and good empathy for them.

## **Resolutions Of The Conference**

The chiefs of mutiny exchanged opinions about the region they should invade and take as headquarter as well as the slogan they should raise to justify their rebel. They thus decided to march to Al–Basrah,

occupy it, and take it as the center of their mutiny against Imam Ali ('a), because they could find many fans and supporters therein.

They also refused the idea of marching to Al-Madinah, because the caliph lived in and ran the political affairs from there. Besides, he had such a reinforced military power that they could not confront. They also refused the idea of marching to Syria, because it was already under their control, since Mu'awiyah was the dominating power there. Thus, they feared lest Mu'awiyah's government that was the opposing power to Imam Ali ('a) would be badly affected.

Deciding on a slogan to be raised in their mutiny, they agreed to raise the slogan of demanding with the blood of 'Uthman, claiming that he was killed wrongly in the sacred city. As practical slogan, they decided to raise 'Uthman's shirt, which was stained with his blood.

The conferees thus decided to hold Imam Ali ('a) responsible for the assassination of 'Uthman, claiming that he sheltered the assassins and refused to submit them to trial.

## **Mu'awiyah Deceives Al-Zubayr And Talhah**

Mu'awiyah deceived Talhah and Al-Zubayr and used them as bridge over which he crossed towards achieving his evil schemes when he promised them to be given the position of leadership if they would breach their homage to the Imam ('a). He thus wrote the following letter to them:

'To the servant of Allah, Al-Zubayr, and the leader of the believers:

From Mu'awiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan:

Peace be upon you. I have obtained the homage of the people of Syria for you and they responded. They are now firmly ready to support you. So, your mission is now to obtain the homage of the people of Al-Kufah and Al-Basrah before the son of Abu Talib would precede you thereto.

In fact, these two regions are the most important, and no region else can be important after these two. I thus declared Talhah to be your successor to this position. So, both of you must declare your demand with the blood of 'Uthman and call people to do so as well. Be as serious as possible and do not show any reluctance. May Allah grant you victory and disappoint your rival.'

When he received this letter, Al-Zubayr rejoiced and took wing. He hurried to Talhah to convey the content of the letter to him. When they both read Mu'awiyah's letter, they did not have the least doubt about the truthfulness of Mu'awiyah, the ferocious. They thus prepared themselves to declare mutiny against Imam Ali's government, hoping that they would be the caliphs after overthrowing the Imam's government. Carrying out Mu'awiyah's instruction, they raised the demand with the blood of 'Uthman as slogan.<sup>9</sup>

## **'Uthman's Fans Mobilize The Mutinous Army**

Those whom 'Uthman had appointed as governmental officials and deputy governors, but Imam Ali ('a) dismissed them as soon as he became the caliph, started mobilizing 'A'ishah's army financially from the money they had usurped from the public treasury during the reign of 'Uthman. Ya'la ibn Umayyah, who was 'Uthman's deputy governor of Yemen, supplied the army with six hundred camels and six hundred thousand dirhams.

Abdullah ibn 'Amir, 'Uthman's deputy governor of Al-Basrah, provided a big sum of money he had embezzled from the public treasury.<sup>10</sup> However, the members of the high command did not find any problem in receiving these illegal sums of money.

## **Imam Ali's Epistle To Talhah And Al-Zubayr**

To accomplish argument against Talhah and Al-Zubayr, Imam Ali ('a) sent them the following epistle:

*Now, both of you know, although you conceal it, that I did not approach the people until they approached me, and I did not ask them to swear allegiance to me until they themselves swore allegiance to me, and both of you were among those who approached me and swore me allegiance. Certainly, the common people did not swear me allegiance under any force put on them or for any money given to them.*

*If you two swore allegiance to me obediently, come back and offer repentance to Allah soon, but if you swore allegiance to me reluctantly, you have certainly given me cause for action, by showing your obedience and concealing your disobedience. By my life, you were not more entitled than the other Muhajirun to conceal and hide the matter. Your refusing allegiance before entering into it would have been easier than getting out of it after having accepted it.*

*You have indicated that I killed 'Uthman; then let someone from among the people of Al-Madinah who supported neither me nor you decide the matter between me and you. Then, one of us shall face the command of law according to their involvement. You should give up your way now, when the great question before you is only one of shame, before you face the question of shame coupled with Hellfire; and that is an end to the matter.<sup>11</sup>*

## **Marching To Al-Basrah**

The troops of 'A'ishah moved from Makkah towards Al-Basrah to occupy it. Drums of war were beaten, standards were stretched, and the deviating powers crowded to join 'A'ishah's army, raising the slogan of demanding with 'Uthman's blood, while in reality those who stood behind shedding 'Uthman's blood were 'A'ishah, Talhah, and Al-Zubayr.

Thus, these troops decided to wage war against the legal authority and to sow disunity among Muslims,

while the commanders of these troops did not have any doubt that they were wrong.

Hurriedly, the army of 'A'ishah marched towards Al-Basrah. On their way, they meet a Bedouin named Al-'Arani who had a camel, which he gave the name of 'Askar. One of 'A'ishah's soldiers offered to buy that camel, but the owner asked for a high price. However, when he knew that they wanted the camel for 'A'ishah, he accepted to give it to them for nothing.

So, the camel was given to 'A'ishah who rode on it to wage war against Imam Ali ('a). Just like the calf that the Israelites worshipped, this camel was the axis around which all the supporters of 'A'ishah gathered. [12](#)

Surrounded by her soldiers, 'A'ishah passed by a place where dogs faced her with heavy barking. Frightened by the scene, 'A'ishah asked Muhammad ibn Talhah about the name of that place. 'This is the Al-Haw'ab Spring!'

Upon hearing this name, 'A'ishah declared that she would retreat. When she was asked about the reason, she said that she had heard the Holy Prophet (S) saying to his wives, 'I see coming that in the face of one of you, the dogs of Al-Haw'ab will bark. O red-faced ('A'ishah), beware lest you will be that one!' [13](#)

Muhammad ibn Talhah said, 'May Allah show you mercy! Move forward and leave such things behind your back.'

However, 'A'ishah did not make a further step; rather, she decided to go back, because she became sure that she was wrong in this act.

The members of the high command were astounded at this situation, and all their attempts to make her change her mind failed. She, full of sorrow and grief, went on repeating such words like, 'Lead me back home! By Allah, I am the one at whom the dogs of Al-Haw'ab barked! Take me back home!'

However, when her nephew Abdullah ibn Al-Zubayr interfered, she collapsed before him. He could gather many bribable faithless persons to bear witness under an oath before 'A'ishah that this place was not Al-Haw'ab! That was the first false oath in Islam. [14](#) Thus, 'A'ishah was persuaded to quit the idea of returning home and to lead these armies to fight Imam Ali ('a).

When the armies arrived in Al-Basrah, the people of this city panicked very much. The deputy governor of the city, 'Uthman ibn Hunayf, delegated Abu'l-Aswad Al-Du'ali to hold talks with 'A'ishah and ask her why she came to Al-Basrah.

Carrying out this mission, Abu'l-Aswad asked 'A'ishah who answered, 'I am here to demand with the blood of 'Uthman.'

Abu'l-Aswad said, 'None of the killers of 'Uthman is in Al-Basrah.'

She answered, 'This is true, but they are in Al-Madinah with Ali ibn Abi-Talib. I thus came here to encourage the people of Al-Basrah to help me fight against him. Would we not revolt against your swords that killed 'Uthman after we revolted for you against 'Uthman's whips when they played on your backs'?

Refuting such weak fallacy, Abu'l-Aswad answered, 'What do you have to do with swords and whips? You are only the detainee of Allah's Messenger. He ordered you to keep yourself at home and recite the Book of your Lord. Women are not required to fight and it is not proper for them to demand with bloodshed?

Moreover, Ali is worthier than you are of following up this case and he is even closer to 'Uthman in family relationship than you are, because both of them are the descendants of Abd-Manaf.'

However, 'A'ishah paid no heed to these overwhelming arguments; rather, she insisted on her situation, saying, 'I will never leave this city before I go on what I have started. O Abu'l-Aswad, do you think that one will have the courage to fight against me?'

'A'ishah thought that she enjoyed immunity with regard to her being the widow of the Holy Prophet (S). However, Abu'l-Aswad answered, 'By Allah, you will be fought as intensely as possible.'

Thus, no success was made by Abu'l-Aswad in his talks with 'A'ishah. He therefore went to Al-Zubayr and talked to him with a soft language, reminding him of his situation with Imam Ali ('a) during the events of the Saqifah conspiratorial conference. He thus said, 'O Abu-'Abdullah, people always remember your situation on that day when Abu-Bakr was paid homage. On that day, you unsheathed your sword, shouting, 'No one should be preceded to the son of Abu Talib in this issue.' How different your current situation from that one is!'

Hypocritically and fallaciously, Al-Zubayr answered, 'We only demand with the blood of 'Uthman.'

Abu'l-Aswad said, 'It was your acquaintance (Talhah) and you who have participated in giving this position of leadership to Ali.'

These words softened Al-Zubayr's heart and he was about to submit to the truth, but he asked Abu'l-Aswad to grant him respite so that he would discuss the matter with Talhah.

Abu'l-Aswad then hurried to Talhah and asked him to submit to the truth and maintain the unity of Muslims, but Talhah refused and insisted on transgression. [15](#)

After this, Abu'l-Aswad returned and informed the deputy governor of Al-Basrah about what had happened.

'Uthman ibn Hunayf, the deputy governor of Al-Basrah, gathered his companions and delivered a sermon in which he said, 'O people, when you paid homage to Ali, you have only paid homage to

Almighty Allah:

***‘Surely, those who swear allegiance to you do but swear allegiance to Allah. The hand of Allah is above their hands. Therefore, whoever breaks (his faith), he breaks it only to the injury of his own soul. And whoever fulfills what he has covenanted with Allah, He will grant him a mighty reward. (48: 10)’***

By Allah, if Ali had known that any one was worthier than him to this position, he would never have accepted it; and if people had paid homage to someone other than Ali, he would most certainly have complied with the people’s choice, although Ali would never need any of the Companions; rather, they all could never dispense with him. Ali had a share in all of their good traits, but none of them had any share in his exclusive good traits.

These two men (i.e. Talhah and Al-Zubayr) paid homage to him, but they did not intend it purely for Allah’s sake. So, they hurried to weaning before the completion of the suckling, hurried to suckling before birth, and hurried to birth before even pregnancy. Thus, they sought for Allah’s reward from people!

They then claimed that they had paid homage (to Imam Ali) by force. If this is true, then they were just like the other people of Quraysh who had the option to pay homage or to refuse. Verily, the true guidance is what all people are following now; namely, the pledge of allegiance to Ali. Now, what do you say, people?’

Hakim ibn Jabalah, one of the prominent personalities of Al-Basrah, responded to ‘Uthman ibn Hunayf and expressed his readiness to support him even if this would lead him to declare war against all people. [16](#)

Soon after that, violent military clashes took place between the group of ‘A’ishah and the supporters of Imam Ali (‘a) and some people fell dead. However, none of the two groups achieved victory. They therefore agreed on a temporary truce, waiting for the coming of Imam Ali (‘a) to solve the problem.

Among the articles of this truce, ‘Uthman ibn Hunayf was decided to keep on his work as the governor of Al-Basrah and to have the public treasury and the armed forces under his control, while Al-Zubayr, Talhah, and ‘A’ishah were given the right to settle anywhere they wanted in the city.

Thus, ‘Uthman ibn Hunayf went on carrying out his missions, such as leading the congregational prayers, distributing the allowances among the people of Al-Basrah, and spreading security and settlement. However, the group of ‘A’ishah breached their pledge and broke their covenants. They agreed upon attacking ‘Uthman ibn Hunayf and usurping the public treasury.

At a dark and stormy night, they implemented their plot. They thus attacked ‘Uthman while he was leading a congregational prayer, captured him, attacked the public treasury house, killed forty of the

guards, and usurped the entire fund there. Marwan, having arrested 'Uthman and killed his companions, plucked the hair of his head, beard, and brows, and left him hairless. [17](#)

## The Minor Battle Of The Camel

When the group of 'A'ishah spread disorder, corruption, and insecurity among people of Al-Basrah, the masses revolted against them and went out to the streets with unsheathed swords under the commandship of Hakim ibn Jabalah who had accompanied three hundred persons all of whom were from the tribe of Abd Al-Qays.

Thus, the troops of 'A'ishah went out to face them; they carried 'A'ishah on a camel and the two groups faced each other and engaged in a horrible battle, which was called the minor battle of the camel.

Hakim ibn Jabalah fought so bravely, but one of the companions of Talhah hit him with his sword on the leg and could sever it. So, Hakim sat on the ground, took the severed leg, threw it at the man, and could kill him.

Hakim did not stop fighting; rather, he kept on bleeding in the battlefield until he was martyred in defense of Imam Ali ('a), the true successor of the Holy Prophet (S).

This battle ended with a victory for the army of 'A'ishah who, as a result, took over Al-Basrah. They also intended to slay 'Uthman ibn Hunayf, but they did not after he had threatened them with harsh punishment and revenge by his brother who was the deputy governor of Al-Madinah.

They thus feared lest 'Uthman's brother would kill their brothers and family members in Al-Madinah; therefore, they released 'Uthman who, immediately, hurried to the capital. On his way, he met with Imam Ali ('a) and joined him back to Al-Basrah. Joking with the Imam ('a), 'Uthman said, 'You had sent me to Al-Basrah as old man, but I have now come to you as beardless youth!'

These events created disunity among the people of Al-Basrah, causing them to separate into two parties; one supporting 'A'ishah and the other supporting Imam Ali ('a). However, a third party withdrew this seditious conflict and refused to join any of the two parties.

## Dispute On Leading The Prayer

The followers of Talhah disputed with the followers of Al-Zubayr as to who should lead the congregational prayer, because each one of them wanted to be the future leader! This dispute lasted for such a long time that the time of the prayer was about to slip away. Anticipating further developments, 'A'ishah suggested that Muhammad the son of Talhah should lead the prayer a day and Abdullah the son of Al-Zubayr should lead it the other day. [18](#)

When Abdullah moved forward, Muhammad pulled him back and moved forward. Immediately, Abdullah

prevented Muhammad to move forward. Upon seeing this situation, people decided to cast lots. When they did, Muhammad won and moved forward to lead the prayer.

In this prayer, he recited a holy Quranic chapter (i.e. Surah) that contained a divine threat with imminent punishment! In fact, Muslims should have expected such imminent punishment at the hands of these people whose political greed had led them to play rudely with the affairs of the religion.

Of course, this dispute presented these two persons and their followers sarcastically to people who began to belittle and deride them.

While they were on their first step, these people disputed on authority. What would they have done if they had gained victory? Of course, they would have fought against each other, no matter how many casualties they would cause to the Muslim community.

## **Imam Ali Seeks The Help Of The People Of Al-Kufah**

Imam Ali (‘a) understood that no other means than armed force would be able to stop this mutiny that was led by ‘A’ishah; he therefore sought the help of the people of Al-Kufah, which was the most powerful military garrison in that time. To do this practically, the Imam (‘a) delegated a number of his prominent companions, headed by Hashim ibn ‘Utbah, to Al-Kufah and sent with him a message to Abu-Musa Al-Ash’ari, the governor of the city. In this letter, Imam Ali (‘a) wrote these words:

*In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent and All-merciful. I have sent to you Hashim ibn ‘Utbah so that you will send with him the Muslims to face some people who had breached their homage to me, killed my followers, and innovated in Islam a grave rebellion. So, send people to me with him when he comes to you, because I have entrusted the governorship of this district with you so that you will help me establish the truth and support me on this matter.* [19](#)

When the delegation arrived in Al-Kufah and Hashim handed the Imam’s letter over to Abu-Musa, the latter erased the letter and threatened Hashim with imprisonment and punishment. Moreover, he started discouraging people and instigating them not to join Imam Ali (‘a). Al-Mirqal sent a letter to Imam Ali (‘a) informing him against Abu-Musa.

In response, Imam Ali (‘a) sent his son Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) along with ‘Ammar ibn Yasir and Qays ibn Sa’d to Al-Kufah carrying his decision of deposing Abu-Musa the betrayer and threatening him with punishment if he would refuse to comply with the delegation and would show mutiny and defiance.

In Al-Kufah, people received Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) and his companions warmly. Immediately, Imam Al-Hasan (‘a) called on Abu-Musa to obey the Imam (‘a), but he refused, insisting on his error. So, he deposed Abu-Musa and appointed Qarasah ibn Ka’b as the new deputy governor of the city.

‘Ammar ibn Yasir then delivered a remarkable speech, calling on the people of Al-Kufah to support and

defend Imam Ali (‘a). He thus said, ‘The Leader of the Believers Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a)–may Allah save him, grant him vast victory, and confirm his affair perfectly–has sent his son and me to you, ordering you to go forth to him. So, go forth, fear Allah, and obey Him.

By Allah, if I knew that there is on this globe one more knowledgeable with the Book of Allah and with the practice of His Prophet than Ali, I would not ask you to go forth to him and I would not pledge to die for him. O people of Al–Kufah, observe Allah with regard to jihad (holy war).

By Allah, if things will be in the hands of anyone other than Ali, you will definitely suffer very much. Allah knows that I only intend to advise you sincerely and order you to what I know very well. I do not desire that in opposition to you I should betake myself to that which I forbid you. I desire nothing but reform so far as I am able, and with none but Allah is the direction of my affair to a right issue. On Him do I rely and to Him do I turn.’

Once again, ‘Ammar made another speech in which he called people to support Imam Ali (‘a) and defend the values of Islam for the achievement of which Imam Ali (‘a) was exerting all possible efforts.

However, Abu–Musa Al–Ash’ari kept on discouraging people and calling them to rebellion and disobedience. So, Malik Al–Ashtar believed that the Imam’s order would not be carried out as long as Al–Ash’ari was in Al–Kufah. He therefore decided to dismiss him with humility.

He gathered a group of his people and attacked the palace where Al–Ash’ari lived. At that night, Al–Ash’ari had to retire from his office. He spent that night fearful and with the first sparks of morning ran away towards Makkah to stay there with those who withdrew from this conflict.

Hujr ibn ‘Adi, the prominent companion of Imam Ali (‘a), delivered a speech, calling people to support Imam Ali (‘a) and respond to the call of Imam Al–Hasan (‘a). He thus said, ‘O people, this is Al–Hasan the son of Amir Al–Mu’minin. You know that one of his two fathers is the Holy Prophet and the other is the well–pleased leader of the community. May Allah bless both of them!

You also know that there is none to match these two in Islam. Al–Hasan is the chief of the youths of Paradise, the chief of the Arab chiefs, the most perfect in righteousness, and the most perfect in knowledge and action. He is now the courier of his father to you. He is calling you to the truth and asking you to give your support to him.

The true happy is he who joins and supports them, while the extremely unhappy is he who lags behind and refuses to participate with them. So, go forth light and heavy and think of the reward that you will win, for Allah never wastes the reward of the good–doers.’

All people responded to the Imam’s call for jihad and support for the truth. Four thousand people decided to join the Imam (‘a). On ships and on riding animals, they headed for Al–Basrah under the leadership of Imam Al–Hasan (‘a). In Dhi–Qar, where Imam Ali (‘a) had camped, they joined his camp.

Upon seeing them, the Imam ('a) became very glad for the success made by his son Al-kasan ('a) and the accompanying delegation. He thus thanked these people for their efforts.

In Dhi-Qar, Imam Ali ('a) delivered a very important speech in which he referred to the horrible events he had to encounter after the passing away of his brother and cousin; namely, the Holy Prophet (S). He thus said,

*All praise be to Allah under all conditions and all circumstances in the mornings and the evenings. I bear witness that there is no god save Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. He has sent him as mercy for the servants and new life for the lands when the earth was suffocated with seditions, its rope was wavering disorderly, Satan was worshipped in all of its sides, and Iblis, the enemy of Allah, had power over the beliefs of its inhabitants.*

*So, Muhammad the son of Abdullah the son of Abd Al-Muttalib was the one through whom Allah extinguished the fires on the earth, smothered its sparks, ripped up its pegs, and put right its inclination. He is truly the leader to true guidance and the divinely chosen prophet.*

*Indeed, he proclaimed that which he was commanded to proclaim and conveyed the messages of his Lord. Through him has Allah re-established normal relations between the disputing parties, made safe the roads, spared the blood, and attuned between the people of mutual rancor that was deeply rooted in their breasts, until the inevitable came upon him. Hence, Allah grasped him to Him praiseworthy.*

*Then, people nominated Abu-Bakr as caliph, and he did not spare efforts. Then, Abu-Bakr nominated 'Umar as his successor, and he too did not spare efforts.*

*Then, people chose 'Uthman as caliph, and he did what he did to you and you did what you did to him. When what you all know took place regarding him, you came to pledge allegiance to me. I then said to you, 'I have no need for that position.' I entered my house, but you took me out of it. I held my hand back, but you stretched it. You then swarmed around me so heavily that I thought that you would kill me or you would kill each other.*

*Consequently, you paid homage to me while I was neither pleased nor cheerful with that. Allah the All-glorified has known that I always disliked governing the community of Muhammad (S) whom I heard him saying, 'Every governor that comes to manage any affair of my community will come, on the Resurrection Day, having his hands hung to his neck in the presence of all of the creatures. His record of deeds will be then opened. If he has acted fairly, then he will be saved; but if he has acted unjustly, then he will fall.'*

*Then, all of your groups agreed unanimously on me; and even Talhah and Al-Zubayr paid homage to me while I could recognize betrayal in their faces and breach in their eyes. They then asked me to permit them to go on 'Umrah (i.e. minor ritual pilgrimage) and I told that they did not intend for going on 'Umrah. So, they went to Makkah, egged on 'A'ishah, and could deceive her. Accompanied by the sons*

of the Released Ones,<sup>20</sup> they all came to Al-Basrah and killed the Muslims there and committed many wrong things.

*How strange this is! They acted so obediently towards Abu-Bakr and 'Umar while they are defying me. They know for sure that I am at least not less than these two. If I wished, I would say more things.*

*From Syria, Mu'awiyah had sent them (i.e. Talhah and Al-Zubayr) a letter to deceive them. They tried not to let me know about the matter of this letter and they mutinied, trying to make the common people believe that they were demanding with the blood of 'Uthman. By Allah, they have neither criticized me for any improper deed that I might have done nor have they treated me with the least amount of fairness.*

*In fact, the bloodshed of 'Uthman is tied to them and should be demanded from them. How disappointed the caller is with regard to what he has called for and what answer he has been given! By Allah, they both are following deaf deviation and blind ignorance. Satan has amassed his party to support them and has urged his horses and feet to follow them, intending to take injustice back home and return wrong to its center.'*

The Imam ('a) raised his hands toward the sky and said,

*O Allah, Talhah and Al-Zubayr have ruptured their relation with me, wronged me, incited people against me, and breached their pledge of allegiance to me. So, please, unfasten what they have tied, break what they have strapped, do not forgive them forever, and make them face the bad result of what they have done and hoped.'*<sup>21</sup>

Malik Al-Ashtar, trying to alleviate the situation, said to Imam Ali ('a), 'Reduce your anger, O Leader of the Believers. By Allah, the sedition of Talhah and Al-Zubayr is not impossible for us to deal with. They have entered under this matter (i.e. obedience to you) optionally and they then departed from us although we have not done any wrong nor have we innovated any matter in Islam.

Now, they are facing us with the fire of sedition, deviated and unjust, because they lack any clear argument against us and they have attired themselves with disgrace for no obvious reason. They thus headed for these territories. If they claim that 'Uthman was killed wrongly, then the family of 'Uthman must benefit from their claim.

I bear witness and I call Almighty Allah to bear witness to me that these two are the killers of 'Uthman. O Leader of the Believers, if they insist on refusing to join what they have already abandoned and if they do not return to the obedience to you and to the allegiance they have already pledged to you, we will most surely attach them to the son of 'Affan.'

## **The Companions With Imam Ali**

In his march towards confronting 'A'ishah, Imam Ali ('a) was accompanied by a good number of

prominent and virtuous Companions, who had already been sure that the truth is always with Imam Ali (‘a) and falsehood is always with his rivals. Of course, these Companions followed the Imam (‘a) on basis of true guidance and insight. They must have always recollected the Holy Prophet’s words about the Imam (‘a), such as the following:

**Ali is always with the truth and the truth is always with Ali.**[22](#)

**Ali’s position to me is as exactly as the position of (Prophet) Aaron to (Prophet) Moses.**

Muhammad ibn Habib Al-Qurashi Al-Baghdadi (died in AH 225) has listed the names of the Companions who took sides with Imam Ali (‘a) during the Battle of the Camel. These Companions were ‘Ammar ibn Yasir, [23](#) Sahl ibn Hunayf, [24](#) ‘Uthman ibn Hunayf, [25](#) Sa’d ibn Al-Harith ibn ‘Amr, [26](#) Jariyah ibn Qudamah ibn Zuhayr, [27](#) Abu-Mas’ud Al-Ansari, [28](#) Abu-Sa’id Al-Khidri, Abu-Umamah Al-‘Abdi ibn Al-‘Ajlan Al-Bahili, [29](#) Khuzaymah ibn Thabit ibn Al-Fakih, [30](#) Hashim ibn ‘Utbah ibn Abi-Waqqas, [31](#) Sulayman ibn Surad Al-Khuza’i, [32](#) Al-Ash’ath ibn Qays Al-Kindi, [33](#) Qays ibn Sa’d ibn ‘Abadah, [34](#) Abu-‘Amrah, [35](#) Hujr ibn ‘Adi Al-Kindi, [36](#) ‘Amr ibn Al-Hamq Al-Khuza’i, [37](#) Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas, [38](#) ‘Ubaydullah ibn ‘Abbas, [39](#) Abdullah ibn Ja’far, [40](#) ‘Umar ibn Abi-Salamah, [41](#) Ju’dah ibn Hubayrah ibn Abi-Wahab, [42](#) Imam Al-Hasan (‘a), and Imam Al-Husayn (‘a).[43](#)

The forces of Imam Ali (‘a) moved from Dhi-Qar towards Al-Basrah and camped in an area named Al-Zawiyah near the city. At this area, Imam Ali (‘a) led a congregational prayer after the accomplishment of which he wept so heavily that his tears flowed on his cheeks. He was beseeching Almighty Allah earnestly to spare Muslims from bloodshed, guard them against the misfortunes of war, and unite their word on truth and true guidance.

Before the eruption of the battle, Imam Ali (‘a) sent to the opposing party some of his companions as peace couriers to warn them against the punishment that Almighty Allah would inflict upon them if they separated the unity of Muslims and shed their blood.

The Imam (‘a) first sent Sa’sa’ah ibn Sawhan to meet ‘A’ishah, Talhah, and Al-Zubayr and to deliver to them his message in which he declared the forbiddance of what they had done when they killed a number of Muslims in Al-Basrah and punished ‘Uthman ibn Hunayf, the companion of the Holy Prophet (S).

Sa’sa’ah first met with Talhah and conveyed to him the Imam’s message. He also invited him to peace, but Talhah did not respond to him; rather, he insisted on error, aggression, and fighting against the Imam (‘a).

When he met Al-Zubayr, Sa’sa’ah found him less intransigent than Talhah and swifter in accepting the Imam’s message.

Sa’sa’ah then headed for ‘A’ishah and conveyed to her the Imam’s message of peace, but she was

resolute in fighting against the Imam ('a). She thus said, 'I have mutinied to demand with the blood of 'Uthman. By Allah, I will do such-and-such'

Sa'sa'ah thus returned to the Imam ('a) carrying the bad news of these people's insistence on fighting against him. This news saddened the Imam ('a) very much. He thus had nothing to say but, 'It is Allah alone Whose help can be sought.'

Once more, Imam Ali ('a) sent Abdullah ibn 'Abbas to talk to the leaders of the opposing party, hoping that he, according to his convincing style, would be able to persuade them to put an end to the imminent confrontation before it would practically begin.

Beginning his peace efforts with Talhah, Abdullah ibn 'Abbas reminded him of his binding pledge of allegiance to Imam Ali ('a). However, Talhah said, 'I had to pledge allegiance to Ali because a sword was unsheathed over my neck!'

Refuting this unfounded claim, Abdullah answered, 'I myself saw you pledging allegiance to him completely obediently. Before he accepted your allegiance, Imam Ali ('a) had said to you, 'If you wish, I will pledge allegiance to you.' You thus answered, 'No! It is I who will pledge allegiance to you.'

Talhah could not deny this fact; he therefore went on searching for any apology, saying, 'It is true that he had said these words to me, but I could not go against the masses who had pledged allegiance to him. By Allah, these people are seducing him. O son of 'Abbas, you should know that Al-Zubayr and I, who enjoy considerable companionship with Allah's Messenger and precedence to Islam, came to him when people were surrounding him with unsheathed swords over his head.

Mockingly, he said to us, 'If you two wish, I will swear allegiance to you (as the caliphs).' If we at that situation said yes, would he then accept to do it, after all people had already pledged allegiance to him? Now, let him depose himself and pledge allegiance to us! By Allah, he would not do it; rather, he might instigate against us some people who would not consider respect for us.

So, we had to pledge allegiance to him against our wills. Now, we are here to demand with the blood of 'Uthman. Convey these words to your cousin: If he really wants to spare bloodshed and amend the affairs of this community, he must give up the killers of 'Uthman and give us hand over them. He must also depose himself from this position and give Muslims freedom to choose whomever they want. Ali is just like any one of us. If he refuses, then we will deal with him with sword. This is the only thing he may have from us.'

Refuting these illogic words, Abdullah ibn 'Abbas said, 'O Abu-Muhammad, you have not been fair. You should know that you were present before 'Uthman for ten days during which he had to drink the water of his own well after you had prevented him from drinking from other resources of fresh water. You kept on pressing on him in that way until Ali interfered to convince you to let 'Uthman feel free to use the water.

However, you refused. When the people of Egypt saw you doing so, while they considered you to be the companions of Allah's Messenger, they, armed, raided on 'Uthman and assassinated him. After that, the people pledged allegiance to a man (i.e. Imam Ali) whose precedence, excellences, close relation to the Holy Prophet (S), and great struggle for Islam cannot be denied.

Your acquaintance and you then came to him obedient, but never coerced, and pledged allegiance to him. You two then breached your allegiance. It is thus so strange! By Allah, you maintained your allegiance to Abu-Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthman, but you now jump to combat the son of Abu Talib.

By Allah, Ali is never less than any one of you all. As for your demand that he must give you free hand to kill the assassins of 'Uthman, you know very well who actually killed 'Uthman! As for your saying that Ali should expect sword treatment from you, behold! By Allah, you know for sure that Ali cannot be threatened with sword.'

Talhah could not find any answer to the overwhelming arguments of Abdullah ibn 'Abbas; he therefore said, 'Stop it! Now, I will not debate with you any longer!'

When Abdullah ibn 'Abbas informed Imam Ali ('a) about the words of Talhah, the Imam ('a) painfully prayed Almighty Allah with these Quranic words:

***'O our Lord, decide between us and our people with truth; and You are the best of deciders.'***  
**(7:89)**

Imam Ali ('a) then sent Abdullah ibn 'Abbas for 'A'ishah to convey to her this message:

*Such affairs cannot be amended by women. Besides, you have not been ordered to interfere in such issues. Why are you now pleased to violate the order of Allah in your current display of finery and to leave your house that the Prophet (S) had ordered you to stay in? Violating these orders, you marched to Al-Basrah, killed a number of Muslims, targeted at my deputy governors and dismissed them, gave orders of punishing the Muslims, and deemed lawful the bloodshed of righteous people!*

*You must consider and watch Almighty Allah, for you know for sure that you were the most intense enemy of 'Uthman. So, what has dissuaded (you) from what was shown (by you previously)?[44](#)*

When Abdullah conveyed these words to 'A'ishah, she answered, 'O son of 'Abbas, your cousin thinks that he has had full control over the country! No, by Allah! Whatever he has under his control, we have more than it.'

Abdullah replied, 'O mother, the Leader of the Believers (i.e. Imam Ali) enjoys unparalleled virtues and precedence to Islam. He also the one who suffered tribulations for the sake of the religion more than anyone else did.'

'A'ishah hurried to say, 'Do you not remember the sufferings of Talhah during the Battle of Uhud?'

Abdullah answered, 'By Allah, we do not know any one superior to Ali in this regard.'

Unfortunately, the efforts and advices of Abdullah ibn 'Abbas did not work with 'A'ishah, because she was persistent on mutiny. He thus said to her, 'Watch and fear Allah with regard to shedding the blood of Muslims.'

'A'ishah answered, 'Muslims have no worth respecting blood unless Ali and those who are with him will kill themselves!'

These reasonless words made Abdullah ibn 'Abbas smile. So, 'A'ishah asked, 'Why are you laughing?' He answered, 'The people who are with Ali are so insightful that they are ready to sacrifice their lives for him.'

Finally, Abdullah ibn 'Abbas left 'A'ishah without reaching at any acceptable solution, because she was too diehard to change her mind.

Abdullah then headed for Al-Zubayr and met him alone, because he feared lest Al-Zubayr's son, Abdullah, would be present with them and spoil the whole matter. In fact, Abdullah the son of Al-Zubayr was one of the bitterest enemies of Islam.

After exchanging discourses and discussing Imam Ali's advice, Al-Zubayr was about to submit to the truth, but some persons hurried to inform Abdullah ibn Al-Zubayr against his father. So, the son interfered and debated with Abdullah ibn 'Abbas. Finally, he could spoil the matter and persuade his father to keep on his attitude of enmity towards Imam Ali ('a).

Thus, the mission of Abdullah ibn 'Abbas failed. He returned to the Imam's camp and put him in the picture.

Nevertheless, Imam Ali ('a) did not stop; rather, he himself went out and met Talhah and Al-Zubayr. He said to them,

*You two must put 'A'ishah on oath by Allah and by His Messenger to be truthful in answering these questions. Does she know any other man than me who is closer to Almighty Allah and to His Messenger? Does she know any other person than me who embraced Islam before all people did?*

*Does she know any other person than me who defended the Messenger of Allah with his sword and his spear against the Arab polytheists? Does she not know that I had nothing to do with the bloodshed of 'Uthman, I did not force anybody to pledge allegiance to me, and I never criticized 'Uthman more than you two did?*

However, Talhah answered the Imam ('a) improperly while Al-Zubayr did the opposite.

When the Imam ('a) returned to his camp, his companions asked him about what had happened with

these two men. The Imam ('a) answered,

*They are of different situations. Al-Zubayr has been led to here by obstinacy, and he will not fight against you. As for Talhah, when I asked him about the truth, he answered me with the falsehood. I met him with certitude, and he faced me with dubiety. By Allah, my truth did not work with him, while his falsehood will harm him. He will be killed among many others.* [45](#)

Imam Ali ('a) then saw that it was not harmful to pull Al-Zubayr out of this tumult and save him from deviation. Riding on the mule of the Holy Prophet (S) and unarmed, Imam Ali ('a) went out and shouted, 'Where is Al-Zubayr?'

Heavily armed, Al-Zubayr advanced to meet the Imam ('a). When 'A'ishah was informed of this encounter, she feared very much and shouted, 'This is the war! Oh, for Asma!' [46](#) However, she calmed down when she was informed that Imam Ali ('a) was unarmed.

Imam Ali ('a) embraced Al-Zubayr and asked him gently, 'What for have you mutinied?' Al-Zubayr answered, 'I am demanding with the blood of 'Uthman.'

Because Imam Ali ('a) considered this excuse to be too worthless to be accepted, he turned his face away from Al-Zubayr and started reminding him of what the Holy Prophet (S) had predicted about him. He ('a) thus said,

*O Zubayr, I adjure you by Allah; do you not remember that day when you and I were under the shed of that tribe exchanging discourses, when the Messenger of Allah (S) passed by me and said, 'According to this situation, you seem to like Al-Zubayr.' I answered, 'Why should I not? He follows my faith and he is my cousin (i.e. paternal aunt's son).' The Messenger of Allah (S) said, 'Behold! He will fight you while he will be wrong.'*

Al-Zubayr could not deny this Prophetic prediction; he therefore had to answer affirmatively.

The Imam ('a) thus asked, 'What for are you now fighting against me?'

Al-Zubayr answered, 'By Allah, I have forgotten this incident. Had I only recollected it, I would never have mutinied against you and I would never have accepted to fight you.'

Thus, Al-Zubayr left surrounded by waves of sorrow. He regretted his situation very much, for he had actually committed a grave sin.

Imam Ali ('a) also returned to his camp where his companions hurried to ask him, 'O Leader of the Believers, you have met that man who was heavily armed while you were unarmed. Why was that?'

The Imam ('a) answered,

*Do you know who that man was? He was Al-Zubayr the son of Safiyyah, the Holy Prophet's paternal*

*aunt. He has pledged to me that he will not fight against you. When I reminded him of an incident and a word that was said by Allah's Messenger, the man expressed that if he had remembered that word, he would not have mutinied and faced me.*

The Imam's companions cheerfully said, 'All praise be to Allah for this. In this conflict, we feared none but Al-Zubayr and we guarded ourselves against none but him.'<sup>47</sup>

When all means and efforts made by Imam Ali ('a) for peace and sparing of bloodshed failed, he ('a) ordered his companions to raise the Book of Allah and invite the other party to accept its judgment. However, the Imam ('a) informed his companions that the one to carry out this mission would be martyred.

So, none of them had the courage to carry out this mission except a faithful young man from Al-Kufah, who declared, 'I will do this mission.' Imam Ali ('a) first ignored this young man, expecting that other elder persons would declare their readiness to do it. However, when the Imam ('a) could not find anyone else, he handed over a copy of the Holy Quran to the young man.

Preparing himself mentally for death, the young man set to the battlefield raising the copy of the Holy Quran before the camp of 'A'ishah. He raised his voice, inviting them to accept the judgment of the Holy Quran, but the enemies surrounded him and cut off his right hand. He thus took the copy in his left hand and kept on doing his mission. They then attacked him and could cut off his left hand.

Bravely, the young man held the copy with his teeth while he was bleeding and shouting, 'Watch and consider Allah with regard to shedding our and your blood.' Finally, they started shooting arrows at him until he fell to the ground dead. His mother, who was present, ran towards him weeping and bewailing.<sup>48</sup> After the martyrdom of this young man, Imam Ali ('a) believed that there was no other means left but to engage in warfare. Only then, he ('a) said to his companions, *It is now legal to fight these people. You may now enjoy strikes.*

The Imam ('a) then said to Al-Husayn ibn Al-Mundhir who was still young,

*Your mission is to maintain this standard (i.e. flag). By Allah, no other standard has ever fluttered or will be fluttering fairer than this one, save the standard that fluttered over the head of Allah's Messenger.*

The Imam ('a) then said these poetic lines:

*Whose flag is this black one? It's shadow is fluttering. When Husayn is asked to advance with it, he will definitely do.*

*He advances it towards death, and when he enters with it to the ponds of death, both death and blood will then drop.<sup>49</sup>*

The Imam ('a) then mobilized his army generally and assigned Malik Al-Ashtar, 'Ammar ibn Yasir, and

other prominent personalities as the commanders of his army. The Imam (‘a) put on the armor of the Holy Prophet (S), rode on his mule, stooped in the fore of the lines of his army, and stretched the standard over himself.

On the other front, the soldiers of ‘A’ishah lined up their rows and advanced the camel on which ‘A’ishah was riding, driven by Ka’b ibn Thawr.

Reciprocal war songs could be heard from the two armies.

Imam Ali (‘a), unsheathing his famous sword Dhu’l-Faqar in his right hand and raising the standard in his left, attacked the enemies and a general clash took place. They fought as intensely as fighting might be; Imam Ali’s army intended to protect their leader and ‘A’ishah’s army intended to protect their mother.

Then, some man-to-man encounters took place, in all of them victory was the share of Imam Ali’s soldiers.

When Abdullah ibn Al-Zubayr advanced to the battlefield, Malik Al-Ashtar decided to come upon him. Hence, Malik sat on Abdullah’s chest and he was about to kill him, but Abdullah called for help, shouting, ‘Kill both of us; Malik and me!’

However, Malik led Abdullah to a ditch and threw him there. He then said to him, ‘Had it not been for your family relationship with Allah’s Messenger, your body organs would never have met one another anymore!’

When ‘A’ishah learnt about the encounter of her nephew with Malik, she lost her nerve and decided to give a ten thousand dirham prize for anyone who would convey to her the glad tidings of the survival of her nephew!

As for Al-Zubayr, he was well known for his soft-heartedness. When Imam Ali (‘a) spoke to him, Al-Zubayr decided to withdraw the battle. He came towards ‘A’ishah and said, ‘In all of my situations in my whole lifetime, I knew where I should put my foot, except for the current situation of mine. By Allah, I do not know whether I should continue or I should withdraw.’

‘A’ishah recognized that Al-Zubayr had responded to the truth; she therefore said to him mockingly, ‘It seems that you have been frightened by the swords of the descendants of Abd Al-Muttalib!’

These words motivated Al-Zubayr negatively. Moreover, his son Abdullah dishonored his father, saying, ‘When you decided to go on this matter, you were totally insightful. However, as you saw the flags of the son of Abu Talib and knew that nothing but death was under these flags’ etc.’

These words of ascribing cowardice to Al-Zubayr motivated his feelings more. He thus said to his son, ‘Woe to you! I have just given Ali my word that I would not fight against him.’

The son said, 'You can expiate this word by manumitting one of your slaves.'

So, Al-Zubayr manumitted his slave and advanced towards the battlefield to prove that he was never coward. When he became certain of the falsity of his situation, Al-Zubayr retreated and decided to go back home. In an area known as Wadi Al-Siba', Umar ibn Jurmuz met Al-Zubayr and said to him, 'You have started a war, whether you were right or wrong, and now you retreat from it. Are you repentant or too weak to continue?'

However, Ibn Jurmuz decided to assassinate Al-Zubayr; he therefore played fast and loose on him until he could stab him, cut off his head, and bring it to Imam Ali ('a).

Upon seeing the sword of Al-Zubayr, Imam Ali ('a) felt very sad. He thus said,

*This sword removed many agonies from the face of Allah's Messenger on many occasions.*

In the midst of the fighting, Marwan ibn Al-Hakam seized an opportunity, shot a dart on Talhah ibn 'Ubaydullah, and could kill him. He then declared, 'I will demand with no more blood. The blood of 'Uthman was in the neck of this man (i.e. Talhah).'

On another occasion, Marwan said to one of the sons of 'Uthman, 'I have taken full revenge for the assassination of your father from Talhah.'

By the killing of Talhah and Al-Zubayr, 'A'ishah's army lost their commanders. They therefore started receiving orders directly from 'A'ishah. Around the howdah of 'A'ishah, the Banu-Dabbah individuals surrounded to fight in defense of her. These people were the most hardhearted and immoral ones.

Likewise, the tribes of Al-Azd and Banu-Najiyah gathered around the camel to fight. In fact, this camel, named 'Askar, was the war flag under which the army of 'A'ishah fought. Unfortunately, in defense of this camel, a huge number of people were killed. For instance, from the tribe of Quraysh only, seventy persons were killed. Whenever one was killed, other people would hurry to take the rein of the camel in their hands.

With words of enthusiasm, 'A'ishah could make so many people die under the feet of her camel.

Historicists have recorded horrible pictures of the bloodshed that took place in defense of 'A'ishah's camel. However, Imam Ali ('a) understood that this war would not come to an end as long as that camel stood on its feet. He therefore raised his voice with these instructive words,

*Cut off the legs of the camel, for it is devil. If you do not cut off its legs, the Arabs will cease to exist. Swords will be kept up and down until this camel falls on the ground.*[50](#)

Imam Al-Hasan ('a) attacked the camel and could cut off its right foreleg and Imam Al-Husayn ('a) could cut off its left foreleg. So, the camel fell to the ground roaring so hideously.

Upon seeing their deity falling to the ground, the troops of 'A'ishah escaped in the deserts. Imam Ali ('a) then ordered that the accursed camel should be set to fire and its ash should be spread in the space so that nothing of it would remain to cause another sedition and ordeal from Muslims. When this order was carried out, Imam Ali ('a) said,

*May Allah curse such an animal! It was very much similar to the calf that was worshipped by the Israelites.*

Stretching his sight towards the ash, Imam Ali ('a) recited this holy Quranic verse:

***Look at your god to whose worship you kept so long; we will certainly burn it, then we will certainly scatter it a wide scattering in the sea. (20:97)***

By the killing of the camel, the war was over and Imam Ali ('a) achieved victory, causing defeat and loss to his rivals.

Imam Ali ('a) then sent his two sons, Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn, and Muhammad ibn Abi-Bakr [51](#) to meet 'A'ishah. Muhammad, 'A'ishah's brother, extended his hand inside 'A'ishah's howdah. She, out of fear, shouted, 'Who is this?'

He answered, 'I am the most hateful blood relative to you.'

She said, 'You are the son of Al-Khath'amiyyah (i.e. the woman of the tribe of Khath'am).'

Muhammad said, 'I am your righteous brother.'

She answered, 'You are the impious brother!'

Muhammad asked, 'Has anything wrong happened to you?'

She answered, 'One arrow hit me; rather, it has not harmed me.'

Muhammad pulled out that arrow and, at the darkest hour of night, led the howdah of his sister to the house of Abdullah ibn Khalaf Al-Khuza'i where Safiyyah bint Al-Harith lived. She stayed there for several days.

The people of Al-Basrah were harshly affected by this war whose casualties were more than thirty thousand persons.[52](#)

Imam Ali ('a), accompanied by his virtuous companions like 'Ammar ibn Yasir, passed by the casualties of the war from the army of 'A'ishah. He saw Abd Al-Rahman ibn 'Attab's dead body and said, 'This is the chief of Quraysh!' [53](#) He passed by Abdullah ibn Khalaf Al-Khuza'i's dead body, which was attired the best of clothes. People said, 'This man was the head of people.' Imam Ali ('a) replied, '*He is not the head of people; rather, he was honorable and self-esteemed.*'

The Imam (‘a) then checked all the dead bodies. When he passed by the dead bodies of the chiefs of Quraysh, he said,

*These people of Quraysh had tried to cut off my nose. By Allah, it is loathsome for me to see you killed, although I had already warned you against the bites of swords. However, you were too young to weigh up what you were following. Nevertheless, this is the time of your death and this is the bad end result. I seek Allah’s guard against bad end results.*

Among the dead bodies, Imam Ali (‘a) noticed that there was a copy of the Holy Quran hung to the neck of the dead body of Ka’b ibn Sur. He therefore ordered his companions to take the Quranic copy from the neck and put it in a pure place. He again ordered them to make the dead body in the posture of sitting. When they did, the Imam (‘a) talked to the dead body, saying,

*O Ka’b, I have found what my Lord promised me to be true. Have you too found what your Lord promised to be true?*[54](#)

Imam Ali (‘a) repeated the same thing with the dead body of Talhah.

Upon this situation, one of the companions asked the Imam (‘a), ‘What is the value of your words with these dead bodies that cannot hear?’

The Imam (‘a) answered,

*They do hear my words in the same way as the dead bodies of the Battle of Badr had heard the words of Allah’s Messenger. However, if they are allowed to answer, you will see wonders!*

The Imam (‘a) then passed by the dead body of Abdullah ibn Rabi’ah and said,

*What has made this miserable one mutiny and go up against me? Was it on account of his faith or was it on account of support for ‘Uthman? In fact, ‘Uthman did not have any good idea about this man and his father.*

Following the practice of the Holy Prophet (S), Imam Ali (‘a) issued a general amnesty, granting security to all of those who had participated with ‘A’ishah in her war against him. Having seen this divine practice, many non-Arab people converted to Islam.[55](#)

In addition to the general amnesty, Imam Ali (‘a) issued the following decisions:

1. The wounded must not be finished off.
2. The absconders must not be stabbed from the back.
3. No woman must be treated as bondmaid due to captivity.

4. No private property of the enemies must be taken.

5. No fleeer must be chased.

Imam Ali ('a) then gave special amnesty to 'A'ishah, Marwan ibn Al-Hakam, Musa ibn Talhah, and 'Umar ibn Sa'id ibn Al-'As who were the commanders of 'A'ishah's army.

The Imam ('a) then moved to meet with 'A'ishah. However, Safiyyah bint Al-Harith met him with harsh words, saying, 'O slayer of the dear ones! May Allah bereave your sons of you as same as you have bereaved me of my sons!'

Safiyyah's sons were killed in that battle.

However, Imam Ali ('a) did not answer her with anything; rather, he straightly went towards 'A'ishah's chamber who said to him, 'You are now the king. So, be lenient.'

Imam Ali ('a), at that meeting, ordered 'A'ishah to leave Al-Basrah and to stay in her house, carrying out the order of Almighty Allah and His Prophet.

When he was about to leave the house, Safiyyah repeated the same words in his face. He, this time, answered, *'If I was really the slayer of the dear ones, I would kill these ones hiding in this house!'*

In that same house, many wounded persons were kept secretly. Hence, Safiyyah kept silent because she feared for these persons. The companions of the Imam wanted to kill these persons, but the Imam ('a) did not allow them.

However, 'A'ishah desisted Imam Ali's order to leave; therefore, he sent Abdullah ibn 'Abbas to her to make sure that she would carry out his order.

'A'ishah did not allow Abdullah to visit her, but he entered forcibly, took a pillow, and sat on it in front of 'A'ishah. She criticized him, saying, 'You have violated the Prophetic practice twice; you entered my house without permission and sat on my private property before I permitted you to sit.'

Ibn 'Abbas answered, 'By Allah, your house is only that one which Allah has ordered you to stay in. Amir Al-Mu'minin (*i.e. the Leader of the Believers*) is ordering you to return to the country wherefrom you came.'

Underestimating Imam Ali ('a), 'A'ishah answered, 'May Allah have mercy upon the true leader of the believers; namely, 'Umar ibn Al-Khattab.'

So, 'A'ishah did not confess that 'Uthman ibn 'Affan was also the leader of the believers; rather, she restricted this name to 'Umar.

Abdullah ibn 'Abbas said, 'Yes, it is. Ali ibn Abi Talib is the leader of the believers.'

‘A’ishah stubbornly said, ‘I do not accept Ali as a leader of the believers!’

These words injured Abdullah, who replied, ‘Your fathers were as insignificant as the milk of a milkless camel. Then, you are forbidden to do what other women are lawful to do. You have no right to issue orders or prohibitions.’

These words saddened ‘A’ishah who, shedding tears, said, ‘Yes, I will return home. Verily, the most loathsome country to me is a country wherein you live.’

Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas lost his nerve and said, ‘By Allah, this is unfair reward from you to us, because we have made you a mother for the believers and made your father siddiq (*i.e. veracious*) of this community!’

With worthless words, ‘A’ishah answered, ‘Do you remind me of the favors of Allah’s Messenger to us?’

Abdullah answered, ‘Yes, I remind you of the favors done to you by him, because if you had had his like, you would certainly have reminded us ceaselessly of his favors.’

Thus, Abdullah left ‘A’ishah bursting with rage, returned to Imam Ali (‘a), and informed him of what had happened.

Imam Ali (‘a) thanked for him this situation.[56](#)

The Imam (‘a) then released ‘A’ishah in a handsome manner and sent with her a group of women in male attire. ‘A’ishah thought that she was accompanied by men; she therefore became angry and went on shouting, ‘May Allah do such-and-such to the son of Abu Talib! He is sending men to escort me.’

‘A’ishah forgot that she had led thousands of men and allowed herself to enter battlefields.

However, when the accompanying team arrived in Al-Madinah, they threw away their masculine turbans and swords to prove that they were women. Upon this situation, ‘A’ishah knew that her accusation was false. She thus said, ‘May Allah award the son of Abu Talib Paradise.’[57](#)

## Jurisprudential View

The majority of Muslim jurists have decided those who flared up the Battle of the Camel as having committed a sin, since their deed was not justified at all. They furthermore described them as transgressors. Of course, the religious duty was to fight against them, because the Holy Quran declares,

***And if two parties of the believers quarrel, (you must) make peace between them, but if one of them acts wrongfully towards the other, (then you must) fight that which acts wrongfully until it returns to Allah’s command. Then if it returns, make peace between them with justice and act equitably. Surely, Allah loves those who act equitably. (49:9)***

Among the master scholars of Muslim jurisprudence who issued this judgment were Abu–Hanifah, [58](#) Ibn Hajar, [59](#) and Al–Juwayni.[60](#)

In brief, the powers that mutinied against Imam Ali (‘a) had no goal other than achieving personal profits, if not authority and power.

Al–Buladhari states that when Al–Zubayr conquered Al–Basrah and seized the funds that were in the public treasury, he recited this holy Quranic verse:

***Allah promised you many acquisitions, which you will take. (48/20)***

When Imam Ali (‘a) eliminated the mutiny and entered the house of the public treasury, he said,

*O world, find someone else to seduce!*

## **Consequences Of The Battle Of The Camel**

Because of the Battle of the Camel, the Muslim community had to go through gross losses and unbearable calamities. This war also put Imam Ali (‘a) to an extremely difficult test.

Let us now refer to some of these bad consequences:

(1) The Battle of the Camel paved the way for Mu’awiyah to rebel against Imam Ali’s government, because the slogan that was raised by the opposing party was their demand with the blood of ‘Uthman, while they had no family relationship with ‘Uthman. In fact, Mu’awiyah was the cousin of ‘Uthman and he had a greater claim to demand with his blood.

(2) This mutiny sowed the seeds of disunity and discrepancy among Muslims and devastated any spirit of mutual affection and love that might have been among them.

After this war, Muslims divided into many conflicting parties. The tribes of Rabi’ah and Yemen who lived in Al–Basrah stood against their relatives who lived in Al–Kufah and each party demanded with vengeance for their people who were killed in this battle.

(3) This war toppled the reverence of government and gave people the dare to mutiny against it. As a result, many opportunist parties were formed, just as the parties of Abdullah ibn Al–Zubayr, the Umayyads, and the Khawarij. Of course, the one and only goal of these parties was to come to power and to profiteer the fortunes of the State.

(4) This war opened wide the door of fighting among Muslims. Before this incident, Muslims were too afraid to shed the blood of each other.

(5) This war resulted in retarding Islam, paralyzing its motion forward, and suspending its growth. After

the Battle of the Camel, Imam Ali ('a) dedicated all of his activities to resisting the mutiny of Mu'awiyah.

In this regard, a philosopher says, 'If internal wars had not been erupted and if Islam had kept on its first progress, it could have conquered the whole world. The main concern of 'A'ishah was to overcome Ali.'<sup>61</sup>

(6) The Battle of the Camel opened the door to abusing the inviolabilities of the Ahl Al-Bayt ('a). 'A'ishah in fact waged war against the Holy Prophet's Household. Had she won this war, she would most certainly have sentenced death penalty to Imam Ali ('a) and his sons.

[1.](#) Al-Hakim Al-Nayshaburi, Al-Mustadrak 'Ala Al-Sahihayn 3: 139; Al-Khatib Al-Baghdadi, Tarikh Baghdad 8:340; Ibn Al-Athir, Usd Al-Ghabah fi Ma'rifat Al-Sahabah 4:33; Al-Muttaqi Al-Hindi, Kanz Al-'Ummal 6:82; Al-Haythami, Majma' Al-Zawa'id 9:235.

[2.](#) Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal 2:3; Sunan Al-Darimi 2:241; Sahih Al-Bukhari 8:37; Sahih Muslim 1:17; Sunan Ibn Majah 2:86.

[3.](#) Sunan Abi-Dawud 2:409; Sunan Al-Tirmidhi 3:329; Sunan Al-Nassa'i 7: 126.

[4.](#) Ibn Taghri, Al-Nujum Al-Zahirah 2:302.

[5.](#) Tarikh Al-Tabari 5: 172; Al-Buladhari, Ansab Al-Ashraf 5:91; Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:53.

[6.](#) Tarikh At-Tabari 3:268.

[7.](#) The Holy Prophet's wives are called the mothers of the believers, because the Holy Quran has ordered all Muslims to consider them so, saying,

The Prophet has a greater claim on the faithful than they have on themselves, and his wives are (as) their mothers. (33:6)

Al-Zamakhshari, in his famous book of tafsir (exegesis of the Holy Quran) 3:251, quotes Mujahid as saying, 'Every prophet is as the father of his community; therefore, the believers are brothers of one another, because the Holy Prophet (S) is their father-in-faith. The Holy Quran has also likened the Holy Prophet's wives to the mothers of the believers in certain cases, such as the obligation of respecting them and the forbiddance of marrying them after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S).

Beyond such cases, they are not treated as blood relatives of the believers. From this cause, 'A'ishah is reported to have said, 'We, the Prophet's wives, are not the mothers of the believing women.' She meant that they are only as mothers for the believing men, because they are forbidden to have them as wives after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S). Confirming this fact, the daughters of the Prophet's widows are not forbidden to marry any Muslim man. [Translator]

[8.](#) Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 2:79.

[9.](#) Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 1:231.

[10.](#) Ibn Al-Athir, Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 3: 106.

[11.](#) Nahj Al-Balaghah, Epistle No. 54.

[12.](#) Tarikh Al-Tabari 3:475; Ibn Al-Athir, Al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 3:107.

[13.](#) Abdullah ibn 'Abbas has reported that the Holy Prophet (S), one day, said to his wives all of whom were present before him, 'Which one of you will ride the huge camel and the dogs of Al-Haw'ab will bark at her? To the left and right sides of her, so many people will be killed and all of them will be in Hellfire. She will barely survive that incident.'

This narration is mentioned in the following reference books: Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 2:297; Ibn Kathir, Tarikh 6:21; Al-Suyuti, Al-Khasa'is 2: 137.

Referring to this narration, Ibn Abd Al-Barr, in Al-Istiab, comments, 'This is one of the points that prove the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (S).'

[14.](#) Al-Mas'udi, Murju Al-Dhahab 2:347; Tarikh Al-Ya'qubi 2: 181.

[15.](#) Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:64.

[16.](#) Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:64.

[17.](#) Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahj Al-Balaghah 2:50.

[18.](#) Tarikh Al-Ya'qubi 2:157.

[19.](#) Muhammad Baqir Al-Mahmudi, Nahj Al-Sa'adah fi Mustadrak Nahj Al-Balaghah 4:55.

[20.](#) When he conquered Makkah, the Holy Prophet (S) gathered its people who were still unbelievers and asked them, 'What do you think I am going to do with you?'

Humble and fearful, they all answered, 'We expect goodness from you, for you are a noble brother and the son of a noble brother.'

Hence, the Holy Prophet (S), out of his magnanimity and generosity of spirit, said, 'Go! You are now released.' (Al-Bayhaqi, Ma'rifat Al-Sunan wa'l-Athar 7:61.) [Translator]

[21.](#) Al-Mahmudi, Nahj Al-Sa'adah fi Mustadrak Nahj Al-Balaghah 1:319-22.

[22.](#) Al-Haythami, Majma' Al-Zawa'id 7:235; Al-Khatib Al-Baghdadi, Tarikh Baghdad 14:322; Ibn 'Asakir, Tarikh Madinat Dimashq 20:361; Al-Qanaduzi, Yanabi' Al-Mawaddah 1:173; Abu-Ja'far Al-Iskafi, Al-Mi'yar wa'l-Muwaznah, pp. 28; Al-Hakim Al-Hasakani, Shawahid Al-Tanzil 2:481' etc. [Translator]

[23.](#) Described by the Holy Prophet (S) as the good and the son of the good, 'Ammar ibn Yasir was one of the contributors to the construction of the edifice of Islam and one of those whom were harshly persecuted for the sake of Allah. Among the Companions, he was known for his self-denial and wholehearted devotion to the truth. He also enjoyed a highly considerable standing with the Holy Prophet (S).

[24.](#) Sahl ibn Hunayf Al-Ansari (i.e. of the Ansar) Al-Awsi (i.e. of the tribe of Aws), whose nickname is Abu-Thabit, participated in the Battle of Badr as well as all the other military expeditions of the Holy Prophet (S). In the Battle of Uhud, he was one of the few warriors who remained steadfast rather than absconding from the battlefield like many others. He had sworn allegiance to the Holy Prophet (S) that he would follow him permanently and sacrifice his life for him. He was then one of the companions of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib ('a) who appointed him as his deputy governor of Al-Basrah. He then participated in the Battle of Siffin with the Imam who, afterwards, employed him as the deputy governor of Persia. He died in AH 38 and Imam Ali ('a) himself offered the ritual Funeral Prayer on his dead body. (Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalani, Tahdhib Al-Tahdhib 4:428)

[25.](#) 'Uthman ibn Hunayf Al-Ansari Al-Awsi participated in the Battle of Uhud and all the battles that followed. In his reign, 'Umar appointed him as the deputy land surveyor of some areas in Iraq. He thus did his job completely. Imam Ali ('a) then appointed him as the deputy governor of Al-Basrah. He moved to Al-Kufah. He died during the reign of Mu'awiyah. (Ibn Al-Athir, Usd Al-Ghabah fi Ma'rifat Al-Sahabah 3:376)

[26.](#) Sa'd ibn Al-Harith ibn 'Amr was one of the most virtuous companions of the Holy Prophet (S). He participated in the Battle of the Camel with Imam Ali ('a) and in the Battle of Siffin where he was martyred.

[27.](#) Jariyah ibn Qudamah ibn Zuhayr was from the tribe of Banu-Sa'd. He reported from the Holy Prophet (S) a number of his discourses. He participated with Imam Ali ('a) in the Battle of the Camel. The Imam ('a) sent him to Al-Basrah to fight Ibn Al-Hadrami whom Mu'awiyah had sent to occupy the city. Hence, Jariyah laid siege on Ibn Al-Hadrami and could kill him.

[28.](#) Abu-Mas'ud Al-Ansari was appointed by Imam Ali ('a) as the deputy governor of Al-Kufah. Imam Al-Husayn ('a) married one of the virtuous daughters of Abu-Mas'ud.

[29.](#) Abu-Umamah Al-'Abdi ibn Al-'Ajlan Al-Bahili participated in the Battle of the Camel with Imam Ali ('a) and reported that the Imam ('a) neither put to death any injured warrior, nor ran after any absconder, nor divested any killed person of his possessions or military personal equipments.

[30.](#) Known as Dhu'l-Shahadatayn (the two-testimony man: i.e. the man whose testimony alone is regarded as two testimonies, since one testimony is inadmissible in many lawsuits according to the religious law of Islam. The Holy Prophet considered Khuzaymah's testimony to be equal to two testimonies), Khuzaymah ibn Thabit belonged to the tribe of Aws. His nickname is Abu-'Abbad. He participated in the Battle of Badr and all the military expeditions that followed. He also fought to the side of Imam Ali ('a) in the Battle of Siffin. When 'Ammar was martyred in that battle, Khuzaymah unsheathed his sword and fought ceaselessly until he was martyred. He used to say: I have heard Allah's Messenger saying, 'Ammar will be killed by the transgressing group.' (Ibn Abd Al-Barr, Al-Istiab)

- [31.](#) Hashim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abi-Waqqas, a great Companion, entered Islam on the day of the Conquest of Makkah. In the Battle of Al-Yarmuk, he lost one of his eyes. In the Battle of Siffin, Imam Ali ('a) appointed him as a commander of a brigade. He was martyred in this battle defending Imam Ali ('a).
- [32.](#) Sulayman ibn Surad Al-Khuza'i is one of the loftiest companions of the Holy Prophet (S). His name was Yasar, but the Holy Prophet (S) gave him the name of Sulayman. After the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S), Sulayman moved to Al-Kufah. He participated in the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Siffin with Imam Ali ('a). He was one of those who revolted against the Umayyad rule after the martyrdom of Imam Al-Husayn ('a).
- [33.](#) Al-Ash'ath ibn Qays Al-Kindi, leading seventy persons from his tribe, came to the Holy Prophet (S) and declared conversion to Islam. Although he had participated with Imam Ali ('a) in the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Siffin, he deviated from the truth thereafter. He was one of those who played a negative role in the issue of raising the copies of the Holy Quran by the army of Mu'awiyah in the Battle of Siffin. Moreover, this man had many disgraceful situations with the Imam ('a).
- [34.](#) The son of the chief of the Ansar, Qays ibn Sa'd was one of the most prominent Companions. His father ordered him to serve the Holy Prophet (S). He participated with Imam Ali ('a) in all of his military campaigns. He is thus regarded as one of the pious and virtuous heroes of Islam.
- [35.](#) Abu-'Amrah's full name is Bashir ibn 'Umar and his mother is Kabshah the sister of Hassan ibn Thabit, the famous poet. He participated in the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Siffin where he was martyred.
- [36.](#) Hujr ibn 'Adi ibn Al-Adbar Al-Kindi, one of the most famous Companions in jihad and firm faith, visited the Holy Prophet (S) and participated in the Battle of Al-Qadisiyyah. He also joined Imam Ali ('a) in the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Siffin. He was one of the most sincere, most dedicated, and most loyal to Imam Ali ('a). When he conquered Marj 'Adhra', he was the first to declare the professions of Islam. Mu'awiyah killed him because of his loyalty to Imam Ali ('a).
- [37.](#) 'Amr ibn Al-Hamq Al-Khuza'i, one of the most famous Companions in jihad and struggle for Islam, was one of those who objected to 'Uthman ibn 'Affan. He participated in the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Siffin with Imam Ali ('a). When Mu'awiyah came to power, 'Amr was exposed to severe punishments and calamities. Ibn Ummi'l-Hakam killed 'Amr in the Arabian Peninsula and sent his head to Mu'awiyah. Giving vent to their anger, the Umayyad ruling authorities carried 'Amr's head and wandered about the cities.
- [38.](#) Known as the learned authority of the Muslim community (i.e. *habr Al-ummah*), Abdullah ibn 'Abbas was the Holy Prophet's cousin (i.e. son of his paternal uncle) and Imam Ali's consultant and assistant. He participated with the Imam ('a) in the Battle of the Camel, the Battle of Siffin, and the Battle of Al-Nahrawan.
- [39.](#) 'Ubaydullah ibn 'Abbas was only twelve years old when the Holy Prophet (S) passed away. For some time, Imam Ali ('a) appointed him as the deputy governor of Yemen. He participated in the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Siffin.
- [40.](#) Abdullah ibn Ja'far ibn Abd Al-MutTalibb is one of the most generous people of the Arabs. He participated in the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Siffin. More details of Abdullah's life account has been mentioned in the book of Lady Zaynab written by the author of this book.
- [41.](#) 'Umar ibn Abi-Salamah was nine years old when he met with the Holy Prophet (S). He participated in the Battle of the Camel with Imam Ali ('a).
- [42.](#) Ju'dah ibn Hubayrah ibn Abi-Wahab is the son of Hind the daughter of Abu Talib. He participated in the three battles of his maternal uncle, Imam Ali ('a).
- [43.](#) Muhammad ibn Habib Al-Qirashi, Al-Muhabbar, pp. 289-93.
- [44.](#) Al-Mahmudi, *Nahj Al-Sa'adah fi Mustadrak Nahj Al-Balaghah* 4:77-8.
- [45.](#) Muhammad ibn Zakariyya, *Waqi'at Siffin*, pp. 35.
- [46.](#) By Asma', 'A'ishah meant her sister (Asma' bint Abi-Bakr) who was the wife of Al-Zubayr. She therefore said these wailing words, because she thought that Imam Ali ('a) would certainly kill Al-Zubayr if any armed encounter would be broken out between them.
- [47.](#) Ibn Qutaybah, *Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah* 1:73.
- [48.](#) Al-Mas'udi, *Muruj Al-Dhahab* 2:246.
- [49.](#) Al-Buladhari, *Ansab Al-Ashraf* 1:180.
- [50.](#) Nasr ibn Muzahim, *Waq'at Siffin*, pp. 45.

[51.](#) Although his father was the head of the opponents of Imam Ali ('a), Muhammad the son of Abu-Bakr was one of the most faithful devotees of the Imam ('a). Muhammad's mother, Asma' bint 'Umays, was married by Imam Ali ('a) after she had been widowed, and thus Muhammad was brought up by the Imam ('a). In fact, history has not been fair to this great personality, because of his objections to his father who usurped caliphate from the Imam and to his sister 'A'ishah who led an armed campaign against the Imam ('a). [Translator]

[52.](#) Ibn Abd-Rabbih Al-Andalusi, in Al-'Iqd Al-Farid 4:326, states that the casualties of the Battle of the Camel were twenty thousands from the army of 'A'ishah and five hundred from the army of Imam Ali ('a). A similar number was mentioned by Al-Buladhari in Ansab Al-Ashraf 1:180.

[53.](#) Majalis Tha'lab, pp. 156.

[54.](#) In this statement, Imam Ali ('a) quoted the following holy Quranic verse:

And the dwellers of Paradise will call out to the inmates of Hellfire, 'Surely, we have found what our Lord promised us to be true. Have you too found what your Lord promised to be true?' They will say, 'Yes.' Then, a crier will cry out among them that the curse of Allah is on the unjust. (7:44)

[55.](#) Tarikh Al-Ya'qubi 2:256.

[56.](#) Ibn Abd-Rabbih, Al-'Iqd Al-Farid 3:103-4.

[57.](#) Ibn Qutaybah, Al-Imamah wa'l-Siyasah 1:80.

[58.](#) Al-Khawarizmi, Manaqib Abi-Hanifah 2:82-3.

Abu-Hanifah states, 'Undoubtedly, Ali is always right in all of the encounters he had to face. If Ali had not acted upon the religious process with regard to his manners of facing these opposing parties, none would have recognized the very religious duty under such circumstances. Unquestionably, Ali fought against Talhah and Al-Zubayr after they had breached the allegiance they had made to him. In the Battle of the Camel, he acted towards them with pure fairness. Of course, Ali is the most knowledgeable of all Muslims. Hence, to follow the Prophetic practice necessitated fighting the transgressing party.'

[59.](#) Al-Nawawi, Tuhfat Al-Muhtaj 4:110.

Ibn Hajar states, 'Those who fought against Ali in the Battle of the Camel and the Battle of Siffin had accused him falsely of collusion with the assassins of 'Uthman. Of course, Ali was innocent of this accusation and he is in reality too high to do so. In general, it is obligatory upon any Imam (i.e. leader of the Muslim community) to fight against the transgressing party, since the Sahabah (i.e. Companions) have unanimously agreed on this point. Following the example of Ali when he sent Abdullah ibn 'Abbas to ask the Khawarij about the reason for their mutiny against the legal ruler, an Imam is required to send to the transgressing party a decent, shrewd, and well-wishing person to have an idea about their opinion and the points they had not accepted from the Imam.'

[60.](#) Al-Juwayni, Al-Irshad fi Usul Al-'I'tiqad, pp. 433.

In this book, the author, who is known as Imam Al-Haramayn, states, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib was the true Imam when he held the position of leadership on the strength of the masses' demand. Those who fought against him were transgressors.'

[61.](#) Mahmud Abu-Rayyah, Shaykh Al-Masirah, pp. 173.