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Uthman's Reign

Muslims went to welcome Uthman in shock and anxiety and in an absolutely distressed condition. The goodly people were agitated and they feared for their religion and they considered the victory of Umayyads in the kingdom as the victory of powers opposed to Islam.

Dozy believes that the success of the Umayyads was the success of a group, which harbored enmity towards Islam. [1](#)

Whatever the Muslims had feared and dreaded became true because within a short time, Uthman's regime tried to make the Quraishites wealthy and that they may plan with their leaders and chiefs. And gave them many preferences and put them in control of the sources of the income of Muslims and land tax, and placed the finances of the kingdom at their disposal. They appointed to all the high posts in government, persons from Bani Umayyah and the clan of Abi Mui't and others from those who did not accord any value for the Almighty. So much so that confusion became supreme and corruption spread in all areas of the land.

Anyhow, when Ibn Auf hoisted Uthman as a caliph on the Muslims, Bani Umayyah and other tribes of Quraish converged on him and declared their complete support for the regime and they raised slogans in support of Uthman and with slogan raising they brought him to the mosque of the Messenger of Allah (S) so that he may announce the policies of his regime and make known his position regarding the external and internal matters. He climbed the pulpit and sat on the step where the Holy Prophet (S) used to sit, though Abu Bakr and Umar never sat on that level. Abu Bakr used to sit one step lower than the Prophet's and Umar used to sit yet another step lower. People remarked about this action of Uthman and some of them said, "Today mischief has taken birth." [2](#)

People listened with all their attention to the first political speech of Uthman, but when he saw the crowd he became nervous and did not know what to say. Taking control of himself he forced out a speech, which was nothing but a confused talk, not having any kind of novelty or point of enlightenment. Then he said, "So to say: The first ride is very difficult. We were not an orator. Allah knows that between whom and Adam is only a difference of one ancestor. Indeed it is a lesson." [3](#)

After that he came down from the pulpit with a pale face and confused condition. People looked at each other and started joking about him. And it is necessary for us that we discuss in detail about the personal qualities of Uthman and understand his political stances. It is also necessary that we undertake a brief study of the events of his reign that had definite effect on Islam and subjected the world of Islam to untold hardships and evils. We have no option but to state those facts because those events also affected the life of Imam Husayn (‘a) and they cast light from various angles on the tragedy of Karbala, which was itself a definite result of those events, which in turn was the consequence of distortion in the values of Islamic beliefs. And after this tragedy of Karbala, it became obvious for us that it was the result of those events that carried its important effects that had played a very important role in changing the principles of Islam.

Aspects of Uthman’s Personality

The most important and well known aspects of Uthman’s personality are as follows:

1. He was a man of weak will and he lacked determination and he did not have any sort of stability of determination through which he could have put his intentions into practice. Also he did not possess any strength to face and control undesirable situations in a time when the Umayyads had gained control over the reins of affairs and were in power in all the parts of the Islamic lands. And Uthman was not capable to take any definite step against them or do anything to restrain them from fulfilling their aims. On the basis of what historians have said he was in relation to them like a dead body in the hands of a funeral bath-giver. Marwan Ibn Hakam was the administrator of his affairs. He gave to whomsoever he liked and deprived anyone he wanted. He spent public wealth according to his whims and desires without paying any attention to Islamic laws. Uthman did not have any control or choice in the events faced by the regime because he had absolute trust in Marwan and had entrusted him with all the matters connected to rulership.

Ibn Abil Hadid quoting from his Shaykhs says, “In fact, it was Marwan who was the caliph and Uthman was only having the title of the caliph.”

Strength of determination has the perfect effect on the making of a personality of man and his stability and it imparts to him personal strength so that he may face the crises that he may come across in life. And it is impossible that a man bereft of this quality to be able to achieve any aim for the people or his nation. Islam has absolutely disallowed persons of weak determination from being appointed as community leaders. And such a person has been denied the right to rulership because he would do nothing but expose the community to hardships and calamities and make powerful people arrogant and they would be encouraged to disobey his commands and the community shall fall prey to dangers and problems.

Some historians have described Uthman to be a softhearted, weak, soft spoken and a pliable man. However all these traits were for his own people. As for those who opposed his regime he was

extremely hard-hearted and he exerted great pressure on them and tried much to subject them to oppression. He dealt with them in a merciless and cruel manner. For example he exiled Abu Zar from Medina to Rabadha, which was a place devoid of any kind of facilities for living, till finally Abu Zar departed from the world as a homeless alien.

Uthman also subjected Ammar Yasir, the prominent companion to a terrible torture and he issued orders that Ammar be given a severe beating that resulted in causing him hernia and police officers left him unconscious on the road. In the same way Uthman ordered his policemen to beat up the reciter of Quran, Abdullah Ibn Masood. They gave Abdullah Ibn Masood a severe lashing and broke many of his bones and threw him out. He was denied his share from the public treasury. In this way Uthman dealt with his opponents who dared to raise any voice of dissent.

Yes, he was very kind and generous to his clansmen from the Bani Umayyah and family of Abi Mui. He accorded them the tax collected from various provinces and imposed their authority on the people. He appointed them to all the important posts in his government.

2. The second prominent quality of Uthman was his favoritism and partiality towards his tribe and clan. He was so much concerned with their welfare that he accorded all sorts of facilities to them and it is said that if he had the keys to Paradise he would have given them also to Bani Umayyah. He granted them preference in public allowances and incomes. He entrusted them a great wealth and bestowed them millions from the public treasury and made them rulers in the Islamic provinces and lands. He received continuous complaints about them that they have forsaken the truth, oppressed people and spread corruption in the land. But he did not pay any attention and did not undertake any investigation in this regard. He used to reject the complaints reported to him and he turned the accusations upon the plaintiffs. We shall discuss these things in detail later.

3. The third aspect of Uthman's personality was that he was inclined to a life of luxury and enjoyment. He did not have any sort of inclination towards piety and religiosity, like the Messenger of Allah (S) was having. Thus he obtained for himself a life of opulence and riches and made for himself splendid palaces and he spent on himself whatever he desired from the Public Treasury. Finally he had amassed a great quantity of wealth without at all bearing any sort of hardship. Imam Amirul Momineen Ali ('a) has described him in the following way: "Like a satiated camel and bulging belly, he had no worry except hoarding wealth and misappropriating wealth from the Public Treasury." And it was one of the causes of objections against Uthman. We shall discuss this in detail in the topic of the economic policy of Uthman.

These were some qualities of Uthman due to which he failed in the sphere of politics and became a target of objections and criticism.

Administrative System of Uthman

The administrative systems that were in force during the reign of Uthman made the Quraish wealthy and

planning with the chiefs and leaders and followed a soft policy against the people of power and influence. It ignored their acts against the law. For example, Ubaidullah Ibn Umar committed intentional murder and he wrongfully murdered Hurzman, Jafifa and Abu Lulu's daughter. However, Uthman closed his investigative file and issued a special order regarding him in order to appease Umar's family. This step became a cause of much criticism and Imam Amirul Momineen Ali ('a) went to Uthman to voice his objection and petitioned him to punish Ibn Umar. Miqdad also demanded similarly but Uthman paid no attention to this. Ziyad Ibn Labid, whenever he met Ubaidullah he used to say:

"There is no escape for you and Uthman's refuge is not your security. By Allah, you have shed innocent blood and the murder of Hurzman is a serious matter."

You killed him for no reason merely on the report of a reporter. Do you blame Hurzman for the murder of Umar?

The foolishness dominated him and he said, 'Yes, I blame him for it as he had issued orders for it.'

While the weapon of that man was in his house and he was roaming about here and there and every fact is established through a proof."

Ubaidullah complained to Uthman and he summoned Ziyad and told him to abstain from this but he did not obey. Ziyad criticized Uthman also and said,

"O Aba Amr, Ubaidullah is responsible for Hurzman's murder.

Thus if you forgive his crime the causes of the crime are inter related.

In that case you would have wrongly forgiven him and you had no right to do so."[4](#)

Uthman became angry with Ziyad and told him to restrain from such statements. He also warned him of dire consequences and Ziyad stopped himself.

Then he sent Ubaidullah from Medina to Kufa and allotted a piece of land and that area became known by his name and it was called, "Kufiyat Ibn Umar" (Ibn Umar's part). These steps brought objections on Uthman from the righteous and religious people because they saw that the caliph has committed a clearly unlawful act in order to appease the Khattab family.

Anyhow, the administrative policies of Uthman's reign were under the absolute control of the selfish desires of the Umayyads. It did not follow either the Quran or the practice of the Holy Prophet (S). Because the Umayyads used to unjustifiably interfere in the areas of the Ummah too much and they used to spread oppression in different provinces as Kurd Ali believes, that these official errors of Uthman were the most important of the causes that led to his murder.[5](#)

Officials and Governors of Uthman

Uthman tried to impose the family members and clansmen on the community and therefore he appointed them as officers and governors in the Islamic provinces.

Maqrizi says, “Uthman made Bani Umayyah the pivot of his kingdom.”[6](#)

Umayyads possessed no sort of administrative capability or qualification for discharging the responsibilities of rulership. And it was only this, which subjected the Islamic lands to hardships and corruption and injustice spread all around.

Historians say, “He encouraged his agents to misappropriate wealth from Public Treasury. For example Abu Musa allowed his officials to trade in the commodities of the people of Iraq.”[7](#)

Sayyid Amir Ali believes that Muslims had to bear untold hardships due to injustices of the rulers and embezzlement of public wealth.[8](#)

Here we present some specific instances of Uthman’s appointees:

1. Saeed Ibn Aas

Uthman appointed Saeed Ibn Aas as the governor of Kufa after dismissing Walid bin Uqbah on charges of imbibing wine. Thus this great province was put in charge of Saeed Ibn Aas. The Kufians welcomed their new ruler with disgust and without of any sort of joy. This was so because Saeed was a brat, brought up in the lap of luxury and opulence and he had no reservations against committing any kind of unlawful deed.

Historians say: Once in the month of Ramadan he asked the people, “Which one of you has seen the new moon?” A senior companion of the Holy Prophet (S), Hashim bin Utbah Mirqal stood up and said, “I have seen it.” But Saeed did not accord any importance to him and he addressed Hashim in a very crude and impolite manner, saying, “Have you seen it with this blind eye?”

Hashim was hurt by this and he protested, “You are taunting me for being blind in one eye, while it has gone in the path of Allah?” Actually he had lost one eye in the Battle of Yarmuk.

Hashim ended his fasts the next day in accordance with the saying of the Messenger of Allah (S) that: “Keep fast on sighting the new moon and end them on sighting the new moon.” The people also followed the example of Hashim and ended their fasts and this information reached Saeed. He summoned Hashim at once and had him beaten severely and then had his house burnt to ashes. This matter caused much hurt to the people and they voiced their objection because Saeed had wrongly punished a standard-bearer of Islam.[9](#)

Saeed exceeded all limits in oppression and cruelty because it is quoted from him that he said: “This

province (Kufa) is a rebel against the Quraish.” This statement of his caused much displeasure and anger among the people. The leader of the noble ones, Malik Ashtar rebutted him, saying, “Do you consider our swords, that Allah has made a channel of our livelihood to be rebels against your people and yourself? By Allah, if anyone desires he shall be defeated and suppressed in such a way that he would be humiliated and disgraced.”

The deviated regime that was imposed by the sword has blamed the righteous members of the community to be rebels against the Quraish, while it was Quraish, which had confronted Islam and made war against it.

The Qaris and jurists of the province supported their leader Malik and seconded his statements. They all voiced their objections against the oppressive policies of the governor. The police chief of Saeed became angry and he scolded them in a severe manner. They pounced upon him and delivered a terrible beating in such a way that he lost his consciousness. Then he got up and left the gathering. The people chastised him and criticized the policies of Uthman. They also mentioned the defects of Quraish and the evils of Bani Umayyah to the public.

Saeed, at once, wrote a letter to Uthman and informed him about the situation. Uthman wrote in reply that he must expel those people to Syria. And at the same time he wrote to Muawiyah that they must be taught a lesson.

These freedom fighters had not committed any crime or created mischief or oppression that they should be punished for their acts. They had only criticized their ruler because he had spoken against the truth and he had deviated from the Straight Path. While Islam has allowed full freedom of speech against the rulers and governors, whenever they may stray from the path and oppress the people. This freedom is the right of every citizen and the government is commanded to respect this right and that people are accorded this freedom.

Anyhow, the administration forced the people towards Syria and there Muawiyah had them arrested and lodged in a church. They were given a counselor and he began to debate with them. He advised and encouraged them to become obedient and cooperative with the ruler. However they did not accept his counsel and they objected to him against the statement of Saeed that the province of Kufa was a garden of Quraish. With this they announced that the Quraish tribes did not have any sort of preference that they should reserve the fruits of the land for themselves.

When Muawiyah failed to convince them he excused himself from Uthman from keeping them in Syria. It may not be that those people cause harm to Muawiyah's rule.

Uthman excused him and ordered him to send them back to Kufa. When they returned to Kufa they began to again speak against the evils of Umayyads.

Saeed again reported the circumstances to Uthman and Uthman wrote back saying that they must be

exiled from there and taken to Homs and Algeria. Thus they were exiled from their land and sent to Homs and the governor of that area Abdur Rahman bin Khalid spoke to them in the most terrible manner. He imposed them to the worst possible hardships and tortured them as much as he could. On the basis of what narrators say, when Abdur Rahman rode his horse he used to command them to run alongside so that he may succeed in humiliating them in the worst manner.

When they saw this cruelty of his, they agreed to become obedient to their ruler and he wrote to Uthman about it. Uthman replied that they should be returned to Kufa.

When they were sent out of Homs, they changed their route to Medina in order to meet Uthman in person. After reaching there they met Uthman and reported to him the tortures and oppressions of Saeed. But not much time had passed when they saw Saeed there who had come to Uthman for some official work. Saeed saw that group complaining about him to Uthman and requesting him to depose Saeed. However Uthman did not accept their petitions and ordered them to obey the command of their ruler. He also ordered Saeed to go back and continue his job.

This group departed for their country before Saeed and reached there before him. After reaching there they made a vow that as long as they had their swords with them they would not allow Saeed to enter their town. After that they came out with a group of Muslim people under the leadership of Malik Ashtar and reached a place called al-Juraa and camped there in order to prevent Saeed from entering Kufa.

When Saeed reached there they pounced upon him and spoke with him in a severe tone and told him not to enter their city. Saeed ran towards Uthman and complained to him. Uthman had no option but to dismiss Saeed. So he dismissed him from the post and appointed in his stead another governor much against his own inclination. [10](#)

Anyway Uthman subjected to great harassment and torture those who had opposed Saeed, while these people were reciters of Quran and jurisprudents in the country. He exiled them from their homeland for the sake of an uncouth and wayward brat only because he was a relative of Uthman's. This matter became the cause of objections against Uthman not only in Kufa but also in all the Islamic territories where he had appointed his clansmen.

2. Abdullah bin Aamir

Abdullah bin Aamir bin Kareez was the son of Uthman's wet nurse. Uthman appointed him as governor of Basra after Abu Musa Ashari was dismissed from that post. At that time Abdullah was only about 24 or 25 years old when the governorship of that important province was entrusted to him. [11](#) Although it would have been better if a senior and trustworthy companion had been given the charge of that area so that people may have benefited from his guidance, advice and piety and they would have received the advantage of his righteousness and uprightness. However, Uthman did not pay attention to this aspect and he sent Abdullah there with the sole justification that he was the son of Uthman's wet-nurse. According to reports of narrators Abdullah lived a life of luxury and wasteful expenditure. So much so

that Ashari remembers him to be a man of no reservations. [12](#) He was the first one to wear fur clothes. He put on a dark colored cloak and people said to him: O chief, you are wearing bear fur. So he changed his clothes and put on a red cloak. [13](#)

Aamir bin Abdullah Tamimi criticized his policies and actions and he also denounced the behavior and character of Uthman. Tabari has narrated that some Muslims gathered and a meeting was arranged to discuss the actions of Umayyads. They decided to send a person to Uthman directly so that he may speak to him and make him aware of his deeds. They selected Aamir bin Abdullah to meet Uthman. When Aamir met Uthman he said:

“A group of Muslims had come together to study your actions and they saw that you committed very serious blunders. Hence, fear Allah, the Mighty and the Sublime; turn back to Him and refrain from such an act”

Uthman considered him lowly and turned his face away from him and told those were around him, “Keep an eye on this man. People claim that he is a reciter of Quran while he comes and asks me about something that has no head or tail. By Allah, he does not know where Almighty Allah is.”

Now who was the one who had asked about something that had no head or tail? He did not speak to Uthman except with regard to the fear of God and for justice among the people and he accorded preference to the benefits of Muslims and following the practice of the Messenger of Allah (S). However this matter was very despicable for Uthman and he considered his statement to be an ignorant question.

Aamir looked at Uthman and asked mockingly, “Do I not know where God is?” “Yes,” replied Uthman.

Aamir said, “I know that the Almighty Allah is in ambush.”

Uthman became infuriated and he summoned his advisors and officers and told them about the objections his opponents had leveled against him and also informed them about the statement of Aamir. Then he requested them to offer their suggestions. So the son of his wet-nurse, Abdullah bin Aamir gave a proposal and said, “O Amirul Momineen, my opinion is that you order him to go for the Jihad so that they become involved in it and make him busy in fighting battles. Thus they would not be after you all the time. And that in which they shall be involved except in their wounds and injuries”

Others expressed their own ideas, however Uthman accepted the suggestion of Abdullah that was necessary to deal with the opponents with severity and strictness. He also sent away his officials with instructions to deal with the opponents with absolute severity. He also ordered them to arrest the people through military action and decided to deprive them of their allowance so that they are reduced to poverty and thus they may be forced to obey him. [14](#)

When Abdullah bin Aamir returned to Basra he decided to take revenge from Aamir bin Abdullah, so he summoned his supporters and ordered them to give a false testimony about him. He leveled false

accusations and allegations against him that he opposes the Muslims in matters that are permitted by God. And that he does not eat meat, and does not believe in matrimony and does not attend the Friday prayers. [15](#) He wrote down their testimony regarding this and sent it to Uthman. Uthman ordered that he be expelled to Syria. Hence he was put upon a packsaddle so that he has a painful journey.

When he reached Syria, Muawiyah lodged him at al-Khizra (the green palace) and sent a slave maid to him so that she may keep him under surveillance and report his activities and matters.

That slave maid kept him under surveillance and she observed that he rises up in the night in prayers and he comes out at dawn and after darkness he goes back. He did not eat anything provided by Muawiyah. He only dipped pieces of bread in water and ate them so that something unlawful may not enter his stomach. The slave maid reported the situation to Muawiyah and he wrote a letter regarding him to Uthman and Uthman ordered him to present some gift to Aamir. [16](#)

Muslim people blamed Uthman with regard to this righteous man who had advised for the fear of God and for justice among the people.

Abdullah bin Aamir in the same way remained the governor of Basra and he behaved with them in a style quite unfamiliar to Muslims. He did not omit any kind of sin, injustice and crime. When Uthman was murdered he plundered the public treasury and fled to Mecca. There he joined hands with Talha, Zubair and Ayesha and helped them financially so that they may gather forces to confront Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a). It was also Aamir who suggested them to march towards Basra and he dissuaded them from going towards Syria. [17](#)

3. Walid bin Uqbah

After Saad bin Abi Waqqas Zuhri was dismissed from the governorship of Kufa, Uthman appointed Walid bin Uqbah as the governor of Kufa. Historians are unanimous that he was a transgressor from Bani Umayyah and he was the most corrupt and most deviated one from Islam among them. The Holy Prophet (S) had informed that Walid shall be an inmate of Hell. [18](#) Walid’s father, Uqbah was one of the staunchest enemies of the Messenger of Allah (S). He used to bring entrails and lodge them at the Prophet’s door. [19](#) And he was also the one who spat on the blessed face of the Prophet. The Prophet had warned him that whenever he is found beyond the mountains of Mecca he would order him to be put to death. When the battle of Badr was near he refused to leave Mecca but his friends insisted that he accompany them. Uqbah told them about the Prophet’s warning but they deceived him and told him, “You are having a red-haired camel that none can catch. Hence if there is need to flee you may mount it and flee from there.” Thus he accepted their suggestion and went forward to participate in the battle against the Messenger of Allah (S). When the Almighty Allah routed the polytheists, Uqbah’s camel threw him on the sandy ground and the Muslims were easily able to arrest him. His Eminence commanded Ali to strike off his neck and Ali (‘a) stood up and sent the horrible fellow to Hell. [20](#) Therefore the whole being of Walid was full of hatred towards the Prophet because His Eminence had put his

father, Uqbah to death. Walid became a Muslim with those infidels of Quraish under the threat of the sword that had slain his father.

The Holy Quran has called Walid by the appellation of ‘transgressor’. Historians and commentators of Quran have stated that the following two verses were revealed about him:

First: The Almighty Allah says: “O you who believe! If an evil-doer comes to you with a report, look carefully into it, lest you harm a people in ignorance, then be sorry for what you have done.”[21](#)

The reason for the revelation of this verse was that the Holy Prophet (S) sent Walid to Bani Mustaliq to collect Zakat funds. He returned to His Eminence and said that they have not given anything to him. His Eminence went to those people and the falsehood of Walid was exposed. The above verse was revealed to announce Walid’s transgression.

Second: The Almighty has also said in the Quran: ***“Is he then who is a believer like him who is a transgressor? They are not equal.”***[22](#)

The circumstances of revelation of this verse are that once a dispute occurred between Walid and Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) and Walid said to His Eminence, “Shut up! You are a child and I am senior in age. By God, I am having a tongue broader than you. I am having spears sharper than you and internal greatness more than you. And I am having more men than you in my tribe!!!”

His Eminence Ali (‘a) told him, “You shut up, because you are a transgressor.” Then the Almighty Allah revealed this verse about the two of them, Hissan bin Thabit has versified this incident in the following couplets:

“The Almighty Allah and the mighty Book has revealed about the dispute between Ali and Walid.

Thus it labeled Walid as ‘transgressor’ and the status of Ali (‘a) is of faith. Whoever is a believer and who recognizes God, can never be same as one who is a transgressor and sinner.

Thus Ali received honor by Allah and Walid was badly humiliated.

Walid shall soon be disgraced and sent to Hell and the reward of Ali is, without any doubt, Paradise.” [23](#)

When Uthman endowed him with the governorship of Kufa, he was openly imbibing alcohol. One day he came out of his palace in a state of intoxication reciting the following couplets that exposed his evil:

“I am not far from wine and the minstrel. Neither am I far from a dry place or goodness.

But I fill my mouth with wine and walk in a sober way among the people.”[24](#)

Narrators say: He used to listen to music and songs and he spent his nights in company of singers and merry-makers till the morning. He preferred to remain awake with a Christian friend of his from Taghlib

tribe named Abu Zubayd Tai. And he had given him a place to live in the mosque, which he later gifted it to him. Tai used to walk through the Mosque to meet Walid at night and enjoy wine there and after that he used to return in an intoxicated condition walking through the mosque again.[25](#)

Historians say that Walid drank wine and in a state of intoxication led people in morning prayers and instead of two recited four units (Rakats). While bowing and prostrating he recited: You drink and give me to drink. After that he vomited the Mihrab (Niche) of the Mosque and concluded the prayers. Then he turned to those behind him and asked, "You want me to make you recite more?"

Ibn Masood told him, "May Allah not increase your goodness and neither that goodness that He has sent you to us." At that moment Ibn Masood picked up one shoe of his and thrashed Walid's face with it. People began to pelt him with stones and he retreated to his palace while people were throwing stones at him. Walid was absolutely intoxicated and quite oblivious of all this.[26](#)

Regarding these defects and disgrace of Walid, Hatiya Jarwal bin Aws Absa has composed the following poem:

"On the day Hatiya meets the Lord he would testify that Walid is the foremost in deceit and misappropriation.

When his prayers concluded he screamed, "Shall I recite more?" And he was drunk and senseless.

He wanted to increase their good deeds. And if they had asked he would have recited more than ten.

O Abu Wahab, they did not accept. And if they had accepted they would have found the Shaf and Watr[27](#) joined together.

Your bridle was tightened when you moved, otherwise you would have continued to go on like this."[28](#)

Hatiya has also written the following couplets about him:

"He openly spoke in prayer and added some things in it.

He kept his mouth away from the practice of the devout of avoiding wine. When they were about to disperse he called out aloud:

Shall I recite more for you, so that you may praise me? And there is nothing good in it for me or you."[29](#)

A group of righteous and good people hastened from Kufa to Medina and complained to Uthman about Walid. They were carrying the seal ring of Walid that they had taken from him when he was senseless in intoxication.

When they met Uthman they swore and testified about what they had seen that Walid was a drunkard. Uthman chastised them and asked, "How do you know that he drank wine?"

They replied, “The same wine that we used to imbibe in the period of ignorance.”

In order to emphasize their veracity they gave to Uthman the seal ring they had seized from Walid when he was intoxicated senseless.

Uthman became angry and he arose and he pushed them by their chests and addressed them in the worst and the most acerbic tone.

They came out depressed and worried and went towards His Eminence, Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) and informed him about the matter. The Holy Imam (‘a) went to Uthman and said, “You have chased away the witnesses and rendered the penal code invalid?”

Uthman’s temper cooled down and he became fearful of the consequences of his actions. He glanced at the Holy Imam (‘a) and asked softly, “What do you suggest?”

His Eminence replied, “My opinion is that you summon your friend. Then if they testify against him in his presence and he does not have any argument, you must award him the penalty”

Uthman had no option but to accept Imam’s advice. So he wrote a letter to Walid and summoned him there. When Uthman’s letter reached Walid he set out for Medina. When he arrived to Uthman, he summoned the witnesses and they testified against Walid. Walid could not offer any justification and in this way he became liable for penalty but no one stood up to mete out the punishment due to the fear of Uthman. So Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) arose and went towards him. Walid abused the Holy Imam (‘a) and said, “O harmful and unjust man!”

Aqil stood up against Walid and replied to his abuses. Walid tried to catch hold of the Imam but the Imam pulled him and threw him on the ground. Then he lashed him with a whip.

Uthman became angry and he screamed at the Imam, “You have no right to do this to him.”

Imam replied to him in accordance with the logic of Shariah, saying, “Yes, it should be worse if he is a transgressor and if he prevents the right of Allah from being taken from him.”[30](#)

This incident proves how careless Uthman was in enforcing the law of the Shariah and how he had no concern about its establishment.

The respected teacher, Alaili, opines regarding this event as follows:

“This story is a new thing except for gift that is from affection which they do with us and the picture of concealing a religious thing as it was obligatory on the caliph that he should be the first one who should become angry at it. Apart from this his position shall be worth criticism and for the people shall be a ground for struggle and criticism against him. Especially his regime which came after the regime of Umar which was well-known for its severity and strictness. So much so that even if someone was related to

him he used to be strict on him or her also.

On the basis of this such exaggeration is not only affection, favoritism and nepotism so that people may come together to help him. Anyway, Walid left a bad effect on Kufa for the future generations because he gave impetus to all sorts of immoral activities.”[31](#)

Anyway, Walid left some effects in Kufa that were undesirable because his unbridled behavior was considered a model for others as some companions and companions of companions were also present in it. They transformed the city of Kufa to be a town of drunkards and people of vice because Walid had encouraged the people towards luxuries, wine, music and dance. Many areas of Kufa were opened for music and dance and the number of people of vice increased in the town. Among the singers was one Abdullah Ibn Hilal who became famous by the title of “Friend of Iblis (Satan)”. [32](#) And Hunain Khairi was a Christian poet.[33](#)

4. Abdullah Ibn Saad

Uthman appointed his foster brother, Abdullah bin Saad bin Abi Sarah as the governor of Egypt and gave the income and taxes of the province in his charge.[34](#)

He was from the most dangerous polytheists and the most inimical towards the Holy Prophet (S). No one had mocked the Prophet more than him and he used to ridicule His Eminence saying, “I can take him wherever I like.” The Messenger of Allah (S) has decreed that he should be killed even if he were found hanging with the curtain of the Holy Ka’ba.

After the conquest of Mecca he fled and took refuge with Uthman and Uthman offered him protection. When the people of Mecca calmed down Uthman brought him to the Prophet. His Eminence remained quiet for a long time and after that he accorded him security and forgave him.

When Uthman went away from there the Prophet told his companions, “I did not remain quiet but to enable one of you to get up and kill him.”

A man from the Ansar asked His Eminence, “O Messenger of Allah (S)! Why did you not signal to me?” He replied, “It is not advisable for the Prophet to glance in a deceitful way.”[35](#)

When Abdullah got the governorship of Egypt he began to deal with the Egyptians with anger and oppression. He imposed more duties and responsibilities than they could bear and he began to practice arrogance and selfish behavior. The people became fed up with him. A group of righteous people hastened to Uthman and complained about Abdullah.

Uthman wrote a letter to Abdullah and denounced his policies and behavior in that province. However Abdullah did not give much importance to this letter and he continued to behave in the same oppressive and arrogant manner. He also got killed the person who had carried the complaint to Uthman. This gave more impetus to anger and discontent of the people. An organization of senior people among the

Egyptians was formed and its members, according to narrators, numbered seven hundred.

They all rushed to Uthman and they reached the Mosque. They reported to the companions about the behavior of Ibn Abi Sarah. Thus Talha went to Uthman and spoke to him in an acerbic tone. Ayesha also sent a message to him that he must dispense justice to that delegation. Imam Amirul Momineen Ali ('a) also told him, "This delegation wants a person in the place of another person (they want Uthman to replace the governor), that regarding him they demand retaliation of murder. So you must depose him and judge among them. Then if they are entitled to a right you must accord it to them"

Uthman accepted it unwillingly and he said, "You select a person whom I can appoint as your governor."

People suggested the name of Muhammad bin Abi Bakr and Uthman wrote a letter of appointment for him as the governor of Egypt and he sent it with some people of the Muhajir and Ansar so that they may judge between him and Ibn Abi Sarah.[36](#)

They departed from Medina but when they reached the area known as Homs, they saw a messenger coming from Medina. When they investigated, they found that he was, Warish, Uthman's slave. So they subjected him to interrogation and found that he was carrying a letter of Uthman for Ibn Abi Sarah. In the letter, Uthman has ordered Ibn Abi Sarah to suppress and punish the members of this delegation. When they studied the letter and pondered over it, they realized that it was a trick of Marwan. They returned to Medina with the intention that they would either depose Uthman or put him to death.

5. Muawiyah bin Abi Sufyan

Uthman did not appoint Muawiyah as the governor of Syria. It was Umar who had appointed him. Uthman only confirmed the post of Muawiyah in Syria. However, he gave him additional powers and influence. In the words of Taha Husayn he cleared the way for him to reach to caliphate. "There is no doubt that Uthman prepared the ground of Muawiyah so that one day he may transfer the caliphate to the family of Abu Sufyan and make it established in the clan of Bani Umayyah. For it was Uthman who increased the sphere of Muawiyah's influence. He added Palestine and Homs to his dominions and created for him a vast area in Syria. He was given the command of military forces all around and his army became more powerful than the Muslim army. And also, like Umar, he allowed him to remain in the seat of governorship for a long time. Uthman gave him more powers than he had during the reign of Umar. When the mischief increased Muawiyah thought that his kingdom was greater than any other kingdom and that he was the most powerful ruler with regard to military power and domination on the people."[37](#)

On the basis of this, Uthman himself was the one who increased the influence of Muawiyah and spread the limits of his dominions so he became the most powerful, influential and strongest ruler having under his control the most important, stable and prosperous province in the Islamic lands.

The above was the account of some of the governors under the reign of Uthman. They were all from

Bani Umayyah and the clan of Abi Mui. And they were given the post of governorship only because of favoritism and partiality for them and to strengthen the influence of the Umayyads and to bring under their control the destinies of the Muslims. Sayyid Amir Ali has commented as follows regarding the governors of Uthman: “These were the men whom the caliph favored! They fastened to the provinces like famished leeches, heaping up wealth by means of pitiless extortion.”[38](#)

Economic Policies of Uthman

The economic policy of Uthman was the continuation of the policy of Umar.[39](#)

There was nothing new in it except what Umar had founded that it was the very creation of class systems and preference of some over others in matters of allowances. This policy had deviated from that which Islam had promulgated in the necessity of observing moderation, public welfare, economic independence, fight against poverty and securing needs of the weaker sections and needy people. Because the rulers do not have any right to appropriate for themselves anything from public wealth, or that they may use it for strengthening their rulership or personal influence, and Islam has been very severe and strict in this regard. The Messenger of Allah (S) has said, “On the Day of Judgment the fire of Hell shall be for those who wrongfully misappropriate public wealth.”[40](#)

Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) has written in letter to his governor in Mecca, Qatham bin Abbas that he must endeavor to establish truth and justice in the land. This letter has explained the economic policy of Islam. The letter is as follows:

“Beware of the Public Treasury. Spend its money on the poor people of your province. Find them out (if they do not come to you) and meet their necessities. If any surplus amount is left over after such expenditure then send the amount to the centre so that it may meet the requirements of the poor throughout the State.”[41](#)

The method of Islam, especially with regard to the government funds was that the governor was duty bound to spend on the welfare of the people in different localities and also spend it on the needy people so that no deprived or needy person remains in the Islamic lands. However Uthman did not accord any importance to this point. Rather he distributed public wealth among the nobles, the rich, the Bani Umayyah and family of Abi Mui. Such that huge wealth amassed with them and they remained busy in spending it’

Yes, the huge wealth that was collected at the central treasury was given away to the Umayyads and they used to claim that it is their property and not the property of the country, because they had bestowed all the superiorities to themselves. A sketch of wealth that Uthman had bestowed to them and others is presented below:

Uthman’s Bestowals to the Umayyads

Uthman restricted the wealth for the Umayyads and presented them with great bestowals as follows:

1. Harith bin Hakam: Uthman gifted the following things to his son-in-law who was married to his daughter, Ayesha:

A. 300000 dirhams^{[42](#)}

B. Camels that reached Medina by way of Zakat were given to him.

C. He gifted him a market in Medina known by the name of Nahruz while the Holy Prophet (S) had given it as a charity for all Muslims.^{[43](#)}

2. Abu Sufyan: Uthman allotted 200000 from the public treasury to Abu Sufyan, the leader of the hypocrites.^{[44](#)}

3. Saeed bin Aas: Uthman paid 100000 dirhams to Saeed bin Aas.^{[45](#)}

4. Abdullah bin Khalid: Abdullah bin Khalid bin Usaid married Uthman's daughter and Uthman ordered that 600000 dirhams be given to him. And he wrote to his governor in Egypt that the money be paid out of the Public Treasury.^{[46](#)}

5. Walid bin Uqbah: Walid bin Uqbah was Uthman's half-brother related through his mother. He had bestowed a large sum from the Public Treasury through Abdullah Ibn Masood who was the treasurer. Later Abdullah asked him to repay the loan but he did not return the sum. Instead he wrote a letter to Uthman complaining about Abdullah. Uthman wrote a letter to Abdullah, which mentioned as follows: Know that you are our treasurer; so do not say anything that has been given to Walid.

Ibn Masood became angry; He threw down the keys and said, "I was under the impression that I am the treasurer of Muslims. So if I were to be your treasurer, I have no need of it." After that he tendered his resignation and settled down in Kufa.^{[47](#)}

On the basis of this we can say that the Public Treasury in the parlance of Uthmani policy was the property of the Umayyads and not related to the Muslims. We leave the judgment regarding this matter to the readers themselves.

6. Hakam bin Abil Aas: This filthy horrible creature was the worst foe of the Messenger of Allah (S), hence His Eminence had exiled him from the country and said, "He should not live at the place I reside." During the period of Abu Bakr and Umar he remained exiled from Medina along with his sons in the same way. As soon as Uthman became the caliph he issued amnesty to Hakam and he returned to Medina in such a way that he brought only a goat with him and he was wearing a worn-out dress. Thus when he arrived to Uthman, Uthman presented him with a fur cloak and a rich and costly dress.^{[48](#)} He also gave him 100000 in currency^{[49](#)} and appointed him as the collector of Zakat from the Qaza-a tribe, which amounted to 300000. This amount was also gifted to Hakam.^{[50](#)}

Uthman's generosity towards Hakam made all the Islamic groups critical of Uthman and they all objected to these policies of the caliph.

7. Marwan bin Hakam: Marwan bin Hakam was the vizier and the special advisor of Uthman and all the important matter connected with the regime were in his charge. He also got a huge quantity of wealth in his control. The following items were bestowed by Uthman:

A. One-fifth of the booty of Africa, which amounted to 500000 dinars was allotted to Marwan. The people went against Uthman due to this matter.

Abdur Rahman bin Hanbal, the revolutionary poet has composed satirical verses about him as follows:

“By Allah Almighty, indeed I swear that I have not been left free without a purpose.

However you created mischiefs for us so that you may become experienced as you did become experienced.

Because the two trustworthy ones have described the illuminated path for guidance.

They did not secretly take away a single dirham and neither did they keep a single dirham for selfish needs.

You have recalled that accursed fellow and made him your confidant, very much against the existing practice.

And you gave the Khums money of Allah's servants (Muslims) to Marwan so that he may oppress them and you have resorted to nepotism.[51](#)

B. Uthman provided him with a thousand and fifty *Awqiya* [One *awqiya* equals seven *mithqals* approximately] of precious metal. But it is not known whether it was gold or silver. However the fact is that this allotment created a great furor in the community and Uthman was much denounced for this misplaced generosity.[52](#)

C. He gave him 100000 from the Public Treasury. It infuriated the treasurer Zaid bin Arqam so much that he returned the keys to Uthman and began to weep. So Uthman scolded him and said, “Are you weeping because I have done a good deed to my relatives (*Sile Raham*)?”

He replied, “Rather we are weeping because the money you would have spent in charity during the time of the Holy Prophet (S), the same money you have taken away. Even if you had given only a hundred dirhams to Marwan, it would have been too much.

Uthman screamed at him, “Give up the keys, we'll appoint someone else in your place.”[53](#)

D. Uthman bestowed the property of Fadak to Marwan.[54](#)

E. He also allotted him the Khums money of Egypt.[55](#)

These were some examples of the misplaced generosity of Uthman towards the Umayyads, which brought vehement denouncements of the Muslim community. The senior members of public and those who were righteous and noble personalities became infuriated at Uthman. This was so because that family had always been inimical towards the Almighty Allah and His Messenger and they had always fought against Islam. Hence it was absolutely against truth and justice that the wealth of Muslims and their incomes be reserved especially for the Umayyads, while it was a time when poverty was widespread in all the regions of the Muslim community.

Uthman's Generosity to Nobles

Uthman endowed huge wealth to all those nobles and aristocratic personages whose power he feared. The following are some of the major bestowals of Uthman to the influential people:

1. Talha: Uthman presented 200000 dinars to Talha[56](#) while he already owed 50000 to him. So Talha asked, "Take back what I owe you." However Uthman wrote off the amount and said, "O Abu Muhammad, it is to honor you for your valor."[57](#)

2. Zubair: The caliph issued 600000 units of currency to Zubair, such that he was astounded at the time of receiving them and inquired about this wonderful matter so that he may put to use what he had received. He told him that it was to enable him to build mansions in provinces and cities.[58](#) Thus Zubair built eleven houses in Medina, two in Basra, one in Kufa and one in Egypt![59](#)

3. Zaid bin Thabit: The third caliph presented a huge amount of wealth to Zaid bin Thabit. Such was the spread of his wealth that when he died he left behind such a huge quantity of gold and silver that it had to be broken up into pieces by sledge hammers. And this was in addition to the landed property that he left and its value was around 100000.[60](#)

Uthman also bestowed other properties to those who supported his regime like Hissan bin Thabit and others, about whom the historians have written in detail and these properties remind us of the millionaires of our time.

The wealth of some companions increased so much that some of them feared that the Almighty Allah would reduce their rewards in the Hereafter. Khabab bin Arat says: "I was with the Messenger of Allah (S) and I did not have any wealth but now I have in box in a corner of my house containing 4000 Wafi,[61](#) and I fear that Almighty Allah be repaying our good deeds in this world itself. (So nothing would remain for us in the Hereafter). Faan Flutton believes that this economic policy led the people to a life of luxury and created every sort of mischief and corruption.[62](#)

Allotment of Land to Feudal Lords

Uthman allotted tracts of land in Kufa to various persons while he knew that those lands were the property of Muslims because they were obtained through military expeditions.

He gave it to feudal person whether the land was in Kufa or beyond its limits. The lands were reserved for building houses and mansions and named "*Maskinal Wujuh*". He gave the following landed properties to a group of companions as follows:

Talha was granted the property, which became famous as *Dar-at-Talhain*. It was situated in al-Kanasa locality. The caliph gifted a huge landed property to Ubaidullah Ibn Umar and it took the name of Kufiyat Ibn Umar. He also made land endowments to Usamah bin Zaid, Saad, his nephew, Hashim bin Utbah, Abu Musa Ashari, Huzaifah Abasi, Abdullah bin Masood, Salman Bahili, Musayyab Fizari, Amr bin Hareeth Makhzumi, Jubair bin Motam Thaqafi, Utbah bin Umar Khazraji, Abu Jubair Ansari, Adi bin Hatim Tai, Jurair Bajali, Ashath Kindi, Walid bin Utbah, Ammar bin Utbah, Furat bin Hayyan Ajali, Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari and Umme Hani binte Abu Talib.

In the same way Uthman gave in ownership to some people some very profitable landed properties that were well known in history.

1. Talha bin Abdullah was given the property called *Nashasataj*.
2. Adi bin Hatim was granted the land of *Al-Radd Jaa*
3. Wail bin Hujr Hazrami was allotted *Radhiya Zaadar*
4. Habab bin Arat was gifted *Sa-abna*
5. To Khalid bin Arafta he gave land in Hamam Ayyim
6. Ashath Kindi got the landed property of *Zeez Nabar*
7. Jurair bin Abdullah Bajali was bestowed al-Jarfain, a piece of land on the banks of Euphrates
8. Abdullah Ibn Masood got a piece of property in *Nahreen*
9. Abdullah bin Malik Zuhri received the grant of the village called *Hurmuz*.
10. Ammar bin Yasir was handed over the land called *Asbeena*
11. Uthman also gave some land to Zubair Ibn Awwam
12. He issued the ownership of a piece of land to Usamah bin Zaid but he sold it later on. [63](#)

These were some of the lands, which Uthman had allotted to the feudal lords while some affluent people

had already purchased those lands and therefore the Iraqis were trying to get them back. While a group of noble class people were interested to purchase fertile lands of Iraq. Talha, Marwan bin Hakam, Ashath bin Qais⁶⁴ and some persons of Iraqi tribes purchased the lands till feudalism spread and huge feudal estates came into being. Slaves, prisoners and nobles gathered around landed properties and amassing of wealth, increase in relatives became apparent for some selected few. Sinoon and Faal Hauzen believe that allotments of these agricultural lands were made before the reign of Uthman.

In any case this great feudalism created the class system and it gave rise to a class struggle among the people of the community.

Appropriating Public Wealth for Personal Needs

Uthman exhausted the public treasuries and whatever he wanted he used to take it for himself and his family. Historians say: There were such precious jewels present in the public treasuries that it was not possible to compute their value. Uthman took them and with them got jewellery made for his daughters and wives.⁶⁵ He himself had gone so much ahead in extravagant expenditure that Muslims had not seen anyone like him. Because he got a house of brick and mortar made for himself in Medina and its door was made of teak and juniper wood. He also kept the funds, orchards and water springs under his control.⁶⁶

He got his teeth covered with gold and wore royal garments and he employed huge amounts from the Public Treasury for planting fields and making houses for himself.⁶⁷ When he was killed he had left 30 million dirhams and 150000 dinars with his treasurer. He also left behind 1000 camels and incomes of Bradis, Khaiber and Wadi al-Qura, which came to be 200000 dinars. He left all this when he died.⁶⁸

The economic policies followed by Uthman created a class system and it caused untold losses to the Muslims.

Muhammad Kurd Ali says, "This economic policy divided the people into two major classes. Firstly: A class which had a lot of wealth and they had nothing to do except indulge in vain pleasures and luxuries and secondly was the labor class who ploughed the land or worked as artisans. These people had to bear hardships and difficulties for their masters so that they may get some leftovers from their banquets. Absence of balance in economic life and loss of stability in political and social life were the two faces of reality of those times. The Umayyad regime followed this policy during their period of rule employed wealth in political matters. They used it as a weapon against their opponents and an instrument of pleasing their friends and supporters."⁶⁹

With this brief statement we conclude our discussion about the economic and monetary policy of Uthman which had deviated from the Islamic policy of observing austerity with regard to public wealth and the necessity of spending it on public welfare and the poor and the deprived sections in all areas of the Muslim dominions.

Opposing Groups

Muslims objected against Uthman most vehemently and the righteous and good people among them took severe steps to oppose him as he had been unduly partial to Bani Umayyah and the family of Abu Mui't and had imposed them over the Muslims. Uthman had also given in their charge the taxes of various provinces and government posts were all given to people of these families inspite of the fact that they continued their oppressions and injustices. Uthman did not take any step with regard to this. People criticized and complained to Uthman but he replied to them with abuses and insults.

The opposing group was divided into two types of people, right and left. Because Talha and Zubair and those attached to them were such that their opposition to Uthman was not based on a demand for social reform even though they pretended such a stance before simple-minded people and the general public. Rather their aim was to reach the seat of power and obtain the key positions in different areas in order to secure their incomes.

As for the other groups of opponents it consisted of senior personages of Islam and supporters of religion like Ammar bin Yasir, Abu Zar, Abdullah Ibn Masood and others like them who had fulfilled their covenants to their Lord and had given a good test in the path of religion. They realized that Uthman's regime has destroyed the Prophetic practice and enlivened innovation. And they saw that truthful persons are belied and in illegal way posts are given to people. In such a way that they themselves were asking Uthman to change his practice and follow the guidance and deal with truth among the Muslims. However he paid scant regard to them and if he had accepted their views many mischiefs and calamities would have been removed from the community.

Crushing the Opponents

Uthman resorted to absolute severity in crushing his political opponents and critics. He directed his fury upon them and reached to extremes in an endeavor to punish and hurt them. Some of those personages who fell prey to Uthman's fury were as follows:

1. Ammar bin Yasir

The status of Ammar in Islam is known to all because he was the companion and friend of His Eminence, the Prophet. He bore terrible tortures and most severe hardships in the path of Islam. The Quraish subjected Ammar and his parents to a severe torture. His parents were martyred in the path of religion and the Holy Quran has announced their excellences in the following verse:

"What! he who is obedient during hours of the night, prostrating himself and standing, takes care of the hereafter"⁷⁰

And the Almighty Allah has said regarding Ammar:

“Is he who was dead then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people”⁷¹

The Holy Prophet (S) accorded great respect and honor to Ammar and he was the recipient of respect and kindness from His Eminence. His Eminence heard that a person has spoken ill to Ammar, therefore His Eminence became very much disturbed by it and he said, “What does he have to do with Ammar? He invites them to Paradise while they call him to Hell fire. Indeed, Ammar is the skin between my eyes and nose (very respected). Whenever someone reaches this status, you must refrain from (disrespect to) him.”⁷²

When the Holy Prophet (S) left this world for the everlasting abode, Ammar became the most prominent companion of Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a); he attached himself to Ali (‘a) and became his servant. Ammar was of those who refused to give oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr because except for Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) he did not consider anyone eligible for the successorship of the Prophet.

When Umar imposed Uthman as the caliph on Muslims, Ammar was in the forefront of opposing and criticizing Uthman. The causes of Ammar’s stand were as follows:

1. When Uthman took for himself a special container having such precious jewels that it was not possible to find their value, Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) objected to it, and Ammar endorsed the stand of His Eminence. So Uthman addressed Ammar saying, “O son of Mutaka,⁷³ are you trying to insult me?” At that time he ordered his officers to arrest Ammar. They arrested him and took him to Uthman’s house and beat him up badly till he lost consciousness. After that they took him to the house of the mother of believers, Umme Salma. Due to the severity of the beating he did not regain consciousness till the time of noon and late afternoon prayers had lapsed. When he regained consciousness, he arose, performed the ritual ablution and performed the evening prayers and said, “Thanks be to God, this is not the first time that I am tortured for the sake of Almighty.”

Ayesha also became infuriated. She took out a strand of Prophet’s hair, one of his clothes and also a slipper and she said, “How soon have you abandoned the practice of your Prophet while his hair, clothes and footwear are still intact.” Uthman became so angry that he did not know what to say and how to have his mistakes excused.⁷⁴

2. Senior companions of the Prophet wrote a memorandum for Uthman in which they told him that he had deviated from the prophetic practice. They advised him to refrain from such tactics. Ammar took the document and came to Uthman. He read a part of the letter and then glanced at Ammar and asked him, “Have you come to me on their behalf?”

Ammar replied, “I am more concerned than them about you.”

Uthman said, “You lie, O son of Sumaiyyah!”

Ammar said, “By Allah, I am the son of Sumaiyyah and the son of Yasir.”

Uthman ordered his servants to tie up the limbs of Ammar and pull them apart. Uthman himself kicked Ammar so hard in the groin that he developed hernia, became weak and lost consciousness.[75](#)

3. When Uthman persecuted and suppressed the great companion of the Messenger of Allah (S), Abu Zar and exiled him to Rabadha where he passed away as a stranger in foreign land and the news of his passing away reached Medina, Muslims were shocked and aggrieved for Abu Zar. While Uthman mockingly remarked, May Allah have mercy on him.”

Ammar denounced this action of Uthman and said, “May Allah have mercy on all of us.”

Uthman became infuriated and he addressed Ammar in the worst possible manner and the most severe way saying, “O one whose father’s mouth foamed. Do you think I regret sending him to exile?”

Such a behavior hardly befits a commoner, what to say about Uthman, who claims that angels were ashamed of him?

Uthman instructed his servants to take away Ammar and torture and beat him up and exile him to Rabadha also. When they were ready to depart for Rabadha the Bani Makhzum tribesmen came to Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) and petitioned him to speak to Uthman and told him, “Fear Allah! You exiled a righteous person from the Muslims and he passed in that exile and now you want to exile him (Ammar) similarly?”

Uthman arose and shouted at the Holy Imam (‘a), “You are more deserving to be exiled.”

His Eminence said, “If you want to do it, go ahead.”

The Emigrants gathered around him and complained and criticized him. He accepted their plea and gave amnesty to Ammar.[76](#)

Uthman did not respect the status and position of Ammar that he had near the Holy Prophet (S) and his seniority in Islam. He committed excess upon him and tried much to torture and hurt him because Ammar enjoined justice and invited towards truth.

2. Abu Zar

Abu Zar was the companion and friend of His Eminence. He was of the senior– most companions of His Eminence who were at the forefront in Islam. He was the most pious of the people and he cared very little for the world and its benefits. The Messenger of Allah (S) considered him trustworthy at a time when he did not trust any of his companions.[77](#) The Prophet used to entrust him with all his secrets at a time when he did not disclose his secrets to anyone. He was one of the three persons whom the Almighty Allah loved and He also commanded His Messenger to love them. And he is of those three

persons,⁷⁸ for whom Paradise was eager.⁷⁹

When turmoil appeared during the time of Uthman, and the Bani Umayyah reserved the profits of the kingdom and the products of lands for themselves, Abu Zar in his capacity of being a Muslims believer chose the religion and criticized the policies of Uthman. He called Uthman so that there be a limit to corruption and spreading of disunity among the people. Uthman refused to follow his advice, but he did not give up. He continued his criticism in the same way. Regarding those who Uthman had given huge grants, he used to stand up and recite the verse:

“and (as for) those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah’s way, announce to them a painful chastisement.”⁸⁰

This statement angered Marwan Hakam because a huge wealth that Uthman had bestowed on him had amassed with him. He became highly annoyed with Abu Zar and complained about him to Uthman. Uthman summoned Abu Zar and deterred him from such behavior but Abu Zar did not agree to change his attitude. He said, “Does Uthman prohibit me from reciting the Book of God? By Allah, I cannot offend Allah for the sake of Uthman. The displeasure of Uthman is better for me than the displeasure of Allah.”

Uthman was infuriated and he was fed up with Abu Zar but he controlled his anger and waited for a chance to destroy his foe.

Abu Zar’s Imprisonment in Syria

The great companion of the Prophet continued to attack Uthman and from this course of action he had the pleasure of God in view and he desired the life of the Hereafter. He neither feared death nor was charmed by the life of this world. While Uthman harbored malice against him and finally deported him to Syria.

Historians say: Uthman asked the audience in his assembly, “Is it allowed for one to borrow some money from the Public Treasury and when it is possible to return it?”

Kaab al-Ahbar, a confidant of Uthman spoke up and gave a verdict to support the legality of that action.

Abu Zar found this matter unbearable because since Kaab had the nature of a Jew and his acceptance of Islam was doubtful, how could he interfere in religious matters? So he screamed at him, “O son of two Jews! Do you teach us our religion?”

Uthman became angry and took the side of Kaab and cried at Abu Zar, “How much has your pain increased and how painful you have become for my friends. Go to your place in Syria.”

Thus Uthman issued orders that Abu Zar be banished to Syria. But when Abu Zar reached Syria and witnessed the evils and innovations of Muawiyah that he had a free hand in using the wealth from Public

Treasury that was collected from the labors of people, he denounced Muawiyah. He also exposed the evil deeds of Uthman among the Muslims people. He also objected against Muawiyah when he said, "The wealth, is the wealth of God." And he told him, "The wealth is the wealth of Muslims." Abu Zar also protested against the construction of Muawiyah's palace, al-Khizra and said, "O Muawiyah, if this palace is being financed from the Public Treasury it is a breach of trust and if it is made with your money, it is extravagance"

Abu Zar invited the people towards an awakening and warned them against the politics of the Umayyads. He told the Syrian people, "By Allah, such innovations have gained currency these days as are not to be found in the Holy Quran or the traditions of the Prophet. By Allah, I see that the truth is being effaced and untruth is becoming stronger. Truthful people are being falsified and sinners are being given preference over the virtuous."[81](#)

People believed the statements of Abu Zar and testified as truth what he said. In this way he continued to enlighten the society and he called out for restoring the rights of the deprived. He encouraged the poor class to demand their rights from the ruling class.

The devil Muawiyah became fearful that a revolution might occur against him. Therefore he issued orders that nobody should be allowed to be in the company of Abu Zar or sit with him. He told Abu Zar, "O enemy of Allah, you incite people against us and do what you do? If I were to kill a companion of Muhammad without the permission of Amirul Momineen (Uthman), I would have killed you."

Abu Zar became very much infuriated and he replied, "I am not the enemy of Allah and neither an enemy of His Messenger. Rather you and your father are the enemies of Allah and His Messenger. You have accepted Islam outwardly and remain disbelievers inwardly"

Abu Zar continued his social activities and followed the course of causing a social awakening. He encouraged the people to rise up in revolt. Thus Muawiyah became angry and wrote a letter to Uthman and warned him of the danger of Abu Zar. He requested Uthman to recall Abu Zar to Medina. Uthman replied to him saying that he may send Abu Zar back to Medina making him ride on the bare back of a mischievous camel with a cruel driver so that he has as painful a journey as possible.

Muawiyah sent him with some servants who neither knew about the status of Abu Zar nor accorded him any respect. They did not permit him even the least relief. In this manner they were taking Abu Zar to Medina such that the skin of his thighs ruptured and he nearly died due to this terrible journey.

When he reached Medina he came to Uthman in a decrepit and emaciated condition. However as soon as Uthman saw him he started reviling him without having any regard for his status. He said, "It is you who have committed improper acts."

Abu Zar said, "I did nothing except that I gave you a piece of advice and you took it ill and sent me away from you. Then I advised Muawiyah. He also did not like it and he turned me out."

Uthman said, "You are a liar. You are nursing sedition in your mind. You want to provoke Syria against me."

Abu Zar advised him saying, "O Uthman, only follow Abu Bakr and Umar and nobody would say anything against you."

Uthman stood up and screamed at him, "What does it matter if I follow them or not? May your mother die."

Abu Zar said, "By Allah, you cannot accuse me of anything except that I direct people to do good and prevent them from doing unlawful acts."

At this Uthman was filled with rage and he said, "O courtiers! Advise me as to what I should do with this old liar? Should I punish him with flogging, send him to the prison, get him killed or exile him? He has created dissensions in the Muslim society."

Having heard this, Ali, who was present there became angry and said, "O Uthman, I heard the Messenger of Allah (S) say: There is no speaker, under the sky and upon the earth more truthful than Abu Zar."

Abu Zar did not pay any heed to Uthman and he continued his mission and went on voicing his opposition to the wrongs prevalent in the regime. He said, "You collect children to recruit them as soldiers and you adopt favoritism for your relatives and you make the children of emancipated slaves proximate towards you."

In the same way he informed the people about what the Messenger of Allah (S) had said regarding the defects and evils of the Umayyads and their danger to Islam. He said that the Holy Prophet (S) had said, "When the number of Bani Umayyah males rises to thirty, they will consider the cities of Allah as their booty and slaves of Allah as their own slaves and maids, and they will destroy the religion of Allah."⁸²

Uthman proclaimed that no one should be in the company of Abu Zar and he prohibited all to even converse with him because he enjoined good and forbade evil and he did not support Uthman's policies.

Abu Zar Imprisoned in Rabadha

Abu Zar continued his crusade and continued to flay the Umayyad policies and the Umayyads oppression and hardships did not weaken his resolve.

Uthman who was absolutely fed up with him, decided that Abu Zar be exiled from the Islamic lands and kept imprisoned in an uninhabited area. Thus he sent his officials and when Abu Zar came he at once addressed Uthman, "Woe be to you, Uthman. Have you not seen the Messenger of Allah (S)? Have you not seen Abu Bakr and Umar? Was their behavior also like this that you are behaving with me like

oppressors?”

Uthman interrupted him and shouted, “Get away from us and leave our cities and go away!”

“Are you banishing me from the sanctuary of the Messenger of Allah (S)?” “Yes, and it is so because you have become disgraced.”

“Shall I leave for Mecca?” “No.”

“To Basra?” “No.”

“Where should I go?”

“To Rabadha, till you die over there.”

After that Uthman ordered Marwan that he should be immediately taken out to Rabadha and added that he should be taken out in a humiliating manner. Muslims were prohibited to go after him or bid farewell to him. However righteous people did not accept it but that they should oppose Uthman’s orders. They trampled on Uthman’s proclamations. Thus His Eminence, Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a), Hasan and Husayn, Aqil and Abdullah Ibn Ja’far came forward to bid Abu Zar farewell.

Marwan went to Imam Hasan (‘a) and told him sternly, “Beware Hasan! Don’t you know that Uthman has ordered not to speak to this man? If you didn’t know it, know it now”

Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) stood up towards Marwan and slapped the ears of his mount and cried, “Get away, may Allah send you away to the fire of Hell.”

Marwan ran to Uthman and informed him that his command had been disobeyed and excess had been committed on him.

Statements of His Eminence, Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a)

Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) stood besides Abu Zar with tearful eyes and he bid farewell to him in words that described his personality, “O Abu Zar, you became angry for the sake of the Almighty. So repose hope in the One for whom you became angry. Those people dread for their life from you and feared from them for your religion. Thus you leave free in their hands that for which they feared you or that for which you feared them. Leave it! As how needy they are for that which you prevented them from and how needless you are from that which they prevented you from. And it shall be known tomorrow who has won and who shall be more vied? That if the heavens and the earth are closed for a servant and he had been pious, the Almighty Allah makes a way out for him. Nothing can give you consolation except the truth. The truth will be your companion in loneliness and you can get alarmed only by falsehood. Because if you had accepted their world they would have loved you, and if you had tore with your teeth a thing from them they would have given security to you”

These statements throw light on the revolution of Abu Zar, which stood for the sake of truth and for lofty principles that Islam had brought and those people feared him in that regard. It was so because they had usurped the wealth of the community and they played with the economy and their future. They became afraid of him. The Holy Imam ('a) appreciated this spirit in Abu Zar and requested him to go away with his religion so that he may remain safe from the mischiefs and evils of those people because he shall be successful and happy on the day of meeting the Lord in the Hereafter. While they shall be in loss as the Hell fire shall scorch their faces and they shall remain in it forever.

Words of Imam Hasan ('a)

Imam Hasan ('a) came forward to his uncle, Abu Zar and shook hands with him and extolled his revolutionary spirit. Then he spoke the following encouraging words that express the deep sorrow of His Eminence.

“Uncle! If it had not been preferable for one saying farewell to be silent and those who follow have to go back the statement would have been brief even though the pain may be prolonged. We are aware of the treatment meted out to you. So separate the world from yourself along with its remembrances and ignore its hardships with the hope in what is to come. Have patience at this calamity till you reach my grandfather while he is pleased with you.”

Statements of Imam Husayn ('a)

Imam Husayn ('a) came forward to Abu Zar while he was fully affected with grief and sorrow. Then he addressed him with these illuminated words,

“O my Uncle, you need not worry as Allah has power over everything to change what you see as Allah is in a new glory everyday. These people have kept their world from you and you kept your religion away from them. And how needless were you of that which they denied you and how needful were they of that which you denied them. Thus beseech the Almighty for patience and seek His refuge from impatience and greed, as patience is from religion and nobility and greed does not hasten sustenance and impatience does not delay death”

How remarkable were these words that exposed the stand of the Umayyads towards Abu Zar and their enmity towards him. Because they feared him for the sake of their worldly life and they were in dread of his lofty grades. The Imam advised him patience under all circumstances, as it does not delay death. Imam Husayn ('a) was decorated with these lofty morals on the day of the tragedy of Karbala. Neither he bowed to the Umayyads nor was he impatient in facing the great horrors and terrible calamities.

Ammar's Discourse

Ammar then stepped forward with his eyes brimming with tears and bid farewell to his friend and companion, Abu Zar, "May Allah not sympathize with him who has put you to great trouble and may He not give rest to him, who has made you restless. O Abu Zar, by Allah, if you had welcomed the world of the world-seekers, they would not have turned you out, and if you had approved of their conduct, they would have befriended you. When you stood firm to your faith, the seekers of the world grew weary of you. Don't be worried as Allah is with you. These are the unfortunate worldly-minded people who sustain the greatest loss"

After hearing these speeches Abu Zar burst into tears and he glanced for the last time on them and bid farewell to Ahlul Bayt (‘a), who had been sincere to him and he had been sincere to them. Then he spoke to them words that showed his deepest emotions:

"May Allah have mercy on you, O the blessed members of the Prophet's family. When I saw you, I remembered the Holy Prophet (S) and blessings surrounded me. O my revered ones! You alone were the means of solace to me in Medina. Whenever I saw you I got the satisfaction of my heart and peace of mind. O my elders! Just as I was a burden to Uthman in Hijaz, I was a burden to Muawiyah in Syria. He did not like to send me to Basra or Egypt, because he has his foster brother, Abdullah Ibn Abi Sarah as the governor of Misreen⁸³ and the son of his maternal aunt, Abdullah Ibn Aamir as the governor of Basra. He has now sent me to a place, which is a desert where I do not have any supporter other than Allah. By Allah, I know Allah alone is my helper and for Him alone I will not care for any wilderness"

At that time Abu Zar's mount began to move and headed towards Rabadha so that he may be taken away from the sanctuary of Allah (Mecca) and the sanctuary of His Messenger (Medina). His heart was filled with sorrow and grief and the separation from Ahlul Bayt (‘a) hurt him as they were the mementoes of the Holy Prophet (S) in his community.

Abu Zar went to Rabadha till finally he starved to death, while the wealth of the nation was in Uthman's control and he was giving it all to Bani Umayyah and the family of Abu Mui't but he prohibited it to Abu Zar, who was, in his guidance and manners, like His Eminence, Isa the Christ, the son of Maryam.

When Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) returned after bidding farewell to Abu Zar a group of people hastened to welcome him. They informed him that Uthman was enraged at His Eminence because he had opposed the orders of Uthman regarding speaking to Abu Zar and bidding him farewell.

His Eminence replied to them, "The horse's rage is on the rein."⁸⁴

Uthman went to the Imam and cried, "Why did you oppose my commands?"

"Yes, Marwan came to me to prevent us but I drove him away but I did not disobey your command."

“Did you not know that I had forbidden the people from bidding farewell to Abu Zar?”

“Is it incumbent for us to obey your orders even if they conflict with the obedience of Allah and the truth?”

“Pay up the penalty to Marwan.” “For what?”

“For slapping the ears of his mount.”

“My horse is over there. If he wants he can slap its ears like I did to his mount. But, by Allah, if he abuses me I shall abuse you in the same way. Not that it would have any falsehood in it except that it would be truth.”

Uthman: “Why should he not abuse you if have abused him? By Allah, you are not superior than him in my view.”

The Holy Imam (‘a) was shocked at Uthman who was so much obsessed by favoritism to his clan that he compares Ali (‘a) who was in relation to the Prophet as Harun was to Musa (‘a) with a lizard son of a lizard whom the Prophet had cursed while he was yet in the loins of his father.

Imam stood up and said to Uthman, “Do you say this to me? And compare me to Marwan? I am, by Allah, superior to you and my father was better than your father and my mother was better than yours. These are the calamities that I am bearing”

Uthman fell silent and failed to give any response and Imam (‘a) went away from there in sorrow and pain.

3. Abdullah Ibn Masood

Uthman suppressed Abdullah Ibn Masood, a prominent companion of the Holy Prophet (S) in the worst manner and harassed him as much as he could. Its reason was the same that we have described in the topic of Walid bin Uqbah’s governorship in Kufa. It was so because when Walid refused to repay the amount he had taken from the Public Treasury, Abdullah protested against him. Walid lodged the complaint regarding Abdullah Ibn Masood with Uthman and Uthman denounced Abdullah Ibn Masood for it. In response Abdullah resigned from his post as treasurer and went to Medina. When he reached Medina, Uthman was atop the pulpit delivering a sermon. When his eyes fell on Abdullah Ibn Masood he addressed the Muslims, “A terrible beast is coming towards you. Wherever he goes to eat he vomits there.” (That is he is thankless to his benefactors).

Ibn Masood rebutted him and said, “I am not such! Rather I am the companion of the Messenger in the battle of Badr and the Allegiance of Rizwan.”

Uthman’s statement created a wave of rage and displeasure among the people and Ayesha expressed

her anger and said, “O Uthman, do you say such things about the companion of the Messenger of Allah (S)?”

Uthman ordered his officials to expel that great companion from the Masjid and they drove him out of there in a very humiliating manner. A slave of Uthman, Abdullah bin Zame or Yahmoom picked up Abdullah Ibn Masood while Abdullah’s legs thrashed besides his neck. Then he threw him down with force and one of his teeth broke.

Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) stoop up and addressed Uthman, “O Uthman, are you doing this to a companion of the Prophet at the complaint of Walid bin Uqbah?”

Uthman replied, “I have not done this on the complain of Walid bin Uqbah. I had sent Zaid bin Sult Kindi to Kufa and Ibn Masood told him that it lawful to shed Uthman’s blood.”

Imam said, “You believed Zaid, who is absolutely untrustworthy?”^{[85](#)}

After that the Holy Imam (‘a) brought Abdullah Ibn Masood to his house and took care of him till he was completely cured of his ailments and wounds. Uthman on the other hand broke off all connections with him and released him. He also proclaimed that Abdullah Ibn Masood should not leave Medina. He also stopped his allowance from Public Treasury.

Ibn Masood fell ill and was on his deathbed when Uthman came to visit him and asked, “What do you complain against?”

“Against my sins.” “What do you want?” “Mercy of my Lord.”

“Shall I send a doctor to you?” “The doctor had made me ill.” “Shall I get you your allowance?”

“You denied it to me when I needed it and when I have become needless of it you are giving it to me?”

“It would be for your children.”

“Their sustenance is from Almighty Allah.”

“O Abu Abdur Rahman, seek forgiveness for me.”

“I shall beseech Allah to secure my rightful share from you.”^{[86](#)}

Uthman went away dejected without being able to gain the forgiveness of Abdullah Ibn Masood. When Ibn Masood’s condition became serious he made a bequest that Uthman should not recite his funeral prayer and his friend Ammar Ibn Yasir recited his funeral prayer. The most prominent companions performed the funeral rites and Uthman was not informed about it. When Uthman learnt about it he became enraged and he asked angrily, “Have you taken precedence to me?”

Ammar replied, “He had made a bequest that you shouldn’t recite his prayers.”

Ibn Zubair, a poet, says:

“I see that you sing a dirge at my death while when I was alive you gave me not a morsel to eat.”⁸⁷

Here we conclude our discussion about the opposition of the people and their dissent against him due to his nepotism and his excess in giving away all the wealth of the community to his clansmen while there existed poverty and starvation in all the areas of the kingdom.

Voices of dissent became louder and people intensified their agitation against Uthman. It was so because he had distorted the practice of the Prophet and imposed Bani Umayyah and the family of Abi Mui't on the necks of the Muslims.

He had exclusively given away all the government posts to them. He had also bestowed them all the profits accrued from the lands.

Revolution

The revolution was to the extreme limit result of social solidarity and a condition developed to seek reform as Alaili says,⁸⁸ “Revolution to a great extent is a result of social awakening and a condition that is demanding reformation because dissent became widespread and anger became common. People talked about the oppression of Uthman, his injustices and suppression of righteous men. These discussions took place in all meetings and gatherings. The prominent and influential people gathered and wrote letters to all the cities seeking their help and asked them to send some soldiers who may overthrow that regime. The text of their letter is as follows:

“From the first Muhajireen and the remaining ones of Shura to any of the companions who are in Egypt. So to say: Come towards us and obtain the Caliphate of the Messenger of Allah (S) before it is snatched away from the hands of its owners. Because the Book of Allah has been altered and the practice of His Messenger is changed and the laws of the two caliphs have been replaced. Thus, by Allah, whosoever reads this letter from the remaining companions of the Messenger of Allah (S) and those who follow them in righteousness, they should come and obtain the rights and restore them to us. So, please come to us if you believe in God and the Day of Judgment so that the truth is illuminated in the same way as they bid farewell to their Prophet, they should have said farewell to the caliphs. Rise up as they have taken away our rights, taken control of our finances and created a gap between our affairs and us. The caliphate after our Prophet was the caliphate of Prophethood and Mercy and today it has become rulership, which is like a thing caught between the teeth, that whoever gets control over it he devours it.”⁸⁹

This message describes the terrible deeds committed by Uthman’s regime and they were as follows:

1. Altering the Book of Allah, scrapping of laws and distancing from its principles.
2. Changing the practice of the Holy Prophet (S) and neglecting its economic and social provisions.
3. Replacing the laws of the previous two caliphs.
4. To confine the national wealth to ones personal control and disposal and to bestow it to ones relatives and confidants.
5. Deviation of the Islamic caliphate from public welfare towards a regime that did not care for the good of the community.

The righteous and good people of different provinces decided to send some committees to Medina in order to study the situation of the caliph and to be informed of his condition.

Another Message to Frontier Military Officials

Another aspect of opposition was a second message to companions posted at the frontiers so that they may come to Medina and take over the government. The text of that letter was as follows:

“Indeed, you have come out to perform Jihad in the way of Allah, the Mighty and the Sublime, and you want to establish the religion of Muhammad while your caliph has destroyed the religion of Muhammad. So come forward to save it”⁹⁰

This letter enflamed the hearts and filled the people with rage against Uthman. They became ready to rise up against the caliph.

Delegations from Different provinces

All through the kingdom, people responded positively to the call of the companions and they sent their delegations to Medina to study the situation. Those delegations were as follows:

A. Egyptian Delegation

Egypt sent a delegation consisting of more than 400 persons and they were under the command of Muhammad bin Abi Bakr and Abdur Rahman bin Adis Balawi.

B. Kufian Delegation

Kufa sent another delegation under the leadership of Malik Ashtar, Zaid bin Sauhan Abadi, Ziyad bin Nazr Harithi and Abdullah Asim Aamiri. And they were all under the supreme command of Amr bin Ahtam.

C. Basran Delegation

Basra sent 100 persons under the command of Hakim bin Jabla and after that 50 persons more which consisted among others, senior personages like Zarih bin Ibaad Abadi, Bushr bin Sharih Qaisi and Ibnul Mahrash.

Companions welcomed the delegations and accorded them respect and honor and they informed them about the deeds of Uthman. They encouraged and implored them to dethrone the caliph and punish him.

Memorandum of Egyptians to Uthman

The Egyptian delegation decided to hand over a memorandum to Uthman and ask him to repent for his policies and to change his behavior to the right path. The text of the memorandum was as follows:

“So to say: Allah certainly does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition. Then for the sake of God, for the sake of God. And again for the sake of God, for the sake of God, you are on the path of the world. So you keep the Hereafter also in view and do not neglect your share in the hereafter, as the world shall not be better for you. You should know that we are for Allah. We become angry for the sake of Allah and become pleased also for His sake. We shall not lift our swords from our shoulders till you do not repent openly or that your deviation becomes known to all. And this statement of ours is for you and our dispute is also with you and our excuse regarding you is with the Almighty”⁹¹

Uthman was worried and confused and read the letter carefully while the revolutionaries had surrounded him. Then Mughaira rushed to him and sought his permission to address the people and Uthman accorded permission. However when he came to the people, they shouted at him, “O cripple, go back!”

Then again they screamed at him, “O transgressor! Go back!”

The third time they cried at him, “O sinner! Go back!”

Mughaira returned to Uthman humiliated and degraded while he had failed his diplomacy. Uthman then summoned Amr bin Aas and asked him to speak to those people. He also came to them and saluted them. However they did not reply to his salutations, because they knew he was a sinner and a terrible transgressor. They told him, “O enemy of God! Go back!”

“O son of such a woman! Go Back! As you are neither trustworthy in our view nor shall you remain secure.”

He returned unsuccessfully in his mission while they did not hear what he had to say. They only considered him a despicable and degraded creature.

Uthman Sought Imam's Help

Uthman knew that except from Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) he would not get a refuge. So he sought his refuge and implored the Imam to call away those people to the Book of Allah and practice of His Messenger. Imam took oaths from him that he shall fulfill his promises and only after that did he accept his request. Then he went towards the revolutionaries while he had the guarantee for all of their demands. When they saw him, they said, “Go back!”

Imam: The Book of Allah shall be given to you and your complaints shall be accepted for all that has enraged you.”

They said, “Do you guarantee all this?” “Yes,” replied the Imam.

“We accept”

At that time senior persons and leaders of that delegation came with the Imam and met Uthman and they complained to him regarding his shortcomings against the Muslims. They denounced him and told him to change his policies and behavior and to behave rightly among the Muslims. He accepted and they told him to put that in writing and Uthman accepted and wrote the following document for them:

“This is a document from the servant of God, Uthman, the chief of the believers. To all those of the Muslims and believers who have objected against him that it is necessary for him to act according to the Book of Allah and on the practice of His Messenger among them. The deprived would be given what they are deprived of, those who are insecure shall be given security, and those who are exiled shall be brought back into the country. No hardships shall be imposed on the people for mobilization of armies. Allowances of the people shall be paid from the state treasury. And Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a) shall stand as a surety for believers and Muslims and the responsibility of fulfillment of their promises is upon Uthman.”

This document was witnessed by Zubair bin Awwam, Talha bin Ubaidullah, Saad bin Malik bin Abi Waqqas, Abdullah bin Umar, Zaid bin Thabit, Sahal bin Hunaif, Abu Ayyub and Khalid bin Zaid. It was written in the month of Zilqada in the year 35 A.H.

Those people took the document and went back to their people. Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) told Uthman to come out to the people and tell them that he would fulfill their demands and he did as advised. And he gave them oath and promise in the name of God that he would act among them according to the Book of Allah and the practice of the Messenger of Allah (S). Also that he would give them their rightful share in public wealth and that he would not restrict it to his relatives. The Egyptians returned to their country.

Uthman Breaks the Pledge

Uthman violated the pledge that he had given to the Egyptian delegation and he did not fulfill the promises he had made to the Muslims. Historians say that it was at the behest of Marwan who was his chief advisor and Prime Minister. Marwan arrived and criticized Uthman for what he had done and he told him,

“Speak up and announce to the people that the Egyptians have gone back and the agreement signed with them is invalid because your statements are publicized in different cities before the people may come to you and you are not able to send them back”

Uthman refused to follow his advice because he was asking him to violate the pledge and issue a false statement. However, Marwan was speaking to him in such a way and warning him of such terrible consequences that he began to dread the future. Also Uthman was a man who lacked determination and a strong will. He was just a puppet in the hands of Marwan. Hence he finally accepted the proposal of Marwan. He ascended the pulpit and addressed the people as follows:

“So to say: Some matters regarding their leaders had reached them from some of these people. And when they became assured that what had reached them was invalid, they returned to their homes”

Muslims stood up to denounce him and Amr bin Aas shouted, “O Uthman, fear Allah as you have put your hand into a dangerous and fatal affair and along with you we are also involved in it. So repent to Allah and we shall also seek divine pardon with you.”

Uthman screamed at them, “O sons of such women! Are you present here? By Allah, from the time I have removed you from your post your cloak has become infested with mites.”

Shouts of protests arose from all the sides of the gathering and they all spoke up in one voice: “O Uthman, fear Allah, O Uthman, fear Allah.”

Uthman’s limbs began to ache and his strength sapped and he was so much confused that he could not say anything in reply. He had no option but to express his regret for what he had done again. He then came down from the pulpit while he was absolutely devastated and crushed and he went towards his residence.[92](#)

Uthman Seeks Muawiyah’s Help

When the revolutionaries learnt that Uthman was not giving up his policies and he continued his manners without any change or modification, they besieged him and demanded that he should resign from his post. However he did not agree and decided to seek help from Muawiyah to send a battalion to save him from the revolutionaries. So he wrote the following letter to Muawiyah: “So to say: The people of Medina have become infidels and left off the obedience and broken the oath of allegiance. On the

basis of this dispatch some Syrian troops for us in any way possible”⁹³

Masoor bin Mukhrama took the letter to Muawiyah. When Muawiyah read the letter, Masoor told him, “O Muawiyah! Uthman shall be killed. So think upon what he has written”

Muawiyah expressed his real view clearly and mentioned the reality to Masoor saying, “O Masoor! I openly say that Uthman in the beginning used to act on that which is liked by Allah and His Messenger. However after that he changed and Allah also changed his situation. Now is it possible for me to change some thing that Allah has transformed?”⁹⁴

Muawiyah did not give a positive reply to Uthman’s request and on the basis of what the historians have said: He was in anticipation of Uthman’s murder so that his murder may become a means for him to get rulership and power. So much so that he completely ignored Uthman’s kindness and favoritism towards his clansmen.

Dr. Muhammad Tahir Darush says: If anyone is to be blamed for the assassination of Uthman, it is Muawiyah and he cannot be released from its responsibility because Muawiyah was the most responsible and important wealthy man of Uthman’s regime. Uthman approached him for advice while he was the most cunning of all, yet he neither arose for his help nor sent any forces for his assistance. On the contrary he just waited for the long life of Uthman to come to an end. And days passed in this. He sealed his fate and allowed it to take its own course. Thus if it is allowed for one to think that Ali or Talha or anyone else was responsible for Uthman’s murder it is all the more suitable that Muawiyah was the one responsible for Uthman’s assassination. If anyone other than Uthman is to be criticized, it is Muawiyah who deserves criticism.

Anyway, when Muawiyah delayed replying to Uthman’s entreaty he wrote a letter to Yazid bin Kurz, the agent in Syria and encouraged him to come and save him from the revolutionaries. When Uthman’s letter reached him, as a response they hastened under the command of Yazid Qasri however Muawiyah ordered them to camp at Zi-Khashab and not to go beyond that. He also made the soldiers camp at that place till finally Uthman was assassinated.

Uthman had also written various letters to people of different towns and cities and also to those who had come for performing the Hajj in Mecca. He pleaded them to offer their help and assistance but none of them accepted his pleas because the deeds that Uthman had committed were to known to all.

Uthman Besieged

The revolutionaries besieged Uthman, while the Egyptian delegation returned to him as soon as they realized the dangerous plot that had been devised against them. They besieged Uthman and raised slogans demanding his abdication. They urged him to resign from the post of caliphate while Marwan Ibn Hakam had fanned the flames of revolt in their hearts. Because he was telling them from the rooftop of

his house: “What do you want? It seems you have come to plunder so that these may be obliterated. You want to take away our kingdom from us. Go away from us”

The patience of revolutionaries reached its limits and they decided to kill him and cut him up into pieces and destroy him.

Marwan’s statements were reported to Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) and he hastened to Uthman and told him, “You have not become pleased with Marwan and he has not become satisfied with you but he deviated you from your religion and your reason. Like a camel of a caravan, which goes wherever, it is pulled. By Allah, Marwan is not concerned either with your religion or your life. By Allah, he shall take you and not bring you back and after this I am not going to complain to you again. You have yourself destroyed your respect and made yourself involved in this.”

Imam (‘a) left him and went away. Then Naila, Uthman’s wife, said to the Umayyads, “By Allah, you shall kill him and orphan his children.”

Then she turned to Uthman and advised him to reject Marwan’s proposal and not to obey him. She said, “If you listen to Marwan he shall have you killed.”

In the due course revolutionaries surrounded Uthman. They cut off the water and food supply and besieged him while he remained firm on his policies and refused to change them. People became more and more enraged towards the caliph who had for the sake of Marwan’s obedience surrendered to the demands of Bani Umayyah and thus became guilty of oppression.

Day of the House⁶⁴⁷

The fire of revolt opened up the tongues and its flames rose high because the revolutionaries had surrounded Uthman’s house and Marwan came out to them. Urwah bin Shayyim Leethi pounced on him and slashed his back with a sword and he fell face down. And Ubaid bin Rufa Zarqi went to him and wanted to behead him with a knife but his wet-nurse Fatima Thaqaifiya chided him saying, “If you wanted to kill him, you have already killed him. What would you do with his flesh that you are cutting off his head?” Ubaid became ashamed of this and he released him. People moved towards Uthman and they found him on the terrace while there was no one with him because all were infuriated and displeased with him. They stoned him and shouted, “We are not stoning you. It is God Who is stoning you.”

Uthman replied to them, “If God had stoned me I would not have committed these mistakes.”

Some Umayyads gathered around him and tried to defend him. A furious fight took place between the two parties while Khalid bin Uqbah bin Abi Muij fled from there and Abdur Rahman bin Saihan composed the following verses regarding him:

“They criticize me for the Day of the house, that I was not with them, while Khalid dressed in armor fled from the scene.”

Among the friends of Uthman killed were Ziyad bin Naeem Fahri, Mughaira bin Akhnas, Niyar bin Abdullah Aslami and others.

Attack on Uthman

After the Bani Umayyah people and clansmen of Abi Muiy fled from around Uthman the revolutionaries surrounded him and a group of Muslims attacked him in the forefront of whom was Muhammad bin Abu Bakr. He caught the beard of Uthman and said, “O Nathal! May Allah disgrace you publicly.”

“I am not Nathal! I am the servant of God and the chief of the believers.” “Muawiyah and so and so and such and such and such and such, what avail have they been to you?”

“O son of my brother! Release my beard, because your father never caught hold of what you are holding.”

“What I have got for you is worse than taking hold of your beard.”

After that he wounded Uthman’s forehead with the point of the sword he was holding in his hand. And Kanana bin Bushr raised the point of the sword he was holding and drove it below Uthman’s ears in such a way that it entered his throat. At that time he hit him with the sword. Amr bin Hamaq Khuzai came to him and sat on his chest while he was breathing his last. Then he hit him nine times. Umair bin Zaabi broke two of his teeth and tried to behead him when two his wives Naila and the daughter of Shabibah bin Rabia threw themselves upon him. Then Ibn Adees ordered them to leave him for them.[95](#)

They left Uthman a lifeless body on the floor and the revolutionaries did not permit the burial of Uthman. And Safadi has said: They threw Uthman’s corpse on the dunghill for three days[96](#) so that he may be humiliated and disgraced further. Then some of Uthman’s relatives requested Imam Amirul Momineen Ali (‘a) to speak to the revolutionaries and mediate about his burial. Imam spoke to them and they accorded their permission for his burial.[97](#)

Joulid Tasheer has said regarding Uthman’s burial: They left his corpse without funeral bath and threw him on a doorpost in such a way that his head was severely smashed. The carriers of his bier picked him up hurriedly and in the darkness of the night took him quickly while stones were raining upon him and curses were following him and they buried him at Hash Kaukab[98](#) and the Ansar did not permit them to bury Uthman in the Muslim cemetery.[99](#) As for his two slaves who were killed along with him, they pulled them and threw them on the hills and dogs consumed their corpses. [100](#)

Well, the revolt against Uthman was a social revolution, which was such an important reformation that history had never seen such an upheaval. Its aim was to end the domination of tyrant rulers, to stop

them from injustice in matters of people and to turn Islamic life to its natural path.

Effects of Uthman's Regime

Uthman's regime was followed by numerous evil consequences that surrounded the Muslim people severely, because the fire of mischiefs from end to end of the provinces had raged into flames and it caused untold hardships and calamities for the Muslims. We shall discuss some of the important and most terrible incidents that were direct consequences of his regime on the Islamic world. They were as follows:

1. Uthman's regime paid no regard for established laws and it intentionally became a cause for the weakening of the power of law, because the members of the Bani Umayyah family disregarded every rule and regulation in their pursuit of acquiring wealth and in their actions and Uthman's reaction to this behavior of theirs was one of indifference and nonchalance and he did not take any firm steps against them. He even defended, supported and justified their acts and mistakes. We have already discussed some instances of this type in the foregone pages. The direct result of this was the spread of chaos and anarchy in behavior, corruption of morals and disobedience to established laws.
2. Uthman's regime, during its tenure, did not consider itself means for social welfare or general well being of the people. It was solely aimed at amassing wealth, exploitation and domination over the people; this matter became a cause for many groups of people looking upon the government as an excuse for collecting booty and luxuries. And this matter caused many groups and people came towards it for rulership and power, and for this they gave up their lives. For example, Talha, Zubair, Muawiyah, Amr Aas and others. No humanistic or social aim was in their rebellion against the government of Imam Amirul Momineen Ali ('a). Rather in their greed for rulership and caliphate they were blind to everything else. And their revolt was the weakness of their spirit of faith and spreading of discord for their personal benefit. All this created a gap between Islamic society and Quranic authority.
3. Uthman's regime created an affluent class that spread seeking ease and selfishness; and in the path of seeking sensuality and profligacy they did not pay heed to anything else and among them were the Quraishite families who were drowned in wealth and who remained busy in spending their money while different social classes were impoverished, deprived and in a pitiful condition. And this compelled the great reformer, Abu Zar, the companion of the Messenger of Allah (S) to take a stand against the hoarding of wealth by Quraish who had amassed wealth in unlawful ways and he was demanding them to return it to the Central Treasury so that it may help in economic development and social welfare as prescribed by Islam.
4. Uthman's regime revived tribal bias and favoritism that Islam had confronted and weakened because Uthman endeavored for the strengthening of his family and spreading of power and their biased support even though it be against the law. He furnished them with all the means of power in such a way that they assumed the appearance of Arabian families and the bias of the period of ignorance in pride and

arrogance in paternity and pride over lineage and descent and other problems became general which we shall present in this book.

5. Profit seekers appeared to obtain rulership on the basis of sword and strength without having any regard for the well being of the community.

Julius Falhauzen says: It was from the time when the sword was supreme in the matter of rulership of theocratic kingdoms and the door of mischief had opened and it was never closed completely. And at that time safety of unity was in the presence of Imam's person as the leader of the group. But mostly apparently and by force and compulsion it was not possible and the fact is that the community has disintegrated and it took the form of groups and clans where each one was trying to impose their political power on others. And in support of their leaders they took up sword against the Imam who was also the ruler at that time”[101](#)

Political greed spread and profit seekers were restless for power and this caused the spread mischief and chaos in all the provinces.

6. Taking the issue of the revenge of Uthman's blood all such greedy elements jumped up to create mischief and rebellion against the law. This was just a pretext and not only from the Umayyads but from all groups who were vying for rulership like Talha, Zubair, Ayesha and others from those who were instrumental in the uprising against Uthman. Now they began to harp on revenge for Uthman's blood. In this path they spilled rivers of pure blood for their cheap greed and they sacrificed their relatives and sorrow spread in all lands of Islam.

These were some of the consequences of Uthman's reign which without any doubt had a profound effect in the changing of event and which incited the society towards political greed and aspirations, proliferation of pursuit for opulence and struggle for power. That they took up a powerful confrontation and the religious government changed into despotism and it did not have any regard for Islamic matters and the fulfillment of its aims. And also they created a distance between the Muslims and Ahlul Bayt ('a) who were such that the Prophet had emphatically appointed them for Imamate and advised the Muslim community to obey them. And that sanctity of Ahlul Bayt ('a) was openly destroyed and the tyrant rulers that came to power, they even cut them into pieces and began to suppress and trample them and paid no heed to their relationship to the Prophet, which was more deserving of consideration.

Here one matter remains and it is that Imam Husayn ('a) during the period of Uthman was in the bloom of youth and historians say that His Eminence accompanied the forces that had gone for the conquest of Tabristan in 30 A.H. under the command of Saeed bin Aas. This battalion performed well and the Almighty Allah gave it victory and success and it returned in triumph. [102](#) However another indication regarding Imam Husayn's participation in that campaign has not reached us. And probably it is due to the fact that the family of the Prophet was on the side of opposition of Uthman's regime and they effectively criticized his policies and Uthman directed his wrath on the companions of Amirul Momineen

Ali (‘a) like Abu Zar, Ammar and Ibn Masood and he tried to harass them and Imam Husayn (‘a) witnessed these horrible events and more pains were added to his pain and the reality of the society and exposed the favoritism in the best way.

Some historians have claimed that Imam Hasan and Husayn (‘a) defended Uthman when the revolutionaries had besieged him, but we have proved in an objective way the incorrectness of this report in our book, Life of Imam Hasan (‘a). Here comes to an end the chapter on Uthman’s regime.

- [1. Ittehaajaatul Shaar Arabi, Pg. 26](#)
- [2. Ibne Athir, 7/148. Yaqubi, Tarikh 2/140](#)
- [3. Al-Maufiqyaat, Pg. 202](#)
- [4. Tabari, Tarikh 4/239–240](#)
- [5. Al-Idaratul Islamiyyah, Pg. 57](#)
- [6. An-Nazaa’a Wat Tukhaasum, Pg. 18](#)
- [7. Tabari, Tarikh 4/262](#)
- [8. Mukhtasar Tarikhul Arab, Pg. 43](#)
- [9. Hayatul Imam Hasan \(a.s.\) 1/263](#)
- [10. Al-Istiab \(Printed on the margins of al-Isabah\) 3/932–933](#)
- [11. Tabari, Tarikh 4/332. Abil Fida, Tarikh 1/168. Al-Ansaab 5/43–49](#)
- [12. Al-Kamil 3/99–100](#)
- [13. Al-Istiab 2/933. Usud al-Ghaba 3/192](#)
- [14. Tabari, Tarikh 4/333–334. Ibne Khaldun, Tarikh 4/1036](#)
- [15. Al-Fitnatul Kubra 1/116](#)
- [16. Al-Isabah 3/85](#)
- [17. Usud al-Ghaba 3/192](#)
- [18. Muruj az-Zahab 2/334](#)
- [19. Ibne Saad, Tabaqat 1/201](#)
- [20. Al-Ghadeer 8/273](#)
- [21. Surah Hujurat 49:6. Ibne Abde Barr in Istiab 4/1553 says: Among the scholars of Quranic exegesis there is no difference of opinion that this verse was about Walid](#)
- [22. Surah Sajdah 32: 18](#)
- [23. Tadkiratul Khawaas, Pg. 202](#)
- [24. Muruj az-Zahab 2/335](#)
- [25. Al-Aghani 5/135, Muruj az-Zahab 1/323, Al-Iqdul Farid 6/348](#)
- [26. Sirah Halabiyyah 2/314, Al-Aghani 5/125, Al-Istiab 4/1553](#)
- [27. Ninth, tenth and eleventh units of the Midnight Prayer](#)
- [28. Al-Aghani 5/125](#)
- [29. Ibid](#)
- [30. Muruj az-Zahab 335/336](#)
- [31. Imam Husayn \(a.s.\), Pg. 33](#)
- [32. Al-Aghani 2/351](#)
- [33. Al-Aghani 2/341](#)
- [34. Al-Wulaat wal Quzaat, Pg. 11](#)
- [35. Qurtubi, Tafsir 7/40, Abi Dawood, Sunan 4/128](#)
- [36. Al-Fitnatul Kubra 1/120](#)
- [37. Ruhul Islam, Pg. 90](#)
- [38. Ansaab al-Ashraaf 5/26](#)

- [39.](#) Tarikh Iraq Dar Zer-e-Sulte Umayyan, Pg. 22
- [40.](#) Bukhari, Sahih 4/104
- [41.](#) Muhammad Abduh, Sharh Nahjul Balagha 2/128
- [42.](#) Ansaab al-Ashraaf 5/52
- [43.](#) Ibid 5/28
- [44.](#) Sharh Nahjul Balagha 1/67
- [45.](#) Ansaab al-Ashraaf 5/28
- [46.](#) Yaqubi, Tarikh 2/145
- [47.](#) Al-Ansaab 5/31
- [48.](#) Yaqubi, Tarikh 2/141
- [49.](#) Al-Ma'arif, Pg. 194
- [50.](#) Al-Ansaab 5/28
- [51.](#) Abul Fida, Tarikh 1/169
- [52.](#) Halabi, Sirah 2/78 (Daar Ahya Thuraathil Arabi)
- [53.](#) Ibne Abil Hadid, Sharh Nahjul Balagha 1/67
- [54.](#) Abul Fida, Tarikh 1/168, Al-Ma'arif, Pg. 195
- [55.](#) Ibne Saad, Tabaqat 3/64
- [56.](#) Ansaab al-Ashraaf 6/108 (Printed Daarul Fikr 1417)
- [57.](#) Tabari, Tarikh, Pg. 4/405
- [58.](#) Ibne Saad, Tabaqat
- [59.](#) Bukhari, Sahih 4/106
- [60.](#) Muruj az-Zahab 2/333
- [61.](#) Each Waafi is one Dirham and four Daaniq (Al-Qamus, root 'Dauq')
- [62.](#) As-Siyadatul Arabiyya, Pg. 22
- [63.](#) Al-Hayat al-Ijtima'iyah wal Iqtisadiyyah Fil Kufa, Pg. 145-146 quoted from Futuh al-Buldan, Pg. 272
- [64.](#) Khatat al-Kufa, Pg. 21, Al-Hizaaatul Islamiyyah 1/123
- [65.](#) Al-Ansaab 5/36
- [66.](#) Muruj az-Zahab 2/332
- [67.](#) Halabi, Sirah 2/78 (Daar Ahya Thuraathil Arabi)
- [68.](#) Ibne Saad, Tabaqat 3/76-77
- [69.](#) Al-Idaratul Islamiyyah, Pg. 82
- [70.](#) Surah Zumar 39:9 Qurtubi in his Tafsir 1/239 and Ibne Saad in his Tabaqat 3/250 have stated that this verse was revealed about Ammar.
- [71.](#) Surah Anam 3:122. Suyuti in his Tafsir 3/352 and Ibne Kathir in his Tafsir 2/178 have stated that this verse was revealed about Ammar.
- [72.](#) Ibne Hisham, Sirah 2/114
- [73.](#) A woman suffering from incontinence
- [74.](#) Al-Ansaab 5/48-49
- [75.](#) Al-Ansaab 5/49. Al-Iqdul Farid 6/57 and 4/307 (Daar Kutub al-Arbi ħ Beirut 1403)
- [76.](#) Al-Ansaab 5/54-55, Yaqubi, Tarikh 2/173
- [77.](#) Kanzul Ummal 13/311 Hadith no. 36886, Majma az-Zawaid 9/330
- [78.](#) Three persons who were eager for Paradise: His Eminence, Imam Ali (a.s.), Abu Zar and Ammar
- [79.](#) Majma az-Zawaid 9/330
- [80.](#) Surah Taubah 9:34
- [81.](#) Al-Ansaab 5/52-53
- [82.](#) Hayatul Imam Hasan (a.s.) 1/280-282
- [83.](#) Misreen' is a word to denote Basrah and Misr
- [84.](#) An Arabic saying

- [85.](#) Al-Ansaab 5/36
- [86.](#) Hayatul Imam Hasan (a.s.) 1/275–276
- [87.](#) Ibne Kathir, Tarikh 7/163
- [88.](#) Al-Imam al-Husayn (a.s.)
- [89.](#) Al-Imamah was Siyasah 1/37–38
- [90.](#) Tabari, Tarikh, 4/367, Kamil 3/168
- [91.](#) Tabari, Tarikh, 4/369, Al-Ansaab 5/44–45
- [92.](#) Tabari, Tarikh, 4/356 and 360, Al-Ansaab 5/74
- [93.](#) Ibne Athir, Kamil 3/170, Yaqubi, Tarikh 2/152
- [94.](#) Al-Futuh 2/218
- [95.](#) Al-Ghadeer 9/206
- [96.](#) Tamaam al-Mutoon, Pg. 79
- [97.](#) Hayatul Imam Hasan (a.s.) 1/303
- [98.](#) ‘Hash Kaukab’ was a garden of Jews where they buried their dead
- [99.](#) Al-Aqeeda wash Shariyah Fil Islam, Pg. 45
- [100.](#) Halabi, Sirah
- [101.](#) Tarikh ad-Daulatul Arabiyyah, Pg. 50–51
- [102.](#) Tabari, Tarikh, 4/269, Al-Abr 2/135. But the writer of Futuhaat-e-Islami has not mentioned Imam Husayn (a.s.) to be with this batlion

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