

Violation of Orders about Usamah's Army

Another event, which occurred at the time of the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S) and due to which the Prophet's intention remained unfulfilled is the problem with Usamah's army. The Prophet wanted to send an army against the apostates under Usamah's command, insisting for this so much, that he said: "Anyone who fails to join Usamah's army, will be cursed."¹

No doubt, had the Holy Prophet (S) lived for a few more days, the said army of Usamah would have confronted the enemies of Islam. But some great companions and so also other Muslims of the time opposed the order totally and therefore the army could not proceed to the apostates and the Prophet did not succeed in his plan. How astonishing that those Muslims preferred to be cursed and sit at home!

What kind of faith is it that the Holy Prophet (S) orders something, but he is disobeyed? Doubtlessly, this disobedience had some special reasons. Apparently, it so appears that had Usamah proceeded with the Islamic army, the gathering, which was held at Saqifah Bani Saada, could not have been held and the matter of Caliphate would have taken a different shape.

In short, only these two events, which occurred near the time of the Prophet's death, project a picture of serious difference between the intention of the Prophet and the attitude of his followers. No other event of difference seems to have happened at that time, but after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S), a very serious disunity came up among Muslims as is even now apparent from the differences in the matter of prayers and social dealings etc.

The first difference to rise among Muslims after the Holy Prophet's departure was about Caliphate. Dispute arose between the Emigrants (Muhajir) of Mecca and the Helpers (Ansar) of Medina. The Helpers said: "Appoint a chief from among you and one from us." But Abu Bakr told the Helpers: Did you not hear the words of the Holy Prophet (S)? He had said: "My successor will be a man of Quraish." This silenced the Helpers.

Then Umar intended to make Abu Bakr the Caliph, but Abu Bakr said Umar should be the Caliph. Umar did not agree to it and hastened to hold the hand of Abu Bakr and announced his allegiance to him.² Along with this, all those who were present in Saqifah began to give allegiance to Abu Bakr.

Thus, the affair of Caliphate had been decided at Saqifah. But Bani Hashim were not there at all. So the Saqifah people were in serious apprehension regarding Bani Hashim. But as Ali (a.s.) did not appear to intend any serious act [the reason of it seems to be that the Holy Prophet (S) had, in his last moments, asked Ali not to rise against his opponents, so that Islam which was then in its initial stage might not be harmed] Bani Hashim too, like Ali (a.s.) remained calm.

Despite this, the people of Saqifah thought it essential to obtain allegiance from Ali (a.s.). So Umar went to His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) and took the latter to Abu Bakr. There, His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) said to Abu Bakr: “You obtained the right from Helpers telling them that, as per the Holy Prophet’s words, the Caliph should be a man of Quraish. Now I demand from you what you obtained from the Helpers, because besides being a Quraishi, I am also a Hashimi and a brother as well as the son-in-law of the Holy Prophet (S) etc.”³ What could the people of Caliphate reply?

Anyhow, when Ali (a.s.) was asked to pay allegiance, he did not comply. Ahlul Sunnat say that Ali (a.s.) paid the allegiance after the death of Lady Fatima (s.a.)⁴ but Shias deny this claim totally. After looking into all the aspects of Ali (a.s.); moral, monetary and social etc. it appears to me that even after the demise of Lady Fatima (s.a.) Ali (a.s.) did not pay any kind of allegiance to Abu Bakr, because Ali was very truthful and sincere. Had he paid any kind of allegiance he would not have, in his sermon of Shiqshiqya⁵, shown so much disgust against the Caliphate of Abu Bakr and thereafter, nor would he have shown so much grief.

It is obvious that had Muawiyah, after paying allegiance to anybody, made such a speech against that fellow, it would not have been considered contrary to his nature, because he was quite able and ready to do anything when needed. In a way though Muawiyah was fully trained by the first Caliph yet, when necessary, he would deliver two thousand orations against his teacher very easily in self-interest.

Similar seems to be the attitude of Talha and Zubair, as they themselves have actually shown. That is to say they paid allegiance to His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) and then broke it and rose against the Caliph. But the nature of His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) was never of this type. It was never possible for him to pay allegiance to Abu Bakr and then getting opportunity, condemn his Caliphate so bitterly as seen in the said sermon. Whoever has looked carefully at the character of His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) can very well say that he was very straight-forward and that he could never give allegiance to Abu Bakr and then on another occasion, oppose him in bitter words.

Hence deep thought over this matter shows that even after the demise of the Lady of Paradise, Lady Fatima (s.a.), Ali did not give allegiance to Abu Bakr. Here, I am not concerned with the question of whether the Caliphate was enacted rightly or not. What is intended here is to see what was the effect of this Caliphate on the holy progeny of the Holy Prophet (S)? The immediate effect was that rulership was taken away from Bani Hashim as a result of which, the status which the holy progeny enjoyed during the time of the Holy Prophet (S) remained no more.

In my view, the active beginning of the apparent downfall of the status of the holy progeny commenced from this point. We will be able to show gradually that this disrespect to the holy progeny increased so much that after the insults at Karbala', the ladies of the holy family were paraded with utter disrespect in the bazaars of Damascus very mercilessly.

Thereafter too, the holy blood continued to be shed and Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) descendants (Sadaats) were readily killed. Here, I don't want to inquire whether or not the Sadaats deserved such treatment. But there is no doubt that the worst behavior was meted out to the holy progeny as can be seen in books of biography and history.

- [1.](#) Refer Milal Wan Nihal by Allamah Shahrastani. Also see the last part of Sharhe Mawaqif, Chapter Tanzeelal Kitab (Pg. 746) printed at Naval Kishor Press, Lucknow.
- [2.](#) Ref. Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Muharibeen and Fathul Bari etc.
- [3.](#) Ref. Rauzatul Ahbab, Vol. II, Pg. 33-34
- [4.](#) Ref. Sahih Muslim, Pg. 125.
- [5.](#) Sermon no. 3 of Nahjul Balagha.

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