

What Does Umar's Behavior Show?

The abrupt and rude manner in which Umar tore down the command of the Caliph shows some things; first, there was no respect or honor of the Caliph in the heart and mind of Umar. Tearing off of the decree of the Caliph of the time and that too in his presence, makes it obvious that the one who made such an extraordinary gesture did not accord any importance to the position of the ruler. The reason of this is also not secret. Umar knew that Abu Bakr was a Caliph made by him (Umar) and that without his (Umar's) help, his Caliphate would not run. Undoubtedly, this kind of thinking on the part of Umar was not untrue.

In such circumstances, how can the respect of the Caliph get room in the heart of Umar? This is not mere guessing. Umar definitely was pressurizing Abu Bakr to such an extent that on one occasion the latter had to complain saying: "If it is to be like this, what was the use of making me a Caliph?" Not only this, once it had so happened that Abu Bakr held Umar's beard, crying: "May your mother weep over you (may you die)." Obviously, it is difficult to believe that a patient man like Abu Bakr will do so to anybody. But when someone crosses limits, even a patient man loses his patience. Those who have knowledge know that all these events are recorded in history. Readers may refer at least to the history of Abdul Fida, *Tarikh al Mukhtasar fee Ahwaalil Bashar*.

Second, the tearing off of the Caliph's order shows that the court of justice was a court of justice only in name. Though Abu Bakr did hear cases and give decisions but their enactment or repealing was in the hands of Umar. All this goes to prove that Umar had made Abu Bakr as a strategic Caliph, while practically it was Umar himself who was the Caliph. After two years, this concealment no longer remained necessary.

Third, the aforesaid gesture of Umar also shows that Abu Bakr's court of justice was not bound by any rules. Apparently, Umar nor anybody else had any such legal right to annul the Caliph's order in this way. We don't know what was the official post of Umar at the time of the first Caliphate. If he was a government pleader, then certainly a government pleader has no such right to tear off the Caliph's decree in such a humiliating manner. And if he was holding a post higher than that of the Caliph of the time in the court of justice, even then this type of interruption in the dealing of a subordinate court does

not appear appropriate and legal. Fourth, such deeds of Umar make his enmity to Lady Fatima and His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) quite obvious.

It looks quite clear that from the very beginning, Umar was trying to assure that Fadak is not restored to Lady Fatima (s.a.) and this enmity of Umar to Fatima is no secret. Only those who close their eyes cannot observe this malice and enmity. Fifth, a very ugly kind of harshness becomes apparent from all these deeds of Umar. Taking this into consideration, the commentator of Nahjul Balagha writes: “Even if law or right was not in favor of Lady Fatima, the Caliphate ought to have taken it into account that Fatima was a grief stricken woman claimant, her parents had passed away and the demise of her father had made her extremely gloomy.”

I say that at the time of writing about such sympathetic words, the commentator forgot that even before the case of Fadak and after the demise of the Holy Prophet (S) the condolence given to the Lady of Paradise by the Caliphate was that Umar was sent by Abu Bakr to burn down the house of this lady¹ or he had proceeded of his own. When such a harsh treatment was given soon after the Prophet's demise, any sympathetic or mild attitude could not have at all been expected at the time of Fadak proceedings in the court of law, which was after quite a long period of time. Why look only at this matter of Fadak?

A look at history shows that the Ummah of the Prophet imagined that it was unlawful to behave nicely with the holy progeny of Prophet! Even today, this behavior is no less visible. Only those descendants of Ahlul Bayt (a.s.) (Sadaats) who had left the path of Bani Hashim and entered the path of Sunni, expect less enmity from the Ummah of the Holy Prophet (S). Otherwise, those who stayed on the path of their elders are even today fearing the same bad attitude from the Prophet's Ummah, which had begun right from the moment of the demise of the Messenger.

¹. Ref. Tarikh Abul Fida

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