

## Worship And Dealings during the Prophet's Time

Verily, during the days of the Holy Prophet (S), the rituals and dealings of the followers of Islam must have been like that of the Prophet. For example, if he prayed with folded hands, all Muslims must also be doing likewise. The rituals of Hajj and Zakat etc. also should be on this line, because in those days, the Prophet himself must have led them in these matters. Likewise, in the matter of social interaction, Muslims must have been doing as they saw the Prophet do. No doubt, this continued till the end of the life of the Prophet. But when he fell on the deathbed, two great differences arose between him and his followers.

One is called "The story of the paper" (Qissa Qirtas) and another "Opposition to join Usamah's army" (Takhalluf Jaish Usamah). What happened in the first, according to the author of Sharh Mawaqif,<sup>1</sup> was when the moment of departure neared, the Holy Prophet (S) asked those around him: "Bring to me paper, so that I may write down some such things whereby you may not go astray after my passing away."<sup>2</sup>

Umar was not pleased with this. So he said: "This man is overpowered by illness. We have the Book of Allah, and it is sufficient for us." And in Sahih Bukhari, it is written: Due to this dispute, voices rose high, which made the Prophet very unhappy. So he said: "Get up and go away from me. This quarrelling is not good before me."

In short, the Holy Prophet (S) could not leave any written order after him. A thoughtful look at this story makes it clear that at that moment the Prophet was in perfect senses and wanted to write something. It was never so that due to illness he had begun to utter senseless things.

No, at that time also, he was so conscious and alert that he knew that he was a prophet and was of the opinion that because of his rank, it was not becoming for his followers to raise their voices in his presence. It is not known what he wanted to write. But it must have been something related to religion and was also very serious and important.

The very words of the Prophet indicate that he wanted to do something to save his followers (Ummah) from misguidance. Shias say that he wanted to issue a written order appointing Ali (a.s.) as his successor while Sunnis say he wanted to make Abu Bakr his successor.

But alas! When nothing could be put in writing, there was no other way except to make guesses. If the guess of Ahlul Sunnat is correct, Umar did very much against not only Abu Bakr but also against the entire Ummah, because, had Abu Bakr been appointed as the Caliph in writing, no Muslim could have ever disputed it and there would not have been any tussle about Caliphate in the Muslim world and all the Muslims would have followed one and the same way.

Shias say that the Prophet intended to appoint Ali (a.s.) as his successor in writing and it was so because, only a few months earlier, the Holy Prophet (S) had orally made Ali (a.s.) his successor at a place called Ghadeer Khumm.<sup>3</sup> The author intends to give details of Ghadeer Khumm in the following pages, which will show that the claim of Shias does not appear baseless.

Anyway, whatever the fact may be, it does not appear that Umar did anything against the Caliphate of Abu Bakr. If Umar was certain that the Prophet was about to make Abu Bakr his Caliph in writing, he would have, instead of preventing the Prophet from such a writing, all the more tried for the conclusion of such a written document, because such writing would surely have resulted in what had happened at the gathering of Saqifah Bani Saada with the support of Umar. But as a matter of fact, Umar too was certain that the Prophet wanted to make Ali his successor in writing.

Ahmad bin Abi Tahir has, in Tarikh Baghdad, quoted a narration of Ibn Abbas that Umar himself had said that the Prophet wanted to mention the name of Ali clearly during his last illness, but that “I prevented it.” That is why he objected. It will be seen henceforth that Umar had always tried to keep His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) away from Caliphate. All know that Umar kept Ali away from Caliphate during his (Umar’s) lifetime very successfully and even after his death, Umar, with his unparalleled political diplomacy, did not allow Ali to succeed as a Caliph. There is no doubt that non-realization of the Prophet’s intention was a great misfortune for the Muslim Ummah, sorrow for Islam and followers of Islam.

***“Surely we belong to Allah and to Him we shall return.”<sup>4</sup>***

Had that writing come into effect, Islam would have remained safe from thousands of mischief-makers and would not have suffered any of the calamities, which it is facing?

<sup>1</sup>. He is one of the great Sunni scholars.

<sup>2</sup>. Ref. Sahih Muslim, Kitabul Wasaya and Sahih Bukhari, Chapter I of Kitabul IIm (Pg. 18) and Mishkat after Babul Karamaat.

<sup>3</sup>. Refer to books of History.

<sup>4</sup>. Surah Baqarah, 2:185.

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