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1. Osama army

Tabari (vol.3, p.212; vol.I, pp.1849-1850 EUR), and Ibn 'Asaker (vol.I, p.427), with regard to the events of year eleven of Hijra, the recorded history of Osama's Army told by Saif is as follows:-

Story by Saif

"The Prophet of God, before his death, gathered together an army under the command of Osama. 'Omar Bin Khattab was in that army. Before the army was even clear of the moat of Medina, the Prophet of God died. Osama sent

'Omar to the successor of the Prophet (the Caliph) to obtain permission for the return of the army to Medina. The companions of the Prophet, who were in that army, told

'Omar to ask Abu Bakr to dismiss Osama and appoint another commander." Abu Bakr jumped forward and grasped 'Omar by his beard saying, " O Bin Khattab let your mother weep at your death bed. It was the Prophet who appointed Osama to be the commander, yet you want me to dismiss him and appoint someone else in his place."

Abu Bakr then ordered the army to proceed and he saw them leave, bidding them farewell saying, "March on, May God destroy you by murder and plague."

The foregoing was related by Saif concerning Osama's army. But others have said that the story is as follows:-

Story by other than Saif

In the year 11 Hijra, on a Monday, when four days remained in the month of Safar, the Prophet ordered the people to be prepared for the war with the Romans. Next day he ordered Osama to command the army saying to him, "Go to the place where your father was martyred, and attack them." On the Wednesday the Prophet developed a temperature and a headache. The next day, the Thursday, the Prophet himself made the Battle standard and handed it to Osama. Osama took the flag and left Medina,

choosing Jorf as the camp site.

The senior members of the Muhajir and Ansar parties, Abu Bakr, ‘Omar Bin Khattab, Abu ‘Obaydah Jarrah, Sa‘d Waqqas, Sa‘eed Bin Zaid and others were ordered to form an army under the leadership of Osama. As Osama was a very young man, there were objections to his being made the army commander in preference to those elder Immigrant Muslims.

The Prophet of God heard these objections and came from his house, his head covered with a handkerchief, and a towel over his shoulder, as he was ill. Mounting the pulpit he addressed the people saying, "What are these reports I have heard concerning Osama, who has been appointed commander.

You objected to his father — now you object to him. By God Osama is capable of holding this position, as his father was." The Prophet then came down from the pulpit, and the Muslims who were going to the camp site at Jorf said good-bye.

The Prophet's health deteriorated, and Osama visited him when the Prophet was unable to speak — he could only kiss Osama good-bye. The next Monday the Prophet was better, and he received Osama saying, "Go, good luck to you." Osama returned to the camp and ordered the march. Just as he was going to mount his horse, a message came from his mother saying that the Prophet was critically ill.

Osama, ‘Omar and Abu ‘Obaydah returned to Medina, and that same day the Prophet passed away. After the death of the Prophet, when Abu Bakr became Caliph, he ordered Osama to undertake the same mission as ordered by the Prophet, (Ibn ‘Asaker vol.I, p.433). On page 438 Ibn ‘Asaker also says, “Abu Bakr told Osama that the Prophet had given all necessary instructions, and he was not adding anything to them. Abu Bakr did not listen to those who advised him that expedition be postponed.”

Comparison

Comparison between the above two ways of recording. There are some points worth mentioning about Saif's recording. He says:

1) The army was crossing the moat of Medina when the Prophet died. Saif included this sentence in his book to conceal the fact that there were delays which prevented the army from setting out; and there were no disruptions by the trouble makers who caused the delays. Yet in his more lucid moments Muhammad was annoyed that the army was delayed, and repeated his original order, "Osama's army must march."

2) Saif says, "When Osama heard that the Prophet had passed away he sent ‘Omar to the successor of the Prophet of God to obtain his permission for the return of the army to Medina." Other instructions say, "Osama heard that the Prophet's condition was serious, so he went to Medina with ‘Omar, Abu Bakr and Abu ‘Obaydah. (Some say that Abu ‘Obaydah was not with them.) After the death of the Prophet, and after Abu Bakr's nomination at Saqifa, and his final election at the Mosque, he dealt with Osama's army.

Here again Saif back dates the successorship of Abu Bakr, making it appear that he was appointed Caliph (successor) before the death of the Prophet.

3) Saif says, "Ansar (helpers) asked Abu Bakr to dismiss Osama and appoint another commander to the army. Ibn ‘Asaker (vol.I, p.438) and other historians say: Early Muhajirs (Immigrants) asked the Prophet to change Osama.

Here again Saif altered the name of proposers from Muhajirs to Ansar to please the then Government who were of Muhajirs (Immigrants) party.

Saif says: "Abu Bakr gave Osama ten instructions." Other historians say: "Abu Bakr said that the Prophet had given the necessary instructions and he did not need to add anything to them." Saif says: "Abu Bakr held ‘Omar by his beard because he brought the message of the Helpers," though a messenger cannot be blamed. Saif says, "Abu Bakr cursed the army and hoped they would be destroyed by plague." Saif being a heretic wanted to make a mockery of Islam as a religion, as well as to please the Caliph of his time. The stories invented by Saif have no foundation, and the heroes mentioned in them never existed for they were but figments of his imagination. We will explain more clearly later.

Some Sahabis Introduced

The time is now ripe for us to briefly introduce the Sahabis we have mentioned so far 1 and 2. There is, of course, no need to say anything about Abu Bakr and ‘Omar, the well-known first and second Caliphs.

3) Abu ‘Obaydah Jarrah Amer, son of Abdullah Bin Jarrah and Omaymah, a daughter of Ghonm Bin Jabir. Abu ‘Obaydah was one of the pioneer converts to Islam from the Quraish tribe, and he emigrated twice from Mecca. Abu Bakr made him the commander of an army sent to Syria. He died of the plague and was buried in Jordan.

4) Sa‘d Waqqas, Abu Eshaq, son of Malik, from the Zuhra family of the Quraish tribe. He was the seventh man to embrace Islam. He attended the Battle of Badr and all later battles launched by the Prophet. He was the first Muslim to fire at the enemy, the chief commander of the armies which conquered Iraq. ‘Omar appointed him Governor of Kufa.

Sa‘d was one of the six nominated committee members to be Caliph after ‘Omar. (It was ‘Omar who ordered that the committee to be established directly after he was fatally stabbed by Abu Lobo). Sa‘d retired to his residence Aqiq — near Medina, after ‘Othman was murdered. He died during the reign of Mo'awiah and was buried in Baqi — the cemetery of Medina.

5) Sa‘eed Bin Zaid. He is from the ‘Adi family of the Quraish tribe, and a cousin of ‘Omar Bin Khattab. ‘Omar married Atekah, the sister of Sa‘eed, and Sa‘eed married Fatima, the sister of ‘Omar. Sa‘eed and Fatima embraced Islam before ‘Omar.

When ‘Omar heard that his sister had become a Muslim, he went to her house, and slapped her face so hard that it began to bleed. ‘Omar felt very sorry for his hasty action, and on the spot he himself accepted Islam. Sa‘eed died in the year 50 or 51 H.L. and he was buried in Medina.

6) Osama. The father of Osama was Harethah, a slave freed by Muhammad. His mother was Umm Ayman, a servant o£ Muhammad who had been freed by him. Osama was born at the dawn of Islam, and died in the reign of Mo'awiah.

Muhammad's policy on his death bed

In the last moments of his life the Prophet acted very strangely, he sent away all the elders and kept only ‘Ali in Medina. He insisted on sending the Party Leaders to Syria — far from the heart of Islam, and he put a man whose parents were slaves, in charge of the elders.

(This will be discussed after examining the events which took place when the Prophet of God passed away).

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