

Part 2 . 1: A Probe into Saqifah 1

Abu Bakr

The Outcome of earlier discussion is that Imam ‘Ali (a) was rightful to Caliphate immediately after the Prophet, because he had deep relations with the Prophet of Islam and Islam itself. Islam as well as the Prophet of Islam considered him worthy of Caliphate and Imamate.

Imagine if people had presented the following proofs in support of ‘Ali’s candidature in Saqifah of Bani Saada:

- (1) ‘Ali was most proximate to the Prophet.
- (2) ‘Ali was raised under the Prophet’s care.
- (3) He was responsible for returning possessions of the people kept with the Prophet as trusts after the latter migrated.
- (4) The Prophet made him his brother.
- (5) He was the Prophet’s son-in-law.
- (6) The Prophet’s progeny would continue from ‘Ali.
- (7) He was the commander of the Prophet’s army in all battles.
- (8) He is to Prophet as Haroon was to Moosa.
- (9) He is the gate of the city of knowledge.
- (10) He is the gate of the house of wisdom.
- (11) He is the reflection of the virtues of prophets.
- (12) He is a part of the light of the Prophet.

- (13) He is the son of parents who raised the Prophet.
- (14) He was born in holy Kaaba.
- (15) He never worshipped idols.
- (16) His love is compensation of the messengership of the Holy Prophet (S).
- (17) He was a proof of truthfulness of Islam in imprecation ceremony (*Mubahila*).
- (18) He is one of the pure members of the cloak of purity.
- (19) He has complete knowledge of the Book.
- (20) He bought divine pleasure in exchange of his life.

If it had been the case and Muslims had elected him for leadership, they would not have faced such deviations and the history of Islam would have been written with gold. Dr. Taha Husayn had mentioned correctly in the following words:

“Ali is worthy of Caliphate without any doubt due to his proximity to the Prophet and Islam, his sacrifices, his perfect character, attachment with religion, knowledge of Quran and Prophetic Practice (*Sunnah*).”^{[1](#)}

Ibn Hajar Asqalani narrates the important virtues of Imam ‘Ali (a) in the following words:

“Ali ibn Abi Talib was the first to accept Islam according to most scholars. He was raised up under the Prophet’s care and was not separated from him at any time. He participated in all battles except the Battle of Tabuk as on this occasion he remained in Medina on the Prophet’s order. And the Prophet had said: ‘O ‘Ali! Aren’t you pleased that you are to me as Haroon was to Moosa?’”

Imam ‘Ali (a) was the commander of the army in most battles. When the Prophet was making Companions, brothers of each other, he made Imam ‘Ali (a) his brother. There are countless virtues of Imam ‘Ali (a). Ahmad ibn Hanbal says: “There is no Companion except Imam ‘Ali (a) for whom so many traditions praising his virtue are present.”^{[2](#)}

Some scholars say that the reason behind so many traditions narrating the virtues of Imam ‘Ali is that the Umayyads had tried every means to conceal them. Hence the narrators thought that it was their religious responsibility to publish the virtues of Imam ‘Ali (a). The sky has never witnessed a scholar like Imam ‘Ali (a). The Prophet had announced in the Battle of Khaiber: Tomorrow I shall hand the banner to a person who loves Allah and His Messenger and they too love him. Allah will grant victory at his hands. On the next day, the Prophet handed over the banner to Imam ‘Ali (a). Umar used to say: This was the only day when I desired leadership. The Prophet handed over the verses of Surah Baraat to ‘Ali (a) to preach. He said that the verses of Quran can only be preached either by him or by someone who is from

him.

Also, the Prophet had said: ‘Ali is my successor in this world and in the hereafter.

The Prophet had gathered ‘Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain in a cloak and said:

«إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيراً»

Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! and to purify you a (thorough) purifying.[3](#)

Imam ‘Ali (a) covered himself with a cloak and slept on the Prophet’s bed to save his life during the night when the latter migrated to Medina.

The Prophet used to tell Imam ‘Ali (a): You are the chief of all believers after me.

The Prophet ordered the doors of all houses opening inside the mosque to be closed permanently except that of Imam ‘Ali (a). Imam ‘Ali (a) was allowed to pass from the mosque any time as there was no other way for him to pass by.

The Prophet ordered a pulpit to be made out of camel saddles. Then he raised the hand of Imam ‘Ali (a) in front of thousands of people and announced: “‘Ali is the master for whom I am the master.”

The Prophet called ‘Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain when the following verse of holy Quran was revealed:

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ»

“But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say: Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our near people and your near people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars.”[4](#)

He prayed: O Lord! These are my Ahl al-Bayt. Imam Tirmidhi narrates from Imran ibn Haseen a tradition of the Prophet: “Ultimately what do you want from ‘Ali? ‘Ali is from me and I am from ‘Ali without any doubt. He is the chief of all believers after me.”

Now the same question arises. Why was Imam ‘Ali (a) kept away from Caliphate in spite of so many virtues?

We will have to study the events in the Prophet's last moments and after he passed away. We must also remember that Imam 'Ali (a) was busy all the time in the burial of the Prophet after he passed away. On the other hand, the politically inclined people left his body and gathered in Saqifah of Bani Saada and established their Caliphate.[5](#)

According to Umar, one of the reasons behind keeping Imam 'Ali (a) away from Caliphate is that Arabs could not bear to see both prophethood and Caliphate in a single family.

To summarize this incident, the Prophet passed away in 11 A.H. and Imam 'Ali (a) became involved in his burial. The political waves were flowing all around outside the Prophet's house. The topic of Caliphate was the most favorite one.

Saad ibn Abu Ubadah reached Saqifah of Bani Saada along with the chiefs of Aws and Khazraj tribes. Umar and Abu Ubaidah were discussing the issue of Caliphate in the mosque. Other groups were busy holding discussions at different places.

When Abu Bakr heard the news of the Prophet's passing away, he came to the Prophet's house from Sunh locality. He saw Umar standing at the door with his sword unsheathed. He was threatening people saying: "I shall kill whoever says that the Prophet has passed away. The Prophet hasn't passed away. He has gone to the heaven like Prophet Isa. He will return after some days and cut off the nose and ears of hypocrites."

As a result of this heartrending tragedy, Umar had apparently lost his senses. Suddenly someone informed him about the activities prevailing in Saqifah. This same person who had lost his senses suddenly became conscious and sent a person to Abu Bakr. The person told Abu Bakr that Umar wanted to seek advice from him in an extremely serious matter.

As soon as Abu Bakr got the news, he came out of the house. Then both of them went to Saqifah of Bani Saada. Over there, chiefs of Aws and Khazraj tribes were bent upon declaring Saad ibn Ubadah as their Caliph.

However in such a case, Imam 'Ali (a) did what he should have done. He remained busy with the Prophet's burial.

Abbas, the Prophet's uncle was aggrieved because of his passing away. He wanted to pay allegiance to Imam 'Ali (a) in this state but Imam 'Ali (a) rejected it straightaway saying that the Prophet's body was not even buried and he could not accept Caliphate at such a moment.

Abu Sufyan ibn Harb came to Imam 'Ali (a) thrice and asked him to take hold of Caliphate. He had said: "If you want I can fill up the streets of Medina with troops in order to end this unpleasant rule." However, Imam 'Ali (a) rejected him straightaway saying: "How come you have become a well-wisher of Islam? You want to play the role of a Caliph-maker?"

Even though Helpers had arranged the meet at Saqifah, they failed to gain any benefit from there. A small account of this probe is as follows:

The people of Aws and Khazraj tribes gathered in Saqifah of Bani Saada. Saad ibn Ubadah was one of them.

Saad was sick and could not speak loudly. He had appointed one of his sons to speak for him. Hence his son spoke out to public loudly whatever Saad wanted to say. Saad said:

“O Helpers (Ansar)! You hold a high rank in religion. No tribe in entire Arabia has a virtue, which you people have. The Prophet preached the worship of Allah and asked people to keep away from idols in Mecca for a number of years. All the tribes except a few people opposed him. Almighty Allah has given you this honor. Allah sent His Prophet to you and chose you to help the religion.

You proved tough before the enemies of religion and you presented more sacrifices for the sake of Islam than any other tribe. Allah’s Messenger remained pleased with you till he passed away. Strengthen yourselves. You are more rightful to kingship than anyone else.”

This news reached Umar, the man who had lost his senses due to grief of the Prophet. Immediately he came to the door of the Prophet’s house and called Abu Bakr and they set out for Saqifah. Abu Bakr announced over there:

“We, Emigrants were the first to accept Islam and we are from the clan of the Prophet. You all are helpers of Allah and our brothers according to Book of Allah. You are our partners in religion and we love and honor you more than others. You have always made sacrifices and I expect sacrifice from you even now. You have Abu Ubaidah and Umar ibn Khattab in front of you. You may pay allegiance to whomever you wish. According to me, both of them are worthy of it.”

Umar and Abu Ubaidah said that it was not possible for anyone to take the post of Caliph in the presence of Abu Bakr. And that the latter was more rightful for it. At this moment, Habbab ibn Mundhir stood up from the Helpers and said:

“O Helpers! Maintain your unity. It was your land where worship of Allah was done freely. You only had given refuge to Allah’s Messenger. You had helped him and after migration, the Prophet came to you only...In spite of this, if these people do not agree with your rule then there should be a leader each for both the groups.”

Umar said that it was not possible. When Bashir ibn Saad of Khazraj sensed that the Helpers are trying to surrender the leadership to Saad ibn Ubadah, he remembered the ancient enmity between Aws and Khazraj tribes. He did not like Saad as leader because Saad was from Aws and he thought that the leadership would go to Aws. He thought that this would be something to boast of, for the progeny of Aws, which could be a cause of weakness of Khazraj and he knew that kingship cannot come to his

tribe. He thought that it was better to hand it over to an Emigrant instead of letting it fall into the hands of Aws tribe.

With this in mind, he stood up and announced: “O Helpers! It is true that we have served Islam. However, we must keep this fact in mind that we did Jihad only for the sake of pleasure and obedience of Allah and His Messenger.

Muhammad belonged to the tribe of Quraish and hence only the latter has the right to his inheritance. Fear Allah and keep away from fighting them.”

Abu Bakr stood up and said: “Umar and Abu Ubaidah are present here. You may pay allegiance to whomever you like.”

Both said: “By Allah! How can we command you? You extend your hand so that we may pay allegiance.”

Abu Bakr stretched his hand and Basheer ibn Saad paid him allegiance even before Umar and Abu Ubaidah.

Habbab ibn Mundhir stood up and called out: “O disobedient one! O enemy of the community, Basheer! You have done this out of jealousy. The tribe of Aws thought that if they remained behind Khazraj in paying allegiance, Khazraj will become dearer to the rulers. Hence Usaid ibn Khuzair from Aws also paid allegiance and then the entire tribe followed suit.

Saad ibn Ubadah was carried to his house on a bed. He did not pay allegiance as long as he lived. Later he went to Syria and was murdered there during the last days of Abu Bakr’s Caliphate. It was alleged that some jinn had shot him dead with arrows at night; however, reporters say that it was the wicked Khalid ibn Walid.

Sometime after this allegiance, Baraa ibn Aazib came to the Prophet’s house and saw that the Prophet was not yet buried. He announced: “I have seen with my own eyes that Umar and Abu Ubaidah are forcing each passer-by to pay allegiance to Abu Bakr.”⁶

Analysis of the Incidents at Saqifah

We have already probed into the incident of Saqifah entirely. The character of Umar in these events is clear to all who are not blind.

1. We want to know the reason why Umar did not come to the Prophet’s house for presenting condolences. Even if he had no interest in ‘Ali and his progeny, he should at least come to comfort his own daughter (Hafasah) who was widowed recently. He could have also got the honor of participating in the burial of the Prophet.

2. If he didn't want to condole the aggrieved family, why didn't he go inside to call Abu Bakr when he got the news of Aws and Khazraj?
3. Why did he send someone else to call Abu Bakr instead of going in himself ? Why did he wait for Abu Bakr outside?
4. There were many Companions gathered in the house of the aggrieved family. Why Umar chose to seek advice only from Abu Bakr?
5. Was the presence of Abu Bakr inside the house and waiting of Umar at the door a coincidence or it was preplanned?
6. What was the decision taken by Umar and Abu Ubaidah before Abu Bakr arrived?
7. Abu Bakr had narrated the virtues of Emigrants. Were all Emigrants included in those virtues or only Umar and Abu Ubaidah?
8. Abu Bakr had narrated two reasons to prove Emigrants' right to Caliphate.
 - A. They were the first to accept Islam
 - B. They were from the Prophet's clan

If the two above mentioned reasons are criteria for Caliphate, who is more eligible for Caliphate than Imam 'Ali (a)? The reasons are:

1. He was the first to accept Islam
2. He was nearer in relation to the Prophet than Abu Bakr

Then why Imam 'Ali (a) was not appointed Caliph as per the standard put forward by Abu Bakr?

9. If Caliphate is the right only of Emigrants why Abu Bakr selected only two persons from them, viz. Umar and Abu Ubaidah?

Can anyone give the reason for this selection? Was this selection without preference?

10. If it was necessary to appoint a Caliph from Emigrants, Abu Bakr could have advised the Helpers to elect any one from Emigrants as the leader. Why didn't he do that?
11. What was the logic behind putting forward only two names out of so many Emigrants?
12. Why did Umar and Abu Ubaidah reject the offer of Abu Bakr? Why did they prefer the leadership of Abu Bakr? What is the logical reason behind it?

13. Were all links in Saqifah procedure joined coincidentally or everything was preplanned? It is absolutely necessary for students of History to know the answers of these questions.

14. Was there any relation between the events at Saqifah and army of Usamah? Did the discussion held between Umar and Abu Ubaidah in the mosque had any relation to Saqifah?

Two persons accompanied Abu Bakr to Saqifah. Didn't the friendship of these three persons prove beneficial in Saqifah?

15. Where were other Emigrants when only a few people had gathered at Saqifah to appoint a Caliph?

16. The enmity of Aws and Khazraj popped out in Saqifah. Was it a coincidence or was it backed by a preplanned conspiracy?

17. If some conspiracy was involved in the creation of this dispute, would you like to probe into it?

18. Was the election of Caliph more important than the Prophet's burial?

19. Couldn't Abu Bakr ask the Muslims to wait till the Prophet was buried?

Why was he in such a hurry that he left the Last Prophet who was also his son-in-law, behind, without burying? He could have at least waited till the burial. Did he not express his lack of love for his son-in-law by hastening so much?

20. Is there any link between the complex events at Saqifah, the tradition in which the Prophet asked for pen and paper and the incident of Usamah's army? It is necessary for the students of history to know the answers of above mentioned questions also. I personally believe that Umar played a central role in all these events. He was the one who had discussed the issue with Abu Ubaidah earlier and drafted a plan. He called Abu Bakr to accomplish it. After this, these main characters of Islamic history finalized a plan on way to Saqifah.

This is the reason why Abu Bakr was putting forward the names of these two persons and vice versa.

Did the entire Muslim Ummah made them their representative and send them to Saqifah? The fact is that not even a part of the Ummah was present in Saqifah.

Who gave the permission to this small group to decide the future of the entire Ummah?

It is a fact that when Abu Bakr was called, no advice regarding the leadership of Islam was taken from any Muslim before or after that. It is impossible to neglect the whole incident of Saqifah calling it a coincidence. It was a thing planned a long time ago. One in which the role of Umar is exposed.

Another reason for denial of Caliphate to Ali

You have already read the incident of passing away of the Prophet and the Caliphate of Abu Bakr. Why Imam 'Ali (a) was denied Caliphate?

One important reason behind it is given by Hafiz in the following words, which we quote here for our readers who prefer justice:

Imam 'Ali (a) had intricate relations with Quraish. Quraish had severe envy for Imam 'Ali (a) because he had killed their chiefs in battles. He had weakened their hold. He had demeaned their honor. The envy could not be removed from their hearts even after accepting Islam.

Just imagine that if you have been a disbeliever for a year or two (God forbid!) and your brother or son was killed in a battle against Islam and later you become a Muslim. However, will all the strained relations and hatred be eliminated immediately? Would you embrace the person who killed your brother or son? It is really difficult! It is possible only when you have accepted Islam from the depths of your heart.

However, in contrast to this, most Arabs accepted Islam either under compulsion or to gain something.

Many of them had recited the formula of Faith (*Kalimah*) to save their lives, while others had done it to demean the tribes with whom they had enmity. You must remember that a number of disbelievers were killed in battles by Imam 'Ali (a) and other Muslims. However, the heirs of those disbelievers held only Imam 'Ali (a) responsible for their death. They used to consider Imam 'Ali (a) as their enemy and killer of their relatives.

Their hearts were not cleansed even after accepting Islam. The fire of hatred for Imam 'Ali (a) blazed in their hearts. They were always ready to take revenge from Imam 'Ali (a). By denying Caliphate, they had taken the first installment of their revenge and they expressed it whole heartedly in Kerbala. The family of Imam 'Ali (a) was martyred in Kerbala despite their thirst and hunger only to revenge this.⁷

If the Islamic Ummah had any feeling of justice, it should have postponed the issue of Caliphate and allegiance till the Prophet's burial. Any person who has a heart will be moved on knowing that people did not attend the funeral of that great personality, whose Caliphate and succession was planned by them. No one came to offer condolence to his near and dear ones. Why did the love and friendship end as soon as the Prophet passed away?

Imam 'Ali (a) loved the Prophet very much and he fulfilled his obligation. He gave preference to the Prophet's funeral over gaining political power. The politically motivated people took the advantage of this. Imam 'Ali (a) always liked peace treaties and understanding. The greatness of Imam 'Ali's peaceful character can be seen from the fact that he did not fight the Caliphate structured in Saqifah. He observed silence for the safety of Islam and holy Quran. He sacrificed his correct decisions for the benefit

of Islamic Ummah.

Imam 'Ali (a) describes this policy of peace in *Nahjul Balagha* as follows:

Almighty Allah was made Muhammad the admonisher of all the worlds. When he passed away the Muslims fought with each other for his Caliphate.

By Allah! I had never thought that Arabs will take Caliphate away from the family of the Prophet. I had never thought that people would leave me and appoint someone else as their leader. When I saw people paying allegiance to a person, I did not oppose them forcefully because I knew that if I did so, most people will leave Islam...

In such conditions, I thought that I should bear personal loss in order to safeguard Islam.⁸ I did not want to take the kingdom for a short time and cause permanent loss to Islam. The loss of Islam was more hurting to me than loss of my rule."

What can be a better proof of Imam 'Ali's peace-loving nature than the fact that he objected to the three caliphs during their rule only in religious matters.

History of the universe will fail to present such a peace-loving person like Imam 'Ali (a) because he sacrificed his rights and those of his wife for the sake of benefit of Islam. Lady Fatima Zahra was denied inheritance of her father, Fadak, which was gifted to her by her father. In spite of this, Imam 'Ali (a) did not let peace let go off his hands. Apart from this, during the early days of Abu Bakr's Caliphate, it was seen that Umar came to the house of Imam 'Ali (a) along with his followers. They stood at the door and brought wood to burn down his house. Is it possible to stop the people from talking about these historical incidents?⁹

Incident of Fadak

The brief account of Fadak is that it is a hamlet of Hijaz, near Medina. Jews inhabited it for hundreds of years, and as the land was very fertile, Jews used to cultivate it.

In 7 A.H., the people of Fadak surrendered their land to the Prophet. Fadak was now a personal property of the Prophet. Almighty Allah says in Surah Hashr:

وَمَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ فَمَا أَوْجَفْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَلَا رِكَابٍ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ رُسُلَهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

And whatever Allah restored to His Apostle from them, you did not press forward against it any horse or a riding camel, but Allah gives authority to His apostles against whom He pleases, and Allah has power over all things. ¹⁰

The Prophet had sowed seven date seeds in Fadak and gifted the entire Fadak property to his daughter, Lady Fatima Zahra. It was used by Lady Sayyada only after it was gifted to her. After the Prophet's passing away, Abu Bakr made Imam 'Ali (a) and Fatima his political victims and confiscated Fadak. Fadak was used by the family of Prophet Muhammad (S) before. The letter of Imam 'Ali (a) is a proof of this seizure of land. He had mentioned in that letter as follows:

"It was the only land owned by us under the sky. Even then people looked at it with greedy eyes. The other party did not feel ashamed while snatching it away. Allah is the best judge."¹¹

Lady Fatima Zahra was sole legal owner of that property. It was necessary for the Caliph to leave the Prophet's gift untouched. If the Caliph had any legal dispute in this matter he should have filed a suit and allowed it to remain in the custody of Lady Sayyada.

The strangest point in this case is that Abu Bakr always believed that Fadak was not Lady Sayyada's property and that it was the property of Muslims. Hence he seized this land on the first day of his rule. Lady Sayyada was claimant in this case and Abu Bakr the defendant.

The cataclysm of this incident is that the opposition party was the judge. It is clear that the petition was against Abu Bakr or at least against Muslim Ummah led by Abu Bakr. In both cases, Abu Bakr was defendant and he had no right to adjudicate this case whatsoever.

Fadak in Various Hands

Before describing the details of Fadak, it is necessary to mention that Fadak was a public property during the rule of Abu Bakr and Umar.

During Uthman's rule, the entire property was handed over to Marwan ibn Hakam. O God! Can anyone tell us if what Uthman did was right?

Ahl al-Sunnah scholars present the character of Abu Bakr as an example here. We must ask them why Uthman did not follow Abu Bakr and acted differently. Which of the two Caliphs was right in this matter?

When Fadak was under the custody of the Prophet's daughter, Muslim Ummah could not bear to see it. Now when it came under the custody of Marwan, why are people quiet? Abu Bakr had said that Fadak is not the personal property of any Muslim. It belongs to the entire Muslim Ummah.

When Muawiyah ibn Abu Sufyan came to power, he divided Fadak into three parts. A third was given to Marwan ibn Hakam, a third to Amr ibn Uthman ibn Affan, the son of Uthman and a third was given to his son, Yazid ibn Muawiyah ibn Abu Sufyan.

When Marwan came to power after Yazid, he did what the third Caliph had done by disassociating his other two partners and seized the entire property.

Afterwards Fadak became the property of his son, Abdul Aziz. When Umar ibn Abdul Aziz came to power, he handed over Fadak to Fatima's progeny. When Umar ibn Abdul Aziz died, Yazid came to power from Bani Umayyah. He seized Fadak from Fatima's progeny and handed it over to Marwan's progeny. Fadak remained with Marwan's progeny till the end of Umayyad rule.

When the Umayyad rule ended, the Abbasid Caliph, Abul Abbas Saffah handed over Fadak to Fatima's progeny.

Mansoor Dawaniqi took it back from Fatima's progeny. After that, his son, Mahdi returned it to Fatima's progeny. It was seized again by Hadi and Rashid. Mamoon Rashid the Abbaside gave it back and Mutasim snatched it away later.

Historians haven't narrated what happened after that.

It proves that Fadak was like a toy for the rulers. They used to hand it over to whomever they wished and seized it whenever and whatever part of it they liked. The writings of Mamoon Rashid at the time of returning Fadak back are enlightening, for he has explained about the inheritors of Fadak in detail.

Mamoon Returns Fadak

The Historian, Balazari narrates what Mamoon Rashid wrote. In 210 A.H., Mamoon gave order that Fadak be returned to its legal owners. He wrote the following to his governor Qathm ibn Ja'far in Medina:

“Amirul Momineen holds a high religious position in front of Allah as the successor of his last messenger. This position and nearness demands that he should follow Allah's Messenger in actions. He should obey the Prophet's orders and make sure that he gives the possession of things gifted by the Prophet to their original owners.

That the Prophet gifted Fadak to his daughter, Lady Fatima Zahra is as daylight, without any doubt.

Hence Amirul Momineen suggests that Fadak be returned to its original owners. Amirul Momineen should seek nearness of Allah through this act. Also he wants to become a follower of the Prophetic Practice (*Sunnah*) through this justice.”

Mamoon then ordered his clerks to enter it in official records.

“After the Prophet's passing away, it was announced every year during Hajj: Whoever has something granted to by the Prophet they should come forward and take it. In spite of this, why was the Prophet's daughter kept away from her right?

Mamoon Rashid had written to his slave, Mubarak Tabari that the entire property of Fadak should be returned to Fatima's progeny. The help of Muhammad ibn Yahya ibn Zaid ibn 'Ali ibn Husain ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Husain ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib must be taken

in this matter. Arrangements must be made to increase the yield.”

The above letter was written in 210 A.H. [12](#)

Judgment Regarding Fadak

“So many calamities befell me; that if they had fallen upon days they would have turned into nights.”

(From the Lamentation of Fatima Zahra)

Allah’s Messenger was granted Fadak by Allah, which he gifted to his daughter upon divine commands and Lady Fatima utilized its income during the Prophet’s lifetime. After the Prophet’s passing away, Abu Bakr dismissed all the servants from Fadak and usurped it. Lady Zahra went to Abu Bakr when she got this news and demanded her right.

Abu Bakr presented an astounding tradition in reply. He said that the Prophet has said: “We prophets neither inherit nor leave any inheritance. Whatever we leave behind is charity.”

The Tradition of Non-Inheritance and Holy Quran

Only narrator of this tradition is Abu Bakr. A similar tradition is narrated also by Abu Bakr only. After the Prophet’s passing away, people had difference of opinion as to where should he should be buried. At that moment, Abu Bakr said that the Prophet has said: “All prophets were buried at the place they passed away.” While the historian, Tabari says that there are numerous prophets who were buried at places different from where they had passed away.

Lady Zahra did not accept the tradition of non-inheritance because if the Prophet’s progeny does not inherit, the Prophet should have told his daughter that she would not inherit him. Abu Bakr’s words mean that the Prophet did not inform his heir and secretly conveyed this fact to a person who had no relation with it. This tradition of non-inheritance was not heard by Imam ‘Ali (a) because if he had done so, he would have never allowed his wife to demand her right. Also why did the Prophet tell this important thing only to Abu Bakr? Why didn’t he inform other Muslims also?

Tradition of Non-Inheritance is against Holy Quran

The stand of Lady Fatima was strong regarding above mentioned tradition of non-inheritance. She had rejected this tradition saying that it was against holy Quran.

1. Almighty Allah says in holy Quran: Allah enjoins you concerning your children:

«يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلزَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ»

The Male shall have the equal of the portion of two females. [13](#)

2. Almighty Allah has said regarding the inheritance of everyone as follows:

«وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِيَ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ»

And to every one We have appointed heirs of what parents and near relatives leave. [14](#)

Readers are requested to pay attention to the phrase, “and to everyone.” It is explicitly said in this tradition regarding inheritance of “everyone.”

Refer to all the verses regarding inheritance, but you won't find a single verse stating that people have their heirs while prophets do not. If there is a verse denying inheritance of the prophet it should be brought forward. I challenge the whole world till Judgment Day to bring forward such a verse.

Three parts of the tradition of non-inheritance are as follows:

1. Prophets do not inherit anyone
2. The progeny of prophets does not inherit them
3. Whatever prophets leave behind is charity

Holy Quran rejects all the three points of this tradition.

Almighty Allah says in holy Quran:

«وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمَانُ دَاوُودَ»

And Sulaiman was Dawood's heir. [15](#)

If a prophet cannot be the heir of anyone, how Prophet Sulaiman can be the heir of Prophet Dawood?

This proves that the first point of this tradition is incorrect.

Also the Almighty Allah has mentioned in the verse that Prophet Sulaiman became the heir of Prophet Dawood.

Hence Sulaiman (a) became the heir of a prophet. If the second point of the above mentioned tradition is correct that there is no heir for a prophet, how could someone inherit prophet Dawood? Why wasn't his property given as charity? Hence this single verse has proved all three parts of the tradition of non-inheritance incorrect.

The supplication of Prophet Zakariya (a) is mentioned in Quran as follows:

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّي وَاشْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَلَمْ أَكُنْ بِدُعَائِكَ رَبِّ شَقِيًّا. وَإِنِّي خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِنْ وَرَائِي وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِي عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا. يَرِثُنِي وَيَرِثُ مِنْ آلِ يَعْقُوبَ وَاجْعَلْهُ رَبِّ رَضِيًّا. يَا زَكَرِيَّا إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ اسْمُهُ يَحْيَى لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا.»

He said: My Lord! Surely my bones are weakened and my head flares with hoariness, and, my Lord! I have never been unsuccessful in my prayer to Thee. And surely I fear my cousins after me, and my wife is barren, therefore grant me from Thyself an heir. Who should inherit me and inherit from the children of Yaqoob, and make him, my Lord, one in whom Thou art well pleased. O Zakariya! Surely We give you good news of a boy whose name shall be Yahya: We have not made before anyone his equal. [16](#)

Read the above mentioned verse repeatedly. Prophet Zakariya has asked for an heir and the Almighty Allah granted him one and selected a name for him.

If there is no inheritance for prophets, why Prophet Zakariya asked for an heir from Allah?

Even if he asked for it, why didn't Allah silence him saying: "You are a prophet? What are you saying? There is no inheritance for a prophet. You should not ask for an heir."

If there are no heirs of prophet, why the Almighty Allah granted him one and selected a name for him?

Lady Sayyada recited the above mentioned verse and rejected the tradition of non-inheritance. However, Abu Bakr refused to restore her rights in spite of it.

Finally Lady Sayyada said: "Now mount your Caliphate after putting a bridle to it. I will meet you on Judgment Day. Allah will arbitrate on that day and the liar will be at loss.

O son of Abu Qahafa! Does the Book of Allah say that you can become the heir of your father while I cannot do so? You are talking strange things.

Have you left the Book of Allah purposely? Didn't you hear the words of Allah: Relatives are inheritors of each other in the Book of Allah? Did Allah reveal a verse regarding non-inheritance of my father? Or you say that people of two communities cannot inherit each other? If yes, didn't I and my father belong to the same community? Are you aware of general and particular matters of holy Quran more than my father and my cousin?"

After presenting these proofs and verses of holy Quran, Lady Sayyada noticed that they had no effect on the Caliph. She became annoyed and returned home crying.

She knew it before that the Caliph would not return Fadak to her. She went there only to exhaust the

argument. She proved it to the world that when her father had intended to write a tradition a few days ago, it was the same group, which had said that they do not need a tradition and the Book of Allah was sufficient for them. When she recited the verse of holy Quran, they replied to her by narrating a tradition.

Hence Lady Sayyada proved to the world that those who had rejected the tradition earlier were now rejecting the verses of holy Quran also. She knew it before that she won't get her right back because the people who could snatch the Caliphate of her husband a few days before could also seize Fadak from her.

Tradition of non-inheritance and demands of Express text and Reason

Let us view the tradition narrated by Abu Bakr in the light of the Prophet's life history.

Allah's Messenger never excepted himself from the commandments of the pure law of Shariah.

1. It would be wrong to say that a prophet should neither offer prayer nor observe fast (God forbid!).

It would be wrong because a prophet cannot be exempted from the commandments of Shariah.

Therefore, as a prophet is not exempted from prayer, fast and other Islamic commandments, he can also not be exempted from the commandment of Islam regarding inheritance.

2. Wasn't there a political aim behind rejecting a simple Islamic commandment in the case of Fadak?

3. Was Abu Bakr trying to suppress his political rival, Imam 'Ali (a) and his family by denying inheritance to Lady Sayyada?

4. Is this matter linked to political economics?

Was it intended to deprive Imam 'Ali (a) and his family from the leftover bread also?

5. Was it intended to weaken Imam 'Ali (a) financially and stop him from contesting for the post of Caliphate?

6. Was it intended to consider those people apostate who rejected the Caliphate of Abu Bakr and bar them from benefits, from Zakat and attack them? Was this reasoning behind usurping Fadak? Did they fear that if Fadak remains in possession of 'Ali, he would help their rivals financially?

7. Was it intended to demean the honor of the progeny of Muhammad by usurping Fadak? Did they intend to show it to the people that the Prophet himself had deprived his people from inheritance?

Did they try to prove that those people who have no right of inheriting the prophet had no right to Caliphate?

8. Were many people involved in seizing Fadak?
9. Even if the tradition narrated by Abu Bakr is considered valid, is it applicable only for the Prophet or to all the prophets?
10. Why did the Prophet want to keep his loving daughter away from his inheritance?
11. Did the Prophet fear that his daughter and son-in-law will misuse it after him (God forbid)?
12. If yes, why did he hand it over to his daughter?
13. Did this apprehension arise because she had misused it during the Prophet's lifetime?
14. If yes, when and how did it happen?

Allamah Ibn Abil Hadid Mutazali has narrated a beautiful debate on this matter between the Chief Qazi and the ensign of guidance (*Alamul Huda*) Sayyid Murtuza. The former rejected inheritance of prophets while the latter tried to prove it.

The stand of Chief Qazi was that the inheritance of prophets mentioned in holy Quran is regarding their knowledge and virtues and not regarding their property.

Sayyid Murtuza's stand was that inheritance is regarding wealth and land first. And this relation is true. Its relation with knowledge and virtues can be metaphorical. As per the principle of holy Quran, metaphorical meanings are accepted only when the real meanings are in effect. What is wrong in a prophet inheriting worldly things? There is nothing wrong logically as well as according to Shariah. It is not possible to discard the real meaning and accept the metaphorical. Even if we accept the statement of Chief Qazi that the inheritance of prophets is in relation to knowledge and virtues instead of material things, it would mean that the Prophet's progeny are inheritors of his knowledge and virtues.

If the Prophet's progeny are inheritors of his knowledge and virtues how could the Caliphate of Abu Bakr be legal in the presence of these personalities. [17](#)

Fadak as a Gift

Lady Sayyada demanded Fadak because it had been gifted to her. Imam 'Ali (a), Hasan, Husain and Umme Aiman were witnesses from Lady Sayyida's side.

However, the Caliph rejected all witnesses and said: "The course of testimony is not complete because 'Ali is Sayyada's husband, Imam Hasan and Imam Husain are her sons and Umme Aiman is her slave."

The fact is that this proof is complete in all aspects.

Refer to the following verse of Surah Aale Imran to know how strong 'Ali's proof was:

«شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ»

Allah bears witness that there is no god but He, and (so do) the angels and those possessed of knowledge, maintaining His creation with justice; there is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise.

In this verse, Almighty Allah includes Himself, His angles and the just ones as witnesses of His unity (Tauheed).

Scholars who prefer justice are witness of Tauheed (Monotheism) and Imam ‘Ali (a) should be listed foremost among the just ones because the Prophet has said regarding ‘Ali’s knowledge: “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Ali is its gate.”

As far as justice is concerned, the sky has not witnessed a just person like ‘Ali. If Imam ‘Ali (a) is a witness to Tauheed (Monotheism), why can’t he be the witness in the matter of Fadak? It is strange that we accept Imam ‘Ali’s testimony in the matter of Tauheed (Monotheism) and reject it in the matter of Fadak. Imam ‘Ali (a) is not only a witness to Tauheed but also a witness to the prophethood of the Prophet as mentioned in Surah Raad by Almighty Allah:

«وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ»

And those who disbelieve say: You are not a messenger. Say: Allah is sufficient as a witness between me and you and whoever has knowledge of the Book.

According to the correct interpretation, the phrase “whoever has knowledge of the book” implies Imam ‘Ali (a).

This verse proves that Imam ‘Ali (a) is the witness of the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (S).

Now the question arises as to why the person who testified to the prophethood of the Prophet could not be allowed to testify in the matter of Fadak?

The Branch Testifies to the Root

The testimony of Imam Hasan and Husain was rejected saying that the branch is testifying for the root. i.e. the testimony of Imam Hasan and Husain is not acceptable as they were sons of Lady Sayyada.

The incident of Prophet Isa’s birth and the problem of Lady Maryam are present in holy Quran. When people started taunting Lady Maryam for the birth of a child, her new-born son had testified to his prophethood and the chastity of his mother.

If the testimony of children in favor of their parents is not acceptable, why Allah made Prophet Isa (a)

testify to the chastity of his mother? If this formula is accepted, what will happen to all traditions narrated by Ayesha regarding her father? There were four persons present in front of the Caliph. One of them was the claimant herself and other three were witnesses. Refer to the incident of Mubahila (imprecation ceremony) to know how reliable the testimony of these persons is.

Testimony of Mubahila

When Christian scholars rejected the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad, the Almighty Allah revealed the verse of Mubahila and said:

فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ

«نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلُ لَعْنَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ»

But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge, then say: Come let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our near people and your near people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars. [18](#)

When this verse was revealed, the Prophet went to Imam ‘Ali’s house and covered Imam ‘Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain with his cloak and prayed: “O Allah! These are my Ahl al-Bayt.”

The Prophet set out for Mubahila along with these personalities only. When the Christian scholars saw their illuminated faces, they agreed to pay Jizyah Tax and kept away from Mubahila.

This incident proves that these personalities are witnesses for entire Islam and even the Christians respected their testimony.

Sometime after the incident of Mubahila, these four personalities went to the Caliph. One of them was claimant while remaining four were witnesses.

The human mind would be surprised that the Caliph of Muslims rejected the testimony of those personalities whom Almighty Allah had made witnesses of truthfulness of entire religion of Islam.

Also it is enough to say regarding the Caliphate of these personalities that Allah has revealed the following verse for them:

«إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيراً»

Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! And to purify you a (thorough) purifying. [19](#)

It was obligatory on Abu Bakr to accept the testimony of Lady Sayyada without any hassle because it is a well-known incident that a Bedouin had argued with the Prophet regarding a she-camel. Both of them said that the she-camel was their property. When the Bedouin asked the Prophet for a witness, Khuzayma ibn Thabit came forward and testified. Later on, Khuzayma was asked why he had testified without knowledge.

He replied: We also testify to the prophethood and revelation of Muhammad even though we have not seen archangel Jibraeel with our eyes. When we can testify to the prophethood without seeing it, why can't we testify in favor of the Prophet for a single she-camel? The Prophet declared the testimony of Khuzayma right and gave him the title of the owner of two testimonies (*Dhul Shahadatain*).

It would have been better for Abu Bakr if he had accepted the testimony of Lady Sayyada like the Bedouin had done. On the other hand, Lady Sayyada did not ask Abu Bakr for witness regarding his tradition of non-inheritance even though she had rejected this tradition.

It was not at all appropriate for Abu Bakr to reject the witness of the great truthful one (Siddiq Akbar) like Imam 'Ali (a). Umme Aiman was the Prophet's nurse, who served Islam and the Messenger of Islam all her life; then why was her testimony rejected?

Inconsistency in actions of the Muslim Caliph

The stand of Abu Bakr regarding inheritance is really strange:

1. He let the Prophet's sword, slippers and turban remain with Imam 'Ali (a) and did not argue with him regarding these items.
2. Also the Prophet had handed over his sword and a ring to Imam 'Ali (a) in his last moments. Abu Bakr did not demand these things.

If the sword and ring were not taken by the Caliph because they were the gifts then Fadak was also a gift. Why was he so particular in confiscating Fadak only?

3. Lady Fatima had kept the dress of the Prophet, which he was wearing at the time of his demise. Abu Bakr did not ask for this dress also?
4. The wives of the Prophet also were not asked to vacate their houses.
5. The governor of Bahrain, Alla ibn Hadrhami sent some goods to the Caliph from Bahrain. Jabir Ibn Abdullah told the Caliph: "The Prophet had promised that he would give me a part from it. Now that the Prophet has passed away and you are the Caliph of Muslims, you should give that part to me." Abu Bakr did not demand any witness from him and granted the requested part of goods to him only by trusting his words.[20](#)

Wasn't the Chief of the ladies of Paradise as truthful as Jabir?

6. When the goods from Bahrain were received by the Caliph, Abu Bashir al-Maazni came to him and said: "The Prophet had promised me a part of the goods from Bahrain." On hearing this, Abu Bakr handed him three handfuls of the wealth.

Students of History are amazed that when a common Companion of the Prophet demanded something, his testimony was accepted. On the other hand, when the daughter of Allah's Messenger demanded her right, she was asked to bring witnesses. The height of oppression is that the testimony of those witnesses was rejected. The Prophet's daughter who was the Chief of the ladies of Paradise was sent back empty-handed.

If the tradition of non-inheritance is accepted, many complications will arise. According to this tradition, it would not be legal to bury the Prophet in his own house because after the Prophet's passing away, all his property would be considered charity and the property of all Muslims. Now the Prophet will have no relation with his house. Then how could he be buried in a house, which is not his?

It is strange that Abu Bakr has himself narrated another tradition that prophets are buried at the same place where they pass away. When prophets pass away at a place, should that place be considered their property or charity?

If this property is considered charity, it will not be appropriate to bury prophets there. If it is appropriate to bury the prophet, it would be necessary to accept that whatever prophets leave behind is not charity.

Now another question arises here. Wasn't Abu Bakr aware of the conflict between these two traditions?

Further explaining it, we can say that Abu Bakr narrated the tradition: A prophet is buried at the place where he passes away.

Now a prophet can pass away only at one of the two places:

1. Either at his own property
2. Or at the property of someone else

If a prophet dies at his own property, it is not appropriate to bury him at that place because it has become charity.

If a prophet dies at the property of someone else, it would not be possible to bury him there at all because that place belongs to someone else.

Hence if the tradition of non-inheritance is considered correct, where would the prophet be buried?

The Place where the Prophet was buried belonged to him and it was turned into charity after he passed

away. Then how did Abu Bakr get the right to make a will that he should be buried beside the Prophet? If we suppose that the room belonged to the Prophet and it was considered his property even after his demise, one should take the permission of owner before entering it. Did Abu Bakr take the permission from the Prophet in his life to get himself buried beside the Prophet's grave?

Or did the Prophet himself say that the first Caliph should be buried beside him?

All these problems arise if we accept the tradition of non-inheritance. It is strange that Ahl al-Sunnah commentators have tried their best to prove that the inheritance of prophets is regarding their knowledge only. Till today, we are not able to understand how knowledge and virtues could be inherited? If it is so, a son of a scholar must also be a scholar and a son of every illiterate person will be illiterate. It is wrong socially and psychologically that Abu Bakr acted upon a tradition whose only narrator was he himself.

While doing so he forgot the strong Islamic tradition whose authenticity was known to him also: that the Prophet had said, "Fatima is a part of me. Whoever hurts her has hurt me and whoever hurts me has hurt Allah."[21](#)

Abu Bakr should have remembered the incident of Abul Aas ibn Rubai while denying Lady Sayyada her right.

This Incident is narrated by historian Ibn Athir as follows: Abul Aas ibn Rubai ibn Abdul Aza ibn Abdul Shams was included among the prisoners of war in the battle of Badr. He was the husband of Zainab bint Khadija.

All prisoners of Mecca were released after paying compensation. Zainab bint Khadija sent a necklace as compensation for the release of her husband. This necklace was gifted by her mother, Lady Khadijatul Kubra. When the Prophet saw this necklace, he recollected the memories of Lady Khadija and was moved. He told the Muslims: If possible release the husband of Zainab and return the compensation also. Before the conquest of Mecca, once it so happened that Abul Aas was going to Syria carrying trade goods belonging to him as well as other people of Mecca. On the way he had a clash with Muslim army and the latter took all his goods away. He returned to his wife Zainab bint Khadija at night.

When Allah's Messenger was going to offer prayer at dawn, Zainab called out: "O people! I have given refuge to Abul Aas ibn Rubai."

The Prophet requested Muslims that they return the goods of Abu Aas if possible. He said that it was only desirable, so there would not be any punishment if the goods were not returned.

The people said: "O Messenger of Allah! We submit before your wish and we will return his goods." So the Muslims returned all the goods of Abul Aas including his walking stick.[22](#)

We have seen that Muslims returned the spoils of war to Abul Aas for the sake of the Prophet's foster-daughter, Zainab; even though they had the right to those goods. Even if Abu Bakr had thought that

there was no inheritance for Lady Sayyada, keeping in mind the incident of Abul Aas, he should have preferred the pleasure of Lady Sayyada over everything.

Was this act of Abu Bakr in accordance to the Prophetic Practice (*Sunnah*)?

Another Face of the Saqifah Regime

Amirul Momineen (a) says:

“Beware! By Allah, the son of Abi Qahafa (Abu Bakr) dressed himself with it (the Caliphate) and he certainly knew that my position in relation to it was the same as the position of the axis in relation to the hand-mill. The flood water flows down from me and the bird cannot fly upto me. I put a curtain against the Caliphate and kept myself detached from it.

Then I began to think whether I should assault or endure calmly the blinding darkness of tribulations wherein the grown up are made feeble and the young grow old and the true believer acts under strain till he meets Allah (on his death). I found that endurance thereon was wiser. So I adopted patience although there was pricking in the eye and suffocation (of mortification) in the throat. I watched the plundering of my inheritance till the first one went his way but handed over the Caliphate to Ibnul Khattab after himself.”

Then he quoted al-Aasha’s verse:

“My days are now passed on the camel’s back (in difficulty) while there were days (of ease) when I enjoyed the company of Jabir’s brother Hayyan.”[23](#)

“It is strange that during his lifetime he wished to be released from Caliphate but he confirmed it for the other one after his death. No doubt these two shared its udders strictly among themselves.”

The Caliphate which Abu Bakr had received due to the efforts of Umar was returned to the latter.

Before nominating Umar, Abu Bakr had called Uthman ibn Affan and Abdur Rahman ibn Auf. He discussed the matter of nominating Umar with them and asked for advice in this matter. Abdur Rahman ibn Auf said: “Whatever you think in this matter is much better.” Abdur Rahman knew that even during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr, the central role was played by Umar only. Uthman ibn Affan replied: “His inner self is much better than his outer one and there is no one like him around us.”

We know that Uthman was absolutely correct because the second Caliph has played a wonderful role in establishing the government of Saqifah.

We don’t know whether both of them gave their advice from their hearts or just for the sake of respecting the Caliph’s decision.

Will of the first Caliph regarding Umar

Finally Abu Bakr asked Uthman to write down the nomination of Umar as Caliph.

Historians have recorded that Uthman was writing down as Abu Bakr dictated. Abu Bakr lost consciousness before mentioning the name of Umar. Uthman wrote Umar's name of his own. When Abu Bakr regained consciousness, Uthman said that he had written the name of Umar. Abu Bakr approved it and appreciated Uthman a lot.

1. We could not understand till date why Uthman himself wrote Umar's name in the will of some other person?
2. Will this act be included in his friendship?
3. If we suppose that Abu Bakr died in this state of unconsciousness, would the will of Abu Bakr be considered legal?
4. Why was the opinion of only two persons out of the entire Muslim Ummah taken regarding Umar's nomination?
5. What was so special about these two personalities?
6. It is said that Abu Bakr appointed his successor for the benefit of Muslim Ummah. Didn't the Prophet think of the benefit of Muslim Ummah like him?
7. Abu Bakr willed at his death-bed and it was accepted. However, when the Prophet had intended to do so, people said that he was talking rubbish.
8. After a few centuries later, if a person points out that Abu Bakr has willed at his death-bed in the state of illness and he was talking rubbish, will he be considered as a friend of Islam or its enemy? Muslim Ummah should also decide what that person should be called who used similar words for the Prophet.
9. Abu Bakr and Umar believed that the Prophet had not appointed anyone as his successor. Similarly, if Abu Bakr would not have appointed his successor, wouldn't this act have been considered as per the Prophetic Practice (*Sunnah*)?
10. What was the problem in taking the views of Emigrants and Helpers regarding the Caliphate of Imam 'Ali (a)?

The simple and true answer to all these questions is that Umar played a central role in nomination of Abu Bakr as Caliph.

Hence Abu Bakr was obliged to nominate Umar after his death.

Shura (Consultation)

Till when the second went his way (of death) he put the matter (of Caliphate) in a group and regarded me to be one of them. But good Heavens! What had I to do with this “consultation”? Where was any doubt about me with regard to the first of them that I was now considered akin to these ones? But I remained low when they were low and flew high when they flew high. One of them turned against me because of his hatred and the other got inclined the other way due to his in-law relationship and this thing and that thing.^{[24](#)}

Ibn Athir Umar ibn Maymun narrates the event of Shura as follows:

When Umar was fatally injured, people asked him to appoint a successor. He said: “Whom should I appoint? If Abu Ubaidah had been alive, I would have appointed him. I would then have told the Lord that I have appointed a person whom the Prophet had called trustworthy in his Ummah.”

“If Saalim Huzaifah’s freed slave had been alive, I would have appointed him as my successor and told the Lord that I have appointed such a person as my successor whom the Prophet called a great lover of Allah.”^{[25](#)}

We also accept that Umar would have indeed appointed Abu Ubaidah as Caliph if the latter were alive. He would have nominated Abu Ubaidah because the latter supported him in Saqifah and not because he was trustworthy. If it had been the case, the number of Rightly-guided Caliphs would have become five instead of four.

The student of History is astounded at this narration. People requested Umar not to leave them without a leader after his death. However it is strange that the same was not asked from the Prophet!

According to Ahl al-Sunnah point of view, the Prophet was not concerned about the future of Ummah, hence he left the selection of Caliph at the discretion of the Ummah. He did not care about the bloody battles resulting out of it and division of Ummah into numerous sects.

May Allah bless the two Shaykhs (Abu Bakr and Umar) who handled the situation in time and saved the Ummah from possible destruction. If Abu Ubaidah and Saalim were really capable why didn’t Umar appoint them in Saqifah? He should have paid allegiance to Abu Ubaidah and then asked the people to follow him because the Prophet had called him trustworthy.

Or he should have sworn allegiance to Saalim and said that this person is a great lover of Allah.

The Prophet had called Abu Ubaidah a “trustworthy person of Ummah” and no such title was given to Abu Bakr. Then how could allegiance be paid by a more virtuous to a less virtuous one? If it was not possible to do so in Saqifah, Umar could have requested Abu Bakr when the latter was nominating the former to appoint Abu Ubaidah in his stead because he was a “trustworthy person of Ummah.”

Also Umar had expressed his desire that he would have appointed Saalim as his successor if the latter were alive.

Abu Bakr had narrated a tradition in Saqifah because of which Helpers backed off: “The imams will be from Quraish.”

Did Salim belong to Quraish?

If not, why Umar expressed his desire to appoint him as Caliph?

If Saalim did not belong to Quraish, the desire of Umar shows that it is not necessary for a Caliph to be from Quraish. If it is not necessary for a Caliph to be from Quraish, were the stands of both the caliphs contradicting each other? If that is so, which of them is correct?

Saalim was to be nominated as Caliph because he loved Allah very much.

It proves that the right to Caliphate is for one who loves Allah greatly.

Did the following tradition slip out of Umar’s mind at that time? It is narrated in *Sahih Muslim* that the Prophet said: “Tomorrow I shall hand over the banner to a person who would be a real man. He loves Allah and His Messenger and they too love him. Allah will grant victory at his hands.”[26](#)

The Prophet has depicted the virtue of Imam ‘Ali (a) in this tradition that he loves Allah and His Messenger and they too love him. The tradition regarding Saalim was that he loves Allah but no tradition proves that he too is loved by Allah. Saalim loved Allah very much while Imam ‘Ali (a) loved Allah and was also loved by Allah. Then why didn’t Umar nominate Imam ‘Ali (a) as his successor?

By the way, Umar selected a committee that included Imam ‘Ali, Uthman, Saad ibn Abi Waqqas, Abdur Rahman ibn Auf, Zubair ibn Awwam and Talha ibn Ubaidullah. He told them: “After my death, you all take three days’ time to decide who would be the Caliph. Suhaib would lead the prayers during this time. A Caliph must be appointed on the fourth day. My son, Abdullah ibn Umar would participate in the committee as an advisor but there is no place for him in Caliphate.” Then Umar called Abu Talha Ansari and told him: “Bring along fifty men to keep a strict vigil on this committee till one of them is appointed as the leader.”

Then he called Miqdad ibn Aswad and told him: “Gather these members at a place after my burial for election of a leader. If one of them rejects the appointment of a leader, cut off his head. If two persons disagree, kill both of them and if the committee is divided into two groups such that there are three persons on both sides, let my son, Abdullah ibn Umar take the decision. If they do not accept the decision of my son, you should support the decision of the side supported by Abdur Rahman ibn Auf and kill the other party.”

Readers are requested to pause for a moment and note that Umar ordered that the Caliph should be

appointed after his burial. Had the Caliph done the same at the time of the Prophet's demise?

According to Islamic history, the holy body of Allah's Messenger was still in the house when the activities of Saqifah started.

Umar considered election of a Caliph more important than the Prophet's burial. Then why didn't he consider appointment of Caliph more important at the time of his death?

It was a simple remark. Let us come back to history. When Umar died, Suhaib lead his funeral Prayer. When Umar was buried, Miqdad gathered the members of committee. Talha was not present in them.

Shura Procedure

The operations of Shura started. Abdur Rahman ibn Auf said: "Is there any of you who would back off from Caliphate and prefer someone else?" No one answered. Abdur Rahman said that he would back off. Uthman thanked him and others also showed their pleasure at this act. Imam 'Ali (a) was sitting quietly and watching everything. Abdur Rahman asked him: "O Abul Hasan! What is your opinion?" Imam 'Ali (a) said: "You should promise me that you would always prefer right, not succumb to your desires and instead work for complete benefit of Islam."

"Abdur Rahman promised Imam 'Ali (a) to do so."[27](#)

After a long discussion, Abdur Rahman ibn Auf told Imam 'Ali (a): "I pay allegiance to you on a condition that you will follow the book of Allah, The Prophetic Practice (*Sunnah*) and the practice of Abu Bakr and Umar."

Imam 'Ali (a) replied: "I will follow only the book of Allah, the Prophetic Practice (*Sunnah*) and my personal exertions (Ijtihad)."

Then Abdur Rahman ibn Auf turned to Uthman and said: "I pay allegiance to you on a condition that you will follow the Book of Allah, the Prophetic Practice (*Sunnah*) and the practice of Abu Bakr and Umar." Uthman accepted all the three conditions.

Abdur Rahman ibn Auf made this offer to Imam 'Ali (a) three times but the latter refused to follow the practice of Abu Bakr and Umar every time.

When Abdur Rahman was assured that Imam 'Ali (a) would not follow the practice of Abu Bakr and Umar, he paid allegiance to Uthman and said: "Peace be upon you! O master of faithful!"

At this, Imam 'Ali (a) said: "I know why the responsibility of selecting a Caliph was handed to you and you have acted on the predetermined plan exactly."[28](#)

A Few Questions

A few questions arise at this moment:

1. Did Abdur Rahman pay allegiance to Uthman unintentionally or it was planned in advance?
2. Was the purpose of including “practice of Abu Bakr and Umar” as a condition a way to prevent Imam ‘Ali (a) from becoming a Caliph or something else was intended?

Before considering these questions, it is necessary to discuss two important issues at Shura:

1. The historian, Tabari writes: When Umar was at his death-bed, he remembered Abu Ubaidah and Saalim very much. He expressed his desire again and again that if they were alive he would have appointed one of them as Caliph. A group of Companions had come to meet him. Imam ‘Ali (a) was among them. Umar told the people: “I wanted to make such a person a leader who would show you the right path.” Saying this he pointed to Imam ‘Ali (a).

“Then I fell asleep and dreamt that a person has entered a garden and planted a few saplings in it. He plucked the flowers grown on plants. I interpreted this dream that Umar would die soon.

How can I carry your burden now alive or dead? Therefore appoint a Caliph after me from this group of people for whom the Prophet has given glad tidings of Paradise.

Saad ibn Zaid ibn Umar ibn Nufayl was also one of them. However I do not include him among the candidates for Caliphate. I feel that the rule should go to either Uthman or ‘Ali.

If ‘Ali becomes the ruler he would be humorous. However he is capable of restoring the rights of the people.”²⁹

¹. Al-Fitnah al-Kubra Uthman bin Affan, Pg. 102–103

². Ibn Hajar Asqalani, Al-Isabah fi Tamiz al-Sahaba, Vol. 2, Pg. 501–502

³. Surah Ahzaab 33:33

⁴. Surah Aale Imran 3:61

⁵. Keeping this incident in mind, Rumi, the mystic says: “Since the Companions were having love for the world they left the Prophet unshrouded.” Abu “Ali Qalandar Panipati has praised “Ali (a) saying: “An Imam who on the day of the passing away of the Prophet left the caliphate and sat down to mourn the Messenger of Allah (S).”

⁶. Abdul Fattah Abdul Maqsood, Al-Imam “Ali bin Abi Talib, Vol. 1, Pg. 149

⁷. Ibn Abil Hadid, Sharh Nahjul Balagha, Vol. 3, Pg. 283, Egypt

⁸. Ibn Abil Hadid, Sharh Nahjul Balagha

⁹. Abdul Fattah Abdul Maqsood, Al-Imam “Ali bin Abi Talib Vol. 1, Pg. 216

¹⁰. Surah Hashr 59:6

¹¹. Ibn Abil Hadid, Sharh Nahjul Balagha, Vol. 4, Pg. 28, Letter no. 45

¹². Balazari, Futuhul Buldan, Pg. 46–47

¹³. Surah Nisa 4:11

¹⁴. Surah Nisa 4:33

- [15.](#) Surah Naml 27:12
- [16.](#) Surah Maryam 19:6
- [17.](#) Sharh Nahjul Balagha, Vol. 4, Pg. 78–103
- [18.](#) Surah Aale Imran 3:61
- [19.](#) Surah Ahzaab 33:33
- [20.](#) Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 3, Pg. 180
- [21.](#) The above mentioned tradition is discussed in Sahih Bukhari
- [22.](#) Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil fit Tarikh, Vol. 2, Pg. 93–94
- [23.](#) Nahjul Balagha, Shiqshiqiya Sermon
- [24.](#) Nahjul Balagha, Shiqshiqiya Sermon
- [25.](#) Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil fit Tarikh, Vol. 3, Pg. 34
- [26.](#) Sahih Muslim, Vol. 2, Pg. 224
- [27.](#) Ibn Athir, Al-Kamil fit Tarikh, Vol. 3, Pg. 35–36
- [28.](#) Ibn Abil Hadid, Sharh Nahjul Balagha, Vol. 1, Pg. 50–67
- [29.](#) Tabari, Tarikh al-Umam wal Muluk, Vol. 2, Pg. 34–35

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