

Writer's Belief

It is the writer's belief that the Holy Prophet (S) was infallible and all the prophets that have passed, were also infallible. Their successors and their legatees were also infallible like them. Reason dictates that the legatee of an infallible cannot be fallible.

From this point of view, it is necessary that the successor of the Holy Prophet (S) must also be infallible. According to our belief, His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) was infallible and inerrant in every way. He never worshipped idols, never indulged in polytheism or drinking wine and never disobeyed the divine commands. He was always steadfast in the battles in company of the Holy Prophet (S). He never fled from the battlefield.

He never left the Holy Prophet (S) in danger to save his own skin. He helped Islam with his sword in such a way that in its absence, Islam would not have gained stability in Medina. He is included in the verse of Purification (Quran 33:33) and the verse of Malediction (Quran 3:16) and there are many verses that are with regard to his merits. He had clear Quranic nomination to the post of Caliphate before the Caliphate of the three Caliphs and even today, he holds the same position near Allah.

The Holy Prophet (S) has mentioned his creation along with the creation of Ali (a.s.) to be from a single radiance (Noor). Even from the aspect of tradition of Two Heavy Things (Thaqalayn), since he is from the Ahlul Bayt of the Prophet, he is deserving of attachment. And from the point of view of the same tradition if Ali (a.s.) is not superior to Quran, at least he is equal to it. The Holy Prophet (S) had stated that Ali (a.s.) was his soul, flesh and blood.

What more can be said to prove his infallibility? If the Holy Prophet (S) was infallible, his successors must also be infallible. Anything else is bigotry and an unfortunate thing. The Holy Prophet (S) has stated that Ali (a.s.) is the gate of knowledge. In the same way, he said:

“Ali is with Quran and the Quran is with Ali.”

In brief, it is beyond reason and understanding to consider him non-infallible. Anyone who is unbiased and his heart is pure of his enmity, will indeed consider him infallible. In brief, the writer, from the aspect

of his belief, considers Ali (a.s.) and the rest of the eleven Imams as infallible, like the Holy Prophet (S). The consequence of this belief in their infallibility implies that the Caliphate of these infallibles was a divinely constituted affair. It cannot be a matter decided by the people.

Thus, from Ali (a.s.) to the Master of the Age (a.j.), all these Holy Imams (a.s.) were successors of the Prophet who were appointed Caliphs and Imams by Allah. This belief is in all respects, his spiritual style. From the aspect of this belief, Ali (a.s.) has the right to be considered the successor of the Holy Prophet (S). Even if we forgo this aspect and view it from a political lens, we again have to agree that only Ali (a.s.) should be the successor of the Prophet. The political expediency dictated that Muslims would have selected only Ali (a.s.) as the successor of the Prophet. The below discussion deserves our attention.

Generally, Sunni belief is not that Abu Bakr became the Caliph of the Prophet through Quranic injunction or prophetic tradition. According to the religion of Ahlul Sunnat, Abu Bakr became the Caliph on the basis of consensus. This is the fact, and majority of Sunnis confess to it. However, some people also present Quranic proofs in support of the rightly guided Caliphate. If Allah wills, we shall investigate this point of view in the future.

But just for the time being, it can be said that this consensus, which had many defects, cannot be construed to be an election. Because an important tribe of Muslims to which the Prophet himself belonged, was not represented in this consensus and neither was it able to exercise its opinion. Rather, this matter of Saqifah was conducted in such a hurried manner that Bani Hashim had no news of it.

Apparently, it seems that even if Bani Hashim had received information, they still would not have been able to attend the gathering, because they were busy in the last rites of the Holy Prophet (S). It was not possible for them to leave the Prophet and attend the election of Saqifah. But if the Bani Hashim had been able to attend the election, Abu Bakr would not have become the Caliph so easily.

At that time, Umar, who had great political cunning, hurriedly decided the matter of Caliphate. This election, which did not follow any principle of election, informs us of a certain defective course of action. At the time of the passing away of the Prophet, Medina alone did not constitute Islamic territory. The religion of Muhammad had spread to the whole of Hijaz. For a perfect election, it was necessary that all the chiefs of all the areas must be gathered.

But this did not happen. In this haste, leave alone the people of Hijaz, even all the respectable personalities of Medina could not be summoned. The people of decision will themselves decide to what extent is correct the claim of Ahlul Sunnat that Abu Bakr became the Caliph by consensus.

Indeed, this weak claim of the supporters of consensus is defective was well known to even those people. But for the need of religion they consider it rightful. The believers of consensus have also believed that consensus is correct even if two people other than Bani Hashim take part in it.

On the other hand, if thousands of Bani Hashim effect a consensus, it shall not be accepted as valid.

Obviously, these types of bigotries create many disconcerting views in the minds of unbiased and just people. There is no need to mention them. Those who claim it was an election, must see it with absolute sincerity was it really a fair election that was effected in a hurried manner at Saqifah Bani Saada?

Though we confess to the cunning of Umar, who easily wrested Caliphate from Bani Hashim so easily that they could not do anything. Though Bani Hashim were once considered indispensable for Caliphate. If he had desired, Umar could have passed on the benefit of this consensus to Ali (a.s.) but he did not like Ali (a.s.) due to a number of factors. That is why in the absence of Ali (a.s.), he made Abu Bakr the Caliph.

Although Umar and Ali (a.s.) had such opposite traits that friendship between them is unimaginable, but apparently it seems that Umar had extreme hatred towards Fatima (s.a.). Thus, he could not bear any good for Ali (a.s.). The cause of this enmity seems that Umar had once desired to marry the Lady of Paradise, but the Holy Prophet (S) on the basis of his hidden wisdom, married her to Ali (a.s.).

Umar very well knew that Abu Bakr had no merit in comparison to Ali (a.s.), but he pledged allegiance to him and other people at Saqifah were also compelled to do the same. The other people did not hesitate in giving allegiance to Abu Bakr. They did not even ask why any member of Bani Hashim was not present. Without considering if Abu Bakr had any superiority to Ali (a.s.), they followed Umar in giving allegiance. This definitely did not prove beneficial to Islam.

As shall be clear from my further analysis, the preference of Umar towards his personal affairs instead of the general good of the people was most unbecoming for Umar. It was also not that Umar was ignorant of the merits of Ali (a.s.). In spite of having no knowledge of Quran, he still knew that Ali (a.s.) was included in the verse of Purification and the verse of Malediction. The verses of Surah Insan¹ were also applicable to Ali (a.s.).

In addition to this, there are many other verses that are revealed to highlight the merits of Ali and Ahlul Bayt (a.s.). Apart from this, at the time of the passing away of the Prophet, the position of Ali (a.s.) as the successor of the Holy Prophet (S) was well established. The name of Ali (a.s.) was indeed included in the Holy Quran at many places and the word of Aale Muhammad (Muhammad's Progeny) was also present therein, as we have shown above. Umar knew that the Prophet had said about Ali:

“Quran is with Ali and Ali is with Quran and I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate and your self is my self and your soul is my soul and your blood is my blood and your flesh is my flesh and I and Ali are from one single radiance (Noor), and you are to me like Haroon was to Moosa.”

And many other similar traditions are there that describe the merits of Ali (a.s.). Umar knew full well that Islam owed a lot to the sword of Ali (a.s.). If Ali (a.s.) had not been there, the Islamic Medina would have been annihilated by the attacks of Meccan infidels. And without the sword of Ali (a.s.) the establishment of Islam would not have been possible during the time of the Prophet. Umar knew that Ali (a.s.) was firm-footed in the battles of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Hunayn and Khaybar.

Rather, the success in all these battles was due to the unique valor of Ali (a.s.). Umar knew how much the Holy Prophet (S) loved Ali (a.s.) as proved by the tradition of the Roasted Fowl (Hadith Tayr). Umar knew that in addition to excellent knowledge, the Almighty had also bestowed Ali (a.s.) with great piety. Umar knew that after the Holy Prophet (S) it was Ali (a.s.) indeed, who was the chief of Bani Hashim tribe and the Bani Hashim was the most superior tribe of Arabs from many aspects.

First of all, from the ancient age, this tribe was the leader of Arabs. Secondly, the Holy Prophet (S) was a chief of that very tribe. Umar knew that Abu Bakr belonged to a nameless tribe. Bani Teem could not be in any way compared to Bani Hashim. Umar knew that Ali (a.s.) was the husband of the Lady of Paradise. Apart from this, he was a close cousin of the Holy Prophet (S). The Holy Prophet (S) had no son and Ali (a.s.) had the status of the son of the Prophet. Umar knew that although Abu Bakr migrated to Medina with the Holy Prophet (S) his predicament could not be more meritorious than the risk that Ali (a.s.) faced after the Prophet's departure. It was a time that the infidels of Mecca could have martyred Ali (a.s.) mistaking him to be the Holy Prophet (S).

But Ali (a.s.) did not care for his life and continued to lie on the Prophet's bed all night. Umar knew that Ali (a.s.) was the first to agree to the help and obedience of the Holy Prophet (S). He was the first to believe in the Holy Prophet (S), he never worshipped idols; he was always aloof from polytheism. Umar knew that after the Holy Prophet (S), Ali (a.s.) was the chief of the tribe in which Prophethood has been sent. Umar knew that the Holy Prophet (S) made elaborate arrangements at Ghadeer Khumm and declared Ali (a.s.) as the master of all believers.

Umar himself at that time had congratulated Ali (a.s.) saying, 'Bakhin Bakhin' (congratulations) and confessed that Ali (a.s.) was indeed his master and the master of all believers. It is surprising that in spite of knowing all this, how Umar gave preference to Abu Bakr? And after appointing Abu Bakr as the Caliph, he made such haste in allegiance. If Umar had even the slightest attachment to Ali (a.s.), he would not have turned his face away from him and paid allegiance to Abu Bakr.

If it is said that Ali (a.s.) was not capable of Caliphate, as some ignorant people say, and thus Umar made Abu Bakr the Caliph. This statement is absolutely incorrect. Ali (a.s.) was more capable of being a Caliph than Abu Bakr. The defect of old age was not less in Abu Bakr. The reality is that if Umar had not remained at the side of Abu Bakr, he would not have been able to perform any caliphal function.

Though apparently Abu Bakr had become the Caliph, it was actually the Caliphate of Umar. This seems to be the greatest cause why Umar did not make Ali (a.s.) the Caliph. Umar knew that Ali (a.s.) was an independent person having his own opinions. He would never allow any interference of Umar in the matters of Caliphate. So he kept Ali (a.s.) away from Caliphate and behind the veil of Abu Bakr's Caliphate, himself became the Caliph. The interference of Umar was to such a great extent that Abu Bakr was compelled to say: "O Umar! Then what was the need to make me the Caliph?" If Ali (a.s.) had become the Caliph, Umar would not have got any chance of interfering like this and would have been forced away from Caliphate.

In the view of the writer, in addition to his personal difference, this was the reason why Umar could not stand Ali (a.s.) becoming the Caliph. In brief, it was the first political blunder of Islam that Ali (a.s.) was kept away from Caliphate. This error gave rise to all sorts of conflicts in Islamic lands, whose consequences are still being borne by Muslims. If Umar had accepted Ali (a.s.) as the Caliph instead of Abu Bakr, Ali (a.s.) apparently would have remained the Caliph for a long time and performed all the duties of Caliphate because he was healthy and young.

It is likely that if Umar had accepted Ali (a.s.) as the Caliph, there would have been only one religion among the Muslims, because Ali (a.s.) was absolutely cultured, educated and an accomplished personality, so there would have been no kind of turmoil in the affairs of Islam. The opposition of Umar not only proved harmful to Ali (a.s.), it caused widespread destruction in Islam also. Umar also beautifully arranged the Caliphate of Uthman.

The third time also, though Ali (a.s.) was superior, he was again deprived of Caliphate, which was nothing but harmful to Islam. We shall discuss the turmoil of the period of Uthman's Caliphate. At last Ali (a.s.) did become the Caliph, but the Caliphate had deteriorated to such an extent that it was one and the same whether he was a Caliph or not. What is the use of discussing the Caliphate during which conflicts like the battles of Jamal and Siffeen occurred. The one single mistake of not accepting Ali (a.s.) as the first Caliph caused numerous turmoils, and still proves to be a bane for the Muslim world.

Umar was a very clever man and he could have teamed up with Ali (a.s.) and served Islam to a great extent. If he had been a supporter of Ali (a.s.), Ali (a.s.) would have continued at the helm of Caliphate for a long time, which would have bestowed all sorts of benefits on Islam. The statement of the opponents of Ali (a.s.) that he had no capability of Caliphate is a lie. Ali (a.s.) had the same capability to conquer Shaam and Fars just as Umar had. There was no special capability required for such conquests. Shaam was a part of the Eastern Roman Empire. The Eastern Roman had become useless like their Western counterparts. As with all the nations, there is decadence after exaltation. The same happened to Fars. They had become accustomed to vices and pleasures.

On the other hand, the Arabs on the basis of a new faith, had fresh impetus and zeal. In such a situation, it was not a matter of surprise that Muslims conquered these territories in a short time. These conquests were not a result of any special capabilities of the Caliph. The conquests were effected when the hungry Arabs rushed to Shaam and Rome in greed of war booty. Just as Goth and Vandel conquered Rome, the Arabs conquered Shaam etc. Such conquests would have been possible even in the time of Ali (a.s.) but he didn't get any chance. First of all, during his Caliphate, Ali (a.s.) did not get respite from mischief mongers.

Secondly, at that time, the Arabs had already accomplished all the conquests possible. In those circumstances, no scope remained for territorial expansion. If Ali (a.s.) had become the Caliph immediately after the Holy Prophet (S) all the conquests made during the Caliphate of the second Caliph would have been made during the Caliphate of Ali (a.s.). Umar, instead of being the Caliph, would have

become the deputy Caliph and served Islam in a beautiful way. But such a golden age for Islam was not destined and the events turned in the way they did.

It should be clear that the aloofness of the people from Bani Hashim in the matter of Caliphate proved very harmful from the political point of view. It is well known that Bani Hashim and Bani Umayyah were the two most powerful tribes of Arabs. They were at loggerheads from ages. Even before the arrival of Islam, sometimes Bani Hashim and sometimes Bani Umayyah gained the upper hand. That is why these two tribes were considered equal.

But when the Holy Prophet (S) migrated and settled down in Medina and Bani Umayyah became weak due to repeated defeats, at that time, Bani Hashim were becoming powerful in Medina, and the people of Medina used to regard them with great respect. But immediately after the demise of the Holy Prophet (S) they were unexpectedly distanced from rulership and power.

And the cause of the distancing was the 'election' of Saqifah. It was the great political blunder of Saqifah when they did not select Ali (a.s.) as the Caliph. Ali (a.s.) at that time, was the chief of Bani Hashim. If he were made the Caliph, the future political terror of Bani Umayyah and Bani Abbas would not have come into being. The result of the error of Saqifah was such that Bani Hashim had to fight for their rights with Bani Umayyah and Bani Abbas and they continued to be weakened, till finally at the hands of Tartars, Muslim hegemony was completely wiped out.

This 'election' of Saqifah not only resulted in the massacre of Bani Hashim, but non-Bani Hashim were also mercilessly massacred. Bani Hashim continued to confront the enemies and sacrifice their lives, because in every age they considered themselves rightful claimants for Caliphate, and many Arabs also confessed that they were on the right. Apparently, the history of Islam is filled with series of uprisings by Bani Hashim and it was because they had lost the Caliphate at Saqifah at the hands of Umar.

It should be remembered that Bani Hashim was a tribe that could not be easily wiped out. This was the lifeblood of Arab nation. It had great importance like Bani Umayyah. It was in this tribe that prophethood had descended. Thus, it was not an easy job to exterminate this tribe. The honor that it had got during the time of the Holy Prophet (S) made it eligible that it must not be deprived of Caliphate.

If Umar or the people of Saqifah had the good of the Muslims in mind, instead of choosing Abu Bakr, they would have chosen Ali (a.s.). Abu Bakr was from an insignificant tribe and neither he trusted his tribesmen nor did they trust him. To bring such a person at the helm of affairs of Caliphate was a dreadful political mistake. The distancing of Bani Hashim from rulership could not have been beneficial to the country. Thus, it resulted in untold turmoil for the community.

If Ali (a.s.) had been selected as the Caliph, there would have been no division of sects. There would have been no Sunni or Shia.

In the event of Ali becoming the Caliph, Bani Hashim would have forever been released from

participating in the uprisings. Due to his successorship, neither Umar nor Uthman had been killed, nor Muhammad bin Abu Bakr slain. Ali (a.s.) himself would have been safe from the battles of Jamal and Siffeen etc. Neither 'A'ysha would have joined the Battle of Jamal nor Talha and Zubair had died.

Neither 'A'ysha would have been killed by being thrown into the well nor Bani Umayyah had become such blatant oppressors. Neither Ali (a.s.) had been killed nor Imam Hasan (a.s.) poisoned. Neither Imam Husayn (a.s.) had to face the tragedy of Karbala' nor would there have been the killings of Imams in the future. Neither horses had been tied in the Holy Kaaba nor there would have been bloodshed at the hands of Bani Umayyah.

Neither Bani Umayyah had to face downfall nor Bani Abbas would have become powerful, nor they would have soiled their hands with the blood of people. And neither the Arab nation had been conquered by foreigners. The 'election' of Saqifah was responsible for all the ills that have plagued the Muslim nations till now and which still continue to do so.

In brief, the first mistake was to distance Ali (a.s.) from Caliphate but on top of that such developments were effected that Bani Umayyah were enabled to rise to the heights of affluence. Bani Umayyah had no right to become rulers of Muslim dominions. This tribe had been the deadliest enemy of Islam, since times immemorial. What right this tribe had to gain power through means created by the religion of Islam?

Yes, if Bani Hashim had become Caliph or had been made Caliph, it would not have been against wisdom, because the Prophet belonged to this tribe and in his time, he was the ruler of the Arab world. It would not have been surprising if his progeny were made Caliph or ruler. Indeed, to keep Bani Hashim away from power and to give the same power to Bani Umayyah was the worst mistake of Saqifah.

Of course, Abu Bakr and Umar gave in to the wishes of Abu Sufyan because they were helpless. It is also true that if they had not furnished the means of pleasing Abu Sufyan, all that was achieved in Saqifah would have been destroyed. But if Ali (a.s.) had been in the place of Abu Bakr, he would not have supported Abu Sufyan for many reasons. To keep Bani Umayyah weak would have been in the best interest of Islam.

No doubt, Bani Umayyah had vied for equality with Bani Hashim but the Holy Prophet (S) had weakened them. Now to make them strong again was very harmful for the mission of the Prophet. If all the factors had been sidelined, and Ali (a.s.) had been made the Caliph, it would have been absolutely appropriate according to reason.

Ali (a.s.) was not an uneducated, incapable person and he never went around sowing seeds of discord. He was a brave and guided one and had his own opinion. He very well understood the affairs of the world and was expert in understanding people. He never had anything to do with diplomacy and deceit. But he well understood the deceit of other people. He was incomparable in forbearance and maturity. He was exceedingly courageous and compassionate. He was enriched with the wealth of contentment, had

incomparable divine good sense for worship; he was truthful, stable minded and gentle in words. Though his praised qualities were same as those of the Great (Ulul Azm) prophets he has also been praised by Allah and the Messenger of Allah (S). Who can dare to excel him in those qualities? According to the statement of the Holy Prophet (S), the remembrance of Ali (a.s.) is worship.² The Holy Prophet (S) also said: “Decorate your gathering by the discussion of Ali.”³

Though this is an emphatic saying of the Holy Prophet (S), here the condition of the people is such that when they hear the praise of Ali (a.s.), their faces redden in fury. In many gatherings, it is even against wisdom to utter the name of Ali (a.s.). Anyway, if with the above merits, Ali (a.s.) had been accepted as Caliph, Caliphate would not have suffered from any lacunae or defect.

Apparently, if any mischief was to be expected, it was from Bani Umayyah and the Holy Prophet (S) had already subdued Bani Umayyah and after becoming the Caliph, Ali (a.s.) would not have allowed this tribe to gain fresh strength and in the whole of Islamic lands, there would have been nothing but unity among Muslims.

Not only Islam would have remained strong, its strength would have increased day by day. The rise of Bani Umayyah was effected due to internal strife, which led to the weakening of Arabs and at last, they had to face humiliation and at last Bani Umayyah were obliterated from the face of the earth.

The Caliphate of Ali (a.s.) would have bestowed unity to the Islamic nation. The progress of the nation would have remained in order. And the time and wealth that was spent in internal wars would have been put to some useful purpose. It is very regrettable that due to the deprivation of Ali (a.s.) from Caliphate, whatever worst that could have been expected, came to pass on the Arab kingdom.

The truth is that all the calamities that befell Muslims and Islam were rooted in the misdoings of Umar and Abu Bakr. Rather, it was especially due to Umar. Although Ali (a.s.), by his own efforts, restrained Bani Hashim from confronting the people of Saqifah, but the conflicts of the future could not be controlled. The condition was that the ‘Rightful Caliph’ sided with Bani Umayyah either due to fear or due to their attachment with them. Getting this opportunity, Bani Umayyah began to revitalize themselves.

Till the period of the first two Caliphs, this tribe had regained so much strength that no excuse remained for them to be suppressed by Bani Hashim. Though apparently they did not create any mischief against Bani Hashim during this period, when the period of Uthman arrived, this tribe made further progress. The third Caliph himself belonged to this tribe.

In his period, Bani Umayyah became so strong that if after this there was to be a Caliph from Bani Hashim in the future, Bani Umayyah would not be compelled to obey him. This is what happened when Ali (a.s.) was appointed as the Caliph and Muawiyah began to confront him.

The Battle of Jamal was through the instigation of Muawiyah alone. After that, Muawiyah came out openly in opposition to Ali (a.s.) and continued to be independent of Ali’s Caliphate. Then finally, Bani

Hashim had to suffer the carnage of Karbala'. Thus, Bani Hashim and Bani Umayyah were always at war. This uprising and war of Muhammad's Progeny continued till the time of Bani Abbas.

In view of the writer, the destruction of Muhammad's Progeny was not an insignificant matter. Though their opponents may be pleased at it, it is very painful spiritually for the followers of Muhammad's Progeny. Here a question could be raised that when in the tenure of the Caliphate there were two powerful tribes of Bani Umayyah and Bani Hashim, and due to their mutual enmity, there was great danger of civil war, was it not a political necessity to subdue one of them? Thus, the Caliphate sided with Bani Umayyah and strove to destroy Bani Hashim.

Therefore, from the political point of view, the Caliphate could not be blamed for supporting Bani Umayyah. The reply to this objection is that though it was necessary to subdue one of these tribes, the suppression of Bani Hashim by the Caliphate was not correct due to some reasons. First of all, Bani Hashim was the tribe in which Ali (a.s.) was born and also because prophethood was in this tribe. They should have accorded more honor to this tribe instead of degrading it. Justice, religion and ethics demand only this.

Secondly, the Holy Prophet (S) was extremely hateful to Bani Umayyah. He was so infuriated with it that he used to curse this tribe.

Thirdly, after the efforts of ten years, the Holy Prophet (S) had weakened Bani Umayyah. The Caliphate should not have acted against the policy of the Prophet.

Fourthly, Bani Umayyah did not deserve any respect and honor from the Islamic government. They were the same who had exceedingly troubled the Holy Prophet (S) and were such deadly enemies of Islam, that not only did they hinder the progress of Islam in Mecca, they continued to make efforts to destroy Islam till Medina. The battles of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq and Hunayn were such that now Bani Umayyah had completely lost hope of wealth and power.

Fifthly, Bani Umayyah were absolutely wanton people. In the days of ignorance, as well as after accepting Islam, they had the same enmity towards Islam and Ali (a.s.). A simple example of this is that when the Holy Prophet (S) had before him the Battle of Hunayn, Abu Sufyan who had apparently become a Muslim and was also with the Holy Prophet (S) in the battlefield but since in reality this battle was also between the Holy Prophet (S) and Bani Umayyah, Abu Sufyan and his supporters just stood by and watched the fighting.

When the Muslim fighters were beheaded by the swords of Bani Umayyah, Abu Sufyan and his supporters used to laugh in joy. If Ali (a.s.) had not participated in this battle, the Holy Prophet (S) would surely have suffered defeat. This incident clearly shows what type of people Bani Umayyah were.

It is very astonishing how Caliphate presented Abu Sufyan, the governorship of Shaam. It is well known what type of a person Muawiyah, the son of Abu Sufyan was. Deceit, falsehood, intrigue and bloodshed

was his practice. Yazeed, the illustrious son of Muawiyah, was beyond praise!

In addition to the greatness of his grandfather and father, Yazeed had horses tied in the Holy Kaaba.⁴ Yazeed allowed homosexuality and incest etc. Marwan was also an excellent example of Bani Umayyah. In the same way, there are many personalities of this tribe whose detailed description is not possible here. In brief, all the misdeeds of Bani Umayyah are clear and obvious in the historical records of their age. It is not surprising that bigots consider Bani Umayyah to be praiseworthy. There is an Arabic saying: "If the eyes are pleased with someone all their defects are negligible."

Sixthly, as Bani Umayyah were extremely bad character, in the same way, Bani Hashim were good natured and kind. Now the job was to suppress Bani Umayyah and promote Bani Hashim. But regretfully, Umar and the Rightful Caliphate acted against Bani Hashim, but they were not so weak that Bani Umayyah's empowerment would have immediately wiped them out. The weakening of Bani Hashim was possible. Just as was clear from the actions of Righteous Caliphate, but it was not possible to wipe them out.

This is what actually happened. For a long period, Bani Hashim and Bani Umayyah continued to fight each other, but when Bani Hashim could not be wiped out easily, the causes of internal strife remained intact, through which the nation had to suffer many losses, economical as well as in terms of human lives. There seem to be two causes of the help and assistance to Bani Umayyah from the side of Umar and the Righteous Caliphate.

Firstly, the Righteous Caliphate saw it as necessary that Bani Umayyah should be kept happy. There is a Persian saying that 'feed the dog to keep it happy'. On this principle, they were given the rule of Shaam. The fact is that Bani Umayyah was a tribe, which had exceeding greed for wealth and power. They had no aim except to gain worldly benefits. They had nothing to do with religion. They had absolutely no regard or respect for Islam. The chief of this tribe, Abu Sufyan, had apparently become a Muslim due to compulsion. When he saw that there was no gain in remaining an infidel, he accepted Islam.

When the Holy Prophet (S) passed away, Abu Sufyan decided to cash upon the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S). He saw nothing gainful in the happening of Saqifah. So he could not do anything but come to Ali (a.s.) and said that "the matter of Caliphate has been decided and you have been deprived of your right. If you say, I will fill the land of Medina with riders of Mecca and destroy this Caliphate of 'election'." His Eminence, Ali (a.s.), on the basis of the factors already mentioned before, became infuriated at Abu Sufyan and said: "O Abu Sufyan! You created mischief when you were infidel and now that you have accepted Islam, your mischief mongering is still there."

After getting this reply, Abu Sufyan came to Abu Bakr and Umar and said, "You people have got hold of Caliphate and we have not got any benefit from it. If you don't provide us with something, we will destroy the Caliphate." Umar and Abu Bakr realized that though Bani Umayyah had weakened by the action

taken against it by the Holy Prophet (S) now if they are not heeded, they will start their harmful activities against Caliphate and it would not survive. After pondering on this matter, Umar and Abu Bakr asked Abu Sufyan that if he is given a share in Caliphate, would he still oppose it?

Abu Sufyan had nothing to do with Ali (a.s.) or Umar and Abu Bakr. He had only his benefit in mind. The governorship of Shaam was given to him in a platter and now it made no difference whether the decision of Saqifah was good or bad. It is clear that this gift of governorship from Caliphate was due to compulsion. Umar and Abu Bakr had to somehow dispel the danger and they finally achieved this. The fact is that Umar and Abu Bakr were helpless in comparison to Abu Sufyan.

What else could they have done? Abu Sufyan was the chief of a great clan. It would not have been much difficult for Abu Sufyan to shake the Caliphate of 'election' (Ijma). Abu Bakr was not from a tribe of any distinction. He did not have any trust on his clan. Umar also did not rely on his tribesmen. The Bani Hashim were already in consternation at the happenings of Saqifah. In such conditions, how else could Umar and Abu Bakr save the Caliphate?

Secondly, Umar and Abu Bakr were not feeling safe from Bani Hashim. Both of them knew that Ali (a.s.) will not take any strict measures against Caliphate. But it was clear that Ali (a.s.) was not satisfied by the decision of Saqifah. And along with this, was the certainty that Bani Hashim were nursing a grudge. If Ali (a.s.) had not restrained them, every member of Bani Hashim tribe would have taken up arms. In such circumstances, what else could Umar and Abu Bakr have done? Whether it was due to political exigency or due to the love of Caliphate seat.

In brief, due to these two compulsions, Umar and Abu Bakr accorded respect and acquiesced Bani Umayyah. And the truth is that one mistake begets thousands. How sad that one mistake of Saqifah had wreaked havoc in the world of Islam and till now, Muslims are suffering its consequences. If they don't reform their conditions, they would continue to suffer till Judgment Day. Now the equitable people are free to take whatever decision they like on the tragedy of Karbala' while keeping in mind the above discussion.

Apparently, in the history of Arabs, there is no event of such significance and the causes of this event were such that any historian having an unbiased mind, can derive many useful conclusions from it. In the view of the intelligent people, the seed of this tragedy was the saying of Umar: "The Book of Allah is with us."

The immediate result of this was the 'election' of Saqifah and the tree of Caliphate took root. And among the various fruits of this tree was the tragedy of Karbala'. It is not stated from the religious point of view. Rather, the fact is that those who view the history of nations with an unbiased eye, have no recourse except to conclude that this tragedy was nothing but the political consequence of the upheavals that started immediately after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S).

- [2.](#) Sawaiqul Mohreqa
- [3.](#) Refer to the Biography of Ali (a.s.) by Maulana Amritsari.
- [4.](#) Ref. Tarikhul Khulafa of Suyuti.

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