The Glorious Caliphate



By Athar Husain

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Publisher

Zia-ul-Quran Publications

Lahore, Karachi- Pakistan

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Title : The Glorious Caliphate

Author : Athar Husain

Publisher : Zia-ul-Quran Publications, Lahore.

Printer : Jamal-ul-Quran Printers, Lahore.

Code : 1E41

Edition : June 2002

Price : Rs. 225/- net

Distributors

Pakistan

Zia-ul-Quran Publications

Data Darbar Road Lahore

Ph:- +92-42-7221953 Fax:- 7238010

9-Al-Karim Market, Urdu Bazar, Lahore

Ph:- +92-42-7225085-7247350

14-Anfal Centre Urdu Bazar, Karachi.

Ph:- +92-21-2630411

E-mail:- zquran@brain.net.pk

Visit us:- www.ziaulquran.com

Abroad

Green Dome International Ltd.

148-164 Gregory Boulevard

Nottingham NG7 5JE UK.

Tel:- 0115-911 7222 Fax:- 0115-911 7220

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CONTENTS

PART I

LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Introduction 13

1. The Advent of the Prophet

Effulgence of Islam 21

On the eve of the rise of Islam 21

Advent of the Prophet 23

Prophet's illness 25

Election of Abu Bakr as his successor 26

2. Abu Bakr 29

Early life 29

Physcial features 30

Conversion to Islam 30

Loyalty and Devotion to the Faith 31

Hijarat to Abyssinia 33

Migration to Madinah 34

The new Chapter of Islam 35

Battle of Badr 35

Battle of Uhad 36

Battle of Trenches 36

Treaty of al-Hudebiya 37

Expedition to Khaibar 37

Other expeditions and the Battle of Hunain 37

Expedition to Tabouk 38

3. Commencement of the Caliphate 39

Abu Bakr's Inaugural Address 39

Insurrection throughout Arabia 39

Attack on Madinah 42

Expedition against Bani Abs and Zubian 42

Action against the Apostates 43

Khalid bin Walid's expendition 43

Battle of Yemama 44

Campaign of Bahrain 45

Campaign of Oman 46

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Restoration of peace in Yeman	46
Rising in Hadharmaut	47
War with Persia	47
War with Romans	52
Pilgrimage of Abu Bakr	57
His illness	57
4. Personal life	61
Mode of living	61
Disposition	62
His integrity and rectitude	63
His generosity	63
Family life	63
Religious life	64
Attachment to the Prophet	64
Sense of Justice and Fairplay	65
Literary acumen	66
Compilation of the Qur'an	67
Conclusion	67
5. 'Umar	69
'Umar's conversion to Islam	69
Early life	70
From Hijrat to Khalifat	72
Accession to the Caliphate	74
Rebellion in the Muslim occupied territory of Iraq	75
Battle of Bowaib	77
Changes at the Persain court	78
The Battle of Cadesiya	79
The 1st day called Arwath	81
The second day called Aghwath	82
The third dad called Ghimas	82
The night of Clangour	83
Preoccupation of Hira and Capture of Madinah	85
The siege of Damascus	86
Battle of Fahl	87

Battle of Yarmuk	88
Campaign in North Syria	91
Campaign in Palestine	91
Herclius abandons Syria	93
Rising in North Syria	93
Deposition of Khalid	94
Conquest of Mesopotamia	95
Conquest of Persia	98
The Western Sector	99
Conquest of Egypt	100
'Umar's assassination	103
6. The Battles in Retrospect	106
7. Personal life	110
Humility	111
His solicitude for others	112
Fear of God	113
Equality	114
Toleration	114
Soundness of judgement	115
Other traits	116
Recitude	117
8. 'Uthman	118
Early Life	118
Participation in battles	120
Accession to the Caliphate	122
Declaration of State Policy	125
Military conquests	127
Byzantine Sector	128
Supercession of 'Amr bin al-Aas by Abi Sarh	128
Discontentment in other sectors	132
Discontent and sedition	133
Causes of discontent	136
Open revolt and attack upon Madinah	146
9. Personal life	154
Simplicity	154

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Generosity 154
Fortitude and patience 155
Fear of God 155
Religious life 156
10. 'Ali 157
Battle of Badr 158
Marriage with Fatima 159
Battle of Uhad 159
Gazwa-e-Ahzab 160
Battle of Khaibar 161
11. Accession to Caliphate 163
Rebellion at Basra 165
Battle of Siffin 168
Emergence of Kharejites or Theocratic Faction 173
Decision of the Umpires 173
Sedition of Kharejites 175
Trouble in Egypt 177
Assassination of 'Ali 180
12. Personal Life 182
Austerity and simplicity 182
Generosity 183
Valour and Courage 184
Treatment with Enemies 185
Justice 186
Learning 187
Religious life 187
Appearance 187

Part II

ADMINISTRATION AND PERFORMS

13. System of Government 191
Khilafat-e-Rashida 212
Election of Abu Bakr 212
Accession of 'Umar 215
Election of 'Uthman 217
14. Civil Administration 221

Marfat.com

Duties of Governors	221
Appointment of Officials	222
Advisory Council	224
Enquiries against officers	226
15. Economic System	230
Equality of opportunity	230
Baitulmal or State Treasury	236
'Ushr or tithe	236
Kharaj or Land tax	237
Jizyah or Poll tax	239
Zakat	241
Zakat of Sawaim of Flocks and Herd	245
The spoils of war	245
Mines	246
Assessment of Kharaj	248
'Ushr	252
Ushore or duty on imported goods	253
16. Judicial System	259
Institution of Muftis	263
General Administration and Police	265
17. Public Works	266
Canal Abi Musa	266
Canal Ma'akal	266
Canal Sa;ad	266
Canal Amirul Mominin	266
Buildings	267
Religious buildings	267
Military buildings	268
Other official buildings	268
Roads	268
Outposts	269
Founding of cities	269
Fustat	270
Mosul	270
18. Military System	271
The Battle Array	272

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Recruitment of soldiers 272
Weapons of War 273
Arms and equipment 273
Participation in Wars by Women 274
Instructions to Commanders 274
Intelligence and Spying 281
19. Summing up 284
Bibliography 293

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PART I

Life and Achievements

INTRODUCTION

In the name of Allah, the benevolent, the Merciful

Those who have made some study of the Qur'ān or have acquired even a little knowledge of the life and Traditions of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) will agree that the scope of the ministry of the Prophet Muhammad or the purpose of his appointment as a Divine Apostle, his instructive and reformative endeavour and the revolution he strove to bring about in the world and the kind of society he wanted to establish, was confined neither to his life-time nor to the peninsula of Arabia. The Qur'ān, proclaimed the universality of his mission in these words:

> "Say (O Muhammad): O mankind! Lo! I am the messenger of Allah to you all—(the messenger of) Him unto Whom belongeth the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. There is no God save Him. He quickeneth and He giveth death." (VII: 158)

It also announced from beforehand the fruition of his Call and completion of his Apostolic work and predicted its triumph to emphasize that his struggle was not a mere flash in the midst of encircling gloom but a lamp which was, ultimately, to illumine the whole world. The Qur'ān left no one in doubt that the sacred faith proclaimed by the Prophet would, in the near future, overcome all cults and creeds. It said:

> "Fain would they put out the light of Allah with (the breath of) their mouths, but Allah will perfect His light however much the disbelievers are averse. He

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> it is Who hath sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may give it supremacy over others however much the idolaters may be averse to it." (LXI : 8-9)

As against these lucid truths and unambiguous declarations which proclaim the boundlessness of the apostleship of the Prophet, in terms of time and space, it is also undeniable that, like all other men and earlier Apostles, he too, had been granted a fixed and limited period of existence in the world. Like the rest of mankind he was not exempt from the operation of the natural law of birth and death. Says the Qur'ān:

> "Muhammad is but a messenger, messengers (the like of whom) have passed away before him. Will it be that, when he dieth or is slain, you will turn back on your heels?" (III:144)

And again:

> "Lo! Thou will die, and lo! They will die." (XXXIX:30)

Both the propositions are so clear and emphatic that no one who believes in the Qur'ān and claims to be a Muslim can call them in question. The Prophet's mission was not to end with his life; it must go on, without an interruption, after his death.

It is a well-known fact that when the Prophet departed from the world Islam had not spread even over the whole of Arabia. It had covered only a part of the Peninsula. It had neither extended to the vast Iranian Empire in the East nor to the sprawling provinces of the Byzantine Empire in the West. Islam had yet to find an opportunity for the development of its huge instructive and reformative potential, of its redoubtable moral, cultural, legislative and political capabilities. Till then an extensive

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experiment had not been made of setting up a complete structure of life and society on Islamic basis and of solving the manifold problems of individual and collective existence through its teachings. It had also not been possible for the world to test and verify the efficacy and relevance of Islamic precepts in its application to different peoples and civilisations and in the contemporary circumstances and administrative and economic systems. Apart from the narrow confines of Arabia which comprised a few towns and central places, God's wide world was still laid waste by the tyranny of despotic monarchs, senseless bloodshed (of which the war between the Iranian and Byzantine Empires was a glaring example), insatiable greed and cruelty of the official classes, sensuality and self-indulgence of noblemen, hypocrisy and luxuriousness of the monopolists of faith and learning (the monks and other ecclesiasts). Nowhere was the spirit of man free. Man had no opportunity to work out his destiny. Knowledge and learning were confined to exclusive classes. Humanity had just heard the tidings of deliverance from idolatory, polytheism and superstition, and of freedom from the eternal servitude of fellowmen. It had only seen a glimpse of the bondage and worship of One God and of success and felicity in both the worlds. The experiment of the creed of monotheism and human dignity had been made only in a limited region that the hour of the Prophet's death arrived and he went to join his Maker.

What other way could there be to carry ahead his task and enable more and more men to partake of the blessing he had brought to the world than that to entrust it to his successors whom he had lovingly and diligently trained during the 23 years of his ministry. These august men were his most trusted companions and had been closest to him in all the spheres of his life and mission. They knew him more intimately and possessed a greater knowledge of the purpose and significance of Islam than

anyone else. Moreover, they were the most honourable and trustworthy persons in the eyes of the Muslims. In short, no one was worthier than them to function as the Prophet's successors. The Prophet's lifelong attitude towards them irrefutably confirms that he considered them to be ideally fitted for shouldering the heavy responsibility. Then, again, it was confirmed by the events that followed, the achievements, the glorious conquests made by his immediate successors during their reigns. The wonderful expansion effected in the range and scope of the preaching and propagation of Islam, their piety and asceticism, selflessness and magnanimity, sacrifice and self-denial, their supreme indifference to worldly inducements and the enforcement of the tenets of Islam with unrelenting resolution and sincerity proved beyond and shadow of doubt that they were admirably suited to succeed the Prophet and to carry out the dual and unique responsibility of providing religious guidance and effecting moral upliftment as also governance of an empire.

This succession to Apostleship is called *Khilafat* (Caliphate) and those who came to occupy (as foreordained by God), the lofty office are known as *Khulfā-i-Rāshideen* (the rightly-guided Caliphs) in the Islamic usage. The Caliphate, in fact, signifies the fulfilment of the religious, missionary, reformative and administrative duties of apostleship, an0d, as such, we regard it, historically, as a chapter of the biography of the Prophet himself, a miracle of his prophethood and accomplishment of his mission. To make known this achievement, to present it in its correct perspective and true colour and to remove misunderstandings appertaining to it is a distinct service to the branch of literature relating to the life of the Prophet. Evidently, whatever the holy companions and the faithful Caliphs attained in the realms of learning and action and the heights of enlightenment and awareness to which they

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rose were, indeed, the direct result of the apostleship of the Prophet. As the Qur'ān says:

> "He it is Who hath sent among the unlettered ones a messenger of their own, to recite unto them His revelations and to make them grow, and to teach them the Scripture and Wisdom, though heretofore they were indeed in error manifest." (LXII: 2)

It is essential to note that the first four Caliphs of Islam lived in different circumstances and had to face different problems and difficulties. Human life is everchanging and the Islamic society, too, was subjected to the interplay of new forces and exigencies; Arabia could not remain unaffected by what was taking place in Madinah or Kufa, nor was it possible for the Caliphs always to hold the same opinion, arrive at the same decision and apply the same solutions to the situations that arose from time to time. The loyalty and trust the Muslims displayed during the reigns of the first two Caliphs (Abū Bakr) and 'Umar) and the way Islam forged ahead and came out triumphant in every field was not to be found during the reigns of the last two ('Uthmān and 'Ali), mainly due to reasons analysed in the present book; Hazrat 'Ali, specially, had to pass through most difficult times; the victorious advance of Islam was halted and, from the political and material point of view, no further progress or growth could be achieved during his caliphate. Yet, in spite of all this, no unbiased student of history can fail to observe that the same spirit was at work in all the four of them and their outlook was basically identical. There was absolutely no difference among them so far as the strict observance of the laws of Islam, whole-hearted treading of the path laid down by the Prophet and earnest desire to fulfil his wishes were concerned. Self-abnegation and extreme austerity, the willingness to do everything in their power in the service of Islam and for the welfare of Muslims and to discharge the

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tremendous responsibility, that God, the preceding Caliphs and the general body of Muslims had entrusted to them with single-minded devotion, even to the extent of laying down their lives, was the common characteristic that inspired all the four Caliphs. This was the spirit which prompted Hazrat Abū Bakr, the first Caliph, to send a punitive expedition under Osāma, the Abyssinian, and to take stern action against those who had refused to pay Zakāt and gone the way of the apostates; this was the spirit that was manifested in the severe self-denial and asceticism of Hazrat 'Umar, the second Caliph, in his relentless enforcement of the laws of Islam and in the appointment and dismissal of high dignitaries and officers of the realm; the same spirit was clearly discernible in the firm refusal of Hazrat 'Uthmān, the third Caliph, to relinquish his office and to shed the blood of the Muslims in order to protect his life (which has been admirably brought out in this book); the same spirit, again, ran through the unwavering decisions of Hazrat 'Ali, the fourth Caliph, and shone brilliantly in his resolve to take up arms against the deniers of the basic principles of the institution of Caliphate and firm refusal to follow the example of the un-Islamic and imperialistic powers, in his unstinted emulation of the asceticism of the holy Prophet and the preceding Caliphs and emphatic unwillingness to yield to unjust demands and unfair pressures to the point of sacrificing his life. The four virtuous and rightly guided Caliphs thus appear to be the symbols of the same reality, the manifestations of the same spirit and the pilgrims to the same shrine. Whatever the diversity and variation (which, of course, is a sign of life and freedom), a fair and impartial observer will affirm that there was not a trace of rivalry or contradiction among them.

Writing about the first four Caliphs and their reigns is not an easy task. He alone can do justice to it who is free from prejudice as well as excessive adulation and is not

given to overstatement. He should be capable of seeking out unity in this diversity and of unearthing reality from a mass of facts and distortions, of not only himself observing the greatness of their achievements but also showing it to others. One who regards material success, victories and conquests as the sole criterion of eminence cannot appreciate fully the role of the worthy successors of the Prophet, nor can justice be done by one who holds only devoutness and asceticism and knowledge and learning to be the governing principle of Caliphate and Apostolic heritage. For it that balanced and comprehensive approach is required which has been the hall-mark of fair-minded *Ahl-i-Sunnat.* Together with largeheartedness, a broad vision and deep scholarship, are needed so that the system of government under the Caliphate and its policies and reforms can be critically examined and properly assessed. Over and above all this, one should possess a facile pen and elegance of contemporary style of writing. When the study is attempted in the English language the writer's difficulties become greater because those who are to read it are, generally, unacquainted with the terms and elementary concepts peculiar to that period of history. They have little background knowledge of the conditions in which the new kind of society was established and the new type of State was set up which was neither autocratic nor wholly democratic in the modern sense.

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I am glad that our learned friend, Syed Athar Husain, has undertaken this work. He possesses a good command of English and has written a number of books and pamphlets on the life of the Prophet and other subjects related to Islam. Mr. Husain is a member of the Indian Administrative Service, with a long experience of the working of government departments concerning revenue and finance. As such he is fully qualified to write on the legal, financial and administrative aspects of the government under the rightly guided Caliphs. He has

presented a balanced, factually correct and erudite exposition touching every facet of the lives of these illustrious caliphs. While recounting the splendid achievements of the Islamic society the author does not feel shy of exposing its weaknesses and pointing out the unpleasant events that took place during those days. These are part of life, an inherent attribute of human nature, from which no community or era can remain immune. Mr. Husain has wisely made no attempt to conceal such incidents or to minimise their importance. He has boldly discussed them in the light of history. These happenings do not detract from the greatness of the illustrious Caliphs but add to their glory by underlining how they did not flinch from the call of duty or abandon their principles in the face of heaviest odds.

As far as I know it is the first book by a Muslim writer to appear in English on this subject. It is hoped that it will be warmly received by Muslims and non-Muslims alike and the ruling classes of various countries, who are responsible for the security and well-being of vast multitudes of men, will be particularly benefited by study of this book.

May Allay grant us all the good fortune to emulate and entertain respect for the noble specimens of humanity!

Dai'ra-I-Shah Ilmullah, ABUL HASAN 'ALI NADWI
Rae Bareli
February 28, 1974

Introduction rendered into English by Dr. M. Asif Kidwai

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1

The advent of the Prophet
Effulgence of Islam

On the eve of the rise of Islam

In a dark period of history when nothing but ruin, squalor and desolation remained of what were once great civilizations, when oppression, exploitation of the weak and the right of might prevailed, when human rights had ceased to be recognised, when superstitions and hedonic cults flourished in many places, was born Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, (peace be on him) on Monday the 12th Rab'i-ul-Awwal (corresponding to the 29th August, 570 a.d.) at Makkah in the desert country of Arabia.

From the earliest times, the people of Arabia have been divided into two classes—(1) the dwellers of the cities and the dwellers of the desert—the bedouins. The dwellers of the cities, particularly the South Arabians had risen to prominence as a maritime people linking India with Africa. Along the trade routes to the north had sprung up cities two of which Petra and Palmyra had acquired renown. The life of the people in this area also could not escape the universal trend of decadence. Drinking, gambling, slavery and other social evils and weaknesses had dissipated the city life and lack of any central authority had produced anarchy. For the Bedouins, the dwellers of the desert, time stood still. Their livelihood depended upon sheep and camel raising and, to some extent, upon horse-breeding, hunting and raiding. In search of new pastures they roamed from place to place and lived a hard and adventurous life. Their survival against their foes depended upon their

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intrepidity, dash and daring and against forbidding and exacting environments, upon their resourcefulness, tenacity and endurance. The bedouin lived, as he does even now, in tents. Every tent represented a family and every encampment, a clan. A group of kindred clans constituted a tribe. While there was complete loyalty of the individual to the clan and close affinity of the clan with the tribe, every tribe was a unit by itself, self-sufficient and independent. Keen competition for water and pasturage was the focal point of conflict between the tribes and every tribe considered every other as a legitimate object of brigandage and plunder. The superiority of the tribe was determined by its fighting prowess. The only law they knew was the fierce tribal code of honour and kinship and the only authority they recognised was the authority of the tribal chief and that, too, sat lightly on its members. Living in a society which levelled down everything, the Arab in general and bedouin in particular, was a born libertine. Subordination to any central authority or coalition of the tribes into a nation had never been attempted before. Lawlessness and cruelty prevailed and frequent outbursts of fratricidal wars left a long trail of hatred, vendetta and insecurity. It is not that the pre-Islamic Arabs were barbarians. Notwithstanding their cruel and predatory habits, they possessed, to a high degree, such virtues as generosity, hospitality and respect for the plighted word. As an enemy the bedouin might be dreadful but as a friend he was loyal and generous. Be he a dweller of the city or a dweller of the desert, every Arab considered eloquence, archery and horsemanship as the basic attributes of a true Arab. Of these, eloquence was regarded the highest attainment The bedouin's love of poetry was his one cultural asset.

The people of Arabia were largely idol worshippers. Here and there were settled a number of Jews and Christians. They followed their own religions which in the practice of their followers had ceased to have much of an

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appeal. Some professed to follow the religion of Abraham but, by and large, the Arabs were idolaters. Every city, like every tribe, had its own deities and its own forms of worship. In the Kaaba itself were installed hundreds of idols. But the Makkans also believed in a Supreme Deity, the biggest Provider and the God to be invoked in time of acute distress or peril. Vague monotheistic ideas had however already been spasmodically entertained here and there. The stage was set and the time had come for the rise of a great religious and national leader. [1]

Advent of Prophet

The child Muhammad grew in such environments. He kept himself aloof from the evils and vices of the day. Not much is known of his early days except that he had no formal education, that he had often to go into the desert to tend the flocks of his uncle, was decorous and well-behaved and was loved and respected by all those who came into contact with him. He earned such a fame for uprightness, integrity and sincerity that the Makkans began to call him *al-Ameen* (the trusted). He entered into several business partnerships and always acted with great integrity in his dealings with his partners. Even as a youth, he felt greatly perturbed over the immorality of the people. Their ignorance and superstitions, their obscene rites and, with all their desert virtues, their lawlessness and cruelty and the frequent outbursts of fratricidal wars greatly saddened his heart. Often he used to repair to the loneliness of a cave on the Mount Hira for prayers and meditations to find answers to the questions surging in his mind. The period of probation had come to a close. The youth had entered the prime of life. At the age of forty he was blessed with the mantle of prophethood. He started preaching the new religion against stiff opposition which soon assumed the

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[1] Phillip K. Hitti : The Arabs, A Short History, page 20.

forms of cruel persecution. He and his band of followers had to leave their hearths and homes in Makkah and to migrate to Madinah. From Hijrat to Khilafat, the history of Arabia is actually a record of brilliant achievements of the Prophet in which his companions played a very notable part. At Madinah they had to face Makkan attacks; but the Prophet and his devoted followers, went on advancing from strength to strength and in twenty three years almost the whole of Arabia professed the religion of Islam. During all these eventful years, the Prophet assiduously carried out his mission of proclaiming the oneness of God and of guiding mankind to the path of virtue and piety leading to salvation in the life to come. He announced that man was the highest creature of God and everything in the Universe was created for his use; that every man was born sinless and uninhibited by any past sins or blemish upon his conscience; that all men were equal in the sight of God and the only criterion of superiority of one over the other was righteousness, and that every man could approach his Maker without requiring any intercessor. He wiped away all distinctions and inequalities based on colour, caste, race, sex and creeds and bridged the gulf man had created between man and man. He gave equality of rights and status to women and struck a deadly blow at slavery. He not only effected a social revolution but changed the concept and way of life. He broadened the thought of his countrymen and widened their sympathies. He taught them purity of life and straight forwardness of conduct. He impressed upon them the seriousness of life and struck at the very root of social corruption. He stimulated their moral qualities of prudence and restraint and breathed into them catholic charity and fear of God. The result was that all the social evils and vices fell like so many chains and powerfully influenced the course of human history thereafter. Indulgence and dissipation gave way to righteousness and austerity. Arrogance, greed and striving for power and wealth were

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replaced by humility and self denial; loot and plunder were replaced by honest living. Injustice, cruelty and oppression vanished and equality, justice and kindness took the field. The gulf between the extremes of wealth and poverty were narrowed down by abolition of usury and games of chance, by promulgation of a law of inheritance that tended to equitable distribution of wealth among one's heirs, by enjoining obligatory payment *Zakat* and encouraging charities and by fixing a moral responsibility upon the well-to-do take care of the poor, the orphans, the widows and the destitutes.

Prophet's illness

The final message of God having been delivered to mankind and the foundation of Islam having been laid firm and true, the mission of the Prophet was now complete. At midnight on the 18th Safar A.H. 11 he went to a public graveyard to invoke God's blessings for those resting there in the slumber of death. While returning to his house he felt indisposed and this indisposition rapidly developed into the illness that proved fatal. During his illness, the Prophet went to the Great Mosque and addressed the congregation thus, "God offered to one from among His servants the choice of his earth or that which is nigh unto Him. And he has chosen that which is nigh unto God." Abū Bakr realised the significance of these words and with tears rolling down his cheeks he said, "We would rather sacrifice our lives and those of our parents."[1]

When his condition deteriorated and he could not lead the congregational prayers, he directed that Abū Bakr be asked to lead them. Ibn Sa'ad records, on the authority of Hamza bin 'Abdullāh bin 'Umar, 'Ayesha implored the Prophet to absolve her father from this responsible duty, for, she pleaded, "He is an old man of tender heart who

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[1] *Tabari I,* Vol. III, page 192 and *Tabaiqat Ibn Sa'ad,* Vol. IV, page 27.

begins to shed tears profusely when he recites the Qur'ān."[1] The Prophet did not accede to her request. Ibn Sa'ad proceeds to mention, on the authority of Anas bin Mālik, 'Ubaid bin 'Amr and Ibn 'Abbās, that Abū Bakr led the prayers seventeen times during the lifetime of the Prophet and the latter once prayed behind him when Abū Bakr was leading the prayers.

Election of Abū Bakr as his successor

The Prophet breathed his last on Monday, the 12th Rab'i-ul-Awwal (May God shower His blessings on him). When the tragic news reached Abū Bakr, he hurried to the Prophet's apartment and uncovering his face, kissed his forehead and uttered these words, "May the lives of my father and mother be sacrificed for you. Sacred was your life and sacred is your death. You have tasted of the death that had been decreed by God for you. And now you will never die."[2] The Prophet had held such a hold upon his followers that they did not believe he could have died. 'Umar was so bewildered that he wildly proclaimed, "The hypocrites say that the Prophet has died. I swear by Allah that he has not died but has gone to Allah like Moses who had returned after an absence of 40 days inspite of the fact that the people said that he was dead."[3]

Abū Bakr put him aside by these words "O people! verily, whoso worshippeth Muhammad, let him know that Muhammad is dead indeed; but whoso worshippeth God, let him know that God liveth and dieth not." He then recited the verse of the Qur'ān, "And Muhammad is no more than an apostle; many apostles have already passed away before him; if then he dies or is killed, will you turn back upon your heels? And whoever turns back upon his

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[1] Ibn Sa'ad – *Tabaqat*, page 25.
[2] *Tabari*—Vol. III, page 197; *Ibn Sa'ad—Tabaqat*, page 7, on the authority of Abū Salma bin 'Abdul Rahman.
[3] Ibn Sa'ad—*Tabaqat*, page 78

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heels, he will by no means do harm to Allah in the least; and Allah will recompense the grateful;"[1] 'Umar was speechless and the excited crowd quietened down. But just then a messenger came bearing the news that the citizens of Madinah—the Ansārs had assembled to choose a chief for themselves. "The moment was critical. The unity of the faith was at stake. A divided power would fall to pieces, and all might be lost. The mantle of the Prophet as head of the Arab State must fall upon one successor, and on one alone. Further Arabia would acknowledge no master but from amongst the Quraish. The dice was to be cast, and atonce."[2]

Taking Abū 'Obaida with them, Abū Bakr and 'Umar hurried to the place. They were just in time for the Madinians were saying, "We are the legion of God and you Muhājirin are few in number. Still you are thinking of cutting our roots and turning us away and to let us have nothing to do with the Caliphate." To this Abū Bakr replied "Every word which the citizen have uttered in their own praise is true, but in noble birth and influence the Quraish are paramount, and to none but them would Arabia yield obedience." The Ansārs said that whenever the Prophet sent a Muhājir on any mission, he had also sent an Ansār with him so there should be one chief from the Ansārs and one from the Muhājirin. 'Away with you!' exclaimed 'Umar, 'two (chiefs) cannot stand together; and even Sa'ad agreed that to divide the power would be to weaken it.' Abū Bakr stepped forward and pointing towards 'Umar and Abū 'Obaida, said, 'Ye see these two; choose Ye now whoever of them Ye will, and salute him as your chief.' 'Nay', cried both at once, 'Thou hast already, at the Prophet's bidding, led the prayers; thou art our chief. Stretch forth thy hand'. He did so and they struck their

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[1] Ibn Sa'ad—*Tabaqai,* page 81.
[2] Sir William Muir; Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 3.

hands on his in token of allegiance. Their example was followed by others and groups after groups advanced to pledge their allegiance.[1] Ibn Is'hāq writes, on the authority of Anas bin Mālik, that on the following day the general public pledged their fidelity to him and thus homage was done to him on all sides and he was acknowledged as the 'Caliph' or 'Successor' of the Prophet as head of the State."

Before his death Abū Bakr had nominated 'Umar as his successor in the vicegerency and the appointment was accepted by the universality of the people, including the House of Muhmmad.[2] 'Umar died as a result of mortal injuries inflicted on him by a Christian fanatic. He had, however, before his death appointed an electoral committee consisting of six eminent companions to select his successor. Their choice fell on 'Uthmān, a descendant of Ommeyya and son-in-law of the Prophet who was installed as Caliph with the suffrage of the people. On 'Uthmān's tragic death at the hands of assassins, 'Ali, another son-in-law of the Prophet, was proclaimed the fourth Caliph.[3]

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[1] Bukhāri ; Muslims : Suyūti—*Tārikhul Khulafā,* page 69, 70
[2] Ameer 'Ali—The Spirit of Islam, page 126
[3] Ameer 'Ali—The Spirit of Islam, page 126

2

Abu Bakr

"The foremost (in righteous living) will be in the front line; It is these who shall be drawn nearest to (God) in gardens of bliss. (56: 10-12)

His real name was 'Abdullah; Abū Bakr was his *'Kunniyat.'*[1] His truthfulness and sincerity were so great and his generosity so abundant that he was given the epithets of *Siddiq* (the true and *'Atiq* (the generous).[2]

He was born two and a half years after the year of the Elephant or fifty years and six months before the commencement of the *Hijri* Era in the Quraishite clan of Bani Taim. He was thus two and half years younger than the Prophet Muhammad. In the sixth generation, his genealogy unites, in his forefather Murra, with that of the Prophet. His father was 'Uthmān who was better known by his *Kunniyat* Abū Qahāfa. His mother was Salma having the *Kunniyat* of Ummul Khair.

Early life

Not much is known of his childhood and adolescence. Like the rest of the Arab aristocracy, he could read and write. On the Quraish genealogy he was considered an authority. All chroniclers are agreed that even before conversion to Islam, he had led a chaste life and kept himself aloof from indulgence in wine and women. He used to say that drinking undermines one's feelings of compassion and generosity.[3] At the age of

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[1] Ibn Kathir – *Tahzib.*
[2] Ibn Sa'ad – *Tabaqat.*
[3] Suyūti—*Tarikhul Khulafā,* page 32.

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eighteen, he took to trade and visited Syria and Yemen in that connection. He had taken up sale and purchase of drapery goods. In course of time, he became one of the most affluent of commercial magnates of Makkah. He was respected for his fair dealings and prudence and his counsel was sought in all important matters.[1] As a tribal chief, he carried the authority of awarding blood money in murder cases. He enjoyed such confidence of the people that if any one wanted to deposit money with some one else, the Quraish would not even hear the suggestion.[2]

Physical Features

Abū Bakr was a man of delicate frame and medium height and had a stooping gait. His face was thin with clear cut profile; his complexion was fair, eyes deep-set and black; his forehead lofty and nose aquiline. Altogether, he was a handsome man. His hair had become prematurely grey and he used to dye them red.[3] He used to wear loose clothes and a turban and carried a white woollen cloth on his shoulders.

Conversion to Islam

From their childhood Prophet Muhammad and Abū Bakr were intimate friends and had occasionally gone together on commercial journeys. Abū Bakr was himself dissatisfied with pagan rites and customs. He had watched his friend at close quarters and was so convinced of his truthfulness that when Muhammad declared his prophethood, he had no hesitation in accepting Islam. There is a difference of opinion among the authorities as to who was the first to embrace Islam. Some say it was Abū Bakr; some say 'Ali was the first to accept Islam, while others

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[1] Ibn 'Asākir.
[2] *Kanzul-'ummāl,* Vol.6 Page 313
[3] Ibn Sa'ad on 'Āyesha's authority reproduced by Suyuti in *Tarikhul-Khulafā* , page 33

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assign this honour to Khadija. Imām Abū Hanifa has summed up the consensus by saying that Abū Bakr was the first among male adults, 'Ali among the children, Khadija among the females and Zaid bin Hāritha among the slaves. Ibn 'Asākir records, on the authority of 'Āyesha, that the apostle of God said "Whenever I invited any one to accept Islam, he argued with me and initially rejected my words save the son of Abū Quhāfa (Abū Bakr) who accepted it immediately and remained steadfast therein."[1]

Loyalty and Devotion to the Faith

From the moment of his embracing Islam, Abū Bakr's life was a story of complete dedication to the cause of God and His Apostle. He employed all the power and influence he commanded, all the ability that he possessed and directed all his efforts and applied all his wealth and property to the promotion of that single cause.

'Āyesha says that on the day of his conversion, Abū Bakr had 40,000 Dināars. He spent them all in the cause of Islam.[2] Ahmed records in his '*Musnad*' on the authority of Abū Huraira, that the Prophet stated, "No one's wealth has stood me in such good stead as that of Abū Bakr." On hearing it Abū Bakr wept and said that both his person and his property were at the absolute disposal of the Prophet. In later years, the Prophet asked for donations from the companions for the Tabūk expedition. 'Umar states that he resolved to surpass Abū Bakr at least this once and accordingly laid half of his wealth at the feet of the great Master. Shortly after Abū Bakr appeard on the scene with his money goods. The Prophet enquired of him whether he had left anything for his family. Came the answer that for them, God and His Prophet were sufficient (Abū Dawood, Tirmizi). Ibn 'Asākir writes, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās,

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[1] Suyūti—*Tarikhul Khulafā'*, page 35.
[2] Ibn 'Asākir

that the Prophet said that to no one he was more indebted than to Abū Bakr who rallied behind him with his person, assisted him with his wealth and married his daughter to him.[1]

In the first few years of his accepting Islam, he had to court suffering and persecution. The lot of the slaves who had ventured to accept Islam was pitiable. They were mercilessly tortured by their pagan masters. Abū Bakr spent his wealth cheerfully in freeing them.

The new religion had met with such hostility that for three years the Prophet preached it in secrecy. So did Abū Bakr. In the fourth year came in revelation.

"Therefore expound openly what thou art commanded and turn away from those who join false gods with God."

The Prophet now started preaching openly. He declared the Oneness of God in the Ka'aba. He was mobbed by the Quraish and beaten unconscious. Abū Bakr came to his rescue. Forcing his way through the crowd he reprimanded them thus: "May God punish you for this. Will you kill him simply because he believes in one God?"[2] Undaunted by the hostility of the Quraish, Abū Bakr himself started preaching openly. The Quraish surrounded him and beat him so severely that he received a number of grievous injuries on his head and had become unconscious. His life was saved on the intervention of Banū Taim. On regaining consciousness his first thought went to the safety of the Prophet and he enquired how the Prophet was. The men of Taim scolded him for being solicitious about the welfare of a person in aiding whom he had endangered his own life but Abū Bakr firmly brushed them aside. His mother wanted to give him something to eat but, as a

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[1] Suyūti—*Tarikhul Khulafā', page 40*
[2] *Fatahul Bari*, Vol. VII, page 129

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precondition, he insisted upon getting information about the Prophet. He sent his mother to Umme Jamil, daughter of Khattāb who came along to see Abū Bakr and disclosed to him that the Prophet was well and safely lodged in Dar-e-Arqam. Abū Bakr did not rest content till he had personally seen the Prophet when darkness of night made it possible for him to stir out.[1]

No amount of oppression and tyranny could, however, extinguish the fire that had been kindled in the ḥearts of the Muslims. Abū Bakr continued his preaching and was instrumental in adding to the fold such valiant swordsmen as 'Uthmān, Zubair, Talha, 'Abdur Rehmān bin 'Auf, Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqās. He also persuaded his brother and mother Ummul Khair to embrace Islam.

Hijarat to Abyssinia

The Quraish made the life of the handful of Muslims so difficult that the Prophet advised them to migrate to Abyssinia. In the cause of Islam, they left their hearths and homes. Abū Bakr was one of them. Mention of this is made in the Qur'ān:

> "Those who believe, and have left their homes and strive with their wealth and their lives in Allah's way are of much greater worth in Allah's sight. Those are they who have succeeded. Their Lord giveth them good tidings of mercy from Him, and acceptance and Gardens where enduring pleasure will be theirs. There they will abide for ever. Lo: with Allah there is immense reward."(Q.9: 20-22)

On the way to Abyssinia the land of immigrants was met by Ibn Al-Dughunnah, the chief of the tribe of Qārā. He accosted Abū Bakr thus :--

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[1] *Isābah,* Vol. VIII, page 229; Maulana Abul Hasan Ali: *Islam and the World*, page 66 on authority of *Albādiya wan Nihāya,* Ibn Kasir. Vol.II, page 30.

'Verily, a man of your calibre must not be exiled, for you help the poor and the needy, give relief to the distressed and your table welcomes the way-farer.' Ibn Al-Dughunnah prevailed upon him to return to Makkah pledging his personal responsibility for his safety and freedom of worship. At his request the Quraish conceded to Abū Bakr the right to worship but only in private. The restraint was too galling for him and after sometime it was thrown overboard and Abū bakr built a mosque (the first in Islam) adjacent to his house. The Makkans complained to Ibn Al-Dughunnah who advised Abū Bakr to refrain from such a course. He was given the reply "Take back your guarantee of protection and safety, for I do not need them; for me the protection of God and His Prophet is sufficient."[1]

Migration to Madinah

Islam had taken roots and started expanding though very slowly. The animosity of the Makkans rose in proportion and they intensified their persecution of the Muslims. It became so unbearable that the Prophet despatched all the Muslims except 'Ali and Abū Bakr to Madinah. For himself and his two lieutenants he awaited the divine command. When it came four months after, he informed Abū Bakr and in secret they made preparations to depart in the darkness of night. 'Ali was left in charge of the house to bluff the Makkans who had planned to assassinate the Prophet. At the appointed hour the Prophet and Abū Bakr left Makkah. For three days the holy fugitives concealed themselves in the cave of Thaur in Mount Hira for the Makkans were in hot pursuit. The comradeship has been referred to in the Qur'ān, "The second of the two when they were both in cave" (Q.9; 40). The Makkans were scouring the country and a party of

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[1] Bukhāri, Vol. I Chapter *Hijrat.*

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them reached the mouth of the cave. Abū Bakr got frightened and said "O Prophet of Allah! We are overtaken." 'Grieve not', replied the Prophet, 'Surely, Allah is with us' (Q.9 : 40). After 3 days' stay in the cave they resumed their journey and reached Madinah on 12th Rab'i I.

The new chapter of Islam

With the migration of the Prophet and the Muslims to Madinah, Islam entered upon a new chapter. The day to day persecution of Muslims at the hands of the Quraish ceased. The Madinian tribes of Aus and Khazraj had, by and large, accepted Islam. A pact had been entered into with the Jews. The foundations of the Islamic State had been laid. But now onwards, Islam had to face the larger danger of concerted action and the onslaught of organised armies launched with vigour and determination to exterminate it. The Prophet and his companions defended Islam with all their might and fervour and ultimately made it so victorious that its sway extended to the whole of Arabia. Says the Qur'ān:

> "And the first to lead the way of Muhājirin and the Ansār and those who followed them in goodness, Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him, and He hath made ready for them gardens underneath which rivers flow wherein they will abide for ever. That is the supreme triumph."

Battle of Badr A.H. 2

Hardly had the Muslims settled down at Madinah when they had to fight a pitched battle with the Makkans at Badr. They were outnumbered by three to one and the enemy ranks had the advantage of superiority of arms. The prospect looked so bleak that the hearts of the most valiant trembled. In his agitation the Prophet cried out, "O Lord! I beseech Thee to fulfil the promise Thou hast given to me.

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O Lord! If Thou shall allow this band of Muslims to perish, Thou will not be worshipped on earth." Abū Bakr comforted him by saying, "O Prophet of Allah! Be of good cheer. May the lives of my parents be sacrificed over you. Your prayer to Allah has met His acceptance and surely He will fulfil the promise that He made to you."[1] Came the revelation "Soon shall be the hosts (of the enemy) be routed and they shall turn their backs." The Muslims gained a signal victory.

A peculiar feature of the battle was that ranged against the Muslims were many of their close relations, yet the Muslims had not faltered. Abū Bakr's son 'Abdur Rehmān was in the enemy's rank. On seeing him, Abū Bakr rebuked him, 'O wretched fellow, what about my claims.' 'Nothing remains', replied the son, 'Except the arrow, the charger, and the sword to amend the errors of old age.' In later years when 'Abdur Rehmān accepted Islam, he told his father that in the battle he had got a chance to strike him down. Abū Bakr replied that if he had got the opportunity, he would not have spared him.

Battle of Uhad A.H. 3

The battle of Uhad was a much bigger encounter which the Muslims had to face three years after. In this battle, the Muslims had to suffer a virtual defeat. But they had, nevertheless, given a valiant account of themselves. Abū Bakr, too, had played a heroic role in it.

Battle of the Trenches A.H. 5

In the year A.H.5 the Makkans, assisted by the Jewish tribes of Banū Ghatfān and Banū Asad marched upon Madinah with an army of ten thousand soldiers. The Prophet got a moat dug up on the unprotected side of Madinah and kept his forces in security. Abū Bakr

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[1] Tabari, Vol. III, page 280, Ibn Hisham, page 444.

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commanded a contingent of the Muslims that guarded it day and night.

Treaty of Al-Hudebiya

In the sixth year of the Hijra, the Prophet set out with some 1400 Muslims to perform the annual pilgrimage to Ka'aba. Even though the Prophet sent emissaries to Makkans to make his intentions known, they collected a force to prevent the Muslims from entering Makkah. Finally 'Uthmān was sent to them; but he was detained and news came that he had been murdered.

It was then that the Prophet, sitting under a tree, took the oath of allegiance from his comrades for fighting to death.[1] This has been referred to in the Qur'ān:

> 'Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance unto thee beneath the tree.'
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> (Q. 48:18)

Finally, a truce was effected. Its terms were apparently disadvantageous to Muslims and 'Umar expressed dissatisfaction over them. But Abū Bakr pulled him up. Abū Bakr was one of the distinguished signatories to the truce on behalf of the Muslims.

Expedition to Khaibar

In A.H. 7, Muslims marched upon Khaibar to chastise the Jews. On the first day, Abū Bakr was commissioned to launch the attack upon their fortress. The command was changed every day till the fortress overtaken by 'Ali.

Other Expeditions and the Battle of Hunain

Abū Bakr had led the expeditions against Bani Kalās and Banū Fazarāh a tribe of Ghatfan in A.H. 7. Next

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[1] Ibn Hishām, Part II, page 179

year when the battle of Hunain took place after the fall of Makkah, Abū Bakr played a very distinguished part in it.

Expedition to Tabouk

In A.H. 9, news came to Madinah that Heraclius was making preparations to launch a full war upon the Muslims. The Prophet started preparations for defence and asked for donations from the Muslims. Abū Bakr subscribed his entire wealth to the fund. Abū Bakr was assigned the responsibility of mustering forces for the expedition and carrying the standard of Islam.

In A.H.9, a large body of Muslims went to perform the annual pilgrimage. Abu Bakr was appointed leader of this caravan and he was authorised to declare at Mina that henceforth no infidel would be allowed to take part in Haj nor would any one be allowed to circumbulate the Ka'aba naked.

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Commencement of the Caliphate

Abū Bakr's Inaugural address

On his election as the first Caliph of Islam, Abū Bakr delivered an address to his people which is unique in the annals of history. Said the old patriarch, 'O people! Behold me charged with the cares of Government. I am not the best among you; I need all your advice and all your help. If I do well, support me; if I mistake, counsel me. To tell the truth to a person commissioned to rule is faithful allegiance; to conceal it, is treason. In my sight, the powerful and the weak are alike; and to both I wish to render justice. As I obey God and His Prophet, obey me; if I neglect the laws of God and the Prophet, I have no more right to your obedience.'

Shortly before his death, the Prophet had ordered the despatch of an expedition to Syria under the command of Osāma to seek reparations for the murder of his envoy, Zaid, father of Osāma. This force was still camping at Jorf, at a little distance from Madinah, when the Prophet fell ill.

Insurrection throughout Arabia

The news of Prophet's fatal illness and death had spread like a wild fire. While Madinah remained steadfast in its loyalty to the Islamic State, news of insurrection and, what is worse, of a resolution by the newly converted tribes to forsake the faith started pouring in from all sides. The turbulent spirit of many a tribe which had acquiesced to Muslim arms was chafing for independence. Their hereditary funds and conflicting interests had not yet had the time to coalesce into an integral union and subordination. The new converts were not sufficiently confirmed in their habits of faith and obedience. They did

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not relish the strict rules of morality enforced by Islam, which placed wholesome restraint upon their passions and suppressed their customs. Some were willing to conform to all the commandments of Islam except payment of *Zakāt* or the poor-tax. A few imposters claiming prophethood had sprung up even in the lifetime of the Prophet. They could make no head way then; but with the passing away of the Prophet, they thought they could give free play to their ambitions. Their example was followed by others.

The rebellion had to be put down and the danger that threatened Madinah had to be met. The city could not be left defenceless. Even senior companions, including 'Umar, counselled against sending away the army to Syria in such a critical situation. Calm and unmoved Abū Bakr replied, "Were the city surrounded by packs of ravenous wolves, and I was left solitary and alone, the force shall go; not a word from my Master's lips shall fall to the ground."[1] Seeing that he was adamant, "Umar urged the Caliph to at least place the command of the force in the hands of some more experienced general for Osāma was but a youth. To this the Caliph gave a stern reply: "Thy mother be childless, O son of Khattāb! Shall the Prophet of the Lord appoint a man to the command, and I, deposing him, appoint another in his place?[2]" while despatching the army, the Caliph gave it the following instructions:--

"See that thou avoidest treachery. Depart not in any wise from the right. Thou shall mutilate none, neither shall thou kill any child or aged man, nor any woman. Injure not the date palm neither burn it with fire, and cut not down any tree wherein is food for man or beast. Slay not any flocks or herds or camels saving for needful sustenance. Ye may eat of the meat which the men of the land shall bring upto you in their vessels, making mention thereon of the

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[1] Tābari : *Tarikh*, Vol. II, page 461.
[2] *Ibid*, page 462.

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name of the Lord. And the monks with shaven heads, if they submit, leave them ummolested.

Now march forward in the name of the Lord, and may He protect you from sword and pestilence!"[1]

When the force marched, the Caliph accompanied it for some distance on foot. 'Be mounted, 'said Osāma to him, 'or else I will dismount and walk by thee'. 'Not so', replied Abū Bakr, 'I will not mount ; I will walk and soil my feet for a while, in the way of the Lord. Verily, every step in the way of the Lord is equal to the merit of manifold good works, and wipeth out a multitude of sins ![2]

The army left while storm was brewing around Madinah. A chronicler records, 'The Arabs were on all sides rising in rebellion. Apostasy and disaffection began to raise their heads; Christians and Jews began to stretch out their necks to watch the scene and the faithful were left like a flock of sheep without a shepherd, their Prophet gone, their numbers few, and their foes a multitude.'

The very boldness of the Caliph in despatching the army to Syria deterred a number of bedouin tribes from launching attack upon Madinah. They reasoned that if the Caliph was not confident of his strength at home, he would not have sent away his army. The imposter Toleiha sent some men to foment disaffection among the tribes of 'Abs and Zubian living in the nearby desert. These tribes, however, vacillated between the claims of the pretender and the Prophet and they thought of a compromise. They sent a deputation to the Caliph to assure him of their continued loyalty and adherence to the faith provided they were exempted from payment of the poor-tax. The Caliph rejected their demand outright even against the advice of

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[1] Suyūti; *Tarikhul Khulafā'*, page 71

[2] Tabari, page 185, reproduced from annals of the early Caliphate by Sir William Muir, page 9.

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some companions who thought that expediency dictated such a course. 'If ye withhold but the tether of a tithed camel, I will fight with you for the same' was the blunt reply they got. The deputation retired but it had seen for itself that Madinah was lying defenceless.

Attack on Madinah

Foreseeing an attack upon Madinah, Abū Bakr posted pickets all round the city under the command of such chief men as 'Ali, Zubair, Talha, 'Abdullāh ibn Mas 'ūd who had not gone with the army. Not three days had passed when the bedouin tribes attempted a surprise attack. They were, however, repulsed by the pickets. Fearing a renewed attack the Caliph rode out in person the next morning with a little band in regular formation and drove out the assailants from Zul Kissa. The skirmish was small but its effect was great. The spirit of the Muslims rose and the disloyal tribes were disheartened. Abū Bakr's implicit faith in God and his resolve to follow in the footsteps of his great master, his prudence and firmness paved the way to success. Writes Sir William Muir, 'But for him, Islam would have melted away in compromise with the bedouin tribes, or, might have perished in the throes of its birth.'[1]

Expedition against Bani Abs and Zubian

In two months time, and some say after forty days, the army returned from Syria and Madinah was relieved from further danger. The Caliph led in person an expedition against Bani 'Abs and Zubiān who, while retreating to Rabaza, had put to cruel death the faithful of their tribes. They were severely punished in an encounter; many of them were killed or taken as captives and the remaining fled to Bozākha to join the army of the pretender Toleiha.

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate.

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Action against the Apostates

With the disappearance of danger to Madinah and submission of the neighbouring inconstant tribes, the Caliph directed his energies to reclamation of the apostates and extermination of the false prophets. For this purpose he gathered the whole available force of Islam and all the loyal chiefs and divided them into eleven independent columns each under the command of a distinguished leader. Thus Khālid ibn Sai'd was to go to the Syrian border, Khālid bin Walid was to subdue Toleiha; 'Ikrima assisted by Shorhabil was to liquidate Moseilama; Mohājir was sent to Yemen; 'Alā to Bahrein; Hozeifa and 'Arfaja to Mahra and 'Amr against the Beni Kuza'a. summons were also sent through Caliph's envoys to all provinces and rebellious tribes to repent and submit themselves for readmission into the fold.

Khālid bin Walīd's expedition

In the story of early Caliphate, Khālid occupies a position of prominence next only to the Caliphs "A dashing soldier and brave even to rashness, his courage was tempered with a cool and ever-ready judgement. His conduct on the battlefields, which decided the fate of the Persian Empire and of the Byzantine rule in Syria, must rank him as one of the greatest generals of the world. Over and again, he cast the dice in crisis where loss would have been destruction to Islam, but always with consummate skill and heroism which won the victory and gained for him the title of Sword of God."[1] With the pick of the Madinian army he advanced against Toleiha. On the way he tackled the tribe of Bani Tay who, like Bani Ghatfān and Bani Asad, were supporting Toleiha. A few of them including 'Adi were still loyal and served as 'emissaries of Khālid to the tribe. The whole tribe submitted to Khālid and joined him with 1000 horses. With this reinforcement Khālid

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of Early Caliphate, page 21.

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encountered Toleiha's army at Bozakha which had been joined by 70 warriors of Bani Ghatfān under Oyeina and the insurgents of Bani Asad. After a sharp combat Oyeina defected with his men and the whole army of Toleiha fled. Toleha himself escaped to Syria with his wife. Oyeina was captured and sent alongwith two other chiefs to the caliph at Midina, where they were pardoned on expression of regret and promise of good behaviour. Later on, when Bani Asad were pardoned Toleiha returned to them and accepted Islam. A number of other vacillating tribes resumed their profession of Islam with all its obligations including payment of the poor-tax.

Battle of Yemama End of A. H. 11

In the centre of Arabia lies Yemāma where lived the tribe of Bani Hanifa. Among them had arisen in the tenth year of the Hijra the pretender, Moseilama. He had been able to build up a considerable following and had the audacity to write to the Prophet claiming a share in the prophethood and suggesting that they may exercise suzerainty each over a half of the world. The proposal was answered with contempt ' "From Muhammad, the Prophet of God to the liar Moseilama. The world is the domain of God and He will give its inheritance to whom He will. And the (successful) end is for the righteous."[1]

This Moseilama had married a woman by the name of Sajjah who had also declared herself a prophetess. Her story is interesting. She had come down with some force from Mesopotamia with the intention of attacking Madinah. She got support from Bani Taghiib but Bani Temim refused to acknowledge her as a prophetess. She turned her fury against them but was discomfited in the combat and had to seek terms. Moseilama sent a message to her to come and

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[1] Tabari—*Tarikh*, page 1749.

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meet him upon which they joined forces and cemented their alliance by marriage.

'Ikrima and Shorahbil had been originally deputed to put down Moseilama's rebellion but a hasty and ill-planned advance made by them resulted in their defeat. Khālid then gave battle to him on the plain of Akraba. In the bitter fighting that ensued the Muslim army lost 360 Muhājirin, 300 Ansārs and about 500 Bedouins but they accounted for a much larger number of the dead in the enemies rank. Moseilama's forces beat retreat to a large orchard enclosed by a strong wall and closed its gate. The Muslim forces surrounded it and Berza, one of the twelve persons who had taken the pledge of 'Akaba, scaled the wall and jumped to the other side. Slashing people left and right he managed to open the gate. A fearful carnage followed in which Moseilama was killed by a negro warrior, Wahshi by name, the same person who had killed Hamza in the battle of Uhad. Thus ended the claim of Moseilama. The Bani Hanifa like other subdued tribes were taken back in the fold of Islam.

Campaign of Bahrein

On the west coast of the Persain Gulf lie the desert tracts of Hejer and Bahrein. They were peopled by the several branches of Bani Rabia family, principal of which was Bani Bakr. Their chieftain Munzir had accepted Islam and in token of suzerainty had agreed to entertain a Resident from Madinah. Munzir died shortly after the death of the Prophet and the province rose in rebellion. The Resident 'Alā' had hastened to Madinah and there he was equipped with a force to quell the rising. As he passed along the outskirts of Yeamāma, 'Alā's force was joined by contingents from Bani Hanifa, Temim and other tribes who had, by now, submitted to Khālid. The rebellion in Bahrein was being spear headed by Hotem who had blockaded the faithful followers of Islam led by Jārūd. 'Alā' reached to

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Jārūd's rescue and together they worsted Hotem's force and killed Hotem. Assisted by Mothannā, 'Alā' soon reclaimed the whole province of Hejer and Bahrein.

Campaign of Omān

Jeyfar, the Prince of Omān, had accepted the suzerainty of Islam one or two years back and 'Amr had been appointed as the Prophet's representative at his court. Soon after the Prophet's death this province revolted. The task of reclaiming it was entrusted by the Calip to Hozeifa and 'Arfaja. Assisted by 'Ikrima they engaged the rebels at Daba and completely routed them.

Hozeifa was left behinds as Governor of Omān and 'Ikrima south west pursued his victoriours course to Mehra. He had no difficulty in pacifying this region. With an army of great strength, which had been swelled by the Bahrein contingent and fresh levies, 'Ikrima advanced to join Muhājir in the campaign aginst Hadhramaut and Yemen.

Restoration of peace in Yemen

In Yemen Aswad had, in the lifetime of the Prophet, declared himself a prophet. He was assassinated by three of his courtiers—an Arab chief Qais ibn 'Abd Yaghūth and two ministers of Persian descent, Feroze Dailme and Dādweih. Abū Bakr appointed Feroze as his lieutenant with Qais and Dādweih to help him. Qais, however, plotted against them both. Dādweih was killed and Fefoze fled for his life. By this time, however, 'Ikrima was advancing from the east and Muhājir was marching from the north. Qais ibn 'Abd Yaghūth and 'Amr ibn M'adekerib had joined forces to oppose Muhājir, but they found the task hopeless. Both Qais and 'Amr were captured and sent to Madinah where, on expression of repentance, they were forgiven by the Caliph. After this, peace was speedily restored in Yemen.

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Rising in Hadhramaut

Muhājir, the Governor of Hadhramaut, had gone to Madinah and had fallen ill there. In his absence Ash'ath ibn Qais, chief of the Kindi tribe, raised his head in rebellion against Ziād who was holding the reins of Government on behalf of Muhājir When news of this reached Madinah, Muhājir was despatched by the Caliph with a force. Proceeding from Sana'a, Muhājir joined Ziād and defeated Ash'ath who fled to the stronghold of Nojeir. He was pursued by Muhājir who was soon joined by 'Ikrima, and they surrounded the fortress. Ash 'ath capitulated on the condition of personal safety. He was taken captive and sent to Madinah where he was set free.

By these operations peace was restored in the south and the reign of Islam was completely re-established.

War with Persia

On the north of Hajar lies Chaldaea and further north east lies the region watered by the two rivers the Tigris and the Euphrates. These rivers join each other a few hundred miles before reaching the Persian Gulf. The upper portion of the region enclosed by these rivers was known as Mesopotamia in ancient times and the lower part as Babylonia and Chaldaea. The Arabs called it Iraq Arab. By the two sides of these rivers stood many flourishing cities. Ancient Nineveh, not far from modern Mosul, which was the seat of Assyrian Kings, and Madā'in, the capital of Persian sovereigns, were situated on the Tigris as does Baghdad, the metropolis of the Caliphs of the Middle Ages. On the Euphrates were situated ancient Babylon, Hira, Kūfa, Kirkessia and Rakka. Beyond the Tigris, to the east of Zagros mountains, lies the country which the Arabs called Iraq 'Ajam.

Like South Syria, Chaldaea was peopled by Arabs who were partly heathen and partly Christians. The former

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had been annexed by the Roman Empire and the latter by the Persians. The peasantry in Chaldaea, the Fellaheen, was Arab but they were lorded over by Dehkans, the landlords and collectors commissioned by the Persian court. The Lakhmite of Hira were also dependent upon Persia. Pacification of the insurgence in north-east Arabia brought the Muslim army in collision with the wandering tribes of Hira and Chaldaea. Raids from the north were followed by reprisals. The wandering tribes sought the support of their Persian sovereign and very soon the Muslim army was engaged in a mortal conflict with the great Persian Empire.

Khālid had by this time quelled the rising in Yemāma. The Caliph addressed a letter to him which has been reproduced by Is'haq bin Yesār.

"From Abū Bakr, the servant of the Lord and Caliph of the Prophet (Peace on him) to Khālid bin Walid, his companion, Ansārs and Muhājirin and their sincere followers, with salutations. I praise God besides whom there is none worthy of worship. All praise to Him who has fulfilled His promise, helped His servant, bestowed honour upon His friends and disgraced His enemies. He alone has given victory to the guided people. Verily, there is none besides Him worthy of worship.

> "Allah hath promised such of you as believe and do good works that He will surely make them to succeed (the present rulers) in the earth even as He had caused those who were before them to succeed (others); and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He hath approved for them, and will give them in exchange safety after their fear. 'They serve Me. They ascribe nothing as partner unto Me. Those who disbelieve henceforth they are the miscreants.' (Q.24 : 55)

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"This is the promise of God and He will not retract it. This is a promise in which there is no doubt." He has made *jihād* obligatory. He states :

"Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you : but it may be that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may be that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knoweth and ye know not." (Q.2 : 216)

"Fulfil the covenant that you have entered into with God and observe your duty to Allah even though you may have to face great hardships, toil and labour in their observance and you may have to endanger your life and property. In the face of the immense reward of God these things are of little moment. Fight in the way of God and God will bestow His kindness upon you." He says :

"Go forth, (equipped) lightly or heavily and strive with your wealth and your lives in the way of Allah ! That is best for you if ye but know."

(Q.9 : 41)

"I direct Khālid bin Walid to march to Iraq and not to leave it till further commanded. All his companions should also accompany him. Let there be no slackness in this. This is a course of action wherein God will reward amply everyone who will willingly join this righteous enterprise and strive sincerely. They should also stay in Iraq till further orders. May God bring to fruition our efforts for the good in this world and the good in the Hereafter. Fare ye will."[1]

Two armies were hastily despatched to the north-east frontier—one under the command of Khālid who was to be joined by Mothanna and the other, under the

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[1] Muhammad Yūsuf—*Hayāt-us-Sahāba*, pp. 470, 471.

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leadership of 'Iyādh. Hormuz, the Satrap of the delta, supported by some other Persian princes, advanced with a considerable army to give battle to the Muslims at Hāfir. Before accepting his challenge, Khālid addressed a letter to him, 'Accept the faith and thou art safe or else pay tribute, thou and thy people which if thou refusest, thou shalt have thyself to blame. A people is already upon thee, loving death, even as thou loves life' [1]

When the two armies met, Hormuz challenged Khālid to single combat. He treacherously posted an ambuscade but was slain in the encounter. A general engagement followed in which the Persians were thoroughly defeated. They took to flight and were pursued upto the banks of the Euphrates. As a portion of the Persian army had been bound together to prevent its escape, this battle was called 'the battle of the Chains.'

The retreating Persian army re-assembled at Madzar on receiving reinforcements from the Persian king. It again gave battle to the Muslims but lost heavily.

The Persian king now realized the gravity of the danger. He raised a great levy of the Arab tribe Bani Bakr and other loyal clans. They joined the imperial forces under the command of Bahman and camped at Walaja. Khālid advanced to meet this force. The battle was fiercely contested but ultimately Khālid routed the enemy.

Another engagement soon followed at Allis, half way between Hira and Obolla. Here again the superior generalship of Khālid prevailed and the Persian army broke and fled.

These successive defeats disheartened both the Bedouins and the Persians 'but the former had proved so troublesome, and occupied a position in the desert pastures

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[1] Sir William Muir-Annals of the early Caliphate, page 72.

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from which they could so materially annoy his flank and rear and his communication with Arabia, that Khālid resolved on reducing the whole tract west of the Euphrates occupied by the Bedouins with its capital city of Hira.[1] For this purpose he advanced rapidly along the bank of Euphrates. The cities of Amghisia and Hira cpaitulated without a fight. They entered into a treaty whereby they agreed to pay annual tribute to the Islamic state. The chief men of Hira brought gifts which were despatched by Khālid to the Caliph. Abū Bakr ratified the treaty and accepted the presents ; but desired that their value should be deducted from the tribute. On their part the Muslims covenanted to protect the city from attack.

Khālid established his headquarters at Hira and remained there for about one year. He left the administration of the city in the hands of its chief men. The peasantry remained untouched, for Abū Bakr had strictly enjoined that the occupiers of the soil, the *Fellaheen*, should be left undisturbed in their possession and their rights should be scrupulously respected. The *Dehkāns* began to pledge allegiance on protection being guaranteed. In Mesopotamia and the outskirts of the desert, a number of Persians detachments were posted at Anbar, Ain tamar and other places within a short distance of Hira. They were surrounded one by one and they capitulated without much fighting.

Meanwhile the second Muslim army under 'Iyāz was battling unsuccessfully against its enemy at Dūma. 'Iyāz sent a message to Khālid for assistance to which the great general replied in martial verse :

'Wait but a moment, my friend,
And a legion shall appear,
Cohort upon cohort following,

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 78.

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With glittering sword and spear.'

Crossing the intervening desert of over 300 miles with a part of his army, according to C.de Perceval, in about ten days, Khālid fulfilled his promise. Instructing 'Iyāz to engage the Syrian troops on the farther side of Dūma, Khālid attacked the enemy in the rear and completely routed it.

The absence of Khālid and the greater part of his force from Mesopotamia encouraged the Persians and their Arab allies to resume their offensive operations. Khālid came back and in Zul Qada A.H. 12 crushed to combined forces of Syrian and Persian garrisons and the bedouins at Firādh. Khālid would have attacked Madāi'n but he was withheld by the cautious policy of Abū Bakr. The enemy having been subdued, Khālid resolved to make the annual pilgrimage to Makkah incognito, unknown even to the Caliph. With a small escort but without a guide Khālid traversed the tortuous desert rout with marvellous speed and daring. His task accomplished, he came back to his post in the same lighting manner.

War with the Romans

While fighting was going on in Iraq, the north-west border of Arabia was no less active. The country, west of Chaldaea and Mesopotamia at that time formed part of the Roman Empire but, like Iraq, both Palestine and Syria were inhabited by people of the Arab race. In Palestine, the Romans held some strongly garrisoned places such as Caesarea, Jericho, Juerusalem, Ascalon, Gāza and Jaffa. On the north was the Province of Jordan (Ordun) in which were situated the garrisoned towns of Acre (ancient Ptolemais) and Sur (Tyre). Further north lies the country called Syria by the Romans and Sham by the Arabs with the historical cities of Damascus, Hems, Aleppo and Antioch. Both geographically and ethnically, the provinces

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of Palestine, Jordan and Syria belonged to Arabia, but they were held by the Romans.

The punitive expedition of Qsāma had enraged the Syrian tribes and they carried out a number of retaliatory raids. Khālid ibn Sa'id, a different Khālid of Omeyyad clan, was despatched by the Caliph to the Syrian border to rally the friendly tribes but to take no offensive steps unless attacked. Calling up the Ghassān and other Syrian tribes, the Romans massed a large force at Balca. Khālid bin Sa'id advanced to meet this force. He defeated a Roman column on the eastern shore of the Dead sea and threw back the Syrians. Finding himself in an advanced position, he asked for reinforcements from Madinah. Meanwhile, the Caliph had been able to mobilise the Muslim forces by declaring *Jihād* and inviting the Muslims to join it. One such letter sent through Ans bin Mālik to the people of Yemen is reproduced here.

"From the Caliph of the Prophet (peace be on him) to all Muslim men and women of Yemen. Salutations to those whom this letter is read over. I praise Allah besides Whom there is none worthy of worship. God has made *Jihād* incumbent upon Muslims and has commanded that whether they be in ease or in hardened strait, they should sally forth and strive with their lives and wealth in the way of God. *Jihād* is a confirmed obligation and its reward is immense. I have exhorted Muslims to come out for holy war with the Romans of Syria and they have splendidly responded with sincerity and steadfastness of purpose. O servants of the Lord! You should also participate with alacrity and sincerity in the enterprise the Muslims have embarked upon. You will not be denied one of the two rewards. Either you will die a martyr's death or gain victory and spoils of war. Verily, in the sight of God profession is naught without action. The obligation of *Jihād* will continue to be imposed so long as the enemies of God

do not accept the faith and the decree of the book of the Lord. May God establish for you your religion, enlighten your hearts, cleanse your deeds and bestow upon you the reward of the patient and the striving'.[1]

With the Muslim forces in fighting trim, the Caliph despatched them under 'Ikrima, 'Amr bin 'Aas and Walid to Khālid's aid. Emboldened by these reinforcements, Khālid ibn sa 'id advanced too far into the enemy territory and had to suffer an ignominous defeat at Maraj al-Soffar. In haste the Caliph despatched four battalions under Shorabhil (who was to replace Welid), Yezid, son of Abū Suffān, and Abū 'Obaidah. The command of the fourth battalion was taken over by 'Amr. The Caliph was conscious of the gravity of his actin, for the Muslims were fighting wars, at one and the same time, with the 'potentates of the East and the West.' Included in these forces were at least a thousand companion of the Prophet, one hundred of whom had taken part in the battle of Badr. As the brigades were leaving the camping ground of Jorf, he walked a little distance by the side of the mounted leader and counselled him thus, 'Profession is naught without action. The merit of a work dependeth on the purpose of the worker. The reward set forth in the Book of the Lord for such as fight in His way, is great. Set this over before thee and before thy men. But when thou haranguest them, be brief, for in the multitude of words the foremost word is lost in the hindermost. So striving, ye will obtain the prize, riches and glory in the present life, and in the life to come, viz; salvation.'[2]

Marching through Balca, Abū 'Obaidah advanced to Jabia. 'Amr bin 'Aas advancing upon lower Palestine threatened Gāza and Jerusalem. Abū 'Obaidah advanced towards Damascus; Yezid defeating a Roman force

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[1] Muhammad Yūsuf—*Hayātus Sahāba,* Page 426.
[2] Sir Willian Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 96.

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threatened Bostra and Shorahbil overwhelmed the depressed valley of Jordan and Tiberias. The four battalion numbered 30,000 and they were supplemented by a force of 6000 under 'Ikrima. Pitched as it was against a mighty empire, this force was by no means adequate. "The Roman Empire of Constantinople, even after it had been shorn of several of its European dependencies, was colossal. Its resources, its wealth, and its supply of fighting material were unlimited. It included the spacious Peninsula of Lesser Asia, encompassed by three seas and studded with rich maritime cities, Syria, Phoenicia, and Palestine, Egypt, the granary of the surrounding nations, together with the long sleeve of the Mantle—the vast strip of territory extending from the Egyptian coast to the Atlantic and including the once renowned dominions of Cyrene and Carthage."[1]

The Roman Emperor despatched a large army to crush and expel the intruders. The Muslim generals, who were till now operating in separate areas, decided to join their forces to meet this army and this was also recommended by the Caliph. 'Draw ye all together,' he commanded, 'by the banks of Yermūk. Ye are the Lord's host, and shall surely put the enemy to flight. Such as you shall not be discomfited by reason of the fewness of your numbers. Tens of thousand are smitten in battle because of their sins. Wherefore, do ye eschew sin. Let every man stand close by his feilow. So shall the Lord give you the victory'[2]. Seeing that the combined Muslim forces were no match in number or equipment to the colossal army facing them, the Caliph directed Khālid bin Wilid to proceed to

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[1] Ameer Ali—History of Saracens, page 36.
[2] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 98

this theatre of war with half of his forces, leaving the other half in Iraq under the command of Mothanna.[1]

A vast expanse of a formidable desert lay like a red sea of sand between Khālid and the Syrian battle fields. Proceeding from Hira, he came down to 'Ain Tamar and then, instead of skirting the desert and taking up the less arduous but longer route on the north, he entered on the bold venture of striking right across the desert. The perilous journey over a waterless tract was performed in a matter of weeks. For days at stretch he and his forces had to depend for their scanty water supply on the storage within the stomachs of their camels. They had also to engage in number of small encounters. At 'Ain Tamar, their way was blocked by a Persian force under 'Aqba. 'Aqba was slain and his force wiped out. Further ahead, Bani Taghlib crossed their arms with the Muslim force to their great detriment. Crossing the desert, Khālid halted at Tadmor which yielded after a slight resistance. He then marched on to Haurān which also gave in after some opposition. With dramatic suddenness, he appeared near Damascus and joined the combined Muslim army in the month of June or July 634. The united Muslim forces defeated the much larger Byzantine army at Al-Ajnādayn between Jerusalem and Gāza at the end of Jamādi I A.H. 12 (July 634).

The chronological sequence of the battles in the early days of the Caliphate, i. e., the closing days of Abū Bakr and the beginning years of 'Umar's Caliphate has been confusing and given differently by different authors. Thus Sir William Muir in his Annals of the Early Caliphate has placed the important battle of Yarmūk in A.H. 13 in the time of Abū Bakr and the battle of Al-Ajnādayn in the time of 'Umar in A.H. 15. He has further stated that the siege of Damascus had started in the time of Abū Bakr, but it was

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[1] *Bālādhuri-Fatoohus Shām*, page 116, reproduced from *Khulafā'e-Rāshedeen, Darul Musannafin.*

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successfully executed when 'Umar had taken over. Ameer Ali following Muir has given more or less the same sequence in his History of the Saracens. Suyūti in '*Tarikhul Khulfā''* gives a contrary account, saying that the battle of Ajnādayn took place in A.H. 13 in the time of Abū Bakr and he received the glad tiding of success of Muslim armies on his death-bed. According to him, the battle of Yarmūk took place in A.H. 15. Ibn Is'hāq states that the battle of Ajnādayn was fought in A.H. 13. Shibli Nau'māni, relying on "*Tarikh Tabari"* and "*Futūhul Buld*ān," has also given the year of the battle of Yarmūk as A.H. 15. The traditional account of the conquests and their chronology has been redically revised by European scholars—[Critique of the Sources, Weilhausen, op. Cit., 37-113; De Goeja, Memoire Sur la Conquest' de la Syrie, Leden, 1900; N.A. Miednikoff, Palestine, St. Petersburg, 1897-1907; Caetani, Annale, (ii, iii)] and the accepted view is one given by Shibli Nau'mānl, and Suyūti.[1]

The details of the battle of Ajnādayn are not known but it must have been a decisive victory for the Muslims, for, thereafter, they advanced ahead to lay siege to the important and fortified city of Damascus.

Pilgrimage of Abū Bakr

In the first year of the Caliphate, Abū Bakr was so occupied with the turmoil in Arabia that he could not proceed to Makkah for the annual pilgrimage and had appointed the Governor of Makkah to deputise for him. Next year he went to Makkah to lead the pilgrimage.

His illness

In Jamādi II, A. H. 13 Abū Bakr was seized with fever which lasted over a fortnight. He felt that his end was

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[1] Encyclopaedia of Islam, New edition, Vol. I, page 111.

near and he wanted the question of his successor to be settled. His choice was 'Umar whom he had earlier appointed as Supreme Judge in civil cases and who had led the public prayers in his absence and had been his constant companion. He first consulted 'Abdul Rehmān ibn 'Auf who thought that 'Umar was the fittest person but was inclined to be strict. To this Abū Bakr replied, 'This is because he saw me soft and tender hearted. When himself the master, he will forego much of that thou sayest. I have watched him closely. If I were angry with anyone he would intercede in his behalf; If over lenient, then he would be severe.' 'Uthmān concurred with the choice and said, 'What is hidden of 'Umar is better than that which doth appear. There is none his equal amongst us all.' Talha, however differed and said, 'If we have suffered so much from 'Umar whilst thou wast yet with us to temper his severity, what will it be when thou art gone to the Lord, there to answer for having left His people to the care of so hard a master'. The dying Caliph replied, 'When I meet my Lord I will say to Him, I have appointed as ruler over Thy people, him that is the best among them. He called 'Uthmān and dictated to him an ordinance appointing 'Umar as his successor. While it was being written, he fainted and 'Uthmān himself completed the document and put in the name of 'Umar. On recovering, he bade Uthmān to read it and expressed his complete satisfaction with it. He desired that the ordinance should be read to all that had assembled in the Great Mosque and himself addressed them thus. 'Are ye satisfied with him whom I have appointed over you. 'It is none of my own kin, but 'Umar, son of Khattāb. Verily, I have done my best to choose the fittest. Whereupon, ye will obey him loyally.' The people answered with one voice, 'Yes, we will obey.'[1]

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[1] Ibn Sa'ad—*Tabaqāt*, Part I, Vol. III, page 42.

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When his condition worsened, his friends asked for his permission to call a physician. He replied, 'He hath been to me already.' Asked what was his advice, he answered that He saith to me, 'I am about to do with thee which I purpose to do.' He then recited a verse on the transitoriness of life.

'There is none that owneth herds of camels but must leave them to his heirs;

And whosoever taketh spoil, one day he shall be spoiled of the same;

Every traveller wheresoever he wanders and however far, returneth;

Excepting only the pathway of death, from which there is no return.'

When some one recited verses from a heathen poet he was displeased "Not so, say rather: "then the agony of death shall come in truth. This, O man, is what thou soughtest to avoid." (Qurā'n)

On his last day, he gave audience to Mothanna who, after having repulsed an attack on the Muslim forces in Iraq by Hormuz under the direction of the new Persian king, Shahriyār, had come to Madinah for reinforcements. He called 'Umar and addressed him earnestly, 'Command a levy for Mothanna. Tarry not. If I die, as I think, this day wait not till the evening; if I linger till night, wait not till the morning. Let not sorrow for me divert you from the service of Islam and the business of your Lord. Ye saw what I did when the Prophet (PBUH) died (and there could be no greater sorrow for mankind than that); truly if grief had stayed me then from girding my loins in the cause of the Lord and of his Prophet, the Faith had fared badly; the flame of rebellion had surely kindled in the city. And, list thee, 'Umar, when the Lord shall have given thee victory in Syria, then send back to Iraq its army, for they are the

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proper garrison thereof, and fittest to administer it."[1] He then counselled 'Umar to temper hardness and severity with mildness and moderation. He breathed his last with these word; "Lord, make me to die a true believer. Take me to join the blessed ones on high!"

Abū Bakr died on August 22 A.D. 634. According to his wishes the two garments that he was putting on formed his shroud for, he had said, 'new clothes befit the living but old the mouldering body.'[2] He was, laid to rest near the foot of the grave of the Prophet (PBUH).

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 114.
[2] Ibn Sa 'ad—*Tabaqāt.*

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Personal Life

Mode of living

For six months after his installation as the first Caliph of Islam, Abū Bakr lived with his wife, Habiba, at Al-Sunh, a suburb of Madinah in a dwelling made of palm trunks. For transacting the business of the State, he used to walk or ride to the 'Great Mosque' in Madinah every day. As the affairs of the State took more and more of his time, he shifted his residence to his apartment in the Mosque. His dress was always the most ordinary and his meals scanty. He attended to his household work and saw no indignity in feeding and milking not only his own goats but, occasionally, that of his neighbours.[1] To the end, his living was austere but always dignified. At his court he followed the pattern of simplicity and frugal life laid down by the Prophet (PBUH). He shunned all pomp and splendour and kept no guards or servitors. Edward Gibbon has aptly observed in regard to all the early Caliphs, "The austere and frugal manner of their lives was the effect of virtue of habit, and the pride of their simplicity insulted the vain magnificence of the kings of the earth."[2]

In the service of man, there was no task too low for him. Often he would go out in the night to seek the destitute and the oppressed. 'Umar used to attend to the household work of a blind, poor and old woman. After some time he noticed that some one attended to her before his visits. The next day he went earlier and found that it

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[1] *Khulfā-e-Rāshedeen, Darul Musannifin,* page 89.
[2] Edward Gibbon—Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol V, page 399.

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was Abū Bakr.[1] The rule of conduct that he had prescribed for himself was the same as he advise to 'Amr bin 'Aas and Walid bin 'Aqba while deputing them as collectors of tithes. "In seclusion or in company, fear ye God. God finds a way for one who fears Him and provides him with sustenance from a source he would not even dream of. God forgives the sins of one who fears Him and doubles his recompense. Verily, in the service of mankind lies piety. You are in the path of the Lord and there is no room for excesses or shortcomings, nor does it brook any negligence in matters wherein lie establishment of religion or protection of the Caliphate. Therefore, let not slackness or negligence overtake you."[2]

Disposition

He was singularly mild and gentle in disposition. Humility and modesty were the keynotes of his character. He felt embarrassed when people showered praises on him or showed exaggerated respect. He would say, 'O God, you know me better than I know myself. And I know myself better than what they think of me ! Pardon my sins and do not call me to account because of their undue praises.'[3] He drew a sharp distinction between Prophethood and Imamate. Immediately upon his succession he stated, "The Prophet (PBUH) was innocent and he was guided by Divine revelations. I am but an ordinary man. If you find me on the right path, follow me. If I deviate, then correct me."[4] In matters of state or religion he was, however, resolute and firm. We have seen evidence of his firmness in the matter of despatch of Osāma's expedition against the advice of almost every one, his refusal to compromise with backsliding tribes seeking exemption from payment of poor

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[1] *Kānzul 'Ammal,* Vol. VI, page 312.
[2] *Tabari,* page 2083.
[3] *Khulfā'-e-Rāshedeen*,, page58.
[4] Ahmed, *Musnad,* Vol. I, page20.

tax and the stern action that he took to crush apostasy, anarchy and rebellion.

His integrity and rectitude

On assuming the office of the Caliph, he asked his daughter 'Ayesha to take a stock of his private patrimony so that it could be determined later on whether he had been enriched or impoverished in the service of the state. For his sustenance and that of his family he depended upon his merchandise; but finding that it interfered with the affairs of the state, he gave it up and consented to take 6000 dirhems per annum from the State revenue. As his end approached, his conscience was so troubled over this allowance that he directed that a part of his landed property be sold to refund what he had taken from the State.[1] On his death bed he said to 'Ayesha, "Ever since the responsibility of the Caliphate devolved upon me, I have contented myself with the simplest food and apparel. Of the things belonging to the State, I have none except a black slave, a camel and an old sheet. When I am gone send them to 'Umar and shake off the burden."[2]

His generosity

He was one of the richest merchants of Makkah but in the cause of Islam, particularly in freeing slaves and in meeting costs of military expeditions, he spent all his wealth; so much so that there were periods in his life when he suffered from acute privations.

Family life

He had wedded four wives at different times. They were Qatila who was the mother of his son 'Abdullah and daughter Asmā'; Umme Roomān—the mother of 'Ayesha and 'Abd-al-Rehmān; Asmā' who gave birth to a son

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[1] Ibn Sa 'ad, *Tabāqat,* Vol. III, page 139.
[2] *Ibid.*

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Muhammad bin Abū Bakr and Hibiba who begot his youngest—Umme Kulthoom.

Religious life

He often fasted during the day and spent whole nights in prayers and meditation. He used to get intensely absorbed in saying his prayers and in reading the Qur'ān and tears would swell in his eyes. He was ever mindful of the Hereafter and used to sigh at the thought of his end; so much so that he was given the sobriquet of the 'sighing'.

He would not touch anything procured by means which were not strictly lawful. Once he partook of meals offered by his bondman. But when he learnt that it had not been legitimately acquired, he vomited it out.

Attachment to the Prophet

'Ayesha states that while they were living at Makkah, his father used to visit the Prophet (PBUH) every morning and evening and was his chief confidant. The same attachment continued in Madinah. After his appointment as Caliph he used to say, 'Call me not the Caliph of the Lord. I am but the Caliph of the Prophet of the Lord.' His strength lay in his implicit faith in the Prophet (PBUH). In decision of any affair, he was ever mindful of what the Prophet (PBUH) had commanded or what the Prophet (PBUH) would have done in the circumstance of the case. To him the word of the Prophet was the law. In obeying it, he went to the length of incurring the displeasure of the beloved daughter of the same Master. She claimed her right, upon the basis of inheritance, in an orchard at Fidak and some other property of her father. Abū Bakr pointed out that the Prophet (PBUH) had said, "No one shall be my heir; that which I leave will be for alms." Now, therefore, the family of the Prophet (PBUH) shall not eat of these lands, for by the Lord, "I will alter not a little of that which he hath

ordained. "But", added he, "If thou art certain that thy father gave thee this property I will accept thy word and fulfil his promise." She replied she had no evidence except of the aged nurse, Umme Ayman. So Abū Bakr did not alter his decision. When 'Ali remonstrated with him he replied, 'I swear by One Who holds my life that the relations of the Prophet are dearer to me than my own relations. In the matter of dispute over the property left by him, I have not deviated one hair's breadth in my decision from the rule of the Prophet himself.'[1]

Sense of Justice and fairplay

Of his children he loved 'Ayesha the most and had given her some landed property in preference to others. This troubled his conscientious spirit and when his death approached, he said to her, "I wish thee, my daughter, to return it, that it may be divided with the rest of the inheritance amongst you all, not forgetting the one yet unborn."[2]

The tithes that were received in the State treasury, were spent on the poor or on arms and equipage. The spoils of war, the gold and silver received from the mines, were all distributed as soon as they came or on the following morning. 'All shared alike, the recent convert and the veteran, male and female, bond and free. As a claimant on the Muslim treasury, every believer was his brothers' equal. When urged to recognise precedence in the faith as a ground of preference, he would reply, "That is for the Lord. He will grant the reward of such as have excelled in the world to come. These gifts are but an accident of the present life."[3]

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[1] Bukhāri—reproduced by *Khulfā'-e-Rāshedeen*, page 37.
[2] Ibn Sa 'ad—*Tabaqāt*, Vol. III, page 136.
[3] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 121.

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In the days when apostasy had overtaken some parts of Arabia, a songstress in Yemen used to satirize the Prophet (PBUH) and another to ridicule the Muslims in their songs. The Governor, Muhājir; had their hands cut off and their front tooth pulled out. When the Caliph heard of it, he approved the punishment of the first, for said he, "Crime against a Prophet (PBUH) is not the same thing as a crime against a common man; and, indeed, had the case been first referred to me, I should, as a warning to others, have directed her execution." But he strongly disapproved the mutilation of the other 'for if she was a Muslim, a mere warning would have been sufficient but if a *dhimmi*, she needed no punishment for abusing Muslims when the greater sin of living in polytheism was being ignored.' He cautioned Muhājir, 'This is your first error, otherwise you would have suffered for it. Beware of mutilation. It is a sin abhorrent. It is only reluctantly permissible in retaliation.'[1] In judicial matters he was ever guided by the Qur'ānic injunctions or the commandments of the Prophet. If he found them silent on any point he would consult others and where that, too, did not help, he would resort to reasoning and conjecture though with considerable misgivings. Ibn Sireen says that on one such occasion he said, 'If my decision is correct, the guidance is from the Lord. If I am wrong, the error is mine and God may forgive me.'[2]

Literary acumen

Though he had received no formal education, he used to compose poems before his conversion to Islam. After that he was interested only in didactic poetry. He was also an orator of a high order. A sample of his oratory is given below:

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[1] *Suyūti— Tārikhūl Khulafā'*, page 96.
[2] Ibn Sa 'ad—*Tabaqāt*, page 26, *Khulfā'-e-Rāshedeen*, page 78.

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"Where are those beautiful, radiant and youthful faces which used to evoke admiration? Where are those sovereigns who founded cities and citadels? Where are those valiant warriors and heroes who used to trounce many a battle field? Vicissitudes of time enfeebled and despoiled them and the darkness of graves has engulfed them in eternal slumber."[1]

He was considered an authority on genealogy. Jubeir bin Mata'em, himself a great genealogist, used to say that he learnt this art from Abū Bakr who stood unrivalled. He could also correctly interpret dreams.

Compilation of the Qur'ān

In the expeditions against apostates and rebels, more particularly in the battle of Yemāma, a large number of companions who remembered the Qur'ān by heart were killed. Till then the Qur'ān was recorded on separate pieces of different writing material as palm bark, leather, bones, stones and a rough type of paper. 'Umar felt the necessity of collecting the sacred text, 'lest any part should be lost thereof' and persuaded Abū Bakr deputed the Prophet's scribe, Zaid bin Tahābit to record the Qur'ān in one volume. Says Hāfiz Ibn Hajar in *Fatahul Bān,* 'God has stated that Qur'ān is preserved in written tablets. The Qur'ān was, no doubt, recorded in scripts but is was scattered. Abū Bakr collected and preserved them in one volume till Uthmān got several copies made out and sent to different cities'.

Conclusion

Abū Bakr's reign lasted for two years and three months only; but his achievements were remarkably great and consequential. With vigour and firmness he put down anarchy and rebellion and gave order and security to a land

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[1] Suyūti—*Tārikhūl Khulfā*', page 101.

seething with commotion and insecurity. The apostates and the wavering new converts who were trying to regain their earlier wanton and unbridled ways of life, were brought back to the fold of Islam and obliged to yield to its regulations. The spurious prophets and pretenders who had kindled the fire of apostasy and rebellion were either eliminated or made to see the folly of their profane claims. Small tribal principalities and mutually hostile clans were fused into a nation. With trust in God and faith in his mission, he took up the challenge posed by such mighty powers as the Persian and Roman Empires. Engaging them, at one and the same time, in unequal battles he gave them decisive blows and paved the way for expansion of Islam to the world.

In personal life he was a saint. Ibn 'Abbās has summed up his character in stating, "May God shower His blessings on Abū Bakr. By God, he used to reflect in the Qur'ān, kept himself aloof from all weaknesses and vices and forbade evil. He was a saint of the highest order, a God fearing person who prayed for whole nights and fasted during the days. In matters of justice and in advocating goodness he was firm. Whatever the circumstance he might be placed in, he was ever grateful to God and remembered Him morning and evening. He excelled his compatriots in moderation, continence, piety, goodness, self-control and self-sacrifice and in contentment over the bounties of God."[1] He lived a simple, pious and sublime life and used his sovereign powers to promote the interest of Islam and the good of the people.

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[1] Muhammad Yūsuf—*Hayāt-us-Sahāba,* page 46.

5

'Umar

'Umar's acceptance of Islam was Islam's victory; his emigration spelled its success and his Caliphate was a benevolence', says Ibn Mas 'ūd.[1]

Umar's conversion to Islam

Sword in hand, a man of twenty seven years, of powerful built and fiery temper, had come out of his house to strike the death blow to Islam. His grim countenance and rapid strides coupled with his well-known animosity for Islam caused concern to a passing by Muslim, No'im bin 'Abdullah, who enquired of him the reason for the unsheathed sword. He was told that it had been drawn to exterminate the founder of Islam. The man had thought of clashing with destiny but it was not to be. A Prophet had prayed for the guidance of that very man and destiny had marked him for playing a vital and leading role in the establishment of Islam. The man was 'Umar. No'im suggested to him that instead of entertaining such high ambitions he might try to bring his own house to order for his sister and brother-in-law had abandoned the religion of their ancestors and accepted the new faith. Stung by the taunt and the shocking news, he directed his steps to the house of his brother-in-law where Khabbāb was reciting a verse of the Qur'ān. Hearing him approach silence fell on the assembly. Khabbāb hid himself in a corner of the house and the sister concealed the parchment on which the verse was written. 'Umar asked them to bring out the parchment and on their refusal to do so, he threw down his brother-in-

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[1] Suyūti—*Tārikhul Khulafā'*, page 121, on the authority of Ibn Sa 'ad and Tabari.

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law and began belabouring him. The sister intervened but she was so violently pushed off that dashing against the floor her head started bleeding profusely. Thoroughly roused she defiantly stated, 'Umar do your worst. We are not going to relinquish Islam and we assert that there is no god but God and Muhammad (peace be on him) is His servant and messenger.' 'Umar was shaken and desired that the verse of Qur'ān be read to him. When he heard 'Lo! I, even I, am Allah. There is no God save Me; so serve Me and establish worship for My remembrance', his mind was made up. Accompanied by Khabbāb he went to Arqam's house where the Prophet (PBUH) was staying. In his excitement he had forgotten to sheath the sword. The Prophet (PBUH) enquired of him the reason for the drawn sword. 'Umar was ashamed and said he had come solely for the purpose of embracing Islam. A full throated cry of 'God is Great' by all those present greeted the statement.[1] It was the sixth year of the Prophethood. Till now the hostility of the Quraish had limited the number of adherents to fifty one—forty males and eleven females—and imposed the necessity of excercising caution to the extent of saying prayers in private only. 'Umar's entry in the fold changed the situation entirely. Characteristic of his boldness and courage, he publicly announced his conversion to Islam, said his prayers in the Ka 'aba and defied the opposition of the Quraish.[2] For the public declaration he received the title of Farooq from the Prophet (PBUH).[3]

Early life

The early life of 'Umar, like that of all the companions, is shrouded in the mist of time. Who could have known that the child born of Khattāb son of Nufail

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[1] Suyūti, *Tarikhul Khulafā'*, page 116.
[2] Shibli Na'umāni, *Al-Farooq*, page 32.
[3] Suyūti, *Tārikhūl Khulafā'*, page 120, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās reproduced by Ibn 'Asākir.

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and Hantama, daughter of Hāsham bin Mughira forty years before the Hijrat would rise to such heights of glory? Khattāb was a literary figure and belonged to the tribe of 'Adi, who used to serve as the envoy of Quraish in the olden times. When the child grew up his father assigned to him the task of taking out his camels for grazing. On reaching the age of adolescence he busied himself in acquiring the arts of wrestling, riding, fencing, oratory and genealogy. Balādhuri writes in *Al-ashraf* that 'Umar acquired considerable fame in wrestling and used to participate in the annual contests at 'Ukāz. He was a great equestrian and used to mount a horse without the aid of stirrups and to ride on its bare back. He was one of the seventeen men of Quraish who could read and write.[1] For his livelihood he depended upon trade. Mas'ūdï has mentioned in his book *Muruj-az-zahab* that in the days of his ignorance 'Umar had travelled widely in Iran and Syria in connection with trade. He was thus a well known figure and Quraish used to appoint him as their emissary whenever disputes with other tribes arose.

By the thirteenth year of the Prophethood, the persecution of Muslims at the hands of Quraish had become so intense that the Prophet advised general migration of Muslims to Madïnah. Even 'Umar was forced to migrate but not before circumambulating the Ka 'aba seven times, saying his prayers in its precincts and challenging the Quraish to come to grips with him if they dared.[2] He stayed with Rifaa bin 'Abdul Munzir in Quba, a suburb of Madinah.

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[1] Belādhūri—*Fatoohul Buldān*, page 471.
[2] Ibn 'Asākir on the authourity of 'Ali, suyūti—*Tārikhul Khulafā'*, page 122.

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Like Abū Bakr, 'Umar had dedicated his life to the service of Islam. In upholding its cause no sacrifice was too great for him. In the life time of the Prophet he zealously participated in al the battles which Islam had to face and gave a heroic account of his valour. During the caliphate of Abū Bakr he had joined Osāma's expedition but the Caliph had taken Osāma's permission to relieve him for being available at Madïnah for advice in the crisis that was brewing. He gave whole hearted support and sane counsel to Abū Bakr in every step that he took to put down apostasy and rebellion. In short, he was associated with every important event in the progress of Islam.

After the battle of Badr, the Prophet had consulted his companions about the disposal of the prisoners of war. Among them were some relation of 'Umar but in matters of State and religion he was so unswayed by personal feelings that he advocated the beheading of the captives. The advice of Abū Bakr that the prisoners be released on ransom, however, prevailed.

In A.H. 3 'Umar's widowed daughter, Hafsa, was married to the Prophet (PBUH).

In the 6th year of the Hijra, the treaty of Hudaibiya was concluded with the Makkans. While it was being recorded, 'Umar considered some of the terms that the Makkans were insisting upon as disadvantageous and derogatory to Islam. The terms were that the Muslims should return that year without performing the pilgrimage, that a Muslim going to Makkah would be detained but a pagan falling in the hands of Muslims should be returned. The advantage of cessation of war for ten years between the Muslims and the Quraish outweighed all other considerations and the Prophet's foresight saw the ultimate advantage that would accrue thereby. Later on, revelation

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hailed the treaty as a distinct victory for Muslims and it proved to be so.

One the revelation of the Quranic injunction that it was no more lawful for Muslims to have infidel wives, 'Umar divorced both of his wives, Quraiba and Umme Kulsoom who had not accepted Islam. Thereafter he married a Muslim lady, Jamila, daughter of Thābit.

After the conquest of Makkah in A.H. 8 the Makkans pledged their allegiance on the hands of the Prophet (PBUH). The women had also come forward and, under the instructions of the Prophet, they pledged their fealty on the hands of 'Umar.

In the battle of Hunain that year when the Muslims were initially swept off their feet on the surprise attack of the infidels, he was one of the few Muslims who steadfastly stood behind the Prophet (PBUH) helping thereby to turn the tide of events and to register a signal victory.

In A.H. 9 the Prophet asked for donations for the Tabouk expedition. 'Umar contributed half of whatever wealth he had.

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd has stated that in four matters 'Umar excelled others, namely (i) his suggestion about the captives of war of Badr turned out to be in accord with the Quranic verse that was revealed soon after; (ii) he advised that the Prophet's wives should live in purdah and revelation confirmed this later; (iii) the Prophet (PBUH) had specifically prayed for his conversion and (iv) he was the first to pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr on his succession as Caliph of the Prophet.[1] It can be added that the method of calling the believers to congregational prayers by loudly proclaiming the prayer call, the *Azān*, was adopted by the Prophet (PBUH) on 'Umar's advice.

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[1] Suyūti—*Tarikhul Khulafā'*, page 127.

In short, ever since his acceptance of Islam, 'Umar was one of the most trusted companions of the Prophet, in fact, his righthand man and he supported and upheld the cause of Islam with his idefatigable energy, dynamism, wisdom, valour and wealth.

Accession to the Caliphate

In A. H. 13 Abū Bakr died and 'Umar succeeded him as the second Caliph. He was immediately called upon to take vital decisions and to assert his dynamic personality. Mention has been made earlier that Mothanna, the general in command of the Muslim force in Iraq, had come to Madinah to personally request the Caliph for reinforcements and the dying Caliph had advised his successor designate to give foremost attention to it. 'Umar forthwith busied himself with the task of raising a fresh levy. People were coming from all directions to pledge their fealty to him. For three days he addressed them to enlist but without any success. The people thought that without Khālid defeat of a mighty empire like the Persians might not be possible. On the fourth day the Caliph harangued them in a stirring speech and Mothanna put heart in them by saying, 'O brethren of the faith ! We have already taken measure of the Magians. They are not much of warriors. We have already wrested from them several large districts of Iraq and the whole of Ajam acknowledges our bravery.' Abū 'Obeid of Thakif was the first to come forward. A thousand followed suit. Abū 'Obeid was appointed commander of the force. Some one pointed out that there were many companions of the Prophet among the volunteers and one of them should take the command but the Caliph turned down the suggestion by saying, 'Wherein doth the glory of companions consist but in this, that they were the first to rally round the Prophet (PBUH). But now ye are backward and come not to the help of the Lord. Such as be ready for the burden, whether it be light or whether it

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be heavy, these have the better claim. Verily, I will give the command to none but to him that first come forth.'[1] He, however, instructed Abū 'Obeid to associate and consult the companions in all important matters. His objective achieved, Mothanna hastened in advance of the force which soon moved swelling its numbers by enlisting volunteers enroute.

Rebellion in the Muslim occupied territory of Iraq

During the absence of Mothanna from Iraq, things had worsened for the Muslims there. After a good deal of bloodshed and rebellion in which several princes and princesses lost their lives, Purāndukht, a daughter of Khusro Parwez seized the throne, with the aid of the renowned general Rustam. To effectively meet the inroads of Muslim arms, she conferred supreme authority upon Rustam. He rellied round him all the nobles and instigated the landlords of the Muslim occupied territory to rise against them. In addition, he despatched two columns from Madāi'n, one under Jābān to advance upon Hira and the other under Narsi to occupy Kaskar between the Euphrates and the Tigris. Unable to meet the two pronged attack Mothanna abandoned Hira and fell back on Khaffān on the desert border to await the arrival of Abū 'Obeid. Abū 'Obeid appeared with his army and taking the command of the combined forces he advanced upon Namārick where Jābān was camping. The Persian force was defeated and put to flight. Jābān was captured while trying to escape but unaware of his rank his captors agreed to ransom him in exchange for two skilled artisans. When he was recognised people clamoured that he should not be set free but Abū 'Obeid stood by the agreement. 'The faithful are one body,' he said, 'and quarter given by any one of them must be sustained by all; perfidy is not permissible in Islam.'[2]

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[1] Sir Willam Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 126.
[2] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 129.

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Crossing the Euphrates, Abū 'Obeid routed the second army under Narsi and vanquished Jalenūs who had come to assist him. The whole delta was thus recaptured and the chieftains made to pay the tribute.

Stung at this reverse Rustam despatched a still greater force under the reputed general Bahman who marched with an array of elephants and the great banner of the empire made of panther skins and regarded as the symbol of victory and good fortune. Bahman camped at Coss Natick, not far from Babylon, where a boat bridge spanned the river. He gave the option to Abū 'Obeid to cross the river or let him cross for the engagement. Abū 'Obeid's counsellors advised him against their quitting the advantageous ground but in the flush of recent victory, he thought it below their dignity to let the enemy take the first step in the field of valour. On crossing over, they found to their dismay that the ground on the opposite bank was too confined for any manoeuvre. The Persian force marched in formidable array. Huge war elephants with their tingling bells and trappings formed its advance guard. That Arab horses shied at the approach of monsters they had never seen before and the whole cavalry was thrown in confusion. Abū 'Obeid jumped down from his horse and exhorted his horsemen to do likewise. Bravely they attacked the elephants on foot and cutting the bands of the howdahs they toppled many a rider. But whichever side the elephants advanced they trampled rows after rows of the soldiers. Singling out a huge white elephant, the leader of the herd, Abū 'Obeid severed its trunk with a mighty blow of his sword but the infuriated beast crushed him under its massive feet. Undeterred Abū 'Obeid's brother picked up the standard and attacked the beast to meet the same end. One after another seven standard bearers thus lost their lives. The Muslim troops fell back in consternation. Crying that they 'should either die as their chiefs had died or conquer' one soldier of Bani Thakif cut adrift the first boat

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of the bridge. Their line of retreat having closed, panic set in. Many plunged themselves in the river to escape the enemy but few reached the opposite shore of the swift stream. Mothanna rushed forward to halt the debacle. With great valour his column held the Persians at bay and one of his companies restored the bridge. But by this time the rout of the Muslim forces was complete. As many as 4000 soldiers had either perished in the river or had been slain or wounded in the field. 2000 of the new levies fled the field and Mothanna was left with 3000 soldiers. The fugitives were later on so struck with remorse and shame that on reaching their homes they would not for a long time come out of their houses.[1]

Battle of Bowib A.H. 14

The defeat of the Muslim stirred the Caliph to raise a still larger force. In response to his call the tribes of Azd Tamim, 'Adi, Rabāb, Kan'āna and others turned up in large numbers. Jarir of Bani Bujaila brought a big contingent with him and the fugitives from the army of Abū 'Obeid hurried to join the new force to retrieve their honour. Meanwhile, Mothanna had mustered up a considerable force in Iraq. Even a Christian tribe, Beni Namr, responded to his invitation to throw in their lot with him. Soon news came that a 12,000 strong imperial force under the command of Mehrān was on the march against them. Mothanna advanced to meet it at Bowaib on the western bank of the Euphrates. When the two armies confronted each other, Mothanna exhorted his men to acquit themselves with valour, 'Your valour this day will be a proverb in the mouths of all. None shall give way amongst us this day. I desire no glory for myself but the glory of all,' said he. With great tumult and fearful din the Persians attacked. While the battle was raging Mothanna rode upto

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[1] Shibli Na'umcni—*Al-Farooq*, page 59.

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the chief of the Beni Namr and said to him, 'Though Christian, ye are one in blood with us. Come now, and as I charge, charge ye with me.'[1] Together they charged. The Persian Centre could not bear the thrust of the powerful attack and gave way upon which the whole Persian army began falling back and made for the bridge. But Mothanna reached there before to cut their retreat and in desperation the Persians hurled themselves again on the Muslim ranks. Mothanna's valiant brother, Mas'ūd, was mortally wounded but even while dying he urged his men, 'Exalt your banners high, Beni Bakr. The Lord will exalt you, my men; and let not my fall disturb you.'[2] 'Amr, the Christian chieftain, met a similar fate. Though greatly outnumbered the Muslims beat back this desperate charge. A youth of the Bani Taghlib, another Christian tribe, slew Mehrān and riding back on his richly caprisoned horse shouted in triumph, 'I am of the Bani Taghlib. I am he that hath slain Mehrān.' The disaster of the Persians was now complete and an appalling number of them were put to sword. The chroniclers Tabari and Deenwāri say that the carnage far exceeded any before and for ages the bones of the dead bleached upon the plain. Detachments of the Muslim troops scoured the country and driving away Persian garrisons they reached within sight of the walls of Madāi'n. Lower Mesopotamia and the delta were thus re-occupied.

Changes at the Persian Court

The Persian court was shaken to the core at the utter defeat of its army and felt the collapse of the empire was inevitable unless the feeble queen was replaced. She was removed and Yezdgird, a youth of 21 according to Tabari and 16 according to Deenwāri, was placed upon the throne. With energy he set about replenishing his army, refitting the garrisons and strongholds and reviving the flagging

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[1] Shibli Na 'umāni—*Al-Farooq*, page

[2] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 137

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morale of the people. His efforts bore fruit and 'something of the old fire of the empire was rekindled'. Again the people of the delta were incited to rebel and again Mothanna had to withdraw.

The Battle of Cadesiya A.H. 14

Mothanna reported the situation to the Caliph who decided upon a conclusive engagement with the Persians. A force was again collected and the Caliph decided to lead it in person but was dissuaded from doing so by the chief Companions. Sa 'ad bin Abi Waqqās, a noted warrior and maternal uncle of the Prophet, was appointed commander of the combined forces of Mothanna, Jarir and the new levies. Sa'ad set out with an army of 4,000. He was joined by contingents led by Toleiha and Al-Ash'ath, the recantant prophets, who giving up their pretentious claims had become staunch believers. The troops halted at Sheraf, fifteen to twenty miles south of Hira. Here Moanna, brother of Mothanna, brought the sad news of his brother's death. That great general had received serious injuries in the battle of the Bridge from which he did not completely recover. Thus ended the heroic chapter of one of the great generals of the world about whom Muir has stated, 'Among the generals who contributed to the triumph of Islam, he was second only to one. Inferior to Khālid in dash and brilliancy of enterprise he did not yield to him in vigour or strategic skill.'

The Caliph attached such importance to this engagement that he was keeping himself well posted with every movement and issued appropriate instructions to Sa'ad from time to time. He considered the terrain of Sheraf unsuitable as a battlefield and advised Sa'ad to move ahead and encamp at Cadesiya with hills at his back and the plains of Iraq in the front. News had reached that Rustam had come down to Sabat with a huge army. The Caliph advised Sa'ad to exercise vigilance and patience and

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to invite Yezdgird to accept Islam before launching an attack on him. Accordingly Sa 'ad sent twenty emissaries to the court of the Persian King. Their simple dress and rude weapons 'contrasted strangely with the splendour of the regal city' but 'as they entered the precincts of the palace, the prancing and champing of the beautiful steeds, and the commanding mien of the stalwart riders, struck awe into the hearts of the king and his effeminate nobles.' The king demanded of them how they dared to invade his territory. The Arab spokesmen told him of their Prophet and the salient features of their religion and invited him to accept it. 'Embrace the Faith,' they said, 'and thou shalt be even as one of us; or, if thou wilt, pay tribute and come under our protection, which things, if thou shall refuse, the days of thy kingdom are numbered.' The king rejected the proposal contemptuously. The Arabs replied, 'Thou has chosen the sword; and between us shall the sword decide.' At this the King got so infuriated that he said, 'If it were not that ye are ambassadors, ye should have been put to death, all of you. Bring hither a clod of earth and let the mightiest among them bear it as a burden from out the city gates.' The Arabs took it as a good omen and 'Aasim galloped with the basket to Sa'ad and exclaimed, 'Rejoice ! O Sa'ad, for, lo, the Lord hath given thee of the soil of Persia.'

Even though Rustam had under him an army of 1,20,000 he hesitated to attack. He had by now ample experience of Muslim arms and thought it more prudent to play a waiting game to weary down his enemies. To provoke him the Arabs started making a series of raids across the river. They attacked the castles of nobles and drove away the herds of people with the dual purpose of teaching them a lesson for going back on their allegiance and of furnishing food for the army. The harassed people appealed to Yezdgird and he directed Rustam to delay the combat no longer. Slowly and unwillingly he moved with his massive army and took four months to reach Cadesiya

and pitch his tents on the opposite bank of the river. Sa 'ad was sending reconnoitring parties. So daring were his men that one night Toleiha entered the enemy camp alone and carried off three horses. He was hotly pursued but single handed he slew his persuers one after another and carried one as a prisoner to his own camp. Sa 'ad sent an emissary to Rustam to make yet another offer to him to accept Islam or to pay tribute and he took three days time to consider it. After its expiry he crossed the river by means of an earthern causeway built overnight.

Rustam marshalled his forces in three battalions—the centre was headed by eighteen elephants and the flanks, under Jālenūs and Fireuzān, had six elephants each. Sa 'ad was laid down with blains and boils and could not come to the field. He was watching the battle from the ramparts of a nearby fortress and was sending down his instructions to his commanders on pieces of paper. The battle lasted for three days and each day was given a name because of some peculiar feature thereof or events enacted therein.

The 1st day called Arwāth

As usual the battle started with individual combats in which 'prodigies of valour' were performed particularly by 'Amr ibn M 'ade Karib, 'Aasim and Ghālib. The latter was able to carry his challenger Hormuz as a captive. The general engagement then ensued. The elephants were tilting the balance in favour of the Persians till 'Aasim attacked them with his band of archers. One by one all the occupants of the howdahs were shot down and the girths of the howdahs cut. With no one left to control them the elephants fled from the field and a more even battle raged the rest of the day. One Abū Mehjān, a poet and a warrior, had been incarcerated in the fortress on charge of drunkenness. He chafed and fumed at his inactivity and entreated Salma, wife of Sa 'ad, to release him on pledge of return if he survived the battle. On being released, he galloped to the

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field on Sa 'ad's horse and performed 'marvels of bravery.' When the armies retired for the night he came back to take on the fetters but in recognition of his bravery he was set free by Sa 'ad, Such was the spirit of the Muslims.

The Second day called Aghwāth or Day of Succour

The Caliph had directed a part of the forces operation in Syria to proceed to Iraq. The gallant hero Q'aqā 'a had hastened with one thousand men in advance of the main body of 5000 under the command of his brother Hāshim. As the fighting began on the second day Q'aqā'a appeared on the scene. Arranging his column in ten squadrons, each following the other at some distance, he magnified the look of the reinforcements and they seemed to be coming on unendingly. Q'aqā'a challenged the enemy to individual combat. Bahman Jadoweih, the hero of the batter of Bridge, advanced to be cut down to pieces. Q 'aq 'a fought so valiantly that he alone accounted for thirty dead. He and his band wrought havoc in the enemy ranks. The fighting was so fierce that by the evening 3000 Muslims and 10,000 Persians lay dead or wounded on the field.

The Third day called Ghimas or Day of concussion

In the morning the Muslims buried their dead and their women tended the wounded. The casualties among the Persians were so large that they let the dead bodies lie unburied on the battle field. As the fighting was resumed, Hāshim came up with the main body of Syrian forces and charged straight into the enemy ranks. The Persians had brought back their elephants. They created confusion in the Muslim ranks till Q'aqā'a undertook to remove the menace. Assisted by his brother Hashim and a band of followers he boldly charged upon two leaders of the herd. With their lances they blinded the elephants and Q 'aqā 'a slashed the trunk of one. The infuriated beasts darted towards the

Muslim ranks to be driven back by shouts and lances whereupon they rushed through the Persian army. The whole herd followed them trampling all before it and plunging into the river it disappeared on the other side of it. The battle continued with unabated fury till the evening.

The night of Clangour

The night brought no rest for after a short lull fighting broke out again and 'screams of combatants and din of arms' lasted through out the night. In the morning of the fourth day Q 'aqā 'a launched a vigorous offensive. The Persian flank wavered and the centre was so hard pressed that it gave way to expose the bank on which was pitched the golden throne of Rustam. A whirlwind blew away its canopy into the river. Rustam tried to flee by jumping into the river but was overtaken by a valiant Arab who cut off his head and hoisted it on his lance. The Persians were too mauled and dismayed to resist any longer and their slaughter began. Firuzān and Harmuzān managed to escape with their broken columns but Jālenūs was killed and the remnants of his column were swept away in the river. For miles the plain was littered with the dead bodies of Persians. Sustaining a loss of about 8500 men themselves, the Muslims utterly vanquished an army four times their size.

A very large booty fell in their hands. Each soldier got 6000 dirhams and those who had particularly distinguished themselves got special gifts. On Rustam's body jewels costing 70,000 pieces were found; the great banner of the empire richly overlaid with gems and valued at ,1,00,000 pieces was captured. Zohra recovered such immense booty from the person of Jālenūs that Sa'ad made a reference to Caliph about its disposal. The Caliph allowed Zohra to retain the spoils and wrote back to Sa 'ad, 'Dost thou grudge the spoil to such a one as Zohra after all that he

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has wrought, and in view of all the fighting yet to come? Thou wilt break his heart thus'.

The Persians had made such vast preparations and their defeat was so crushing that it sealed Persia's fate. Analysing the causes of their defeat Sir William Muir says, 'The battle of Cadesiya reveals the secret. On one side there was but a lukewarm, servile following; on the other, an indomitable spirit that nerved every heart and aim; and after long weary hours of the fighting enabled the Muslims to deliver the final and decisive charge. The result was that the vast host on which the last efforts of the empire had been spent, was totally discomfited and the military power of the empire never again gathered itself into formidable shape.'

The issue was being watched all over the country. Yezdgird had posted men all the way from the battle field to Madāi'n, within earshot of one another, to constantly relay news of the war to him. In Madinah, the Caliph was coming out of the gates of the city every morning in the hope that he might meet a messenger bringing the news. At last a courier came on camel back and to 'Umar's query replied, 'The Lord hath discomfited the Persian host.' 'Umar followed the courier on foot and gathered from him the general outline of the battle. Thus engaged in conversation the two entered the gates of the city. The courier found to his consternation that every one greeted his companion as 'Ameer-ul-Mominin'. Ashamed he cried out, 'O Commander of the Faithful ! why didst thou not tell me?' 'It is all right, my brother,' was the Caliph's reply. 'Such was the unpretending mien of one who at that moment was greater than either the Kaiser or the Chosroes.'

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Reoccupation of Hira and Capture of Madāi'n (AH 15 & 16)

After his great victory at Cadesiya, Sa'ad had no difficulty in reoccupying Hira. The Persian troops, which had re-assembled at Birs Nimrūd, could not put up much of a resistance. Soon Babylon passed away from their hands and Sa 'ad made it his base of operation. His lieutenants Hāshim and Zohra fanned out to re-occupy the whole of the delta and to drive away the Persians to the capital city of Madāi'n. Sa'ad then advanced to occupy Bahar Sair, a suburb of Madāi'n. The capital city was built on both banks of the river Tigris. The western and nearer side fell after some siege but the eastern part containing the royal palaces was protected by the deep and swift Tigris flowing in between the two parts. While retreating from the eastern sector, the Persians had dismantled all the bridges on the river and had removed all the boats. Yezdgird sent away his family and the bulk of his treasures to the more fortified town of Holwān in the north and was planning to flec the city himself. When news of this reached Sa 'ad, he decided to cross the Tigris at all cost. Upstream they discovered a place where the river could be forded but the difficulty was that the river was in flood and the stream was swift. Undaunted by these hurdles six hundred cavalry men headed by their leader 'Aasim plunged into the river and bravely encountered the rapid current and drove away a Persian picket which tried to bar their way near the opposite shore, As they safely landed on the opposite shore, the whole army leaped into the river 'so thick and closely arrayed were they, horses and mares together, that the water was hidden from view; and, treading as if it had been the solid ground, without a single loss, all gained the farther side'.[1]

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[1] Sir william Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate.

By this time the Persians had evacuated the city. On entering it, the victorious army performed a Service of Praise. Such a vast booty fell in their hands that each soldier of the sixty thousand strong army got 12,000 dirhams and those who had particularly distinguished themselves got even more. One-fifth was despatched to Madinah as the share of the State along with some precious gifts including a seventy cubits long and sixty cubits broad banqueting carpet of the king. The carpet was designed as a garden, 'the ground of wrought golden and the walks of silver, green meadows were represented by emeralds, running rivulets by pearls; trees, flowers, and fruits by diamonds, rubies and other precious stones.'

For sake of continuity we have described events in the eastern sector two years in advance of the happenings in Syria. With Sa 'ad firmly established at Madāi'n, we must now revert to fourteenth year A.H. and take up the threads of events in the Byzantine sector.

The Siege of Damascus (A.H. 14)

The siege of Damascus had been laid by the Muslim forces in the time of the first Caliph Abū Bakr. It lasted for seventy days according to Tabari and six months according to Wāqidi. Abū Bakr died in this period and the siege was continued under the order of the new Caliph. The Romans had vainly hoped that the severity of winter would force the Muslims to retire. Heraclius tried to provide assistance to the besieged garrison but a force despatched by him was intercepted by a Muslim column under dzul Kel 'a and another detachment prevented any assistance reaching the city from the side of Palestine. The Muslim forces were, however, finding the city defences impregnable. The city wall was twenty feet high and fifteen feet broad and a ten to fifteen feet wide moat running round the walls gave further protection. In the early hours of one morning, Khālid with a band of daring followers including Q 'āqā 'a, crossed the

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moat on inflated skins and scaled the wall by means of ladders and ropes. The picket at the gate was taken by surprise and quickly disposed of and the gate was opened from within for the troops waiting outside. The panic stricken Roman soldiers could not put up any resistance and Khālid's column reached the centre of the city. Realising that resistance was useless, the Governor of the city had, meanwhile, surrendered to Abū 'Obaidah who was besieging the city from its western side. The two columns met near the middle of the city. The Romans executed a treaty whereby they agreed to surrender one-half of their property and to pay a light tribute. No spoils were taken nor any one was made a captive.

Battle of Fahl (A.H. 14)

Abū 'Obaidah wanted to measure strength with Heraclius at Hems but the Caliph forbade any further advance as long as there were enemy troops in the rear. Leaving Yezid as Governor of Damascus, Abū 'Obaidah retraced his steps towards Jordan. The Roman forces had gathered at Beisān and they were joined by the column which had been prevented from effecting a junction with the Damascus garrison. The Muslim troops encamped at a small town called Fahl at a short distance from Beisān. The Romans breached the canal running in between the two places and inundated the area in an effort to stem the advance of the Muslims. When this strategy failed, the Romans gave the bait of ransom but this was rejected by the Muslims who gave the option of acceptance of Islam or payment of tribute by them. Exchange of emissaries proved fruitless. A fierce battle then ensued in which the Romans were worsted and their commander Sacalar was killed. A large part of the fleeing army was caught in the marsh with the result that casualties among the Romans were enormous. Abū 'Obaidah sought the instructions of the Caliph about the treatment to be meted out to the Romans.

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The Caliph directed that the defeated Romans be treated as *dhimmis* and the cultivators should be allowed to remain in undisturbed possession of their land.

After this battle other towns in Jordan were easily overtaken or they themselves surrendered. They were given the same terms of capitulation whereby their persons, property, land and places of worship were guaranteed full protection. Only a little land here and there was taken for construction of mosques.[1] Leaving Shorahbil and 'Amr bin 'Aas in charge of Jordān, Abū 'Obaidah and Khālid returned to Damascus.

They decided to attack Hems from where Heraclius was directing his operations. They had proceeded a little distance when their way was blocked by two Roman armies under Theodore and Shanas. Shanas was engaged by Abū 'Obaidah and put to flight while Theodore's army was completely routed by Khālid. With the way cleared the Muslim army continued its march to Hems. In the way Ba'albek surrendered after a short siege. Heraclius retired from Hems and tried to enlist the support of some bedouin tribes of Mesopotamia but they were engaged by Sa 'ad bin Abi Waqqās and prevented from joining the Roman forces. The city of Hems resisted the siege for some time but it surrendered when it lost hope of getting any assistance.

Battle of Yarmūk (A.H. 15)

Successive defeats of the Roman forces, loss of sizeable part of his territory and the hue and cry of the populace compelled Heraclius to engage in a decisive encounter with his enemy. He enmassed an enormous force numbering 2,40,000 at Antioch. When news of the massive preparations reached Abū 'Obaidah, he felt that alone he could not encounter such a huge army. For putting up an effective opposition it was necessary that the scattered

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[1] Azdi—*Fatooh-us-Sham.*

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Muslim armies should once again collect. Accordingly, Abū 'Obiadah decided to quit Hems and to join Khālid at Damascus. While leaving the city he returned all the tribute to the citizēns from whom it had been collected as he could no longer provide protection to them. The local populace was greatly impressed by this unheard of act of fair play.[1] On reaching Damascus, Abū 'Obaidah received a message from 'Amr bin 'Aas that rebellion had broken in many districts of Jordan. Despatching a communication to the Caliph, he left for Jordan and was joined by the forces under 'Amr bin 'Aas at a place on the bank of river Yarmūk towards which the Roman army was also heading. The latter was accompanied by a host of monks and bishops carrying banners and golden crosses held aloft and exciting the people to religious fervour by shouting that religion was in jeopardy.

The two armies met in the plains of Wacusa. A series of encounters took place in which the Romans were worsted. The five Muslim battalions were serving under separate commands and could not give a decisive blow. On Khālid's suggestion it was decided that there should be one Supreme Commander, that each General should take the Supreme Command for a day and that Khālid should be the Supreme Commander for the first day. On taking up the Supreme Command he re-arranged the troops into forty battalions. Twenty of them formed the centre under Abū 'Obaidah and ten were posted in each wing one of which was led jointly by 'Amr bin 'Aas and Shorahbil and the other by Yezid. 'Ikrama was in charge of the reserve. Each battalion was a thousand strong and placed in charge of a trusted leader. Abū Sufiyān was deputed to go round the troops to raise their morale and ardour.

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[1] Balādhuri—*Fatooh-ul-Buldān*, page 137; Azdi—*Fatooh-us-Shām*, page 138.

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The Roman forces came up in a thick formation. Seeing their magnitude a bystander said, 'How many the Romans, how few the Muslim." 'Nay' cried Khālid, say rather, 'How many the Muslims, how few the Romans', for, if you count aright, numbers wax by the help of the Lord, but when He withdraweth His face, then they wane. I would that the Romans were double the number they now appear, if I had but under me my good Arab steed.'[1]

One of the Roman generals, Jarija (or George) who had been deputed to conduct parleys with Khālid was so impressed by the rectitude and conduct of the Muslims and the undeniable truth of their religion that he embraced Islam and fought on their side. This defection, however, could not dampen the ardour of the Roman soldiers thirty-thousand of whom had put on chains to present a massive wall of defence and to eliminate the possibility of any one fleeing the field.

The Romans launched such a vigorous attack that the right flank of the Muslim army had to fall back in disorder and Khālid had to call upon his reserve to assist the right flank. 'Who now' cried 'Ikrama, 'will join me in the covenant of death'. Four hundred including his son and the hero Dhirār took the fateful pledge. They charged valiantly and died to a man but in doing so they tilted the balance. The left wing of the Muslim army was equally hard pressed for numbers were heavily telling against them. The fighting was grim and the issue so uncertain that even the Arab women joined their husbands and brothers in the field. Huweiria, daughter of Abū Sufiyān, was severely wounded in the engagement. In the furious fighting many outstanding deeds of valour were performed. One leg of a soldier Habash bin Qais was slashed off in the encounter but oblivious of his loss he continued fighting on the other

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Calipahte, page 108.

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leg and was later seen searching for his decapitated leg. With varying fortunes the battle raged throughout the day. Towards the evening the Romans began to falter. Khālid wedged his centre between their infantry and the cavalry. Having lost the support of its infantry, the Roman cavalry made a dash for their lives and the Muslims let them go. The Muslim troops then fell upon the remaining force which falling back was either cut to pieces or toppled over the steep and rugged bank of the river which forming a loop bordered three sides of the plain. 'Those that escaped the sword were pushed in a moving mass into the yawning gulf. And so, in dire confusion and dismay, the whole multitude perished.' The defeat of the Romans was so crushing that it sealed the fate of Syria.

Campaign in North Syria (A.H. 15)

Leaving a garrison at Hems under 'Obada bin Sāmit, Abū 'Obaidah continued his triumphant march northwards. Hama, Laodicaea and a number of other smaller towns were easily reduced. Kinnisrin fell to Khālid after a short resistance. Alepoo fell next. Many of the tribes living in the area accepted Islam and some agreed to pay tribute. Abū 'Obaidah then proceeded towards Antioch the capital of North Syria. After a short siege it also capitulated and with its fall the whole of Northern Syria, extending from Damascus to the hilly range of Asia Minor, came under the sway of the Muslim arms. The Arab tribes settled in this region accepted the Muslim faith. The Christians either retired unmolested into Roman territory or agreed to pay tribute. They were 'treated with moderation, their churches spared and their worship respected.'[1]

Compaign in Palestine (A.H. 15)

While Shorahbil was operating in Jordon, 'Amr bin 'Aas attacked Palestine. Gaza, Sebastia, Bablūs, Lydda,

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 201.

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Beit Jibrin, and Joppa fell or surrendered one after another before him. Jerusalem and Ramleh alone held out, 'Amr advanced upon Jerusalem and Abū 'Obaidah having overtaken Kinnisrin by this time, also directed his steps towards it. The commander of the Roman army escaped with his forces to Egypt and the Patriarch sued for peace on the condition that the Caliph should himself come to the Holy City and settle the terms of the surrender. When this was communicated to 'Umar he immediately set out for Palestine. It was Rajab A.H. 16 when he reached Jabia. Khālid and Yezid had reached there earlier to greet the Caliph. In honour of the occasion they had gone robed in Syrian brocade and mounted on richly caparisoned horses. Their finery, however, enraged the Caliph who gathered a handful of gravel and threw it at the astonished chiefs. 'Avaunt', he cried, 'is it thus attired that ye come out to meet me. All changed thus in the space of two short years. Verily, had it been after two hundred years, ye would have deserved to be degraded.' 'Commander of the faithful, they replied, 'this that thou sets is but the outside, beneath it (and they drew aside their robe) behold our armour'. 'Enough' answered 'Umar, 'go forward'.[1]

A deputation of the Patriarch met the Caliph at Jabia and concluded with him the terms of the treaty. The Caliph decided to visit Jerusalem. When he neared the city, Abū 'Obaidah and other chiefs came out to meet him. The Caliph was on foot as the hooves of his horse had worn out and he was putting on the most ordinary clothes. Abū 'Obaidah tried to offer him rich robes and a caprisoned horse but 'Umar contemptuously discarded them saying, 'The honour that God has bestowed upon me is the honour of Islam and that is sufficient for me,' The Caliph received the Patriarch and the citizens with kindness and granted

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 207; Tabari, page 2402; Shibii—*Al-Farooq*, page 158.

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them 'the same privileges as to the most favoured cities, imposed upon the inhabitants an easy tribute and confirmed them in possession of all their shrines and churches." Accompanied by the Patriarch, the Caliph visited the various places of pilgrimage in the city. The appointed time of one of the five daily prayers came while he was visiting the Church of Resurrection and the Patriarch suggested to him to say his prayers there but the Caliph politely declined the offer for the reason that his example might later on be followed by Muslims and they might try to convert the place into a mosque.[1] After a short stay at Jerusalem the Caliph returned to Madinah.

Heraclius Abandons Syria

Having suffered crushing defeats in successive battles, Heraclius retired from Roha to Samsat. When the country to the west of Samsat was occupied by Khālid, Heraclius lost all hope and decided to abandon Syria for good and repair to Constantinople after crossing the Bosphorous. While quitting Syria, he exclaimed, 'Peace be with thee, holy and blessed land, Syria, fare thee well ! There is for me no more returning into thee; neither shall any Roman visit thee for ever but in fear and trembling.' To prevent the advance of Muslims further north, the retreating army razed to the ground a number of towns and fortresses in a broad belt on the northern border of Syria.

Rising in north Syria

In A. H. 17 Heraclius made a last desperate effort to dislodge the Muslims from Syria. The Christian tribes of Mesopotamia had promised full support. From the port of Alexandria, Heraclius despatched his force by way of the sea to Antioch and the bedouin tribes started gathering round Hems. Abū 'Obaidah was so alarmed that he called Khālid from Kinnisirin and requested the Caliph to send

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 210.

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reinforcements immediately. The Caliph directed Sa'ad to despatch forthwith 4000 soldiers under Q'aqā'a from Kūfa and to affect a diversion by sending troops against Rickka, Roha, Nisibin and other strongholds in upper Mesopotamia. Not content with this the Caliph left Madinah for the second time and proceeded to Jabia. When the bedouins learnt that the safety of their own homes was threatened, they forsook the Romans and dispersed. Abū 'Obaidah then engaged the Roman army and routed it so completely that it did not dare to re-enter Syria ever again.

Deposition of Khālid

Some chroniclers, including Ibn-al-Athir, have reported that the first step that 'Umar took after assumption of office was to depose Khālid from the post of Commander-in-Chief in Syria and that this order of the Caliph was delivered to Khālid during the actual engagement in the battle of Yarmūk. The deposition actually amounted to supersession of Khālid by Abū 'Obaidah. According to Balādhuri the order of supersession was not received till the siege of Damascus. It seems fairly certain that Khālid's supersession took place during or after the battle of Yarmūk and the controversy about the date is largely due to the confusion over the chronological sequence of the battles. As many historians supposed that the battle of Yarmūk took place during the last days of Abū Bakr and the beginning of the Caliphate of 'Umar, they assumed that deposition of Khālid was the first command given by 'Umar. What led to his supersession is not very clear. Some say that he had persistently neglected to render accounts of expenditure over the military campaigns; others say that he had lavisly rewarded some poet and the Caliph did not like this extravagance. It seems more likely that after the conquest of the greater part of Jordon, Syria and Palestine, 'Umar thought that the high command could be better placed in the hands of Abū 'Obaidah who was milder

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in disposition and cooler in judgement and probable a better administrator. That this supersession took place after the conquest of Syria is confirmed by a speech of Khālid himself which has been quoted by Qāzi Abū Yūsuf and Tabari,[1] one reaching Hems, 'Khālid delivered a speech in which he complained that Caliph 'Umar had appointed him generalissimo of Syria and when he had subjugated the whole of Syria he had been superseded. One hearing it a soldier got up and asked the great General to keep silence for such utterances could lead to mutiny and rebellion upon which Khālid stated that with 'Umar as the Caliph there could be no apprehension of any such turmoil[2]. This shows what respect' Umar commanded and in what awe he was held. It is stated that Khālid came to Madinah and remonstrated with the Caliph that he had been unjustly treated, the Caliph asked him from where he had amassed all his wealth and he was told that it had accrued from spoils of war and that Khālid retained 60,000 pieces with him and deposited 20,000 in the treasury. It is also stated that Khālid was reinstated and in a rescript to all generals the Caliph explained that the deposition was ordered because people had begun to believe in the infallibility of Khālid's arms and they should know that whatever is done is done by God.

Whatever might have been the reasons for his supersession, it is accepted at all hands that it did not dampen the zeal or devotion of Khālid and putting aside his grievance, he continued giving as sterling service as ever before and his advice was implicitly followed by Abū 'Obaidah 'and, his supersession not-withstanding, be remained thus virtually the Chief Captain of Islam in Syria.'

Conquest of Mesopotamia (A.H. 16)

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[1] Qāzi Abū Yūsuf—*Al-Khirāj*, page 87, Tabari, page 2527.
[2] Shibli Na 'umāni—*Al-Farooq*, page 165.

While Muslim armies were accomplishing one victory after another in the Byzantine sector, stirring events were taking place in the eastern sector. It has been already reported that Madāi'n had been captured by Sa;ad in the fifteenth year of Hijra and the Persian King Yezdgird had fled to Holwān. In the winter of the sixteenth year he assembled a big army and gave its command to Mehrān who advanced to Jalolā, a stronghold half way to Madā'in. With the approval of the Caliph, Sa 'ad sent Hāshim and Q'aqa'a with an army of 12000 men to meet the Persian force. They besieged the capital for eighty-days at the end of which a decisive engagement took place and the Persian force was, completely liquidated. Yezdgird fled to Ray and Q'aqā'a advancing forward captured Holwān.

Sa'ad asked for permission of the Caliph to pursue the fugitives into Khorasan but 'Umar did not agree. He wrote back 'I wish that between Mesopotamia and the lands beyond a hill of fire could form a barrier, so that the Persians shall not be able to get at us, nor we at them'.

Sa'ad then began to consolidate his position in Mesopotamia. Accordingly he sent troops to Tekrit which was held by a mixed garrison of Roman troops and Christian bedouins. After its siege had lasted for forty days the Romans thought of deserting their allies but the bedouins had got wise to their plan and they secretly joined the Muslim forces. The Romans were easily eliminated and the Muslim force advancing forward captured Kirckesia and Hit.

Meanwhile, in the south 'Utba had captured Obolla and thus the Islamic State was established from the junction of the two rivers to the shore of the Persian Gulf. The cities of Basrah and Kūfa were founded by the seventeenth century and Kūfa became the Capital city. Streets were provided in regular lines and in the centre the main mosque was built. Sa'ad built a spacious house for himself with a

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gateway in front. When the Caliph heard of it, he wrote to Sa'ad, 'It hath been reported to me that thou hast built for thyself a palace, and people call it the Castle of Sa 'ad; moreover, that thou hast reared a gateway betwixt thee and the people. It is not thy castle; rather it is the castle of perdition. Whatsoever is needful to secure the treasury that thou mayest guard and lock; but the gateway which shutteth out the people from thee, that thou shalt break down'. The order was obeyed.

The Caliph had restrained the Muslim armies from advancing forward but the Persians, chafing at their defeats, could not let them settle down. Hormuzān, a Persian satrap who had escaped from the field of Cadesiya began to make raids from Ahwāz upon Muslim settlements. In an encounter he was repulsed by 'Utba and had to ask for amnesty after ceding Akhnoor. However, he again fomented rebellion which was put down and Hormuzān fled to Rann Hormuz.

Yezdgird was, in the meantime, collecting another army and Hormuzān sought to join hands with him. The Caliph despatched an army under the command of N 'omān who defeated Hormuzān. The latter fled to Tostar where he was captured and sent to Caliph at Madinah. There he embraced Islam and was granted a pension of the highest grade. N 'omān advanced to capture the cities of Sūs and Jundai-Sabur.

A deputation waited upon 'Umar to persuade him to withdraw his ban on further advance. The Caliph enquired, 'What is the cause that these Persians thus persistently break faith and rebel against us? May be ye treat them harshly.' 'Not so', they replied, 'but thou hast forbidden us to enlarge our boundary, and the king is in their midst to stir them up. Two kings can in no where exist together, until the one of them expel the other.' It is not our harshness, but their king, that hath incited them to rise up

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against us after they made submission. And so it will go on until thou shalt remove the ban and leave us to forward, occupy their cities and expel their king. Not till then will their vain hopes and machinations cease. 'Umar had, therefore, to lift the embargo upon eastward movement of his forces.

Conquest of Persia (A.H. 21)

Yezdgird had redoubled his efforts not only to check the advance of the Arabs but also to wrest from them, the territories he had lost. He directed the governors of all the provinces to join their forces for a final assault to which, in face of the common danger, they readily agreed. A large army began collecting on the plains of Demāvend. Sa 'ad reported the impending attack to the Caliph. 'Umar decided to march froth in person but he was persuaded to remain at Madinah. All available troops from Basrah and Kūfa were rushed forward along with fresh levies making a total of 30000 under the command of N'omān. The Persian army had drawn up a line of fortification on the plain of Nehāvend and outnumbered the Muslim army by five times. After two days skirmishing a fierce battle took place in which the Persian army was so completely routed that few could manage to escape. The valiant commander of the Muslim forces was, however, killed in action. His brother, Na'im, was promoted to fill his post to deal a final blow at the Persian empire.

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Isfandiār, brother of Rustam, took the offensive and attacked the Muslim garrison at Ray. Na'im went up to their aid and vanquished the Persians. Isfandiār fled to Azerbaijān where he was again defeated. Yezdgird fled to Isfahān, then to Kermān from where he went to Balkh and finally to Merv. He was initially assisted by Turks but he had to retire across the Oxus. Ultimately in the reign of 'Uthmān, nine or ten years afterwards, he died miserably in a hut forsaken by his followers and deprived of his

treasures. After the fall of Ray, Muslim armies spread out in all directions and, one after another, they captured Fāss, Kermān, Makrān, Sejestān, Khorasān and Ajerbaijān. Gradually the Persians adopted the Muslim faith, opposition ceased altogether and the Islamic state extended from the Caspian to the Indian Ocean.

The Western Sector

Having completed narration of course of events in the Eastern Sector we must now once more revert to the Byzantine sector and to the eighteenth year of the Hijra. It was called the 'year of Ashes' for it was blighted by both famine and pestilence. Famine was the first to stalk the land. To alleviate the distress of the people, the Caliph requisitioned stocks of grains from the outlying provinces which had not been affected. Abū 'Obaidāh came himself from Syria with four thousand beasts of burden laden with corn, 'Amr bin 'Aas despatched grains from Palestine by camels and ships and supplies were received from Iraq. 'Umar ensured that the distribution was equitable. To himself he denied meat, butter and even milk. His servant one day brought some milk and butter to him. He gave them away in alms saying, 'I will not eat of that which costeth much; for how then should I know the trouble of my people, if I suffer not even as they?' He scolded his son for eating a cucumber. After nine months of great suffering and trial a general assemble was summoned in the Great Moasque and there 'Umar holding up the hands of 'Abbās, the Prophet's uncle, prayed with the rest of the congregation. No sooner the solemn service had finished than the sky was overcast and heavy rains fell on the parched land to revive life and activity.

The famine was followed by a greater calamity. Plague broke out in Syria and soon it spread to Palestine and as far as Iraq. People began to die in thousands. Disaster and devastation overtook the land. 'Umar tried to

call away Abū 'Obaidāh from the scene of the scourge but he preferred to stay with his people. 'Umar then himself set out for Syrain. He was met on the border by Abū Obaidāh. 'Umar tried to persuade Abū 'Obaidāh to abandon the stricken place but he posed the question 'What ! do we flee from the decree of God?' The Caliph replied, 'Yes we flee, but it is from the decree of God unto the decree of God.' He directed Abū 'Obaidāh to take away the Arab population from the infected cities to the high lands of the desert and himself returned to Madinah. Abū 'Obaidāh and his son were struck down by the plague at Jabia while he was leading the people to Haurān. Mo 'āz, who took his place, died soon after. 'Amr then conducted the people to Haurān. Gradually the epidemic subsided but not before it had taken a toll of about twenty-four thousand lives.

Many a home had completely perished leaving no survivors to its property. The calamity had left behind a trail of problems to settle which the Caliph decided to visit Syria once again. He betook the journey without much of entourage and on the way halted for a day at the house of a bishop. His long shirt had been rent during the journey and he gave it to his host to mend it. The bishop not only mended it but prepared another garment for him which 'Umar politely declined to accept saying that one would do for him. He visited all places inhabited by Muslims and gave instruction for disposal of properties of those who had died intestate. As both Abū 'Obaidāh and Yazid, governor of Syria and this, later on, turned out to be the foundation of the Omeyyad dynasty.

Conquest of Egypt (A.H. 20 A.D. 641.)

'Amr bin 'Aas had contacted the Caliph at Jabia during the latter's second visit to Syria and had pleaded with him to extend the Muslim arms to Egypt for that would enfeeble the Byzantine Empire and enhance their own power. 'Umar hesitatingly agreed and placed four

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thousand soldiers under the command of 'Amr bin 'Aas. After the force had left 'Umar thought of recalling it but finding that it had gone too far he despatched heavy reinforcements under Zubair numbering eight to twelve thousand.

'Amr entered Egypt by way of 'Arish. From there he proceeded to Farmā. Its garrison gave resistance but had to surrender after sometime. Crossing the desert he reached the eastern most branch of river Nile. Bubastis was then overtaken and marching along the vale of the Nile he routed several columns sent to bar his way and reached 'Ain Shams or Heliopolis near the city of Misr, the capital of Mocoucus, governor of Egypt. There he was joined by Zubair. The Egyptians were driven back into their city in an engagement and were besieged. After the siege had lasted for some time Zubair accompanied by a few companions scaled the wall of the fortress and jumping on the other side they managed to open the gate for the army waiting outside. Considering that further resistance was useless Mocoucus capitulated and obtained terms from 'Amr bin'Aas.

Mocoucus retired to the fortified port town of Alexandria where the Greek troops had gathered to strengthen its garrison of some 50,000. A massive line of walls and towers guarded the leading port. 'Behind it lay the whole strength of the Byzantine navy, of which the city was the base. The invaders, far inferior in number and in equipment, had not a single ship no siege machine, and no immediate source of supply for their man power.'[1] 'Amr bin 'Aas besieged this seemingly impregnable city. Heraclius died during the siege and no help came from the Byzantine court. The siege had its telling effect for the Greeks abandoned the place and Mocoucus offered to

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[1] P. K. Hitti : The Arabs—A short History.

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surrender on the condition that the prisoners taken by the Arabs throughout the campaign should be set free. This was agreed to and the glad tidings were sent to the Caliph in these words 'I have captured a city from the description of which I shall refrain. Suffice it to say that I have seized therein 4000 villas with 4000 baths, 4000 poll-tax paying Jews and four hundred places of entertainment for the royalty.' Alexandria was the second city in Byzantine empire 'the seat of commerce, luxury and letters.'

Memphis was selected as the headquarters of the army and around it grew a military station called Fustāt or 'Encampment'. It developed into the capital city of Egypt, the modern Cairo. There 'Amr built the famous mosque which is still known after his name. He wanted to build a house for himself but was reminded by the Caliph that he had a house at Madinah. The Caliph did not permit the Arabs to acquire a single acre of land and commanded 'Leave the land of Egypt in the people's hands to nurse and fructify.' The result of this magnanimity and prudence was that Egypt prospered further and the people gradually took to the new religion.

To the credit of 'Amr bin 'Aas goes the execution of the stupendous scheme of restoration of the disused and silted communication between the waters of Nile in Upper Egypt and those of Red Sea at Suez. The canal remained navigable till the time of 'Umar II.

By eliminating Roman settlements on the coast of Africa and putting down some native tribes 'Amr bin 'Aas gradually extended the domain of Islam towards the West. In the East the Persian Empire had been liquidated. In Syria, Jordon and Palestine the Arabs were firmly in control and had set up stable governments. A large number of reforms and administrative measures of lasting benefit were undertaken by the caliph but they will be discussed in Part II of the book. Only one or two outstanding measures

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need be mentioned here. One was the enlargement of the Square round the Ka 'aba which was achieved by pulling down buildings located too close to it after paying compensation to the owners thereof. The boundary pillars of the Haram and the sacred Territory were renovated and halting stations were built on the pilgrim route to Madinah. 'Umar established the Dewan or Department of finance and introduced the Muhammadan Era commencing from the new moon of the first month, Muharram, in the year of the Prophets' migration to Madinah.

'Umar's Assassination

The caliphate had now entered its eleventh year. As usual the Caliph made the annual pilgrimage to Makkah. Immediately on his return to Madinah his dynamic career came to a sudden and tragic end.

Moghira bin Sh'oba had brought with him from Iraq a Persian slave, Feroze, also called Abū Lūlū. One day he met the Caliph in the market place and complained to him that his master was exacting too heavy a tribute from him. He carried on the trade of a carpenter, engraver and blacksmith. The Caliph considered that 2 dirhams (about 7 annas) a day that he was paying was not too much and declined to interfere.

Next day at the time of the early morning congregational prayers, Feroze got into the front rank of worshippers and as soon as the Caliph started the prayers he attacked him with a sharp edged weapon inflicting several wounds on his person. He ran wildly killing a few persons and injuring others and finally stabbed himself to death. The Caliph asked his son 'Abdul Rehmān to continue the service and was himself carried inside his house. When he was told that the man who had mortally wounded him was not a Muslim he exclaimed, 'Praise be to

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the Lord that it was not one who had ever bowed down before Him, even once, in prayers !"

Realising that his end had approached he sought the permission of the Prophet's widow 'Ayesha to be buried by the side of Prophet's grave. 'Ayesha graciously agreed to it even though she had reserved the place for her own self. He then took up the question of his successor. He set up a small electoral body composed of the most respected companions 'Ali, 'Uthmān, Zobair, Sa'ad, Talha and 'Abdul Rehamān bin 'Auf to select the person most suitable for the office. He addressed each of them individually cautioning him of the grave responsibility cast on him as an elector and the danger of favouritism and nepotism. Addressing the crowd that had gathered he said, 'To him who shall succeed me, give it as my dying bequest that he be kind to the men of this city which gave a home to us and to the Faith; that he make much of their virtues, and pass lightly by their faults. And bid him to treat well the Arab tribes for verily they are the back-bone of Islam, the tithe that he taketh from them, let him give it back unto the same for the nourishment of their poor. And the Jews and the Christians, let him faithfully fulfil the covenant of the Prophet with them. O Lord, I have finished my course. And now to him that cometh after me I leave the Kingdom and the Caliphate firmly established and at peace.' Three days after i. e. on the 26th of Zil Hijj of the 23rd year of the Hijra, corresponding to 644 A. D., he succumbed to his wounds and was buried by the side of the Prophet "So died 'Umar, next to the Prophet the greatest in the kingdom of Islam; for it was all within these ten years that, by his wisdom, patience and vigour, the dominion was achieved over Syria, Egypt and Persia, which Islam has over since maintained. Abū Bakr beat down the apostate tribes, but at his death the armies of Islam had but just crossed the Syrian frontier. 'Umar began his reign as master of Arabia. He died the Caliph of an empire embracing Persia, Egypt, and some of

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the fairest provinces of the Byzantine throne. Yet throughout this marvellous fortune he never lost the equipoise of a wise and sober judgement, nor exalted himself above the frugal and familiar style of the Arab Chief. 'Where is the Caliph?' would the visitor from distant provinces enquire, as he looked around the court of the Great Mosque; and all the while the monarch sat in homely guise before him."[1]

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 283.

6

The Battles in Retrospect

The Arab conquests which liquidated the Persian Empire and crippled the Byzantine power constitute the most striking events of the early medieval times. With the rise of Islam, the barren and almost inconsequential Arabia seems to have been converted as if by magic into a nursery of heroes the like of whom, both in number and quality, would be hard to find anywhere. The military campaigns of Khalid bin Walid and 'Amr bin 'Aas which ensued in Iraq, Syria and Egypt are amongst the most brilliantly executed in the history of warfare and bear favourable comparison with those of Napoleon, Hannibal or Alexander.'[1] The exploits of Abū 'Obaidāh, Shorahbil, Yazid, Mothanna, Q'aqā'a, Hāshim, Sa'ad, Zohra. 'Ikrama, 'Iyāz, Dhirār and N'omān, to name a few, rank high in the field of valour and strategem.

After meeting a very stiff opposition the new religion had spread to remote corners of Arabia. However, before it could by firmly established the Prophet (PBUH) had died. Many a newly converted tribe had found the rigorous discipline of Islam irksome and had rebelled. Apostasy had raised its head. In a series of short but decisive battles Abū Bakr conquered one after the other all the seceders. He put down anarchy and restored peace. Islam was now united to meet the challenge from across the borders of the country.

Syria was the first to become the scene of military campaign. It was held by Byzantnes as a part of their

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[1] P. K. Hitti—The Arabs, A short History, page 42.

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heritage from Romans and Alexander. They could not imagine that from a non-descript country would emerge a power to throw them out from the territory held by them for almost a thousand years. Greatly superior in numbers and arms they looked down upon the ill-equipped and much smaller army of their foe. Initially they could halt the progress of their march but with the appearance of Khālid bin Walid the rout of the Byzantine became a debacle. Damascus was surrounded and it surrendered after a siege of six months. Towns began falling, thereafter, like ninepins and soon the whole of Syria, Palestine and Jordan was either over-run or itself capitulated. The last battle in the valley of Yarmūk sealed the fate of Byzantine power. The successive victories of the Arabs and the rapid acquisition of such a strategic territory from the first power of the earth gave recognition in the eyes of the world to the rising power of Islam. That they could simultaneously and successfully engage the two greatest powers of the world on two frontiers amazed the world. After a series of smaller engagements, a huge Sasanid army was utterly routed on the field of Cadesiya in the year 637 and all the fertile land of Iraq west of the Tigris lay before the Arabs. In total disregard of the perilous nature of the venture the Muslim army accomplished the marvellous feat of crossing the swift flowing Tigris swollen by high floods. The Persian emperor and his troops deserted their capital city without a fight and the Muslims triumphantly entered the greatest royal city in Asia. In a decade the whole Persian Empire was completely demolished. As the triumphant march continued in the east, the wave of Muslim conquests rolled along in the west. After a brilliant campaign 'Amr bin 'Aas had subjugated the whole of Egypt. On the fall of Alexandria he carried the banner of Islam, with the same dash and enterprise, along the coast of North Africa to the land of Berbers in Tripoli.

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The almost miraculous successes of the Muslim army need some explanation. The rival Byzantine and Sasanid Empires had fought with each other incessantly for many generation and had weakened themselves in the process. Internal dissension's and struggle for power in Persia had enfeebled that country. Their Epicurean and grossly sensual life, schism in their religion, indulgence in luxury and extravagance had sapped their vitality. This had, to some extent, facilitated the victory of the Muslim arms but these empires were still great powers and had at their command almost unlimited supply of men and materials. They hurled in the battle fields eight to ten times as many men as the Caliph could muster. The brilliant successes of the Muslim forces were almost entirely due to their religious zeal and unbounded faith in their cause, the higher morale of their soldiers, their power of endurance and remarkable mobility gained by the use of cavalry and the consummate skill of their generals. What facilitated the consolidation of the conquests were the uprightness, fair play and integrity displayed by the Muslims, which could not but impress the subjugated races. When Abū 'Obaidāh returned the tribute he had taken from the people of Hems as he was retreating and could no longer afford protection to the people, the Christians asked him to come back again and the Jews swore on the old Testament that so long they lived they would not let Caesar retake the country. The native semites of Syria and Palestine as well as the people of Iraq looked upon the Arabs as nearer of kin and saviours against their oppressive landlords. Both the Iraqis and Syrians hated their old masters as aliens and neither the Greek nor the Persian culture, imposed from the top, had ever been fully assimilated by the native people. In fact, the Muslim conquests may be looked upon as the recovery by the ancient Near East of its early domain. Under the stimulus of Islam the East awoke and reasserted itself after a millennium of western domination.' Moreover, 'the

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tribute exacted by the new conquerors was less than that exacted by the old, and the conquered could now pursue their religious practice with more freedom. As for the Arabians themselves, they represented a fresh and vigorous stock fired with new enthusiasm imbued with the will to conquer and emboldened by the utter contempt of death inculcated by their new faith.'[1]

In Persia things were, however, different. There the people inspired by their chieftains fought desperately and gave battle to the Arabs at every opportunity. It took a decade to subdue them completely. The sterling qualities of the Muslims dispelled their hatred and prejudice and facilitated their assimilation in the fold.

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[1] P. K. Hitti : The Arabs, page 43.

7

Personal Life

Simplicity and devotion to duty were the key notes of his character. Even at the height of his glory when his domain extended to large parts of Persian and Byzantine Empires, he led an unpretentious and austere life. Whether the occasion was reception of envoy of Caesar or Khusro or admonition of such a general as Khālid or diplomat as Mu'aviya or posting of governors to the provinces, he did not mind putting on a shirt bearing a dozen patches. On the way to Syria he got his torn shirt mended by his host but declined the offer of a new garment on the ground that one was enough for him. Once some visitors to his place had to wait for him for unusually long time for he had put out his washed clothes to dry and had no spares to put on. He led an austere life but he did not preach asceticism or renunciation. He got annoyed when one of his officers posted in Yemen appeared before him in rich clothes and made him to put on ordinary clothes. Next time that officer presented himself dishevelled and wrapped in tattered clothes before the Caliph. He was again pulled up and asked to put on neat but simple clothes. Twice he took the long journey to Syria accompanied just by a servant. To perform the pilgrimage he visited Makkah every year without any entourage. No tent or canopy ever accompanied him. The shade of a tree was a sufficient halting place and his sheet spread over the branches sufficient protection from the scorching sun.

In Makkah he had lived on his trade. On the fall of Khyber he was allotted a piece of land but he dedicated it for the benefit of the poor. On ascending to the Caliphate

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he accepted an allowance which just sufficed for simple meals and clothes. The companions wanted to get his allowance increased but they could not do so without consulting him. They knew the suggestion would be spurned if it was directly put to him. They decided to put it through his daughter Hafsa, widow of the Prophet (PBUH). When she broached the subject, 'Umar was visibly annoyed. He enquired of her what were the best clothes of the Prophet in her household. She said they were a pair of saffron coloured garments which the Prophet (PBUH) put on Fridays or on the occasion of reception of envoys. Asked what was the best dish the Prophet (PBUH) partook, she said that barley bread was the dish. Asked what was his best bed she stated that it was a thick cloth which was folded four times in summer and in winter half of it served as bed spread and half as blanket. He then asked Hafsa 'to tell his well wishers that the Prophet had by his example laid down a pattern and he intended following that pattern. He, his august master and his companion Abū Bakr were like three persons who followed the same path. One had reached the goal; the second followed his footsteps and succeeded in joining him while the third had started his journey. If he followed their footsteps he would join the august company but if he faltered and deviated from their ways, he would miss the goal'.

Once 'Utba bin Farqad joined him in his meals. Seeing the coarse bread he observed that the flour could have been sieved. 'Umar replied how could he take fine flour when all the Muslims could not afford it.

Humility

While delivering a sermon he started saying without any relevance to the subject matter of the talk that once he was so poor that he used to fetch water for the people and as wages got some dates which constituted his meals. So saying he got down from the pulpit. When somebody asked

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for the reason for such a parenthetical statement, he said that he was feeling a bit vainglorious and therefore humbled himself to serve as an antidote. He did not even hesitate to rub oil with his own hands on the bodies of his camels. Once a camel belonging to the State broke loose. He ran hither and thither in search of it. When somebody advised him to put a servant on the job he replied who could be a greater servant than himself.

His solicitude for others

He used to visit the houses of blind and disabled persons to attend to their household chores. Talha states that he saw 'Umar entering a hut in the early hours of a morning. On enquiry he learnt that an old blind woman lived in that hut and 'Umar attended to her needs everyday. He also used to visit the houses of soldiers fighting the battles of Islam on the frontiers of its territories to enquire about the welfare of their families, to make purchases for them and to deliver letters to them received from the front. Occasionally he patrolled the city in the night. In one of his night patrols he observed a woman three miles away from the city cooking meals. The night was fairly advanced and her children were crying due to hunger as she had nothing to give them and had put on a pot on the fire to delude them to sleep. The Caliph returned to the city and from the *Baitulmāl* brought out flour, ghee, meat and dates. His servant, Aslam, offered to carry the bag but the Caliph declined the offer saying that he would not be able to lift his burden on the Day of Reckoning. He carried the heavy package himself and was happy only after the meals had been prepared and the children fed properly. He asked the woman to come to the city in the morning so that the Caliph could fix some allowance for her.

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Fear of God

While despatching forces to Iraq under the command of Sa 'ad he advised him thus, 'Sa 'ad! Let not the thought delude you that you are the maternal uncle of the Prophet and his companion. Remember! God does not wipe off evil with evil. He effaces evil with good. There is no other relationship between God and man except His worship by man. His grace is obtained by service. In every matter be guided by the practice of the Prophet. And remember my advice. You are being sent on a big mission. You can discharge your trust only by doing the right thing. You and your companions should follow uprightness and fear God. And fear of God is inculcated by his obedience and shunning of vices. And who-so-ever obeys God has scant liking for this world; he loves the Hereafter'[1]. He was always afraid of the final Reckoning. At times he would exclaim, 'O, that my mother had not borne me; would that I had been this stalk of grass instead'. Bukhāri has recorded that he conversed with Abū Moosa Ash 'ari thus, 'Will you not consider it adequate recompense that we who accepted Islam, migrated from our homes and served the Prophet (PBUH) at every step should be neither rewarded nor punished'. Abū Moosa replied that he would not be content with that for they had done a number of good deeds and hoped for ample rewards. 'Umar said that he would be content if in the final accounting he was quits.

During the day time occupations of State and service of the people kept him busy. Besides the five congregational prayers at the appointed hours he used to do extra prayers at night. He was strict in observance of fasting and performed the pilgrimage every year. Before his death he had fasted continuously for two months.

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[1] Muhammad Zakariya :*Hikayāt Sahāba*, page 84.

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Equality

He regarded all people as equal and his high office did not breed in him any sense of superiority. He was once summoned as a defendant to the court of Zaid bin Thābit, the Qāzi of Madinah. On seeing 'Umar enter the room, he got up and vacated the place. 'Umar observed that it was the first act of injustice done by him in that case. The plaintiff had no evidence to establish his case and 'Umar did not admit the claim. The plaintiff wanted to administer oath to 'Umar but the Qāzi intervened saying that the plaintiff should no forget that 'Umar was *Amir-ul-Momineen*. 'Umar was so angry at this that he said to the Qāzi, 'So long as an ordinary citizen and 'Umar do not rank equal in your eyes, you are not fit to be appointed Qāzi'. While delivering a speech somebody interrupted him several times saying, 'O 'Umar fear ye God' people asked that man to refrain from interruption but the Caliph said, 'Let him say it. If the people do not give me good advice they are useless and if I do not listen to it I am useless'. On another occasion he asked the assembly 'O ye people ! if I lean towards the world what will you do?' A man unsheathed his sword and said, 'I will slash off your head'. To test his boldness the Caliph said to him harshly 'you are misbehaving with the Caliph'. He replied he was conscious of the Caliph's prestige. The Caliph said, 'Praise be to God that among my people are present men who could put me on the straight path if I deviated from it.'

Toleration

'Umar was not intolerant of followers of other religions. He had permitted the Muslims to stay, during the course of their journeys, for three days at a time as guests of Christians and advised them to develop social contacts with their co-religionists. He did not look down upon them nor disdained using their utensils or performing ablutions

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for prayers with water brought in their vessels.[1] He was so conscious of extending fair treatment of Jews and Christians that he laid stress upon it even at the time of his death. Bukhāri has recorded many instances of his kind and sympathetic treatment of the Christians. Balādhuri says in his *Kitabul-Ashrāf* that the Caliph had requisitioned the services of a Roman Christian for supervision over his state accounts.

Soundness of Judgement

In his judgements and opinions 'Umar always displayed soundness and sagacity. Some of his opinions have become religious precepts. When the question arose how the believers should be called to congregational prayers at appointed hours, many a suggestion was put forward like blowing of conch or ringing of bells. It was 'Umar who suggested that in a loud resonant voice the *Muazzin* should proclaim the greatness of God and invite the people to their salvation. His suggestion about disposal of prisoners of the battle of Badr, observance of *pardah* by ladies and abstention from saying death prayers of a *munāfiq,* 'Abdullah bin Obeiy found approval in Quranic revelations. It was on his insistence that Abū Bakr ordered compilation of the Qur'ān.

He used to say—

1. Do not be deceived by somebody's reputation.
2. Do not go by one's prayers and fasting but see his truthfulness and wisdom.
3. The man who keeps his secret, retains the direction of his affairs.
4. Fear the man whom you hate.

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[1] Shāh Waliullah—*Izālatul Khifā', page 138.*

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5. He is the most prudent man who can assess his own actions
6. Do not postpone today's work for tomorrow.
7. That which goes back does not advance.
8. He is likely to fall in evil ways who has no idea of evil.
9. I judge a man's intelligence by the queries he makes.
10. In your concern for others do not forget yourself.
11. Take only a little of the world, you can lead a free existence.
12. It is easier not to indulge in vices than to repent.
13. If contentment and gratitude were two mounts, I would not care which I was riding.
14. God bless the man who discloses to me my weaknesses.

Other traits

Even before the emergence of Islam, the Arabs took pride upon their eloquence, oratory, poetry, the art of reciting genealogy, Swordsmanship, valour and intrepedity. In all these matters, nature had gifted 'Umar in abundance.

He was a gifted orator. Participation in elocution contests at 'Ukāz had given a fine edge to this gift so much so that on the basis of this qualification the Quraish had selected him as his envoy. On being nominated as Caliph he delivered a sermon the opening sentences of which were—

"O God ! I am hard, make me soft. I am weak make me strong. (Addressing the congregation he said) the Arabs

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are like disobedient camels, whose reins have been given in my hands. I intend making them follow the path."

He was not a poet himself but was a connoisseur of good poetry. He remembered by heart a large number of couplets of many famous Arabian poets particularly of Zuhair, Imraul-Qais and Nābigha. A number of distinguished scholars considered him the best critic of the land. Among the poets he gave first place to Zuhair. Asked by 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbas to give reasons for his preference, he said, 'Zuhair does not go in for the less frequently used words nor does he make the meaning of his couplets obscure. He versifies only the subject he knows. In praise of others he extols those attributes alone which the man actually possesses'.

He advised the people to teach their sons swimming, riding and to make them remember good couplets and proverbial adages.

Rectitude

He wrote a letter to Caeser His wife Umm-e-Kulsoom sent some presents through the messenger to Caeser's wife. In return she sent some gifts including a costly pearl. The Caliph got it deposited in the State treasury, saying that it had come through an official whose expenses had been borne by the State. What Umm-e-Kulsoom had spent on her gifts was given back to her from the treasury.

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8

'Uthman

'Uthmān son of 'Affān was born six years after the year of elephant and forty-seven years before the emigration.[1] He was also known as Abū 'Abdullah being the father of 'Abdullah born of Ruqaiyya, daughter of the Prophet [2] and his epithet was Zunnūrain as he was married to two daughters of the Prophet (PBUH) i. e. Ruqaiyya and after her death to Umme Kulthoom.[3] His parentage met in the fifth generation with that of the Prophet (PBUH) in the common ancestor 'Abd Manāf. His maternal grandmother, Bai'da, was the daughter of 'Abdul Muttalib and sister of Prophet's father 'Abdullah.[4]

Early Life

As in the case of other companions the details of his early life are not known except that his family had acquired great affluence in commerce, exercised considerable influence in the affairs of Makkah and was next to Banū Hāshim in importance and that he had learnt to read and write and had led a decent and chaste life. He was one of the earliest converts having accepted Islam on the hands of the Prophet (PBUH) on the persuasion and preaching of Abū Bakr. According to Tabari and Ibn 'Asākir he had embraced Islam before the Prophet (PBUH) started living in Dār Arqam. His wealth and eminence, however, could not protect him from the persecution of the Quraish for his own family denounced him. Sayūti states on the authority

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[1] Hāfiz Ibn Hajar—*Isāba,* Vol. III, page 455.
[2] Tabari—History, Vol. I, page 444.
[3] Hāfiz Ibn Hajar--*Isāba,* Vol. III, page 455.
[4] Tabari, Vol.III, page 444.

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of Ibn Sa'ad that 'Uthmān's uncle Hakam bin Abi al 'Aas had bound him with a rope in a futile attempt to force him to renounce the new faith. When the persecution became intolerable he decided to migrate with his wife to Abyssinia alongwith the first batch of emigrants.[1] He stayed in that country for a few years and returned to Makkah on receipt of the incorrect information that the Quraish had accepted Islam. When the entire body of Muslims moved to Madinah some years later he also migrated to that city.

Immediately after migration to Madinah he had occasion to display his generosity. There was acute dearth of sweet drinking water in the city. A well known as Bir Roma could give plenty of water supply but its owner levied charges on any one collecting water from it. 'Uthman purchased the well for 20000 *dirhams* from its owner and dedicated it for free use of the people.

Soon the Muslim community of Madinah had to defend itself against the repeated attacks of the Makkans. 'Uthman participated in all the encounters except in the battle of Badr. He was prevented from joining the battle of Badr by the serious illness of his wife Ruqaiyya. The Prophet (PBUH) had asked him to attend her saying that his reward would be no less than that of the victors of Badr. In spite of his tender care Ruqaiyya died the day the news of victory of Muslims at Badr reached Madinah. Her death threw him in great despondency for not only had he lost a beloved wife, his connection with the Prophet's family had been severed.[2] The Prophet (PBUH) consoled him by treating him as one of the victors of Badr and gave him a portion of the spoils thereof. The Prophet also gave his second daughter Umme Kulthoom to him in marriage.

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[1] Ibn Sa'ad—*Tabaqāt*, Vol. I, Part III, page 38.
[2] *Kanzul 'Amāl*, Vol. VI, page 379.

Participation in Battles

In A.H. 3 the battle of Uhad took place. The Muslims had fought valiantly against their numerically much superior foes and had initially got ascendancy over them but the desertion of their posts by the archers who had been deputed to defend the main body from any surprise attack from the rear, made them lose the field. Unable to withstand the furious attack launched by the Makkan cavalry under Khālid from the rear and the reorganised attack from the front, the whole Muslims army had got disorganised and scattered in utter confusion. Only a small band was left to guard the Prophet (PBUH) who was himself injured in the encounter. The spread of the rumour that the Prophet (PBUH) had been killed in action had further demoralised the Muslim army. But when the truth was known and the peril in which the Prophet lay was realised the scattered force gathered to retrieve the position. 'Uthmān was one of those people. The pressure under which they had got disorganised must have been very great but they were so sad and penitent about it that God in His infinite mercy forgave them in the Qurānic verse :-

> "Lo! those of you who turned back on the day when the two hosts met, Satan alone it was who caused them to backslide, because of some of that which they have earned. Now Allah hath forgiven them. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Clement." (3:155)

In the pledge of Rizwān, 'Uthmān was the central figure. In A.H. 6 the Prophet decided to go to Makkah for pilgrimage. With 1400 companions attired as pilgrims he set out for Makkah. Only the way he learnt that the Quraish would not let them enter the city and the Makkan cavalry was already on the road. Making a detour through mountain gorges, they reached the place called Hudebiya and encamped there. The Prophet sent a messenger to Makkans

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to convince them that the Muslims only wanted to perform the pilgrimage and had not the slightest intent to fight but the messenger was maltreated and he returned unsuccessful. The Prophet (PBUH) then sought an emissary who would command respect. 'Uthmān was selected because of his kinship with the powerful Ummayyad family. The Makkans, however, detained him for three days and news reached the Muslim camp that he had been assassinated. Without any exception all the 1400 comrades gave their pledge on the hands of the Prophet (PBUH) that they would stand or fall together to avenge 'Uthmān's murder. This pledge was very pleasing to God and He referred to it in the following Quranic verse :-

> "Lo! those who swear allegiance unto thee (Muhammad) swear allegiance only unto Allah. The hand of Allah is above their hands. So whosoever breaketh his oath, breaketh it only to his soul's hurt; while whosoever keepeth his covenant with Allah, on him will He bestow immense reward."
>
> (48:10)

Soon it was known that the news of 'Uthmān's murder was false and, after some negotiations, the treaty of Al-Hudebiya was signed which provided for cessation of hostilities between the parties for ten years.

In the battle of Khaibar (A.H. 7), the fall of Makkah and the battle of Hunain (A.H. 8), 'Uthman had taken a prominent post.

In A.H. 9 came the news that the Roman Emperor was contemplating a massive attack upon the Arabs. They had been impoverished by failure of crops and the season was of intense heat. Large scale preparations for defence had to be made. The Prophet appealed to the companions to donate generously for the purpose. 'Uthmān took upon

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himself the responsibility to meet one-third of the total expenditure on the expedition in which, according to Ibn Sa'ad, 30000 footmen and 10000 cavalry had participated. The Prophet (PBUH) was so pleased at this generosity that he exclaimed, 'from today nothing 'Uthmān will do will harm him.'

Details of the part played by Uthmān during the Caliphate of Abū Bakr and 'Umar are lacking but he was actively associated in all important matters of State.

Accession to the Caliphate

When 'Umar was fatally wounded he was urged to nominate his successor. The task was by no means simple for by now the Caliphate had expanded into an empire. The Persian and Roman empires had received some crippling blows and had ceded large parts of their territories to the Arabs but they still presented a formidable threat to the security of the newly founded state. The inhabitants of the conquered territories had their own religion, culture and system of administration. They had to be moulded into homogeneous entities and brought under one common system of administration. New laws had to be promulgated and tribute to be imposed in a manner and to an extent that while it should suffice for maintenance of internal security, preparedness for defence and for consolidation and further expansion of the empire, it should not become a too heavy burden. The internal problems were no less complex and exacting. The Arabs had been forged into a nation but their tribal structure had not totally disappeared. Flushed with the glory and spoils of war the tribes had become powerful units and had to be kept under strict control. Family rivalries among the Quraish could emerge at any moment. On top of the civil, military and administrative responsibilities attached to the office of the Caliph, was the responsibility for maintenance of the religious heritage. Had the problem been limited to internal administration,

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conquest and expansion, the Arabs would have forged ahead like other people growing from weak to strong and from uncultured to a civilised nation. But Islam had come for a different purpose altogether. Its primary aim was not to subdue people but to guide and reform them. Therefore, besides the requirement of political, military and administrative ability, the Caliph was required to also possess the ability to enunciate, protect and promote the religion and to keep it unsullied in the wake of conquests and admixture of peoples of diverse faiths. These were the problems which 'Umar had to face and he could foresee that with march of time heavier duties were going to devolve upon the shoulders of the Caliph. He lamented that Abū 'Obaidāh and Sālim, the freed slave of Abū Hudhaifah, were no more, otherwise he would have nominated one or the other as his successor.[1] He decided upon the expedient of nominating six foremost companions to be electors of his successor from amongst themselves. These were 'Abdul Rehmān, 'Uthmān, 'Ali, Sa'ad, Zubair and Talha. About them he said 'I do not consider any one more qualified for the Caliphate than these people with whom the Prophet (PBUH) was pleased till the end of his life.[2] Talha, Zubair and Sa'ad were warriors of renown. Zubair was closely related to the Prophet (PBUH), Sa'ad was the nephew of Prophet's mother, 'Ali was the son of Prophet's uncle and the widowed husband of Fātima, daughter of the Prophet. 'Uthmān was the son-in-law of the Prophet having been married to two of his daughters in succession. Attractive in his person and carriage his years carried weight for he was nearly seventy. 'Abdul Rehmān was a real patriot. To this council of Electors was added a seventh person 'Abdullah son of 'Umar who was to exercise the casting vote in case the conclave was divided but he himself was excluded from election.

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[1] 'Umar Abū Nasar – *Farooq Azam*, page 172.
[2] Bukhāri, *Manaqib* Chapter *Bait-i-'Uthmān*.

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'Umar had directed that the selection should not be delayed beyond the third day after his death. The electors assembled but two days were wasted in unprofitable wrangling each pressing the claim of his own party. To avoid dissension 'Abdul Rehmān offered to forego his own claim if the others agreed to abide by his decision. This was assented to by all. Zubair and Sa'ad withdrew, and Talha was away. The contest was narrowed to the houses of Hāshim and Omeyya in the persons of 'Ali and 'Uthmān and their influence with the electoral body was fairly equal. 'Abdul Rahmān began sounding the views of all prominent citizens and governors of provinces who had come for the annual pilgrimage and had not gone back. He also conferred long with 'Ali and 'Uthmān. Each pressed his own claim but admitted the claim of the other to be the next in weight. On the third day people assembled in the Great Mosque and they were addressed by 'Abdul Rehmān.[1] Bukhāri has recorded that addressing 'Ali, 'Abdul Rehmān said, 'I have conferred with the people and they give preference to 'Uthmān. You should not take it amiss.' Turning towards 'Uthmān he said, 'On the understanding that you will act according to the Book of the Lord, the example of the Prophet (PBUH) and the precedent of his two successors, I pledge allegiance to you.' He then lifted his face towards heaven and taking 'Uthmān by the hand he prayed 'O Lord! Do Thou hearken now and bear witness, verily the burden that is around my neck, the same I place around the neck of 'Uthmān. He then saluted 'Uthmān as Caliph and all the people including 'Ali followed him and took the oath of allegiance.

An unfortunate incident took place immediately on the accession of 'Uthmān. 'Obeidullah, son of the deceased Caliph, was informed by some one that his father's assassin Abū Lūlū had been seen conversing privately with

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[1] Tabari, Vol. III, page 295—298.

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Hormuzan the Persian prince and a Christian slave belonging to Sa'ad and when they were surprised they had hastily dispersed dropping a poniard which resembled the one used in the murder of the Caliph. Infuriated at this information and rashly assuming a conspiracy 'Obeidullah put to sword both Hormuzan and the Christian slave. He was apprehended by Sa'ad and brought before the new Caliph. Some people including 'Ali advocated that the extreme penalty should be imposed upon 'Obeidullah for murdering two persons without any evidence connecting them with the assassination of the second Caliph and that no distinctions should be made in matters of justice. With equal vehemence others protested against the adoption of such a course saying that 'Only yesterday 'Umar was killed, should we today kill his son.' 'Amr bin Al-'Aas advised the Caliph not to interfere in the matter as it had taken place before his assumption of office. The Caliph could not, however, connive at the crime nor could he start his Caliphate by shedding the blood of 'Umar's son. The deceased person had left no heirs. By the laws of escheat the State inherited their property and the Caliph could, as their heir, exercise the option to demand the murderer's death or to accept blood money in lieu thereof. In view of the fact that public opinion was divided in the matter and a sentence of death was likely to have great political repercussion the Caliph adopted the second course and himself paid the blood money to the State treasury.

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Declaration of State Policy

On his accession the Caliph sent a number of letters to his governors and others which indicate the policies he proposed to adopt in the governance of the State.

To governors and other high officials he wrote, 'God has bidden the rulers to become guardians of the community and not to be merely tax collectors. Officers preceding you had acted as guardians and servants of the

people. I feel that senior officials may cease to discharge their responsibility as guardians and devote themselves to tax collection alone. If they will do so modesty, righteousness and faithfulness will desert them. The best course is that you should take interest in the affairs of Muslims. Whatever is due to them give it to them and whatever is due to the State take it from them. Similarly, whatever is due to *Zimmis* give it to them and take from them whatever is due to you. Even with your enemies your conduct should be upright. Win them by your uprightness and fulfilment of covenants.[1]'

To the officers of the armed forces posted on the frontiers he wrote –

'You are the protectors of Islam from the hands of its enemies. 'Umar had prescribed certain regulations for you which are not unknown to me. In fact, they were drafted in consultation with me Beware! That I do not get reports about any one of you that you have transgressed in any manner. If you will do so, you will be replaced by better people. You should always be mindful of your conduct. I will watch over whatever God has entrusted to my care.

Tax Collectors were addressed as follows :

'God has created all beings with fairness and justice. He accepts only what is right and just. Give what is right and take what is right. Trust begets trust. Adhere to it strictly and do not be of those who fail to discharge it. That way you will be counted among those who misappropriated. Faithfulness begets faithfulness. Do not oppress the orphans and those with whom you have covenanted (*Zimmis*). God will punish those who will oppress them.'

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[1] Tabari, Vol. V, page 49.

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The message to the common man was—

'Remember your success and eminence have been attained by following and obeying the leaders. Beware that the love of this world may not deviate you from the right path. On the acquisition of three traits the community is likely to incline towards departure from the prescribed code. Those three things are (i) luxury (ii) excessive wedlock with bondswomen (iii) separate manner of recitation of Qur'ān by the Arabs and non-Arabs. The Prophet (PBUH) has stated that in foreign ways lies the seed of infidelity. When the foreign ways will overtake the Muslims they will start deviating and making innovations.[1]'

Military Conquest

The conquests made by 'Umar in Iraq and Iran had shaken the Persian empire but it had not been demolished. Bulk of Iran still remained with it and Yezdgird and the Persian chieftains were constantly endeavouring to wrest back the territories lost by them. They instigated a number of uprisings.

Azerbaijan, which was then a part of Iran, had been overrun by the second Caliph in A.H. 22 and its people had agreed to pay annually a tribute of about Rs.4 lakhs. On 'Umar's death they refused to make the payment and turned out the Muslim collectors. 'Uthmān directed Walid bin 'Uqba, the governor of Kufa, to take steps against them. In A.H. 24 Walid attacked Azerbaijan and its people again agreed to pay the tribute. Under the command of Salmān he despatched a force to Armenia but because of its difficult terrain it could not be completely conquered.

The same year the people of Ray had revolted but they were quelled by Abū Musā Ash'āri.

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[1] *Ibid.*

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Likewise, there was an uprising in Alexandria which was put down.

Byzantine Sector

After his exploits in Armenia in A.H. 24 Walid had hardly reached Mosul when he received the command of 'Uthmān to despatch a force of eight to ten thousand soldiers to Syria for the assistance of 'Mu'āviya who was facing a massive attack by the Byzantine Emperor. Walid immediately sent 8000 soldiers under the command of Salmān who joining the Syrian forces under their commander Habib Fahri repulsed the Byzantine attack and captured a number of their fortresses.[1] Following up their success the Muslim forces overran Asia Minor and penetrating Armenia they established contact with their compatriots on the Persian border near the Caspian. From there they went as far as Tiflis and to the shores of the Black Sea. Aided by naval expeditions from the African coasts the triumphant march was extended in Levant and Asia Minor.

Supersession of 'Amr bin al-'Aas by Abi Sarh

Shortly before his death 'Umar had appointed 'Abdullah bin Sa'ad bin Abi Sarh, foster-brother of 'Uthmān, as the Officer in-Charge of Tax Collections in Egypt and had limited the authority of the governor, 'Amr bin Al-'Aas, to civil and military administration. Possessed of administrative ability, Abi Sarh showed his mark and augmented the State revenues considerably. He, however, fell out with 'Amr who had not relished this separation of powers. 'Amr went to Madinah and protested to 'Uthmān 'To be over the army', he said, 'and not over the revenue, was but holding the cow's horns while another milked her'. He insisted that the bifurcation of functions should be ended or he would resign. 'Uthmān tried to persuade him to

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[1] Tabari, Vol. III, page 308—309

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let the arrangements continue but 'Amr was adamant and submitted his resignation. Thereupon Abi Sarh was appointed as governor of Egypt.

With complete powers in his hands Abi Sarh, under the directions of the Caliph, carried his arms along the coast beyond Tripoli and Barca and threatened Carthage and the far west. To meet this challenge the Byzantine governor, Gregory, after receiving reinforcement from the Emperor, advanced with an army of one lakh twenty thousand soldiers. This far outnumbered the army at the disposal of Abi Sarh and he asked for reinforcement of Madinah. 'Uthmān despatched a contingent of 10000 men under the command of 'Abdullah son of Zubair. It included a number of veterans and companions and sons of Abū Bakr and 'Abbās. The outcome of this battle was going to determine the fate of the whole African coast. 'Uthmān promised a personal reward of one-fifth of the share of the State in the spoils of war. On the other wide Gregory declared a reward of one lakh guineas to anyone killing Abi Sarh in the encounter. 'Abdullah bin Zubair, therefore, made an announcement of similar reward to the warrior slaying Gregory and in addition promised the hand of Gregory's daughter. A fierce and bitterly contested engagement took place, the fiercest of the battles after Cadesiya and Yermuk, in which the Byzantines were worsted with great slaughter. Gregory was killed by 'Abdullah bin Zubair and he got the prize. Abi Sarh was given a fifty of the royal share of the booty and the rest was sent to Madinah. Advancing further Abi Sarh annexed Algiers and Morocco. According to some historians 'Uthmān directed an attack upon Spain and 'Abdullah bin Nafey got a foothold upon the continent.

Abi Sarh was to gain yet greater renown as the first commander of a Muslim fleet. Mu'āviya, the governor of Syria, was strongly advocating him from the time of 'Umar

the establishment of a naval fleet for more effective execution of the Muslim expeditions and strengthening of their positions. Without it, he emphasised, the Byzantines Empire could not be demolished nor could Islam spread to Europe and Africa. He had sought the permission of 'Umar to build up a naval force. He had written, 'The Isles of Levant are so close to the Syrian shore that you might almost hear the barking of the dogs and the cackling of the hens; give me leave to attack them[1]' 'Umar asked for the views of 'Amr who advised him thus, 'The sea is a boundless expanse whereon great ships look but tiny specks; there is nought saving the heavens above and the water beneath, when the wind lulls, the sailors' heart is broken; when tempestuous, his senses reel. Trust it little, fear it much. Man at sea is an insect floating on a splinter, now engulfed, now scared to death'.[2] On receipt of this advice, 'Umar forbade Mu'āviya to embark the Muslim upon ships. When 'Uthmān took over, Mu'āviya renewed his proposal and after repeated requests 'Uthmān gave the permission. The first fleet was equipped in A.H. 28 under the command of Abu Qais as admiral. It was joined by Abi Sarh with a compliment of ships manned by Egyptians and Arab warriors. The fleet advanced upon Cyprus which was easily overtaken and a large number of men were made captives. On the day of victory Abū Darda, a companion of the Prophet (PBUH), burst into tears. Some one asked him the reason for shedding of tears, instead of rejoicing over the event and he replied, 'These Cypriots were their own rulers. They dominated over others and oppressed them. As they disobeyed the commands of God they have been reduced to the state you are witnessing. When people ignore the ordinances of God they are subjected to utter humiliation'. According to Bukhāri, this victory had been prophesied by the Prophet who had announced the glad

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[1] Tabari, Vol. III, page 312.
[2] *Ibid.*, page 315.

tidings of paradise for those embarking upon the first Muslim naval expedition. The Cypriots agreed to pay the same revenue to the Arabs as they were paying to the Emperor but the Caliph remitted the poll-tax as he could not, in the uncertain state of things, guarantee their protection. It is reported that Abū Qais carried out fifty expeditions by land and sea and was at last killed while exploring the Grecian sea port.[1]

The Byzantines made large preparations to retrieve their positions. Three years after the fall of Cyprus they gathered a fleet of five to six hundred vessels of war and defied the Arabs at sea.[2] Abi Sarh was appointed to take up the challenge. With a squadron much inferior in weight and numbers but manned by valiant warriors, Abi Sarh intercepted the Byzantine fleet near Alexandria. For a while both the sides lay at anchor. The Muslims spent the night in prayers and recitation of the Qur'ān while the Greeks kept on chiming the bells. The morning witnessed a furious engagement in which the two sides grappled with each other and a hand to hand fight with swords and daggers ensued. The slaughter was great on both the sides but the Greeks could not withstand the intrepidity of the Arabs and fled. Constantine who was commanding the Greek navy sailed away to Syracuse where he was murdered by his own people.

On his appointment as admiral of the fleet some leading persons like Muhammad son of Abū Bakr and Muhammad son of Abū Hudhaifah voiced resentment against the Caliph. When their scathing remarks reached the ears of Abi Sarh he excluded the detractors from participation in the naval battle. Shorn of the credit of victory they were further incensed. Jealously prevented them from appreciating the great service Abi Sarh had done

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[1] Tabari, Vol. III, page 317.
[2] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 30.

to the country. Joining the faction which had been created on the relinquishment of the office of the governor by 'Amr bin al'Aas, these shortsighted and unpatriotic persons began to cast obloquy upon the Caliph.

Discontentment in other Sectors

Sa'ad, the governor of Kūfa, had been deposed by 'Umar in the last year of his office and Mughira was posted in his place. Mughira did not give a good account of himself and it is said that 'Umar had suggested before his death that Sa'ad should be re-appointed. Shortly after his accession 'Uthmān removed Mughira and Sa'ad was reinstated. Sa'ad began to live in luxurious ways and took substantial advance of money from the Chancellor of the treasury, Ibn Mas'ūd. When Sa'ad delayed its return, Ibn Mas'ūd insisted upon its immediate payment. This led to differences between them. Soon faction developed among the people as they began to align themselves to either side. The matter was reported to 'Uthmān who recalled Sa'ad and appointed Walid Ibn 'Uqba in his place. Walid was a brave warrior. Immediately upon assuming the office he had to face a number of uprisings in the East. Displaying great vigour and gallantry he launched successive campaigns and managed for a time to divert the rebellious spirit of the people at home. But in the end the unruly element began to malign him of intemperate living and taking of liquor. Instead of ignoring these wild accusations, the Caliph recalled him and appointed Sa'id Ibn al-'Aas as the governor.

Abū Mūsa, the governor of Basra, was likewise finding things difficult in that city. Even in the time of 'Umar a group had started opposing him. He continued in his office for six years in the reign of the third Caliph but people were getting impatient of his rule. An opportunity arose which gave the people the desired handle. The Kurds rebelled in A.H. 29 and Abū Mūsa had to take an

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expedition against them. He addressed a gathering of the people and expounded to them the virtues of *Jihād* and of enduring hardness as good soldiers in going to war on foot. The next morning the people watched to see whether he would be himself true to his teachings. They were greatly annoyed to find that Abū Mūsa came out riding a fine horse and his ample luggage followed him ladden on a long string of forty mules. The people confronted him and asked him to reconcile the difference between his preachings and practice. Abū Mūsa could hardly give any explanation. A group of men went to Madinah and complained that Abū Mūsa had drained the land of its wealth and had pampered the Quraish. He was replaced by 'Abdullah Ibn 'Amrr.

Discontent and Sedition

The Caliphate of 'Uthman lasted for twelve years. Historians are generally agreed that the first six years were popular and witnessed great expansion of the Empire but thereafter a number of disruptive forces were unleashed and discontent began to emerge which culminated in sedition and finally in the assassination of the aged Caliph. At first the discontent was directed against the governors of various provinces. To appease the disgruntled people the governors were unwisely changed. This appeasement instead of giving any satisfaction to the malcontents emboldened them to be more cantankerous and to pursue their sinister design to erode the foundations of the Empire from within. Not that the governors had done anything unjust or highhanded or had neglected the welfare of the people. The tribal structure of Arabs had not disappeared and the Arab tribes, conscious of their power and the role they had played in the rapid expansion of the Empire, were getting impatient of the control of the Quraish, and were developing a spirit of opposition to all authority. A series of misunderstanding or acts of provocation embittered the tense situation and this was exploited by the other races

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particularly the Magians and the Jews who had been subjugated by the Arab arms to cause internal dissension. It was so clearly camouflaged that the Arab tribes in their state of political immaturity could not discern the sinister purpose and gave full support to it.

Replacement of 'Amr-ibn-al-'Aas by Abi Sarh as governor of Egypt had led to appearance of factions in that province. The group which favoured 'Amr-ibn-al-'Aas began to impute motives to this appointment by 'Uthman. Muhammad son of Abū Bakr and Muhammad son of Abū Hodzeifa who aspired for the governorship of provinces but had been rejected by the Caliph began to sow the seed of discontent. Notwithstanding the brilliant victories achieved by Abi Sarh and augmentation of State revenues at his hands, these people labelled his appointment as governor as an act of nepotism. They said, "Uthmān hath changed the ordinances of his predecessors and made captain of the fleet a man whom the Prophet (PBUH) had proscribed, and desired to have put to death; and such like men also hath he put in chief command at Kūfa and Basra elsewhere". It is not known what had led to his proscription on the fall of Makkah but that was certainly before he had accepted Islam. After embracing the faith all his past sins were obliterated according to the Quranic law but his detractors and that of the Caliph would not let that episode be closed.

Kūfa and Basra had become hot beds of intrigue. The turbulent and factious atmosphere of these cities became rapidly and dangerously charged with the sentiments of disloyalty and rebellion and an unwise change of governors aggravated the evil. Sa'ad, the conqueror of Mada'in, and governor of Kūfa was removed by 'Uthmān and replaced by Mughira. Mughira did not come upto expectations and Sa'ad was reinstated. He had, however, to be recalled within an year of his reinstatement. The next governor Walid bin 'Uqba was for a time popular

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and successful. He had served in various capacities from A.H. 9 to A.H. 30 and had been appointed as Tax Collector by the prophet. He held that office in the reign of Abū Bakr and was later appointed as Commander of Muslim forces in Jordan. 'Umar had appointed him as his political agent in Mesopotamia. He was a capable administrator and warrior of renown. An undercurrent of opposition was, however, gaining in volume and strength. A murder took place and the culprits were sentenced to death and executed by the city gate. The relations of these persons bore great ill-will against the governor and as a vendetta began to defame him and accuse him of intemperate habits. The charges were levelled before the Caliph but were repeatedly dismissed by him as lacking in legal proof. The conspirators managed to detach from Walid's hand the signet ring of office while he was asleep and furnished fabricated evidence before the Caliph that Walid was found sleeping from the effects of a debauchery. Walid was thereupon recalled to Madinah, scourged according to Shariat law and removed from office.

Walid was succeeded by Sa'id-ibn-Al-'Aas, a young kinsman of 'Uthmān, who had been brought up by 'Umar and had seen active service in Egypt. His appointment was not liked by the people of Kūfa for by now they had become impatient of the authority of the Quraish. They said, "One Quraishite succeedeth another in this governorship, the last no better than the first. It is but out of the frying pan into the fire." Sa'id wrote to 'Uthmān that 'licence reigned at Kūfa, that noble birth passed for nothing and that the bedouins were out of control with the bit between their teeth.' He declared his intention of putting down arrogance and sedition with a rod of iron. But for a time he had to leave the internal matters and to give attention to troubles at the frontiers. After the conquest of Armenia and Tibristān he was again confronted with troubles at home.

Meanwhile storm was brewing at Basra. The Caliph had listened to the importunate demands of the people and instead of promptly checking their audacity and insubordination he had deposed the Governor Abū Mūsa and appointed his cousin Ibn ‘Āmir in his place.

Causes of Discontent

Near the end of ‘Uthmān’s reign the ferment which had been secretly brewing in Egypt, Kūfa and Basra came to the surface. The Arab tribes were displeased with the Quraish and the Quraishites were themselves divided and jealous of the Omeyyad branch and the favourites of the Caliph. Other causes were also at work, which unimportant in themselves, were adroitly seized by the enemies of the Caliph and utilised to increase the disaffection. People began to talk loosely that the Caliph was not following the precepts of the Prophet (PBUH) and the preceding Caliphs. Few realised the consequences of such irresponsible talks and puerile accusations.

(1) He made certain changes in the routine of the annual pilgrimage which trivial in themselves excited strong disapprobation at his court. It is said that he had offered full prayers in Mina though the Prophet and the first two Caliphs had said shortened prayers as are permissible during the course of a journey. Questioned by ‘Abdul Rehmān to explain the innovation, the Caliph replied that he had said the full prayers so that the local people upon whom it was incumbent to say full prayers might not consider that shortened prayers was the rule. He discountenanced the motive imputed by ‘Abdul Rehmān that he was thinking of residing at Makkah or its suburbs. It was also said that he had got tents pitched at Mina for shelter which had not been done ever before. The reason for their not coming into use earlier might have been only their non-availability. The army had adopted their use when it had noticed foreign troops using them. In fact, use of

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Shamiānās had given the name of Fustāt to the city founded by 'Amr-bin-al-'Aas. But when the Caliph got them pitched for the protection of the people from scorching sun it evoked bitter criticism.

(2) In the time of the Prophet and the first two Caliphs *Zakāt* was not levied on horses but 'Uthmān included them in the list. The reason for their exemption earlier might have been only their shortage and use in warfare. After a series of conquests by the Arabs the position had materially changed and 'Uthmān though it appropriate that *Zakāt* should be given on horses as on camels.

(3) Large scale warfare had necessitated heavy expenditure in equipping the armies and the naval forces. Besides the money received as the State share of the spoils of war, 'Uthmān also spent money received as *Sadaqa* and *Zakāt* on the prosecution of war as also on certain welfare projects. His detractors voiced the criticism that the Qur'ān has prescribed the heads of expenditure for *Sadaqa* and *Zakāt* and they could not be spent on other purposes. 'Uthmān explained that he had taken the amount only as a loan from the State treasury for successful conduct of various expeditions and the amount would be refunded in due course. But many people did not appreciate that any government has authority to appropriate funds from one head to another for expenditure on urgent business.

(4) The Prophet (PBUH) had reserved a pasture ground at Naq'ih for the grazing of State horses and camels. 'Umar had added two more. In 'Uthmān's time increase in the number of State horses and camels necessitated opening of new pasture grounds and he set up a number of them. When most of the animals were despatched to the frontiers, the Caliph permitted animals of Banū Omeyyad to be grazed in some of these pastures.

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(5) Even such beneficial works as enlargement of the grand square of the Ka'aba and the Great Mosque at Madinah did not escape adverse criticism. The enlargement of the Grand square had been started by 'Umar and it was carried on by 'Uthmān during his visits to Makkah. The owners of the houses demolished in the course of enlargement refused to accept compensation and raised great outcry against it. In A.H. 29 'Uthmān decided to enlarge the Great Mosque at Madinah and convert it into a masonry structure. Some companions objected to financing of the project from State resources but this did not deter 'Uthmān and he got the work done at his own expense. The supports of trunks of trees were removed and the masonry roof was rested on hewn stones. The kachcha walls were replaced by brick walls and they were richly carved and inlaid with precious stones.

(6) 'Uthmān's uncle Hakam ibn al-'Aas used to ill treat some of his neighbours in the days of ignorance and to mock the Prophet (PBUH). He was exiled from Madinah. After some years 'Uthmān pleaded for him with the Prophet (PBUH). The Prophet did not agree initially but after repeated requests he relented and promised to consider the matter.[1] His death left the matter undecided. 'Uthmān successively appealed to Abū Bakr and 'Umar but they declined to give a permission which had been refused by the Prophet. On his accession to the Caliphate 'Uthmān allowed Hakam to come back to Madinah after a lapse of about seventeen years. When this was made a subject of criticism, the Caliph explained that though the Prophet had initially refused, ultimately he was inclined to grant the permission.

(7) Much ado was made of the fact that the Caliph had given one-fifth share of the State's share of the spoils

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[1] *Isāba:* Vol. I, page 345.

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of African wars to Abi Sarh. The Caliph had announced that this share would be given as reward to serve as an incentive for gallantry but when this was objected to he got the reward refunded by Abi Sarh. A false accusation was also made that he had allowed his nephew Marwān to purchase the States' share of the spoils for an inadequate price. The people talked glibly that he was partisan and generous towards his relatives. How far this accusation rested on truth can be discerned from 'Uthmān's own speech. "People in Madinah say that I have a soft corner for my relations and am generous towards them. But my affection or regard from them is not at the cost of anyone's rights. I give them only what is legitimately due to them and that, too, out of my own wealth. I have not considered it lawful to appropriate public money for myself or for anyone else. In the time of the Prophet, Abū Bakr and 'Umar, I had given large benefactions to people even though in those days I was greedy and miserly. Now that I have approached the fag end of my life and have entrusted my property to my children and family, unbelievers spread false allegations against me. I have not burdened any city with tribute to expend it wastefully but have spent it for the good and prosperity of the people. I get one-fifth share but I do not take anything from it for my own self. It has been spent by Muslims on deserving persons. Not a pie is misappropriated from God's property nor do I take anything from it. I live on my own income."

(8) Stories were spread that he ill-treated some of the companions. As an instance, the case of Abū Zarr Ghifāry was cited. A baneful effect of the rapid and sweeping conquests was that people became rich overnight and they came in contact with people who lived in luxurious ways. 'Gorgeous palaces, crowds of slaves, multitude of horses, camels, flocks and herds, profusion of costly garments, sumptuous fare and splendid equipage were the fashion, not only in Syria and Iraq but had begun

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to find their way even into the Hejaz.'[1] These riches and extravagance rushing in like a flood were demoralising the people. The stricter class of believers recoiled against this luxury and indulgence. Abū Zarr Ghifāry, himself an ascetic, was vociferous in their condemnation. Proceeding to Syria he admonished the people of Damascus and prescribed repentance to them. 'This gold and silver of yours', he cried, 'shall one day be heated in the fire of hell and therewith shall ye be scared in your foreheads, sides and backs, ye ungodly spendthrifts! Wherefore, spend now the same in alms leaving yourselves enough but for your daily bread or else woe be to you on that day.' These utterances disturbed the public mind. Apprehensive of public disorder, Muāviya despatched Abū Zarr to Madinah informing 'Uthmān that he was a sincere but misguided enthusiast. Abū Zarr persisted before the Caliph that the great and the wealthy must be forced to disgorge their riches. 'Uthmān tried to reason with him. "After men have completely fulfilled their legal obligations', he asked, 'what power remaineth with me to compel them to any further sacrifice." Arguments were, however, of no avail. Realising that he could not mould the Caliph in his way, Abū Zarr went away to Rabaza and there lived for a time the like of a hermit and died in penury. Ibn Mas'ūd happening to pass that way, said his funeral prayers. The death of Ibn Mas'ūd himself after a few days added to the pathos of the incident. "The plaintive tale was soon in every one's mouth; and the banishment of the pious ascetic and preacher of righteousness was made much of by the enemies of the Caliph. The necessity was forgotten, the obloquy remained." Stories were also circulated that the Caliph had ill-treated Ibn Mas'ūd and 'Ammār, a supporter of 'Ali. That there was no truth in these rumours is proved by the fact that soon after 'Ammār was chosen among others to go

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of the early Caliphate, page 309.

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to the Capitals of the provinces and to report upon the conduct of governors.

(9) A more serious charge levelled against the Caliph was that he had rescinded the Qur'ān. With the spread of Muslims to distantly separated areas and conversion of a large number of people, differences arose in the manner of recitation of the sacred text as it had been settled in the previous reign. Basra followed the reading of Abū Musa, Kūfa was guided by the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd and the text of Hems differed from that in use at Damascus. Hudhaifa who had seen the variants in the various provinces and Sa'id, the governor of Kūfa, urged upon 'Uthmān to recall all the variants and to issue the authoritative text 'before the believers began to differ in their scripture even as do the Jews and Christians.' In consultation with the leading companions, the Caliph appointed a syndicate of fittest persons whose authority could be relied upon to collate all the copies with the text in possession of Hafsa, widow of the Prophet. All the variations were reconciled by the syndicate and an authoritative exemplar was written and its copies were despatched to all the important cities for further reproduction. All the other manuscripts were gathered and consigned to flames. All sensible persons appreciated the uniformity that was thus secured and even to this day it is cited as a great achievement of the Caliph. But Ibn Mas'ūd who prided himself upon his faultless recitation of the text expressed displeasure which was exploited by factious people of Kūfa to trump up a charge of sacrilege against the Caliph. It was later on cited by the partisans of Abbāside dynasty as an 'unpardonable offence on the part of the ungodly Caliph.'

A spirit of turbulence and defiance of authority was spreading in the land. It was at this juncture that there appeared on the scene 'Abdullah ibn Saudā, more

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commonly known as Ibn Saudā or Ibn Sabā, a Jew from south of Arabia who tried to wreck the Caliphate from within. To camouflage his activities he accepted Islam and put on the garb of piety. He established contacts with the most rebellious and rowdy people in all the big cities and succeeded in spreading a network of seditioners. His chief ally and lieutenant was Mālik Ushtur who was sowing the seed of sedition in Kūfa and Basra. When Ibn Sabā's activities came to notice he was turned out from Basra by the governor Ibn 'Āmir. He went to Kūfa and was expelled from there as well but not before he had given dangerous impulse to the already discontented classes. He found a safe retreat in Egypt where Muhammad ibn Abū Bakr and Muhammad ibn Hudhaifa became his willing tools.

Ibn Sabā adopted two fold method to gain his objective. One was to create schism and differences in their religious sphere. For this he began spreading strange and startling doctrines that the Prophet Muhammad was to come again even as Messiah was expected to come back and that 'Ali was his legate. Ultimately he began to preach divinity of 'Ali. 'Ali asked him to desist from such blasphemy but when he persisted 'Ali consigned him to flames on assuming the office of Caliph. The second method was to alienate the people from the Caliph and the governors by saying that they were godless people, that impiety and wrong was rampant and the Caliph and the governor were doing nothing to arrest the wickedness and that truth and justice could not be attained till they were overthrown. Charges of nepotism and partisanship were freely levelled against them. A number of preachers masquerading as pious and religious men were employed to spread these wicked doctrines and vicious propaganda. Seeing that Muhammad son of Abū Bakr and Muhammad son of Hudhaifa were actively assisting Ibn Sabā, Abi Sarh wrote against them to the Caliph but he restrained Abi Sarh from taking any action against them. He wrote, 'the acts of

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Muhammad bin Abū Bakr be condoned having regard to the position of his father and sister and likewise Muhammad bin Hudhaifa should not be called to account as he is a dear son of Abū Hudhaifa and a Quraishite youth.' The leniency shown to them was grossly abused for both joined the rebellion when it broke out and figured amongst the most dangerous enemies of the Caliph.

Turbulence first appeared at Kūfa. In a gathering at his house Sa'id, the governor, described the vale of Chaldaea (Sawād) as the garden of the Quraish. This was greatly resented by the Arab tribes who said, 'as if without us—our strong arms and our good lances—they could have even won this garden.' This resentment was exploited by Malik Ushtur to stimulate disaffection. The main demand of the discontented people was that they should be allowed to get possession of the land of *Zimmis* who had been declared hereditary tenants of the Sawād by Caliph 'Umar. They demanded that this policy should be reversed and the ban imposed upon them in the matter of acquisition of land should be lifted. Rejection of this demand by 'Uthmān turned the malcontents into implacable enemies and they began to show their defiance of authority openly. In a sitting at the house of the governor these people had the audacity to severely beat up a youth and his father when he tried to save his son. Emboldened by this incident the rowdy element began to openly advocate rebellion. Sa'id reported the situation to the Caliph who ordered that ten of the ringleaders should be expelled to Syria. They included Mālik al-Ushtur, Zeid ibn Sohān, Jundub, 'Orwa and Thabit ibn Qays. Mu'aviya tried to reason with them and to keep them under control but the firebrands were a difficult lot to deal with. Mu'aviya wrote to Caliph, 'You have sent to me a group of persons who speak the language of Satan. They invite the people to follow the precepts of Qur'ān only to confuse them and to create misgiving in their minds. Everyone cannot fathom their ultimate object which

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is only to create differences in the community and to cause schism. For them Islam is an irksome burden which agitates them. Devilry is enshrined in their hearts. They have spoiled and misguided many people of Kūfa and if they continue to reside among the Syrians they will by their evil ways and sorcery swerve them as well from the right path. Therefore, I will request you to order their return to their own city of Kūfa.'[1] They were sent back to Kūfa but on reaching there they resumed their subversive activities and had against to be expelled. This time they were sent to Hems to 'Abdur Rahmān son of Khālid who gave them the treatment they deserved upon which they professed repentance and asked for forgiveness. For a time they lived quietly but Ibn Sabā got in touch with them and instigated them to resume their activities.

Meanwhile storm was gathering at Kūfa. Most of the important men who could exercise some restraining influence, were away on military expedition to Persia. The malcontents in league with the Egyptian faction went ahead with their plan of subversion. Sa'id, the governor, went to Madinah to report the situation to the Caliph. The conspirators thought that the time was propitious to take some bold step. They sent message to the exiles in Syria to return and Mālik Ushtur hastened to join them. Yazid, a brother of one of the exiles, raised the standard of rebellion. Gathering about a thousand men he proceeded to Aljara to block the return of Sa'id from Madinah. The acting governor 'Amr bin Hārith and the renowned warrior Q'aqā'a tried unsuccessfully to prevent them from launching open rebellion. When Sa'id, accompanied only by a servant, reached Aljara on his way back to Kūfa the rebels told him that they had no use for him and he should return to Madinah. When his servant tried to push his way through he was killed. Sa'id had to perforce return to

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[1] Tabari, Vol. III, page 367.

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Madinah. On the demand of the rebels he was deposed by the Caliph and Abū Mūsā was appointed governor in his place. If instead of yielding to the importunate demand of the rebels the Caliph had given them condign punishment, he might have probably averted the crisis that was soon to overtake the land. The rebels were scheming, unscrupulous and wicked while the gentle Caliph did not want to err on the side of harshness or to abandon his scruples of justice and righteousness.

As a part of the conspiracy the rebels began sending letters containing all sorts of accusations against the governors to the leading companions at Madinah. Getting alarmed these companions contacted the Caliph. It was decided that four trusted persons should be sent to the four provincial capitals-Damascus, Kūfa, Basra and Fustāt to make discreet enquiries. Accordingly Muhammad ibn Masalma, Osama ibn Zeid, 'Abdullah son of 'Umar and 'Ammār were deputed for the purpose. With the exception of 'Ammār, who was won over by the rebels and who stayed back, emissaries returned and reported that people were, by and large, satisfied and no complaint was found to be true. Even then, the Caliph declared that all genuine complaints will be looked into and he issued an edict, 'at the coming pilgrimage the various governors would, as usual, present themselves at Court. Whoever, then had cause of complaint against them or any other ground of dissatisfaction, should come forward on that occasion and substantiate the same, when wrong would be redressed, or else it behoved them to withdraw the baseless calumnies which were troubling men's minds.'

The governors attended the court as usual but no one came forward to make any complaint. Even so, rebellious activities were on the increase and rumours of treason were afloat. The Caliph asked for the counsel of the governors to put a stop to the machinations of the

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subversive element. Sa'id advised that the conspirators should be arrested and executed; Abū Sarh proposed that the stipends of the disloyal men should be cancelled while Ibn 'Aamir suggested that the rowdy people should be diverted by engaging in fresh campaigns. Mu'āviya was also in favour of taking stern action against them. To these suggestions the Caliph replied, 'Cruel measures I would not sanction. If rebellion was to come, no one should have the least to say against him. The millstone would grind round and round to the bitter end. Good had it been if before it began to revolve, he had been taken to his rest. There was nought left for him but to be quiet and to see that no wrong was done to any one.' While leaving the city Mu'āviya warned 'Uthmān of the danger facing him and requested him to retire to Syria where loyal people would rally round him. But the Caliph replied, 'Even to save my life I will not quit the land wherein the Prophet (PBUH) sojourned, nor the city wherein his sacred person resteth.' 'Then let me send an army to stand by thee', Said 'Mu'āviya.' 'Nay, that I will not' replied the Caliph, 'I never will put force on those who dwell round the Prophets' home by quartering bands of armed men upon them.' In that case, 'replied Mu'āviya, 'I see nought but destruction awaiting thee.' 'Then the Lord be my defence,' exclaimed the aged Caliph, 'and that sufficeth for me.' 'Uthmān was not unaware of the serious danger awaiting him but his conscience would not permit him to take drastic action like execution of the rebels nor did he like the army to assist him for that, he thought, was likely to engulf the land in civil war.

Open Revolt and Attack Upon Madinah

Even before the governors had reached their provinces, the conspirators had hatched a complete plan of action. It was to emerge simultaneously in a menacing force from Kufa, Basra and Fustāt and converge upon Madinah. There they would present a long roll of

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complaints against the governors to the Caliph and ask for their redress and removal of governors. If the request was not acceded to they would ask the Caliph to abdicate and enforce the demand at the point of sword.

Preparations were made in secret to execute this plan. On the pretext of visiting Makkah for performing the Lesser Pilgrimage, each band of the insurgents, numbering six hundred to one thousand, advanced simultaneously from Fustāt, Kufa and Basra. Abū Sarh, however, got to know of their plan and he sent information to the Caliph who directed that the rebels might be pursued but it was too late for they had proceeded too far to be overtaken. On return to Fustāt he learnt that Muhammad son of Abū Hudhaifa had usurped the governorship of Egypt and he had to flee for his life.

Learning that the insurgent had approached Madinah, 'Uthmān summoned the citizens and addressed them thus, 'It is against myself. Soon they will look back, with a longing eye, to this my Caliphate and wish that each day of the same had been a year in length because of the tumult and bloodshed, anarchy and ungodliness that will flood the land.' Soon the insurgents appeared and pitched their camps at the outskirts of the city. The citizens armed themselves and prepared to resist to the entry of the rebels. Thus foiled in their attempts they sent their envoys to the chief men of the city. 'We come', They said, 'to the Prophet's home, and resting place, and to ask that certain of the governors be deposed. Give us leave to enter.' But leave was refused. Each camp then sent its deputation to its candidate for the Caliphate. 'Ali was indignant at the messenger sent to him and branded them as rebels accursed of the Prophet. Talha and Zubair accorded similar reception to the deputations that waited upon them. The insurgents then played a ruse. They declared that they were satisfied at the Caliph's promise of reform and breaking camp they

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retired. The citizens of Madinah heaved a sigh of relief and put off their armours. All was quiet for a few days and the city led its normal life. Suddenly all the three insurgent bands reappeared at the city gates. Asked by 'Ali to account for their reappearance they pointed to a document which they said had been intercepted from a messenger heading towards Egypt. It was attested by the Caliph's seal and it contained orders to the Egyptian governor to seize the insurgents on return, to imprison some, torture others and to put to death the ringleaders. Suspecting that it was a fictitious document 'Ali asked how could its recovery by the Egyptian band on road to Fustāt be so promptly known to the groups returning to Kūfa and Basra in different directions as to bring them all together to Madinah. To this straight question there was no answer. There can be no doubt whatsoever that the documents was wholly fictitious. Firstly, it would have been sheer foolishness to believe that by writing a letter to the governor of Egypt and getting some men imprisoned or put to death, the Caliph could have put down the rebellion. Secondly, even if the Egyptian band could have been controlled in this manner, there was nothing to deter the insurgents of Basra and Kūfa. To take action against only one group and to leave other two groups to do whatsoever they liked was meaningless. Thirdly, if 'Uthmān wanted to quell the rebellion by force he could have summoned the armies from all the provinces, got the rebels encircled and completely smashed instead of writing an epistle to a governor to deal with the rebels of his province in a half-hearted clandestine manner. Fourthly, even if he felt that something for the better could emerge by writing a letter, there was no reason why he should not have written to Mu'āviya to intercept the rebels in Syria or Palestine instead of allowing them to cross that country and reach Egypt to foist the standard of rebellion there. Mu'āviya would have smashed them in no time. The rebels, however, insisted that the seal on the letter was that of the

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Caliph and the messenger was his servant. 'Uthmān denied all knowledge of the document but consented to receive a deputation of the rebels. The Caliph swore before the deputationists that the document was not issued under his authority nor he knew who had written it. The rebels cried, 'Either thou speakest the truth or thou art a liar. Either way, thou art unworthy of the Caliphate. We dare not leave the sceptre in thy hands. Resign for the Lord hath deposed thee.' Resolutely the Caliph replied, 'The garment wherewith the Lord hath girded me I will in no case put off; but any evil ye complain of, that I am ready to put away from me.' The insurgents threatened to fight till he abdicated or was slain. With dignity and firmness the Caliph answered, 'Death I prefer; as for fighting, I have said it already. My people shall not fight, had that been my desire, I had summoned legions to my side.'

By gaining a footing in the city the insurgents had gained a part of their objective. On the following Friday, the Caliph addressed them thus, 'Ye are aware that the men of Madinah hold you to be accursed of the mouth of the Prophet (PBUH), for that ye have risen up against his Caliph and vicegerent. Wherefore wipe out now your evil deeds by repentance and by good deeds atone for the same.' A number of loyal citizen also admonished them. Instead of paying any heed the rebels became violent and threw stones at the citizens one of which struck the Caliph and he fell down unconscious and had to be carried to his home. After this incident the rebels blockaded the Caliph's house except the entrance which was guarded by a bodyguard of armed people including a son each of 'Ali, Talha and Zubair. It is amazing that besides ineffectively guarding the gate of the Caliph's house the citizens of Madinah including many heroes of Islam hardly did anything to protect the Caliph or to repell the insurgents. It is said that Merwān and some other's had accused 'Ali as the prime author of the insurrection and this led to his

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abstaining from giving any real assistance to the Caliph. It is also said that the Caliph had, with a view to avoid bloodshed, himself forbade fighting against the rebels. The fact, however, remains that the people of Madinah, notwithstanding the defenceless state of the city, did not raise an effective opposition to prevent the perpetration of a dastardly crime by the heartless regicides. They did not realise that defiance against constituted authority and open rebellion required to be met by bold and uncompromising measures in the larger interests of the State. Once violent methods were adopted for the removal of a Caliph, it was bound to create a dangerous precedent and to lead to schism, chaos and anarchy. 'Uthmān vainly tried to persuade the rebels to desist from such a course of action, but in utter disregard of the fatal danger confronting him he refused to bow down to the threat of the regicides and to lay down the reigns of office. Nobly he appealed to them, 'My fellow citizens! I have prayed to the Lord for you that when I am taken away he may set the Caliphate aright. Ye have risen upon to slay the Lord's elect. Have a care, ye men! The taking of life is lawful but for three things—apostasy, murder and adultery. Taking my life without such a cause, ye but suspend the sword over your own necks. Sedition and bloodshed shall not depart for ever from your midst!'

The blockade had now lasted several weeks. News reached the rebels that both Mu'āviya and Ibn 'Aamir had despatched strong columns to crush the rebels. They redoubled their efforts to gain their objective. They closed every approach to the Caliph's house and did not even allow water to be taken inside. They put utmost pressure on the Caliph to make him abdicate but with supreme unconcern he stood by his principles. Most of the inhabitants were shocked at this barbarity and violence but they had neither the organisation nor the courage to oppose the rebels. Some even quitted Madinah. On 18th Zul Hijj

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the rebels attacked from all sides. Under the order of 'Uthmān his small band of defenders retreated within the mansion gates. They had to cover their retreat by a discharge of archery which killed one of the insurgents. Thereupon the insurgents rushed at the gate and when it did not give way to hammering they began to burn it down. Meanwhile others gaining access to the house from an adjoining roof attacked the guard killing one and severely injuring Merwān and overpowering others. Calmly the aged Caliph sat reading the Qur'ān in an inner chamber. Three assassins rushed upon him one after another but observing his composure, dignity and unruffled demeanour they retired saying, 'it would be murder to lay hands upon him thus.' Muhammad son of Abu Bakr had, however, no such scruples. He advanced and caught the Caliph by his beard. The Caliph remonstrated, 'son of my brother; thy father would not have served me so. The Lord help me! To him I flee for refuge from thee.' The admonition touched the heart of even this scoundrel and also retired. Thereupon, the insurgent leaders including Al-Ghāficky, Sudān, Kanāna ibn Bishr, 'Amr ibn al-Hamac crowded upon the Caliph and struck him with their swords. Clutching the Qur'ān in his hands and pressing it to his bosom the Caliph fell down. His wife, Nāila, threw herself on the wounded Caliph to shield him from further assault but the merciless crew gave a sword cut which severed some fingers of her hand. One of the Caliph's slaves killed Sudān, the leader of the insurgents but was immediately himself slain. The blood thirstly savages plunged their weapons in the body of the dying Caliph and he breathed his last reciting the Qur'ānic verse, 'Verily, the men have gathered forces against thee, whereupon, be afraid of the same. But (the taunt) only increased their faith, and they said, 'the Lord sufficeth for us; He is the best Protector' even while blood flowed upon the leaves of the open Qur'ān smearing the

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verse, 'If they rebel, surely they are schismatics, thy Lord will swiftly avenge thee.'

Having accomplished their dastardly deed the assassins retired to plunder the treasury. Upon their departure the palace gates were closed and for three days the dead bodies of 'Uthmān, Mughira and the slave lay in silence within. Then Jubeir ibn Mot'im and Hakim ibn Hizām (nephew of Khadija) obtained permission to bury the dead bodies. The small funeral procession including Zobeir, Hasan son of Ali and the kinsmen of 'Uthmān mournfully carried the corpses in the dust of evening to the burial ground of Baqi'e outside the city even while the heartless ruffians pelted the bier with stones.

The respectable citizens were aghast at this horrible brutality. Sa'id bin Zaid, a relation of 'Umar said, 'If the mount of Uhad were to fall on you for this ghastly crime, it would be in fitness of things.' Abū Hudhaifa prophesied, 'A gulf has been created in Islam which will not close till the day of Resurrection.' Ibn 'Abbās said, 'If all the people had been privy to the assassination of 'Uthmān, there would have been showers of stones from the skies even as fell upon the people of Lot.' 'Abdullah bin Salām lamented, 'Today the power of Arabs has been finished.' 'Aiyesha said, 'Poor 'Uthmān has been murdered. By Lord, his record of deeds was clean like clean linen;' When the blood soaked shirt of 'Uthmān and the severed fingers of Nāi'la reached Mu'āviya in Syria and shown to the congregation there was loud mourning and the demand of vengeance was on many a lip.

In his martyrdom 'Uthmān demonstrated supreme resignation and unique calmness and composure. By refusing to submit to the unlawful demand of the rebels to abdicate, he exhibited firmness of character and a deep conviction that affairs of State cannot be trifled with or be dictated by misguided and unruly element. He preferred to

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die than to relinquish the vicegerency of the Prophet. By refusing to listen to the advice of his well-wishers to summon the army to crush the rebels, he showed great concern for his people and his utmost endeavour to avoid a civil war. By his resolution and nobility, his utter indifference to the fatal peril facing him and by his unruffled conduct he set an example which does not find a parallel in history apart from the glorious martyrdom on the field of Karbala.

'Uthmān not only consolidated the conquests made by 'Umar, he extended the Islamic domain to wider horizons. In the west the triumphant march of Muslim armies was continued to Tripoli, Burqa and Morocco. In the east the remaining parts of Persia were conquered and parts of Afghanistan, Khurasan and Turkistan were annexed. In the north Armenia and Azerbaijan were subjugated. The Empire reached upto Caucasus and a part of Asia Minor was annexed to Syria. It is such a pity that a person who did so much for Islam was to be later on maligned by a section of the followers of the same faith and was to be thwarted at every step and to be mercilessly assassinated in the end. Ungratefulness could not reach greater heights nor the interest of the State could be more recklessly disregarded.

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Personal Life

'Uthmān was a handsome man of average height and impressive deportment. His complexion was fair, teeth well set and sparkling and he had a long beard. He was married successively to two daughters of the Prophet (PBUH). After their death he contracted a number of marriages at different times. In all he had eight spouses.

By nature 'Uthmān was modest, gentle and generous. He lived a life of great piety and uprightness. He had not touched liquor even in pre-Islamic days and had abstained himself from sins and immorality.

Simplicity

Though he did not lead an austere life as 'Umar had done, his living was simple. He was one of the richest merchants of Makkah yet he did not indulge in luxury or ostentation. He used to make simple food and to put on neat but simple clothes. He had great liking for cleanliness and used to perfume his clothes. He had a large number of attendants but he used to do most of his personal work himself. In the night when he got up for *Tahajjud* prayers he would not wake any one to give him warm water for ablution.

Generosity

His generosity was unbounded. Before assuming the office of the Caliphate he had constantly helped the Islamic movement by his wealth and bounty, particularly on the migration of Muslims to Madinah and at the time of Tabouk expedition. He used to give alms and charity freely

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and to look after poor widows and orphans. It was his custom to free a slave every Friday and if he had none to free himself he would pay the bond money of another's slave. He did not take any remuneration for holding the office of Caliphate and lived on his own ample means. Besides carrying on trade and merchandise he had the income from the agricultural estate granted to him by the Prophet (PBUH) in the Khaiber area. He supported a number of relations from his personal income. His detractors, later on, made a false accusation that his relations received bounties from State funds. He had advanced as loan a sizeable amount to Talha and when the latter came to return it he declined to take it saying that he had given it as a gift.[1] He acquired a large piece of land in Baqi'e and dedicated it as common graveyard.

Fortitude and Patience

His fortitude and forbearance were unparalleled. In all the tumult that raged and the storm that brewed in the latter part of his Caliphate and the peril and disaster that stared him in the face during the insurrection he never lost his poise and equanimity and resigned himself completely to the decree of God. His trust in the Almighty was unshakeable and he acted with supreme unconcern for his personal safety.

Fear of God

Fear of God dictated his actions. He was ever mindful of death, the grave and the resurrection. He used to get up whenever any funeral pier passed the way. He used to repeat the Prophet's saying that "grave is the first step of the life beyond. If one could pass this stage successfully, other stages would be rendered easy but if it proved difficult, all other stages would be difficult."

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[1] Tabari, History, page 3037.

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Religious Life

Occupations of State kept him busy during the day time but major part of the night he devoted to prayers. At times his prayers lasted throughout the night and he would recite the whole Qur'ān in one night. He fasted almost every second or third day. At times he fasted for months at a stretch. Except the last year of his life when he was besieged by the insurgents he performed the Pilgrimage every year.

He loved the Prophet (PBUH) dearly and the latter's precepts and practices were his constant source of guidance. The Prophet's austere life and privations used to perturb him. At every opportunity he used to send gifts to his household. He had great regard for members of the Prophet's family and as a Caliph he doubled the daily allowance of the Prophet's widows.

He remembered the Qur'ān by heart and had occasionally recorded the revelations on the dictation of the Prophet (PBUH).

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10
Ali

'Ali was born in the distinguished family of Banū Hāshim ten years before the conferment of prophethood on Muhammad (PBUH). His father was Abū Tālib and his mother was Fātima, also of the Banū Hāshim. 'Ali was thus Prophet's first cousin. Abū Tālib held a position of eminence and exercised considerable influence in the affairs of the Quraish. In course of time his circumstances got straitened partly due to his having a large family. To give him a helping hand his brother 'Abbās took over one of his sons J'afar and the Prophet (PBUH) took over 'Ali for their upbringing. It was thus that 'Ali got very closely associated with the Prophet (PBUH).

Even at the tender age of ten, 'Ali was greatly impressed by the manner in which the Prophet and his wife Khadija observed their prayers and when the significance of the prayers was explained to him, 'Ali promptly accepted Islam. He was one of the first few persons to accept the new faith. For thirteen years 'Ali lived with the Prophet at Makkah and actively participated in all the gatherings where the Prophet preached, in the congregational prayers and in religious discourses with the infidels. These thirteen years were a period of great tribulation for Islam. As the opposition of the Quraish stiffened and took the shape of persecution, the Prophet advised his followers to migrate to Makkah. When only a few Muslims remained in Makkah, the Quraish decided to kill the Prophet (PBUH) because all their efforts to dissuade him from preaching the new faith had proved futile. They surrounded the Prophet's house in the night but

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having been forewarned in one of the revelations the Prophet (PBUH) had already left the house leaving 'Ali in his place. In utter disregard of his personal safety, 'Ali slept in Prophet's bed prepared to give any sacrifice. On breaking upon the house in the morning the infidels saw how their bloody plan had been foiled and they hurriedly departed to pursue the Prophet leaving 'Ali unmolested. 'Ali remained in Makkah for another two or three days to settle the financial dealings of the prophet and to return the properties which the Makkans had entrusted to his care. On the third or fourth day, 'Ali also migrated to Madinah to join the Prophet in the house of Kulsoom.[1]

On reaching Madinah the Muslims could worship and preach freely and their ranks started swelling rapidly. In the seventh month after migration, it was decided to construct a simple mosque for congregational prayers. The Prophet and his companions constructed it with their own hands. While bringing bricks and mortar 'Ali recited—

'One who constructs a mosque and toils for it standing or sitting and one who abstains from it because of dust and manual labour cannot be equal to one another.[2]

Battle of Badr

The first noteworthy event in which 'Ali participated was the battle of Badr. The Muslim forces comprised of three hundred and thirteen persons and among them were two standard bearers. One of them was 'Ali. According to the custom of the day, the engagement started with individual combats. From the Muslim ranks had come out 'Ali, Hamza and 'Obeidah to meet the same number of Makkans. 'Ali quickly despatched his opponent Waleed and rushed to slay Shaiba who was fighting with 'Obeidah.

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[1] Ibn Sa'ad—*Tazkirah 'Ali*, page 13 .
[2] Shibli Na'umani—*Khulfā' Rashedin*, page 271 on the authority of Zarqāni.

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In the general engagement that followed 'Ali played a very heroic part and finished a large number of Makkans.

Marriage with Fatima (A.H. 2)

The same year Prophet's daughter Fātima was betrothed to 'Ali. The marriage was consummated ten to eleven months after. All that 'Ali could offer by way of *Mehr* was his armour which he had sold for five hundred and eighty dirhams and all that the Prophet (PBUH) could give to his daughter were an ordinary cot, a mattress stuffed with palm leaves, a water bag, two grinding stones and two earthern pitchers.

Battle of Uhad (A.H. 3)

The ignoble defeat of the Makkans at Badr had made them furious. Their whole energy was aroused and they commenced preparation for another attack upon the Muslims. With a force of three thousand men under the command of Abū Sufyān they marched towards Madinah and occupied a vantage position on the hills of Uhad a short distance from the city. The Prophet (PBUH) marched to meet them with a thousand men but on the way three hundred of the hypocrites deserted him. In the first clash of arms the Muslims got the upper hand inspite of their numerical inferiority. 'Ali, Hamza and Abū Darjāna gave a heroic account of their valour. The Makkans, however, succeeded in turning the table on the Muslims and the Prophet (PBUH) was injured. The Muslim force had got so disorganised that they had left the Prophet (PBUH) unprotected. A small band including 'Ali, defended him against fearful odds till they received succour from the bulk of the Muslim forces and managed to take the Prophet (PBUH) to the security of the heights of the hills.

Ghazwa-e-Ahzab (A.H. 5)

The Makkans entered into a coalition with Banū Nadhir, Banū Ghatfān and Banū Asad and marched again in A.H. 5 to Madinah with a ten thousand strong force. Under the advice of the Prophet (PBUH) the Muslims had dug a moat on the unprotected side of the city. The Makkans laid a siege of the city which lasted for a month. Occasionally some of them would try to cross the moat. 'Amar, Naufil and a few others succeeded in this attempt. 'Amar and Naufil were slain by 'Ali in individual combats while others escaped. Inclement weather and depleting provisions were having telling effect upon the besiegers and finally a blast of wind uprooted their camps, cast terror in their ranks and made them abandon the siege.

Banū Kuraiza had entered into a treaty of alliance with the Muslims. Discarding that treaty they had joined the besieging Makkans in the Battle of Ahzāb. As soon as that siege was lifted the Muslims turned attention of Banū Kuraiza who had retired to the fastness of their fortresses. Now it was their turn to be besieged and the command of the Muslim army was in the hands of 'Ali. Ultimately Banū Kuraiza capitulated.

In A.H. 6 'Ali was sent by the Prophet (PBUH) with an expedition of a hundred soldiers to punish Banū Sa'ad who were gathering to assist the Jews of Khaiber.

Before entering into the treaty of Hudaibiya, the Muslims had taken a pledge at the hands of the Prophet (PBUH) to avenge the reported murder of 'Uthman. 'Ali was one of those who had taken the pledge. Drafting of the treaty was assigned to 'Ali and he had started by writing "in the name of the Prophet of God." The infidels objected to this saying that were they to admit Muhammad (PBUH) as Prophet of God that would be the end of all hostility and differences. The Prophet asked 'Ali to score out the line but

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'Ali stated that he would not be the person to obliterate an eternal truth. To appease the Makkans the Prophet, therefore, himself scored out the words.

Battle of Khaiber (A.H. 7)

The battle of Khaiber was the decisive battle which put down the Jews for ever. All the Jewish tribes had collected in this region and had built a number of powerful fortresses. They made preparations for a final show down with the Muslims. They were surrounded by the Muslims but it was not easy to reduce their fortresses. The command of the Muslim army was successively given to Abū Bakr and 'Umar but they could not succeed. The Prophet (PBUH) announced that the next day's command would be in the hands of one who was dear to God and his Prophet (PBUH). With the dawn of morning expectations arose high as to who would be the privileged person. Then 'Ali's name was called and the banner was given in his hands. He mounted a furious assault on the main fortress and broke open its massive gates. In individual combat 'Ali killed their leader Marhab and after a little resistance the Jews surrendered.

In the battle of Hunain after the fall of Makkah in A.H. 8 'Ali had played a prominent part.

In A.H. 9 the Prophet (PBUH) had marched at the head of a large expedition to Tabouk. 'Ali was left behind at Madinah to look after the city in their absence. 'Ali was rather dismayed that he was not to participate in such an important expedition. The Prophet (PBUH) consoled him by saying "Ali! Will you not like that in my estimation you should occupy the same position of eminence as was of Haroon's in the sight of Moses."

On return from Tabouk the Prophet (PBUH) sent the Muslims to Makkah for annual pilgrimage with Abū

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Bakr as their leader. After the departure of Muslims came the revelation—'Repentance.'

'Ali was sent to Makkah to read out the proclamation "No idolator shall after this year perform the pilgrimage. No one shall make a circuit of the Ka'aba naked, who ever hath a treaty with Prophet (PBUH) it shall continue to be binding till its termination. For the rest, four months are allowed to every man to return to his territory, after that there will exist no obligation on the Prophet (PBUH) except towards those with whom treaties have been concluded."

In A.H. 10 'Ali was deputed by the Prophet (PBUH) to preach to the people of Yemen and he did the job so successfully that the entire tribe of Hamadan accepted Islam.

In the same year 'Ali participated in the last pilgrimage by the Prophet (PBUH).

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11

Accession to Caliphate

On 'Uthmān's assassination anarchy was let loose. The citizens were horror struck at the tragedy and were too cowed down to do anything effective. For several days the regicides held control of the city and even led the public prayers. On the sixth day they insisted that before they departed a Caliph must be elected. At first 'Ali declined to hold the precarious office but with the threats of the rebels on one side and the entreaties of his friends on the other he had to yield. An announcement was promptly made that 'Ali had been elected. Talha and Zubair gave their allegiance though later on they asserted that they had given their allegiance under compulsion. The people came out to render their allegiance and the rebels retired to their respective countries.

The Caliph was immediately confronted with a number of thorny problems. The rebellion had disrupted society and constituted authority was openly flouted. Bands of bedouins waiting for a chance to plunder hung round the city. The standing dispute between the Quraish and the rest of the Arabs assumed disturbing proportion. To this was added the cry of vengeance. Talha and Zubair insisted that the culprits responsible for 'Uthmān's murder must be punished. 'My brothers', replied 'Ali, "I am not indifferent to what ye say. But I am helpless. These bedouins and rampant slaves will have their way. What is this but an outburst of paganism long suppressed, a return, for the moment; of the days of ignorance, a wish of Satan? Just now they are beyond my power. Let us wait and the Lord will guide us." Had 'Ali actively pursued the traitors, the

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course of history would have been different. His hesitation and policy of drift were utilised for making unfounded allegations against him and the whole country was drawn rapidly into the vortex of rebellion.

Instead of punishing the rebels 'Ali took a precipitate action in the opposite direction. Even against the advice of Mughira and 'Abbās he deposed all the Governors in the Empire and sent his own men to replace them. The Governor of Basra Ibn 'Aamir was loath to provoke hostilities and quietly retired and his successor 'Uthmān Ibn Hanief entered unopposed but the population was sharply divided in three groups—one which favoured 'Ali, another that wanted the blood of 'Uthmān to be avenged and a third—a neutral group waiting how things shaped at Madinah. The governor designate of Egypt Qays could enter only by feigning support to the cause of 'Uthmān, while the district of Khartaba refused to submit till the regicides were brought to book. The new governor took over in Yemen but his predecessor Yala removed the treasure to Makkah. The governors-elect who attempted to enter Kūfa and the province of Syria could with difficulty flee back with their lives. 'Ali then wrote to Abū Mūsa, the governor of Kūfa and to Mu'āviya, the governor of Syria asking them to acknowledge him as their Caliph.

Abū Mūsa responded in loyal terms but cautioned 'Ali against the spirit of rebellion brewing at Kūfa. Syria was headlong plunging into defiance and open revolt.

A citizen of Madinah had carried the severed fingers of Nāi'la, the wife of 'Uthmān and the latter's gory shirt to Mu'āviya. They were hung at the pulpit of the Great Mosque of Damascus and their sight had thrown the people into frenzy. Damascus was in turbulent mood when the Caliph's letter reached Mu'āviya. The envoy was kept in waiting to observe the gathering storm, and then he was given a letter in reply. On top of the envelope was written

"From Mu'āviya to 'Ali" and the seal of the State was affixed to it but the envelope contained no letter inside. Asked to explain, the messenger said 'Know then that I left behind me weeping under the blood-stained shirt of 'Uthmān, by the pulpit of the Great Mosque at Damascus, sixty thousand warriors, all bent on revenging the Caliph's death and revenging it on thee!' 'What! 'exclaimed 'Ali,' On me! See thou not that I am powerless to pursue the murderers. Oh Lord! I take thee to witness that I am guiltless of 'Uthmān's blood. Begone! See, thy life is safe.' As the envoy withdrew the slaves and the rabbles shouted after him, 'Slay the dogs, slay the envoy of dogs.'

'Ali decided to settle the issue by sword. He announced an expedition to Syria and sent messages to Kufa, Basra and Egypt to raise troops. He exhorted the citizens of Madinah, 'Fight then, against the cursed schismatics, who would destroy the unity of Islam and rend in twain the body of the faithful. Haply the Lord will set that right which the nations of the earth are settling wrong.' There was not much of a response to his call.

Rebellion at Basra

Before crossing sword with Mu'āviya, 'Ali had to attend to a rebellion in another quarter. A number of members of Omeyyad family had migrated to Makkah on 'Uthmān's death to join the adherents of that House who were still there. 'Āyesha was returning from Pilgrimage when she received the news of 'Uthmān's assassination and 'Ali's accession. She hurried back to Makkah saying, 'Carry me back to Makkah. They have murdered the Caliph. I will avenge his blood'. Talha and Zubair had quitted Madinah with 'Ali's leave. When they confirmed on reaching Makkah that, 'They had left the men of Madinah plunged in perplexity. Right and wrong had been so confounded that the people knew not which way to go. It was therefore for the citizens of Makkah now to lead, and

to punish the traitors who had slain their Caliph', the Makkahns were stirred deeply. The Governor of Makkah, 'Abdullah bin 'Aamir Hazrami, Marwān bin Hakam, Saye'ed bin al 'Aas and others of the Omeyyad clan further fanned the feelings of revolt. The standard of rebellion was raised and preparations were made to take over the treasury and to excite the people of Basra, Kūfa and other settlements in Iraq to join the rebellion. Four months after 'Uthmān's death a rebel army, 3000 strong, set out for Iraq. 'Āyesha travelled in her litter on a camel which gave the name of the first engagement in civil war as the battle of the Camel.

The rebel army reached Basra and after a short struggle the Governor Ibn Honeif was made a prisoner and the government passed into the hands of Talha and Zubair. A large number of men who had participated in the attack on 'Uthmān were executed and the citizens swore allegiance to Talha and Zubair conjointly.

When the news of defection reached Madinah 'Ali directed the Syrian column to march to Nejd hoping to intercept the insurgents on their way to Basra. 'Ali himself made haste to join the column much against the advice of senior companions. On reaching Rabaza they found that the rebels had already passed. 'Ali halted at *Zu Qar* and sent messages to Kūfa, Egypt and other places for reinforcements. He was joined by Bani Tay and some other loyal tribes. The Caliph sent his eldest son Hasan accompanied by the former Governor 'Aamir to Kūfa. Their personal appeal had the desired effect and ten thousand people headed by veterans like Qaqā'a and 'Adi son of Hatim set out to join 'Ali. Basra was divided. Some joined 'Ali, some remained neutral and some joined the rebels. Both the armies almost equalled each other in number but they hesitated to take the plunge which would engulf the country in civil war. 'Ali wanted peace if at all

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possible. The insurgents wanted the blood of 'Uthmān to be avenged. 'Ali did not deny that justice would be dealt out against the murderers but he was compelled to temporise as a large number of them were enrolled in his army. He sent Qaqā'a to reason with Talha and Zubair 'Ye have slain six hundred men of Basra,' 'said Qaqā'a to them' for the blood of Uthmān, and lo! to avenge their blood six thousand men have started up. Where in this internecine war are ye to stop'. It is peace and repose that Islam needeth. Given that, again the majesty of law shall be set up, and the guilty brought to justice.' Talha, Zubair and 'Ayesha realised the danger and several days passed in negotiations. A conference of 'Ali, Talha and Zubair was held, 'Wherefore came ye out,' asked 'Ali, 'did ye not swear homage to me! 'Yes,' replied Talha, 'but with the sword over our necks, and now our demand is that justice be executed against the regicides.' 'Ali said, 'The lord blast the murderers of 'Uthmān. But they must wait for some time more'. 'Ali recalled to Zubair to a conversation of the Prophet when he had said, 'One day you will unjustly fight with 'Ali'. Whereupon Zubair resolved not to participate in the fighting any more. Both the armies retired for the night hoping that the unfortunate clash had been avoided. But the regicides had thought otherwise. A large number of them had found place in 'Ali's Army. The negotiations for peace alarmed them for they thought that if a settlement was reached their fate was doomed. Hurriedly their leader Ushtur and Ibn Sauda and others held a secret conclave and decided that their safety lay in precipitating hostilities. In the early hours of the morning squadrons upon squadrons of regicides struck upon the pitched tents on both the sides. Each camp thought that it was being treacherously attacked by the other. Soon the two armies drew up in deadly combat against each other. The battle was fought with terrible ferocity and the carnage was great. The field was littered with ten thousand bodies. Zubair had left the

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battlefield only to be killed by a soldier in an adjoining valley. Talha was disabled in the leg and was carried to Basra where he died. Bereft of their leaders the insurgent troops gave way and began retracing their steps to Basra. 'Ayesha's camel which was stationed in the rear was being attacked from all sides. A band of insurgent troops fought valiantly to protect the latter. One after another seventy brave warriors perished by its side in upholding its banner aloft.[1] Seeing that it was becoming a rallying point the Caliph ordered the camel to be hamstrung. With the fall of the camel the battle ended. 'Ali forbade pursuit of the fleeing army, killing of wounded soldiers and plunder of any kind. 'Ayesha was honourably taken to a tent by his brother Muhammad bin Abū Bakr. The best house in Basra was given to her where she was waited upon by her own attendants. After 3 days i.e. on the first of Rajab A.H. 36 she left for Makkah in the company of his brother and with a retinue of forty women. 'Ali himself accompanied her on foot for a few miles and his sons accompanied her some distance farther. After performing the pilgrimage she proceeded to Madinah and did not ever again interfere in the affairs of the State. Merwān and others of the Omeyyad clan fled to Hejaz or found refuge in Syria.

After a few days halt at Basra, 'Ali went to Kufa and made it his permanent capital. 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās was appointed Governor of Basra and Ushtur of Mosul. Ushtur raided a part of Syria but he was soon forced back by Zahāq bin Qais, a commander of Mu'āviya.

Battle of Siffin (A.H. 36-37 A.D. 657)

Refusal of Mu'āviya to submit to the Caliphate of 'Ali was fraught with great danger and a deadly clash between the two seemed inevitable. 'Ali wanted to avoid it to avert further bloodshed. He sent a letter to Mu'āviya

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[1] Hakim—*Mustadarak,* Vol. III, page 366.

through Jarir, Chief of Beni Bajla saying, "Allegiance to me is incumbent upon you as well as on all Muslims under your influence because the Muhajirin and Ansar have elected me with their common consent for the Caliphate. Abū Bakr, 'Umar and Uthmān had also been likewise elected by these very persons. Therefore, anybody who defies after tendering allegiance or abstains from giving allegiance shall be compelled to submission. Therefore, you should follow the Muhajirin and Ansār and that would be the best course for you. Otherwise be prepared for war. You have made the assassination of 'Uthmān a pretext for gaining personal ends. If you are really keen to take revenge from 'Uthmān's murderers, then submit to me first and put up your case before me and it shall be decided according to the Book and Tradition. Otherwise the course adopted by you is deceit and pretence." Jarir was kept waiting for long and was then sent back with an oral message that allegiance would be tendered only on the condition that punishment was meted out to the regicides. Mu'āviya had been governor of Syria for twenty two years and longed for independence. 'Uthmān's murder, 'Ali's Caliphate and dismissal of officials of Omeyyad clan had revived the animosity between Omeyyad and Banū Hāsham. All the dismissed officials had gathered round Mu'āviya and a number of companions and tribes had joined him. In 'Amr bin al-'Aas, the conqueror of Egypt, Mu'āviya had gained a powerful person and a capable statesman. 'Ali had alienated another astute statesman Mughira bin Sho'aba and he had repaired to Damascus. 'Obeidullah son of 'Umar was there and so was Ziad another statesman of repute. Confident of his own 'strength, Mu'āviya was in no mind to submit to 'Ali. The latter therefore resolved to take the bold step of attacking Syria. He gathered a big force of 50,000 men from Basra, Kūfa and Madinah and planned to attack Syria from the north. An advance guard was sent up the Euphrates but it

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was forced back to Mesopotamia. 'Ali himself marched to Tigris and crossing the desert of Mesopotamia he reached Ricca on the Euphrates. Crossing the river, the army reached Allepo.

By this time Mu'āviya had collected a more imposing force and it had reached the front under the command of the veteran warrior 'Amr bin al-'Aas assisted by his sons and the freed man Werdān. The vanguards of the two forces spent a few days in skirmishing. A lull then followed and 'Ali sent three of his chief men to advise Mu'āviya to tender allegiance for the good of the Empire. Mu'āviya demanded that the murderers of 'Uthmān should be dealt with. The demand was stigmatised as a more pretence to cover ambitious designs upon the Caliphate. However, on each sides were men who exerted their utmost to avert bloodshed and for three months prevented clash of arms. But as no settlement could be reached 'Ali marshalled his forces in eight columns and the Syrian army divided itself accordingly. Each day a column would engage its opposite number and desultory fighting continued for a month. With the opening of the Year, the 37th of the Hijra, a truce was called for the month of Muharram which was spent in sending deputations to each other but they could not bring about any settlement. Hostilities were renewed with the beginning of the second month. For a week the fighting was as desultory as before but it became increasingly severe. Then both the armies were drawn up in full array and they fought the whole day. Fighting was renewed the next morning with greater vigour. Feats of great bravery were displayed by both the armies and many men of rank were slain. On 'Ali's side fell Hāshim the hero of Qadesiya and 'Ammār the governor of Kūfa. The slaughter was great. Darkness failed to separate the combatants and, like Qadesiya, the night was called a second 'Night of Clangour!' The morning saw the two armies struggling with each other and fighting hand to

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hand. The fighting was called off to bury the dead and to remove the injured. 'Ali incited his followers, 'Brave warriors, our efforts have reached a stage that with God's pleasure, a decision will be reached by tomorrow. Take rest to give defeat to your foe tomorrow and do not leave the field till the matter has been finally decided.' The slaughter had disheartened Mu'āviya's army and they were beginning to think that if their ranks were to be depleted in such large numbers the Romans might re-occupy Syria. Mu'āviya wrote to 'Ali, "If you and I had known that this battle would be such a long drawn affair none of us would have liked to commence it. We should now end this disastrous war. We both descend from Manāf and one has no superiority over the other. A compromise should be reached which may uphold the honour and prestige of each." But now 'Ali refused to compromise and came out with his army next morning. 'Amr had, however, thought of a strategem. He addressed Mu'āviya, 'Raise aloft the sacred leaves of Qur'ān. If any refuse to abide by it, it will sow discord amongst them; if they accept, it will be a reprieve from cruel slaughter.' When 'Ali's army came out the Syrian army confronted it with the sacred scrolls raised aloft on the points of lances and stated, 'The Law of the Lord! The Law of the Lord. Let it decide between us.' 'Ali expostulated with his men. 'It is the device of evil men; afraid of defeat they seek their end by guile and cloaked rebellion under the love of the Word!' They answered, 'We are called to the Book, and we cannot decline it.' In open meeting they threatened the Caliph that if he did not agree they would desert him and hand him over to the enemy. They forced the Caliph to recall Ushtur from the field. At first he refused to comply saying that he was gaining a great victory but compelled by the dissidents the Caliph summoned him again. 'Of what avail is victory when treason rageth? Would thou have the Caliph murdered or delivered over to the enemy.' Unwillingly Ushtur returned

and a fierce altercation ensued between him and the angry soldiers.

With the cessation of hostilities letters were exchanged and an assembly of learned men of both the camps was convened. It was agreed that the matter of appointment of the Caliph should be left to the decision of two umpires—one from each side. On 'Ali's side Ash'ath proposed on behalf of the soldiery of Kūfa the name of Abū Mūsā. 'Ali did not agree to it. He proposed the name of 'Abdullah son of 'Abbās, the Prophet's uncle. 'As well name thyself' they answered rudely. 'Then take Ushtur!' 'What', said the bedouin Chief in the same imperious tone. 'The man that hath set the world on fire! None for us but Abū Mūsā.' The Caliph had no alternative but to appoint him as arbiter. The Syrian arbiter was 'Amr for whose sagacity Abū Mūsā was no match.

Abū Mūsā was summoned and an agreement was reduced to writing. As dictated from 'Ali's side it began, 'In the name of the Lord Most Merciful. This is what hath been agreed between the Commander of the Faithful, and.....' 'Stay', Cried 'Amr (like the Quraish to the Prophet (PBUH) at Hudaibiya), "Ali is your Commander but he is not ours,' Again the Caliph had to give way and the names of the contending parties were written simply as 'Ali and Mu'āviya. The document went on to say that both the sides bound themselves by the judgement of the Qur'ān; and where the Qur'ān was silent by the acknowledged precedents of Islam. To the umpires the guarantee of both 'Ali and Mu'āviya was given for the safety of their persons and families and the promise of the people that their judgement should be followed. On their part the umpires swore that they would judge righteously so as to stay hostilities and reconcile the faithful. The decision was to be delivered after six months at some neutral spot midway between Kūfa and Damascus.

Emergence of Kharejites or Theocratic Faction (A.H. 37)

On the return journey to Kūfa, a body of 1200 men fell out from 'Ali's ranks and marched at some distance though parallel to the main force. They objected to decisions by umpires in matter of religion. They resolved that if they gained ascendancy they would neither have any prince nor Caliph nor take any oath of allegiance to any one but would submit to God alone and would vest the administration in a Council of State. They argued that nothing would be gained by arbitration. They wanted a theocratic rule but the umpires would be just deciding between 'Ali and Mu'āviya. 'Ali, at first, sent his cousin Muhammad son of 'Abbās to reason with them, but they could not be brought round. The Caliph then himself went to their camp and argued that "far from being responsible for the 'Godless compromise' he had been driven to accept the arbitration against his better judgement by their own wayward and persistent obstinacy; that the umpires were bound by the terms of the truce to deliver their decision in accordance with the sacred text which equally with himself the theocrats held to be the final guide; and that, if the umpire's deliverance should after all turn out to be in disregard of it, he would without a moment's hesitation reject the same, and again go forth at their head and fight against the enemies of the Faith." The assurance of the Caliph pacified them and they returned to their homes.

Decision of the Umpires (A.H. 37)

For about six months Mu'āviya ruled over Syria and 'Ali over the rest of the empire and a quiet uneasiness prevailed. Then 'Amr appeared to Dūma to be followed by Abū Mūsā. As permitted by the agreement each had brought a retinue of four hundred horsemen. The Bedouin chief Shoreih captained the Caliph's horsemen and 'Abdulla son of 'Abbās accompanied them. 'Abdullah bin

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'Umar, Sa'ad, Mughira, and a number of other important men from Madinah, Makkah, Syria and Iraq had gathered to watch the fateful proceedings.

The umpires went into conference. The dialogue that ensued has been summed up as follows. Pressed by his astute colleague Abū Mūsā admitted that assassination of 'Uthmān was a foul and unjustifiable thing. 'Then why', rejoined 'Amr, 'will thou not take Mu'āviya, the avenger of his blood, for his successor? 'If it were a mere question of blood feud or kinsmanship, Abū Mūsā answered, 'there were 'Uthmān's sons with a nearer claim. Succession to the throne, however, was a matter to be determined not by such considerations but by the vote of chief companions of the Prophet (PBUH).' 'Amr then proposed his own son. 'A just and good man,' replied 'Abū Mūsā, 'but one whom thou hast already made to take sides in the civil war; and 'Amr, we must above all things beware of kindling mutiny again against the Arab tribes.' A similar objection ruled out 'Abdullah son of Zubair and the son of 'Umar was put aside as not having qualities fitting him for the command. 'Then,' asked 'Amr, after all the possible candidates had been named and negatived, 'what may be the judgement that thou wouldst give.' 'My judgement' answered Abū Mūsā, 'would be to depose both 'Ali and Mu'āviya and then leave the people to choose whom they will.' 'Thy judgement is also mine,' said 'Amr, 'let us go forth.'

'Abū Mūsā asked 'Amr to announce the judgement but the latter pleaded that he could not take precedence over him as he was senior to him in age and superior to him in righteousness. Abū Mūsā advanced and said, 'We are agreed upon a decision, such as we trust, will reconcile the people and reunite the empire. Ye people! We have considered the matter well. We see no other course so likely to restore peace and concord amongst the people as to depose 'Ali and Mu'āviya, both the one and the other.

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After that ye shall choose a fit man in his place. This is my judgement. He stepped aside and 'Amr came forward, 'Ye have heard the judgement of Abū Mūsā. He hath deposed his fellow and so do I, too, depose him. But as for my chief Mu'āviya, him do I confirm. He is the heir of 'Uthmān, and as avenger of his blood, the best entitled to succeed.' The assembly was flabbergasted at the decision. Abū Mūsā cried that this was deceit and dishonesty and compared 'Amr to a dog. 'Amr retorted by describing him as an ass laden with books. There was a furore and the commander of the Kūfa bodyguard assaulted 'Amr. With difficulty bloodshed was averted. Abū Mūsā was so ashamed and disgusted that he immediately left the place for Makkah to live in seclusion for the rest of his life.

Sedition of Kharejites

On 'Ali's intervention the Kharejites had broken up their camp at Harora but instead of settling down in peace and loyalty they became an aggressive force and adopted a fanatical creed. Secular power, dignity and pomp of this life were abhorrent to them and so was oath of fealty to any one save the Lord. 'No judgement, but the Lord's alone' became their slogan. 'There was strange mingling of innocence and simplicity in these seceders, with a fanatical indifference to the distinctions of vice and virtue, and a readiness to perpetuate any crime against the person or the State if it forwarded the cause they had at heart, namely, the 'Rule of the Lord' and setting of that which they conceived to be His Kingdom.[1] 'in their view the judgement of the umpires justified their secession at Siffin and they began leaving their homes stealthily. Five hundred people came out from Basra alone. They were chased by the Governor Ibn 'Abbās but they managed to escape and to join the band emerging from Kūfa. They planned to

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[1] Sir William Muir—Annals of the Early Caliphate, page 396.

occupy Medāi'n but they were repulsed by its governor. Crossing the river Tigris they collected 4000 strong at Nahrawan.

At first the Caliph did not take much notice of them. He was busy in raising an expedition to Syria to settle the issue with Mu'āviya and invited the fanatics at Nahrawan to join the army. They replied insolently, 'If he acknowledged his apostasy and repented thereof, then they would see whether anything could be arranged between them; 'otherwise they cast him off as an ungodly heretic.'

The Caliph had collected a force of 4000 men and had started his march to Syria when news reached him that the fanatics were committing gruesome and cold blooded outrages in the country round their camp. A messenger Hārith bin Murrah was despatched to make enquiries but he was put to death by the fanatics. The Caliph changed the course of his journey and crossing the Tigris reached a place near Nahrawan. Abū Ayyub Ansāri and Qais bin Sa'ad were deputed to reason with the Kharejites but they were intractable and adamant. No option was left but to fight with them. Just before the fighting began 500 of the Kharejites slipped away to a neighbouring town, many more departed for Kūfa and a thousand of them expressed repentance and joined 'Ali. Still 4000 diehards under the command of 'Abdullah bin Wahāb swore to fight to the bitter end. Notwithstanding the overwhelming odds against them they launched a furious assault on 'Ali's forces and a large number of them were cut to pieces.

When the fighting was over, 'Ali directed his forces to march to Syria but Ash'ath bin Qais said, 'Commander of the faithful let us return for a while to our homes to furbish up our swords and lances and to replenish our quivers.' Ali consented and the army marched back and pitched their tents at Nokhala a place close to Kūfa. The soldiers dropped off in small parties and in a short time

none but the Commanding Officer were left. When the soldiers did not return the Caliph entered Kūfa to upbraid the people but exhortation and reproach failed to evoke any response. The Syrian expedition had to be given up and no attempt was made to resume it again.

Trouble in Egypt

Meanwhile trouble was brewing in the Egyptian sector. Before the battle of Siffin, Mu'āviya had tried to win over to his side the powerful and able governor of Egypt Qais son of Sa'ad, who had declined to change loyalties. Mu'āviya then cleverly tried to stir up bad feeling between the Caliph and his governor. Assiduously the news was spread that Qais was having parleys with Mu'āviya and was going to defect 'Ali. When this news reached 'Ali, he directed Qais to launch an attack upon the town of Khartabān to test his loyalty and when Qais remonstrated against his policy it was taken as a proof of complicity. He was deposed and Muhammad, the regicide son of Abū Bakr, was appointed in his place. Muhammad summoned the dissentients and pressed them either to submit or to leave the country. They marked time for a while and after the battle of Siffin they took up the offensive. A party sent to punish them was defeated and the second attempt also resulted in failure. An open revolt was now in the offing. 'Ali realised his mistake in recalling Qais. He wanted to send him back but the latter declined. The Caliph decided to send Ushtur. He went in haste but on the Egyptian border he met sudden and untimely death having been poisoned by a Chief at the instigation of Mu'āviya. 'Ali asked Muhammad bin Abū Bakr to hold on and tried to send reinforcements to help him but with difficulty 2000 men could be raised and they delayed their departure till it was too late. Meanwhile, supporters of Mu'āviya had increased considerably in numbers and when 'Amr entered the province a large body of insurgents joined him. After a

short resistance Muhammad bin Abū Bakr had to give up. He was killed and his body was ignominiously consigned to flames inside the skin of an ass. 'Amr took over the governorship of Egypt on behalf of Mu'āviya and the province was lost to 'Ali.

The remaining days of 'Ali's reign were equally vexatious and troublesome. His life was a continuous struggle and he had hardly a moment's peace. To increase his difficulties Mu'āviya sent his emissary 'Abdullah bin Hazarmi to instigate the people of Basra against him during the temporary absence of its governor Ibn 'Abbas. Basra had already a faction which favoured Mu'āviya and the Kharejites were a constant menace. 'Abdullah bin Hazarmi was successful in fomenting discontent. The turbulent and factious atmosphere became dangerously changed with the spirit of disloyalty and rebellion, so much so that the temporary governor Ziad had to flee for his life. The Caliph sent a force to quell the uprising. After a bloody and fierce fighting the rebels were at last defeated and driven to take refuge in a neighbouring castle. The castle was surrounded and put to fire in which Abdullah bin Hazarmi along with seventy of his followers perished.

Defiance, disturbance and rebellious spirit was not confined to Egypt and Basra. Kharejites were grouping themselves into bands and were raising the standard of revolt and they had to be put down almost half a dozen times by force. The most disturbing of these rebellions was the one raised by Khirrit who had fought alongside 'Alj with his tribe Bani Nājia both in the battle of the Camel and the Siffin. Khirrit was pursued but he managed to escape to Ahwāz and Ran Hermuz. He instigated the Persians, Kurds and Christians to stop payment of taxes and with a band of apostate Arabs he kindled revolt in Faris. The Caliph had to send a force from Basra. In the fight Khirrit was killed and the supremacy of the Caliphate in Southern Persia was

restored. Faris and Kirmān had repudiated their allegiance and had driven off the governors. Ziad was deputed to quell the uprising and he was able to restore peace and orderly government.

All this time Mu'āviya was harassing the Caliph by sending small forces to make raids on his territory with the object of either collecting tithe from the bedouin tribes or compelling them to change their allegiance. In the course of the year they made 8 to 10 incursions from Syria and occupied 'Ain Tamar, Anbār, Madiān and Taima. Mu'āviya made an inroad in person across the plain of upper Mesopotāmia. These sporadic attacks created a sense of great insecurity and showed how precarious was the hold of Caliph and how listless the support of his people. Eventually the Caliph repelled all the raiders and wrested back the territories occupied by them.

In A.H. 40 Mu'āviya again took the offensive. He sent Busr bin Abi Artāt with a force of 4000 men to Hejaz to compel the people to lend their allegiance to him. As he approached Madinah, its governor Abū Ayūb fled to Kūfa and Busr entered the city unopposed. Threatening the citizens with dire consequences he made them acknowledge Mu'āviya as their ruler. He then proceeded to Makkah and the Makkans yielded in the same manner. Abū Mūsā fled for his life and sent a warning to the governor of Yemen—'Obeidullah son of Abbās. The latter rushed to Kūfa to get aid from there but by this time Busr had reached Yemen. He committed great outrages on the supporters of 'Ali and killed in cold blood the little children of the governor along with their attendant when he protested against the cruel deed. An army of 4000 was sent by the Caliph but it reached too late to stop the atrocities.

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Assassination of 'Ali (A.H. 40 A.D. 661)

The fanatic Kharejites were incessantly intriguing. Three of them met in secret and decided that as long as 'Ali, Mu'āviya and 'Amr bin al 'Aas lived the struggle for power will not cease and there will be no end to internecine wars. They resolved to simultaneously put all the three of them to death. The details of the execution were worked out. Each of the conspirators was to finish the man assigned to him as he presided over the morning service on the same Friday in the mosques of Kūfa, Damascus and Fustat. They dipped their swords in a strong poison and swore to carry out their nefarious plan or to perish in the attempt. All the three assassins struck at the appointed hour. 'Amr was fortunate as he was sick that day and another person substituted for him and he fell a victim. Mu'āviya received a rear fatal wound but he survived. 'Ali's end had approached. The conspirator Ibn Muljim of the Egyptian regicides had enlisted the support of two desperate accomplices from Bani Tayam and his resolve was strengthened by Qatam, a beautiful maid of the same tribe, who having lost her father, her brother and other near relatives was madly incensed. She had promised to marry Ibn Muljim if he could bring the head of 'Ali as her dowry. As soon as the mornign service began Ibn Muljim along with one of his accomplices struck and severely wounded the Caliph on the head and side. He was captured. The accomplice was cut to pieces and 'Ali was carried inside his house. He had strength enough to question Ibn Muljim and he boldly admitted that he had been contemplating the deed for forty days. Turning to his son, the Caliph said, 'If I die, his life is forfeited to justice, and he shall be slain for the deed he hath done; but see that thou mutilate him not, for that was forbidden by the Prophet'. As his condition deteriorated people asked him if he would like his son Hasan to succeed him. True to the elective principle he replied, 'I do not commend this, neither do I forbid it. You

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better decide for yourself.' He then called Hasan and Husain to his bed side and counselled them to be steadfast in piety and resignation to the will of God. He then dictated his testament and continuing to repeat the name of Almighty he breathed his last on Friday the 20th Ramadhan A.H. 40.

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12
Personal Life

Austerity and Simplicity

'Ali lived an austere and sternly simple life. Till the age of twenty-five or twenty-six he had lived with the Prophet and had tried to emulate him in every way. On his marriage with Fātima he started living separately. An ordinary cot, a mattress stuffed with palm leaves, a water bag, two grinding stones and two earthen pitchers which Fātima had brought with her, constituted the entire household goods of 'Ali. He could give out a dinner on the occasion of his marriage only by selling his armour. Fātima used to do all the household chores and 'Ali used to earn his living by doing manual labour like drawing of water for irrigation purposes. There were many a day in his life when he went without meals. His share in the spoils of wars in which he had so heroically participated occasionally served to supplement his meagre income. On ascension to the Caliphate, 'Umar had entrusted to 'Ali the management of a grove in Fidak and had also fixed an annual stipend of five thousand dirhams.

There was no change in this austerity on assumption of the office of Caliphate. He continued putting on the most ordinary clothes and taking the simplest possible food. Generally bread made of barleyflour without removing its bran, some vegetable or a cup of milk was all that he used to take. 'Abdullah bin Zarir while sharing his frugal meals with him once enquired whether 'Ali was not fond of meat of fowls. He replied that a Caliph was entitled only to two dishes—one that he and his family could take and the

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second that he could offer to poor people.[1] He continued living in the small house and did not build any house of his own. No guard was kept at the house and there was nothing to distinguish it from those of poor people. He had once wanted to sell his sword saying that if he had money even sufficient to purchase a sheet he would not have thought of parting with his sword. Some body came forward and advanced him a loan.

Simplicity was the keynote of his life. Even as a Caliph he did not feel shy of doing manual labour like digging of earth, pulling of water or repairing of his own shoes. He would sit on the ground and even go to sleep on bare floor. He used to put on a turban, a *Kurta* with small sleeves and a *Tahband.* Thus clad, he used to go round the city and if any one followed him he discouraged him by saying, 'This is likely to make the ruler swollen headed and to abase the believer.' His *Kurta* and *Tahband* would have even patches. 'Amr bin Qais says that when some people advised the Caliph to discard the worn-out clothes, he replied that wearing of such clothes bred contentment, kept away pride and was worth emulating by others. A goat skin served as the rug of his house on which he received envoys and distinguished persons. When somebody made a pointed reference to it, the Caliph said that a wise person does not lay much store by a house which he has to ultimately abandon.

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Generosity

Though himself lacking adequate means of sustenance, he would never let any destitute go disappointed from his doors. In his earlier days he had once irrigated an orchard throughout the night to earn some barley. He had divided it in three portions and had got a portion cooked. When the meal was ready a beggar came

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[1] Ahmad—*Musnad,* Vol. III, page 78.

and 'Ali gave the whole food to him. He got the second portion cooked when a destitute orphan turned up and the food was given to him. The third lot likewise went to an infidel prisoner.[1]

Valour and Courage

In bravery and intrepidity 'Ali was unsurpassed. He had given a glorious account of it in every battle he had fought. In Battle of Badr, 'Ali, Hamza and 'Ubaidah bin Hārith had, on the challenge of the enemies, advanced to have individual combats. 'Ali had slain his opponent—Walid and had also assisted 'Ubaidah in finishing off Shaiba. In the general engagement that followed 'Ali emerged as the hero of the battle. In the battle of Uhad the standard bearer of enemy force Talha bin Abi Talha had thrown out a challenge for individual combat. 'Ali had advanced to silence him forever. In the battle of Trenches the famous wrestler of Arabia, 'Amr bin 'Abd-e-Wad had thrown a similar challenge. 'Ali requested the Prophet to let him accept the challenge. The Prophet (PBUH) gave his own sword to him and with his pious hands had tied his turban and prayed to God to help him. 'Ali advanced to meet his foe. A deadly combat ensued and so much dust was raised that the challenger and his opponent were both hidden from view. With beating hearts people waited to know the outcome. The resounding call of God is Great, announcing the death of the challenger, filled the hearts of Muslims with joy.

The siege of Khaibar had lasted for several days but the fortress had remained impregnable. The Prophet said that on the following day he would give the banner to one who loves God and His Prophet (PBUH) and who was also dear to the Prophet (PBUH) and Good. The banner was

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[1] Mo'inuddin Nadvi—*Khulfa'-Rashedeen*, page 395, quoting Bukhari, Chapter *Manaqib 'Ali.*

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given to 'Ali. The Jewish chief Marhab came forward brandishing his sword and reciting martial couplets. 'Ali went to meet him and splitted his skull with one powerful stroke. The fortress was captured by sheer valour and the Jews subdued. In the battle of Hawāzin 'Ali along with some other companions had stood steadfast when in the initial terrific discharge of enemy archery the Muslim forces had got disorganised and defeat had seemed imminent.

Treatment with Enemies

The Prophet (PBUH) had said, "Brave is not he who over-powers his foe, but one who restrains his passions and desires." 'Ali was a living example of this precept. He had laid low the claim of many an adversary but he did not ill-treat any enemy. In an individual combat he had once thrown down his adversary and was on the point of cutting off his head when the desperate foe spat on his face. 'Ali spared his life and let him go. Asked to explain his queer conduct 'Ali said that if he had finished off his enemy after the spitting incident his motive would not have remained un-alloyed and he would not have put the enemy to death purely in the cause of God but also partly due to personal anger. In another combat he had left his adversary when the latter had got naked in the encounter. When the battle of Camel had ended in his favour, he had gone to meet 'Ayesha and had said nothing to those who had taken shelter with her. He had also proclaimed that fugitives should not be pursued, that safety should be granted to every one laying down his sword and no injured should be trampled under horse hoof. Zubair was one of the leaders of the opposing force. His killer Ibn Jarmooz had severed his head and brought it before 'Ali. With tears in his eyes 'Ali had said, "announce the penalty of Hell fire to the killer of Safi's son, (i.e. Zubair) I had heard from the Prophet that every Prophet had some disciples and Zubair is one of my

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disciples." He had counselled showing of mercy to his own assassin, Ibn Muljim, when he was brought before him. He had said, 'Feed this man well and let him lie on a soft bed. If I recover, I will decide his fate or forgive him but if die then despatch him to his death but do not torture or mutilate him.'

Justice

'Ali was renowned for his acute sense of fair play and justice. Whatever was received in the *Baitulmal* he used to distribute equitably and would not even listen to the request of his brother 'Aqil to give him a little more share. 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud as also 'Umar used to say that 'Ali was the best judge. Once a petty but interesting case had come up before him. Two persons had sat down together to take meals. One had five loaves and the other had three loaves. When they were about to start eating they were joined by a third person. The loaves were pooled and all the three ate the meals. The third person gave eight coins and went away. The man who had five loaves took five coins and gave three to the other. The latter insisted on equal distribution and the matter came up before 'Ali. 'Ali advised the man to accept what was offered to him as it was profitable for him but he demanded justice. 'Ali then announced that seven coins be retained by the man who had five loaves and the other be given only one coin. The latter's consternation was dispelled when 'Ali disclosed the reason for his decision. He explained by saying that every loaf should be presumed to have been divided in three parts. Thus the man with three loaves had nine parts in a total of twenty four parts. As three persons had shared the meals it should be taken that every man had eaten eight parts of the loaves. Thus the second man had himself taken eight of his nine parts of loaves while the first one had contributed seven. The first one should therefore get seven coins and the second should get only one.

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Learning

'Ali the 'gate of learning' according to the Prophet (PBUH) remembered the Qur'ān by heart. He knew precisely when, where and in what circumstance every verse of Qur'ān was revealed. He is reckoned among the topmost exegesists of Qur'ān and among the companions only 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbās could match him in this regard. It is stated that he had arranged the verses of Qur'ān in chronological order of revelation. For thirty years he was constant companion of the Prophet (PBUH) and therefore he was well versed in a large number of traditions. Even in the time of earlier Caliphs he used to give discourses on Qur'ān and *Hadith.* His interpretation was taken as authoritative. 'Umar, 'Ayesha and 'Uthmān used to refer difficult cases to him for decision.

'Ali was also an orator of the highest order. He could deliver extempore highly inspiring and thought provoking speeches before any audience.

Religious Life

'Ali was very particular about not only obligatory prayers but also about supernumerary prayers. Often he would spend whole nights in prayers and used to get to absorbed in them that nothing else mattered. In the battle of Uhad an arrow had deeply pierced his leg. It was removed when 'Ali stood up for prayers and he did not exhibit any symptom of pain at the time of its extraction. He would also often keep fasts for three days consecutively.

Appearance

'Ali was a man of ruddy complexion, not very tall, but extremely well built, inclined to stoutness, with a flowing beard soft grey eyes and a look of great amiability and kindness.

His bravery had won him the title of 'Lion of God', his learning that of 'Gate of Knowledge'. Chivalrous, humane and forbearing he was ever ready to help the week and to redress the wrongs of the oppressed. Self-abnegation, practice of justice, honesty, purity and love of truth were the hall marks of his character.

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PART II

Administration and Reforms

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13

System of Government

We have given brief life sketches of the first four Caliphs and have traced the course of the epoch making events of their time and the part played by them in the expansion of Islam. This reign of thirty years together with the Prophet's era constitutes the golden period of Islam. They were the rightly guided successors of the Prophet (PBUH) and *Imāms* of the Muslims. They were among the emigrants of Madinah as also among the learned divines of the community, they were present at the time of treaty of Hudeybiya and revelation of *Surah Noor* which had promised rulership to the pious. They were also among those whom the Prophet (PBUH) had given glad tidings of Paradise. They possessed all the virtues and qualifications required of a Caliph. About Abū Bakr the Prophet had said, 'Are you not the first man who will enter Paradise in my company? You would be my companion at *Hauz Kausar* as you were my companion in the cave'. About 'Umar, the Prophet (PBUH) had said, 'There were originators in earlier communities. If there would be any originators in my community he will be 'Umar'. Abut 'Uthmān he had said, 'Every prophet had companions. 'Uthmān will be my companion in Paradise'. To 'Ali he had said, 'Are you not happy that you should have the same relationship with me as Haroon had with Moses? He had also said, 'Tomorrow I will give the banner to one who loves God and His Apostle and who is dear to the Apostle and God'. On another occasion the Prophet had said, 'In my community Abū Bakr is the most kind-hearted, 'Umar is the most stringent

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in the cause of God, 'Uthmān is the most modest and decorous and 'Ali is the best judge'.

Another tradition goes to say, 'If you will select Abū Bakr as your Amir, you will find him contemptuous of this world and desirous of the Hereafter. If you will select 'Umar as your Amir you will find him strong and trustworthy and unmindful of any criticism or disapprobation in seeking the good pleasure of God. If you will appoint 'Ali as your Amir you will find him rightly guided and he will well guide the people. The Prophet had also said to his followers, 'It is incumbent upon you to follow me and to also follow my successors'.

As Edward Gibbon writes in his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (Vol. III) 'A historian who balances the four Caliphs with a hand unshaken by superstition, will calmly pronounce that their manners were alike, pure and exemplary; their zeal was fervent and sincere; and that, in the midst of riches and power, their lives were devoted to the practice of moral and religious duties'.

Says 'Abdullah bin 'Umar 'those who are desirous of following anyone, should follow the companions who were the best of the community, whose hearts were pure, whose wisdom was profound and who did not believe in externalia of life. They were a people whom God had selected to assist His Prophet (PBUH) and who extended his religion to the world. Therefore, try to emulate their ways and manners for, by the Lord, they were rightly guided people'.[1]

All the four Caliphs had dedicated their lives to the cause of Islam and had rendered to it unique and sterling service. Let us now see how they had governed the state, how they had consolidated the empire, what administrative set up they had founded, what economic and social policies

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[1] Muhammad Yusuf—*Hayate Sahaba*, page 42.

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and principles they had laid down, how they had ensured internal security and defence of the state and what reforms they had effected in other fields.

According to the Qur'ān, God is the Creator and Sovereign of the entire universe. The dominion of God over the universe is held by its own force or natural laws. Man, though dependent upon God in many ways, has been given free will in certain respects and is only invited through revelation to accept obedience. God is the Lord of His creation, the Sovereign, the Supreme authority.

> "Whatsoever is in the heavens and in the earth is His; everything is subject to His command." (30:26)

> "His it is, whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is on the earth and whatsoever is between them both and whatsoever is underground;" (20:6)

Sovereignty of the Universe belongs to God alone unshared by any one—

> "His is the Sovereignty over the heavens and the earth. He hath begotten no son, nor hath. He any partner in His Sovereignty." (25:2)

> "Knowest thou not that it is to God that dominion of the heavens and of the earth belongeth, and that for you there is no friend or helper save Him." (2:167)

> "They (mankind) have no protector besides Him nor doth He share His sovereignty with any one." (18:26)

> "It is not that after creation of the universe with all its natural laws and forces God has ceased to exercise power and authority. On

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the contrary "He regulates every affair between the heavens and the earth." (32:5)

"Blessed is He in whose hand lieth the absolute Sovereignty and who hath power over all things." (67)

"His is the Sovereignty over the heavens and the earth and everything shall ultimately hold itself responsible to Him." (57:5)

The Qur'ān decrees that there should be implicit obedience of God and His ordinances—

"When God issues forth a decree there is none to set it aside. And swift is He at reckoning." (13:41)

"So keep to the clear path to which We have directed thee and do not yield to the wishes of those who cannot understand." (45:18)

"These are the bounds of God: therefore overstep them not, for they who overstep the bounds of God are indeed transgressors." (2:229)

"And whose do not judge by what God hath sent down, they are indeed rebels." (5:44)

Man is invited through messages sent through Prophets to submit himself to God. Prophet is the representative of God on earth and obedience to him is obedience to God—

"We never sent an Apostle, except to be followed even as God desires." (4:64)

"Whoso obeyeth the Apostle, he indeed, obeyeth God." (4:80)

"As for him who sets himself against the Apostle despite the opening out for him the

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> right path and follows any path other than that of the faithful, We will let him go the way he hath chosen for himself and We will cast him into Hell—an evil destination indeed." (4:115)

The decree of God and His Apostle is the supreme law and the faithful cannot question it—

> "And when God and His Apostle have decreed a thing, it is not for a believing man or believing woman to have any choice in respect thereof. Whoever disobeyeth God and His Apostle, indeed, commiteth a manifest error.' (33:36)

Government by man is, according to Qur'ān, limited to vicegerency of God and His Apostle and their authority in civil, administrative or legal matters is subject to the bounds set for him—

> "Said We, 'O David: We have made thee our vicegerent on earth. Judge, therefore, aright between men and yield not to any inclination of thy own lest it cause thee to turn aside from the way of God." (38:26)

> "God hath held out the promise to those of you who believe and do what is right, that He will accord to them the privilege of ruling in the land, even as He had accorded to those who had gone before them and that He will let the way of life (*din*) chosen for them prevail and that He will replace their state of fear by one of security." (24:55)

This vicegerency is not the exclusive domain of any particular individual, house or class. On the contrary, the entire community is the recipient of it and this distinguishes

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Islamic Caliphate from monarchy, party government or rule by priestly class.

The purpose of the state is to banish highhandedness and oppression and to let justice and equity prevail—

> "Assuredly, We have sent our Apostles with clear arguments, and given them the code of conduct and the criterion, whereby man may be judged with equity." (57:25)

The power and resources of the state are to be utilised for establishment of prayers, giving of *zakat*, promotion of goodness and abolition of evil. The value of the state is derived from its moral purpose.

> "They are they who, if We establish them in the land, will observe prayer and pay the poor due and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. The final issue of all things rests with God." (22:41)

It is incumbent upon the people to comply with the regulations of such a state in matters upright and proper and not in others which are evil—

> "Cooperate one with another in goodness and piety and do not cooperate in sin and transgression and avoid displeasure of God, for, God is strict in dealing out chastisement." (5:2)

The Islamic State is constituted by the voluntary resolve of an independent nation to submit to the will of God and to act in accordance with the ordinances of God and His Apostle. By not assuming sovereignty it presents a resemblance to theocracy but it fundamentally differs from it in as much as it does not entrust the rein of administration to any coterie of clergies but lets it remain in the entire body of believers. It agrees with democracy that the

government should be constituted, changed and run by the people but the law of the land, its internal and external policies are not to be laid down and its revenues and resources are not to be regulated wholly by the will of the people but shall be subject to the supreme law of God and His Apostle and shall function within the bounds set for them. Neither the legislature nor the executive not the entire body of the people have the right to change the pattern. They can amplify and adapt but the basic pattern and ingredients are inviolable. It is a state governed by certain principles and ideologies, which can be administered only by those who believe in them but it gives equal right and treatment to believers and non-believers alike. Instead of being conditioned or motivated by any national, racial or parochial interests it is constituted on the basis of a common ideology. Its purpose is not only to maintain law and order and security of its borders but also promotion of goodness, rule of justice and extermination of evils. It grants equality of rights and opportunities and lays down rule of law, enjoins cooperation in goodness and non-cooperation in wickedness, insists on consciousness of moral obligations and strives to ensure that no one in the society suffers from want and privation. It also strikes a balance between the individual and the state so that the State may not work in an autocratic manner and render the individual helpless nor grants a degree of unbridled freedom to the individual that he may injure the collective interest. It gives full opportunity to the individual to grow and progress by bestowing certain fundamental rights upon him. The fundamental rights are:—

1—Security of life, property, honour and privacy.

"And who do not take away the life of any one which God holds sacred except for a just cause." (17:33)

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"Consume not each other's property by false pretence nor present a part of it to judges (as bribe) that you may consume unjustly a part of another man's property knowing full well." (2:188)

"O believers, It is not proper for one section of the people to talk lightly of another section haply they may be better than themselves…Let none defame another, nor give bad names to each other. It is a sin for a man of faith to give bad name to anyone." (49:11)

"O believers, avoid excessive indulgence in suspicion for in some cases suspicion is a sin. Let none spy one another and let none indulge in backbiting among them." (49:12)

2—Right to protect against inequity and injustice.

"God doth not like any evil to be talked about publicly unless if one hath been wronged." (4:148)

3—Freedom of faith and conscience.

"There shall be no compulsion in Religion." (2:256)

"He lets every one to think out things for himself and bear the responsibility for his action. So, if there be any who do not follow thy advice, will thou then bring pressure to bear on them till they believe in what thou sayest?" (1:100)

4—Protection from slandering of one's religion.

"Revile not those whom they call upon beside God." (6:109)

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5—Right of equal treatment.

"Pharaoh surely grew domineering in the land, and created rifts among his people. One group of them, he wilfully humiliated by slaying their male children and letting only the female children survive for he was indeed an evil minded person." (28:4)

6—Freedom of association

"Let there be a band of people among you who shall call men to goodness and enjoin what is recognised on all hands to be good and forbid what is considered to be evil. And these are they who will be a force for progress." (3:104)

7—Right to insist upon goodness and to prohibit coil.

"You are a band of good people raised up to be a model for mankind, Ye enjoin the right and forbid the wrong and ye repose faith in God." (3:110)

The Divine law covers all manifestations of human life and it is the purpose of the State to get that law obeyed. The task of the State is not only to guarantee life and property through justice and equity but also the happiness of its citizens. The primary purpose of the Government is rendering possible service of God. In Islam the ruler combines political with spiritual authority. In Christianity the functions are divided between the emperor and the pope. In contrast to both the Sessanian and Christian Roman and Byzantine governments, the Muslims State did not employ organised religion as part of its administrative machinery and, as a rule, it was not concerned with

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enforcing complete agreement in theological and legal doctrines.

The main purpose of man is service of God. Complete service requires the existence of an organised community of believers. The existence of such a community requires authority and government.

Ibn Khaldūn writes in his *Muqaddimah:*

"The real meaning of royal authority is that it is a form of organisation necessary to mankind. Royal authority requires superiority and force which express the wrathfulness or animality of human nature. The decision of the ruler will, therefore, as a rule, deviate from what is right. They will be ruinous to the worldly affairs of the people under their control. The situation will differ according to the difference of intention to be found in different generations. Therefore, it is necessary to have reference to ordained political norms which are accepted by the masses and to whose laws they submit. If these norms are ordained by the intelligent and leading personalities and best minds of the dynasty, the result will be political institution on an intellectual (rational) basis. If they are ordained by God through a law-giver who establishes them as religious laws, the result will be a political institution on a religious basis, which will be useful for life in both this and the other world. Political laws consider only worldly interests. They know the outward life of this world. On the other hand, the intention of the law-giver concerning mankind is their welfare in the other world.

"Therefore, it is necessary, as required by the religious law, to cause the masses to act in accordance with the religious laws in all their affairs touching both this world and the other world. The authority to do so was possessed by the representatives of the religious laws, the

Prophets. (Later on) it was possessed by those who took their place, the Caliphs".

Caliphate—Theory and Function

'This makes it clear what the Caliphate means. To exercise natural royal authority means to cause the masses to act as required by purpose and desire. To exercise political authority means to cause the masses to act as required by intellectual (rational) interests avoiding anything that is harmful in that respect. And to exercise the Caliphate means to cause the masses to act as required by religious insight into their interests in the other world as well as in this world...Thus the Caliphate in reality substitutes for the law-giver (Muhammad) in as much as it serves like him to protect the religion and to exercise political leadership of the world.'[1]

Etymologically 'Khilafat' or Caliphate means succession. As long as Muhammad (peace on him) lived he performed the function of Prophet, law giver, religious leader, chief judge, civil head of the State and commander of the army. In his role as a Prophet and Messenger of God and the instrument of revelation he could have no successor. Succession to the Prophet meant only succession to the sovereignty of the State. The Caliph was not only the civil head of the State and chief commander of the army but he was also the protector and defender of religion. The main purpose of the Caliphate was perpetuation of Islam and the continued observance of its laws and rules. It was the business of the Caliph to ensure that religious practices like prayers, fasting, pilgrimage and payment of Zakat were observed, that people practised righteousness and eschewed sins and vices. He suppressed heresies, defended the faith, led holy wars, issued decrees and ordinances prescribing limits and penal laws and arranged education of the masses

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[1] Ibn Khaldun : *Muqaddimah,* Vol. I, 385-388.

in theology and religion. The Caliphs attended to social uplift of the people, the relief of distress and extension of justice to the weak and the strong alike. In short, they aimed at both temporal and spiritual development and spiritual development and happiness of the people. Necessarily, therefore, they had to be men fully equipped for the task; they were required to possess a high standard of piety and righteousness, to be learned in Qur'ān and traditions and be themselves fully observant of all the religious obligations and practices. But besides these external virtues their most important equipment was spiritual attainment under the guidance of the great Master. So long as all these virtues and qualities continued to be found in the Caliphs their reign remained the golden period of Islam.

It is in the combination of the temporal and the spiritual and their balanced development that lies the progress of humanity and the salvation of man. As Frithjof Schuon has stated, 'In the life of the people there are as it were two halves; one constitute the play of its earthly existence and the other its relationship with the Absolute.' What determines the value of a civilisation is not the literal form of its earthly dream but its capacity to 'feel' the Absolute. A sense of sacred is fundamental for every civilisation, because the sacred, which is immutable, inviolable and infinitely majestic, is in the very substance of our spirit and of our existence. The modern civilisation, with what materialistic and experimental science or machines having made it, it an indeterminate flux…The world is sick because men live beneath themselves, the error of modern man is that he wants to reform the world without having either the will or the power to reform man, and this flagrant contradiction, this attempt to make a better world on the basis of worsened humanity, can only end in the abolition even of what is human, and consequently the abolition of happiness too. Reforming man means binding

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him again to Heavens, re-establishing the broken link; it means plucking him from the kingdom ·of the passions, from the cult of matter, quantity and cunning and re-integrating him into the world of the spirit and serenity even, it might be said, into the world of his own sufficient reason.'[1] And this is precisely what the Caliphate aimed at and achieved so long as growth of notions of Divine right in the matter of succession or of preferential claim resting with the Prophet's family had not led to schism in Islam and the Caliphate had not become a dynasty on the basis of natural succession rather than on the principle of election of the fittest person. G.E. Von Grunebaum has observed in his book 'Islam' that schism arose from dispute over the person of the legitimate ruler of the Muslims. It developed into heresy due to—

A. The infiltration into political argumentation of traditional, that is, pre-Islamic thought-motifs (such as the epiphany of god in the ruler; dynastic legitimism as in the case of the Shia);

B. Moral absolutism (the extreme egalitarianism of the Kharijites and their exclusion of the sinner from the community);

C. Historical accidents such as the multinational character of the community.

It is generally assumed that Al-Māwardi (991-1031) codified the orthodox Sunni doctrine and laid down the authoritative Sunny theory of the Caliphate. This view is not, however, correct. Māwardi born more than three hundred years after the establishment of the first Caliphate was compelled by circumstances of his time to effect a compromise between the ideal and reality.

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[1] Frithj of Schuon—*Understanding Islam.*

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Māwardi distinguishes in his work *Al-Ahkām-us-Sultāniya,* (Ordinances of Government) between government shaped by reason and the higher form of government based on revealed law. The first simply guards against strife, discord, anarchy and injustice while the second ensures enforcement of law and justice in mutual confidence and friendship and administration of religious affairs and preparation of man for the hereafter. The Caliphate or *Imāmat* is established to replace prophecy in the defence of the faith and administration of the world, Accordingly to Māwardi:

(1) The Caliphate or *Imāmat* is obligatory by revelation not by reason.

(2) The office is filled by election carried out by qualified electors.

(3) Candidates for election must possess certain basic qualifications.

(4) The election of the Caliph is valid even if made by single qualified elector.

(5) Solicitation of the office of *Imām* does not debar a candidate from election.

(6) A duly elected man cannot be displaced in favour of a worthier candidate.

(7) Election cannot be dispensed with even if there be a single qualified candidate.

(8) There cannot be two *Imāms* at one and the same time. (Al-Baghdadi, later on, expounded the view that in widely separated lands co-existence of two *Imāms* is permissible).

(9) The assumption of the Caliphate by virtue of nomination of the preceding Caliph is legal and a reigning Caliph may on his sole

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authority confer a valid contract for the successor.

(10) The nomination of a successor is not valid until accepted by the nominee; when once accepted it cannot be revoked by the nominating Caliph nor can the nominee resign except under specific conditions.

(11) The Caliph may limit the choice of the electors after his death to certain persons, and may also designate the electoral conclave.

(12) The Caliph may nominate two or more persons and lay down the order of their succession.

(13) A prior successor may, after becoming the Caliph, change the list of eventual successors in favour of his own nominees.

(14) It is not necessary that all members of the community shall know the Caliph in person or by name.

(15) Designation of the Caliph as *Khalifatul Allah* is illegal and impious.

(16) A Caliph may forfeit his office on account of:-

(a) Loss of probity by reason of evil conduct or heresy,

(b) Infirmity of mind or body such that it affects the capacity of the Caliph to discharge his duties,

(c) Curtailment or loss of liberty.

A Caliph has to fulfil certain conditions:

(1) He should have a good character and be just, honourable and right minded.

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(2) He must possess *ilm,* that is, knowledge of Qur'ān and traditions to enable him to take independent decisions.

(3) He must be physically and mentally fit to discharge his duties as a ruler.

(4) He must possess courage and determination to protect the territory of Islam.

(5) He must be a descendant of the Quraish.

Al-Māwardi assigns ten principal duties of public concern to the Caliph:

(1) To guard the faith based on its established principles and on consensus (*ijm'a*) of the first Muslims.

(2) His primary function is administration of justice.

(3) Defence of the territory of Islam, protection of life and property of the people.

(4) Guarantee of the livelihood of the people.

(5) To see that punishment to offenders is meted out in accordance with the Divine Law and the rights of the subjects are upheld.

(6) He is responsible for military action—the protection of frontiers and waging of Jehad.

(7) He is under obligation to make just distribution of spoils of war and of alms and charity to deserving people.

(8) He is responsible to have a sound financial administration.

(9) He has to make judicious selection of competent and loyal officers.

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(10) Caliph is enjoined to extend personal supervision to public affairs and to apply himself to government of the nation and defence of religion.

These duties clearly indicate unity of religion and politics, of the spiritual and temporal or religious and secular aspects of life centred in and leading to God.

The Caliph is the defender of the faith, the dispenser of justice, the leader in prayer and in war, all in one. He is bound by the *Shari'a* to the loyal and effective discharge of these duties. There is no separation between State and Church. In theory at least offices of Caliph and *Amir* are united in one and the same person. In actual practice after the golden era of the Caliphate the Caliph often delegated his temporal authority to an *Amir,* who exercised effective power but recognised the spiritual authority of the Caliph. As these *Amirs* got powerful there were sometimes struggles between the *Amirs*, backed by their military strength, who usurped political power, of weak Caliphs. But there was never a struggle arising from clash of different religious theories and their interpretation as happened in the Christian West between Pope and Emperor. There were not rival laws of the church and the State competing for acceptance for Islam knows only one law holding sway over all aspects of life—political, social, economic and cultural. "The authority and validity of this law were never questioned by any Muslim ruler, no matter what his own practice was."

Compromise was, however, effected between the classical theory of the Caliphate and the political reality of the day. This is most evident in the theory propounded by the celebrated theologian, religious philosopher and mystic Abū Hāmid al-Ghazāli (d. 1111). Even though he enumerates more or less the same qualifications for the

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Imām as Al-Māwardi stipulated, he modified them partly to meet the general political situation.

Ability to wage war was laid down as one of the qualification of the Caliph and it was conditioned by possession of prowess and courage. Al-Ghazāli stated prowess and courage were not an essential pre-requisite as they were possessed in ample measure by Seljuk Sultans. According to Ghazāli for competent discharge of the duties of government and administration it is quite adequate if the Caliph is supported by experts and a conscientious Vazir. For exercising effective power the Caliph can lean on the strength of the Sultan, in matters of statecraft on the wisdom of the Vazir and in matters pertaining to erudition and knowledge of *fiqh* he can depend on the expert '*Ulema* of his time. Al-Ghazāli introduces *War'a,* i.e. fear of God—a pious way of life and abstention from dubious practices as the fourth moral virtue required of the *Imām.* Knowledge and application of *Shari'a* are sure guides of a Caliph in the proper discharge of his duties. Knowledge (*M'arifa*) and service of God (*ibāda*) guarantee the good order of religion. Al-Ghazāli advises the Caliph to study the law (*Shari'a*) and to practice the virtues of piety, humility, charity and compassion as *Khalifa-tul-Allāh.*

The violent changes that took place in the political structure of Islam forced Ghazāli to move further along the path of compromise. He stated, "We consider that the function of the Caliphate is contractually assumed by that person of Abbāsid house who is charged with it and the function of the government in various lands is carried out by means of Sultans who owe allegiance to the Caliphate."[1] He went on to say, "Government in these days is a consequence solely of military prowess, and whosoever he may be to whom the possessor of military power gives his

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[1] Al-Ghazāli—*Ihyā* 11, Cairo 1352.

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allegiance, that person is the Caliph." From this passage it is clear that the Caliphate, as represented by the Abbāsid family, itself did not confer any authority but legitimatised the rights acquired by force provided the holder thereof recognised the supremacy of *Shari'a* Law by giving allegiance to the Caliph. Declaration of the government as illegal could result in chaos and lawlessness. Order and welfare of the State had to be safeguarded.

Jalāl-ud-Din Dawwāmi in his *Akhlāq-I-Jalāli* stated that the recognised doctrine of the Caliphate is that the Caliphate lasted for thirty years only; and that thereafter there were only *Imāms* whom Caliphal titles were attached as it were by courtesy. Both Dawwāmi and Ibn Khaldūn distinguish between secular kingship and the Caliphate and stated that only that righteous ruler is entitled to be styled Caliph or *Imām* who rules justly and enforces the *Sharı'a.*

When the Caliphate of Baghdad was knocked out by the Mongols in 1258, it remained only to take the last step and to declare that rights acquired by force constituted a valid *Imāma.* Ibn Jama'a, the Qazi of Cairo (1241-1333) under the Mamlūks, 'gave final consecration to secular absolutism'. In his treatise on constitutional theory and administrative law, Ibn Jama'a summarises the duties of the *Imām* "as defence of *Din,* the warding off of offender, granting compensation to the wronged, and establishing right, for herein consists the welfare of the land, the security of the subjects, and the stemming of the tide of corruption and delay. The affairs of mankind are in good order only if Sultan devoted himself to their administration and to their protection exclusively." Ibn Jama'a not only recognised usurpation *de jure* but also dispensed with the conclusion of *Baya* or contract between *Imām* and the community. The established principle that Caliph can be deposed if he acts contrary to the *Shari'a* and that he is to be disobeyed if he issues regulations contrary to *Shari'a,*

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was quickly given up in favour of obedience to any lawfully constituted authority. The gulf between ideal law and political reality became wider as time passed on. The jurists bowed to expediency and brute force but it must be stated that not only political considerations but the concern for preservation of the unity of the community and Islam as the unifying bond led to this degree of compromise. The Caliph became in law what he was for a long time in fact, a mere figurehead.

Ibn Taymiya (d. 1328) tried to escape from the predicament which confronted Ibn Jama'a and his predecessor by ignoring the problem of *Khilāfa,* denying its necessity and criticising its theoretical foundation. He laid all the emphasis on the *Shari'a* and its application to the life of the community. The *Shari'a* is the supreme authority and complete guide of the community whose life must be regulated by the Divine Law. He acknowledged the necessity of political authority and recognised the *defacto* poser of the ruler of the day and the necessity of obedience to authority for the benefit of the community but the forcefully advocated reform of the administration in the spirit of ideal *Shari'a.* Even though he pleaded for close cooperation between the *Imām* and the community, the reforms that he advocated brought him continuously into conflict with the authority and led to his frequent internment and finally to his death. He urged those in authority to practise the quality of sincerity, of fear of and trust in God, of charity and patience and to be well disposed towards their subjects. Though he absolved Muslims from obeying orders contrary to commandments of God, he did not advocate open rebellion for fear of anarchy. Ability and loyalty are two essential qualities required of man in public life. Ibn Taymiya was realist enough to say that ability to fill an office, courage and bravery in a war leader, judgement and power of enforce-

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ments in a judge is more important than piety and loyalty if nobody is found possessing all the qualities.

As stated before, Ibn Khaldūn (1336-1406) reproduces the classical theory of the jurists and sees in the Caliphate the frame within which the *Shari'a* determines the life of the community and ensures the happiness of the believers in the Hereafter.

In order to adumbrate the theoretical basis of the Caliphate and to indicate the changes that took place in its concept with passage of time as a result of cleavage between the ideal law and political reality, we have covered a period several hundred years later than the period of the first four Caliphs—the *Khulfā-e-Rāshidin*—which is the subject of our study. We now revert to that period to show how the first four Caliphs were appointed and how they acted upto the ideal precepts of Government.

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KHILAFAT-E-RASHIDA

(11—40 A.H. = 632—661 A.D.)

Election of Abū Bakr

On the death of the Prophet (PBUH) the *Ansār* of Madinah assembled in Saqifa bani Sa'ada to elect a successor to the Prophet. Sa'ad bin-'Ibāda addressed them in the following terms:—

'O *Ansār*! No clan of Arabia stands equal to you in dignity and prestige. You are the first of the believers. For ten years the Prophet (PBUH) lived amongst his own people and preached to them to worship God and to abandon idolatory but only a few listened to him and those who embraced Islam were not in a position to defend themselves what to say of defending the Prophet (PBUH) and raising the banner of Islam. When God blessed us with the advent of the Prophet (PBUH) we assisted him, carried out *Jihād* against his adversaries and your sword subdued many an arrogant foe as a result of which every nook and corner of the Arabian peninsula is under the sway of Islam. The Prophet was well pleased with you and died amongst you. Having regard to all this, if I say that you are better entitled to his succession I should not be wrong."

Getting news of this assembly 'Umar hastened to it accompanied by Abū Bakr and Abū 'Obeidah bin Jarrāh. After praising God and describing the condition of Arabia before the advent of Islam Abū Bakr addressed the concourse thus "It was difficult for the Arabs to give up the religion of their ancestors but God bestowed this honour upon the *Muhajirin* among the people of the Prophet (PBUH) that they acknowledged his Prophethood, accepted the faith, gave solace to him and bore up all manner of

difficulties and tribulation, the abuse and opposition of their own people and inspite of their great numerical inferiority they disregarded the contempt, hatred and enmity of their people. The *Muhajirin* who belonged to the family of the Prophet were the first to practise worship of God in this land. After this I have no hesitation in saying that the group of the first *Muhajirin* is best entitled to the Caliphate. Leaving aside the unjust everyone will endorse my view. O *Ansār!* We acknowledge your position and station and the precedence you took in religion. God selected you as the helpers of His Apostle and directed him to migrate to you. Many of the widows of the Apostle and wives of the *Muhajirin* belong to your families. After the first *Muhajirin* we hold you in highest estimation. Let there be *Amirs* from amongst us and Vazirs from amongst you. We shall never do anything without consulting you."[1]

One of the *Ansār*, Hubāb bin Munzar suggested that there should be one *Amir* for amongst the *Ansār* and one from amongst the *Muhajirin*. 'Umar opposed the suggestion and said, "It would be calamity if there were to be two *Amirs* simultaneously. By God the Arabs will never agree to be your subjects when their Prophet was from a different clan. On the contrary the Arabs will not hesitate to accept the authority and obedience of the Prophet's clan. This is such a forceful argument that nobody can dare to controvert it. We pertain to the family of the Prophet and who can be better entitled to his succession than us. Only an obstinate can deny it."

Bani Khazraj seemed even then inclined to give acceptance to Sa'ad bin 'Ibāda. The Aus opposed it and sided with the *Muhajirin*. 'Umar proposed the name of Abū Bakr and himself advanced to give allegiance on his hand saying, "Abū Bakr! Did not the Prophet (PBUH) ask you to

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[1] Tabari, History, Vol. III, page 207—209.

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lead the prayers in his place? I give my allegiance to you. You are the successor of the Prophet. To give feality to you is to give feality to the person who was dearest to the Prophet."[1] Abū Obeidah and Bashir bin Sa'ad followed suit and then one after the other all the assembled *Muhajirin* and *Ansār* took the oath of allegiance. 'Umar later stated, "It was the most difficult and trying moment in our life. We feared that if the people did not support us and after we had tendered our allegiance, they started giving allegiance to some one else, we would have to either swallow the unpalatable thing or to oppose it which might lead to disorder and anarchy."[2]

This allegiance by the elite was followed the next day by general allegiance by the masses in the Prophet's mosque. 'Ali and a few others of Bani Hāshim abstained from tendering allegiance for some time as they thought themselves to be more deserving of succession.

Some historians have described Abū Bakr's accession to the Caliphate as one by nomination or designation. 'Umar had no authority to nominate any one. It was just a proposal on his part to which he gave practical shape and which was accepted by the people. It was in no way different from election except that there was no contest and Abū Bakr was unanimously elected. His accession had all the democratic ingredients in it and was in accord with the system of election of the chief of a clan which was in vogue from before. According to Sir Thomas Arnold in the election of Abū Bakr all the conditions like age and distinction in the clan which determined the election of a chief were fulfilled.[3]

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[1] Ibn Hishām—*Sirat*, Vol. III, page 464.
[2] Tabari – History, Vol. III, page 207.
[3] Sir Thomas Arnold, The Caliphate, page 20.

After his election Abū Bakr delivered a scintillating speech which reflected the policies he was going to adopt in the government of the Caliphate:—

'O people! Behold me charged with the cares of government. I am not the best among you; I need all your advice and all your help If I do well support me; if I mistake, counsel me. To tell the truth to a person commissioned to rule is faithful allegiance; to conceal it is treason. In my sight, the strong and the weal are alike, and to both I wish to render justice. If any people fail to strive in the way of God, humiliation is their lot and if wickedness becomes common in a people God lets it face sufferings and tribulations. As I obey God and His Prophet (PBUH), obey me; if I neglect the laws of God and the Prophet, I have no more right to your obedience."[1]

Accession of 'Umar

In A.H. 13 when Abū Bakr fell seriously ill, he wanted to entrust the reins of government to a person who would further unify the community, subjugate any differences and defend the country from external aggression. His choice fell on 'Umar but he did not consider it proper to nominate him on the basis of individual discretion. He consulted a number of distinguished companions and every one welcomed the suggestion. 'Abdul Rahman bin 'Auf said, "'Umar is the best of all and none compares with him. Albeit, there is a hard strain in him." Abū Bakr replied, "This is because he sees me lenient. When he will have to shoulder the burden himself, he will exercise moderation." 'Uthmān stated, "I know his interior is better than his exterior. None amongst us stands comparison to him." Usaid bin Huzair said to Abū Bakr, 'After you I consider 'Umar to be the best. No one is better fitted for the post than him." Saye'ed bin Zaid,

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[1] Tabari – History, Vol. III, page 202.

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Qāzi of Egypt and a number of other *Muhajirin* and *Ansār* praised 'Umar and thought him eminently suitable for the appointment. After this consultation Abū Bakr asked 'Uthmān to write the epistle:—

"In the name of God, the most merciful, the most compassionate I have appointed 'Umar as your ruler. If he acts with justice and equity and undertakes measures for welfare of the people, I would not have erred in my selection. If he indulges in injustice and oppression I will be innocent for I do not know the unseen and rely on appearances. God knows that I mean well."

When his condition deteriorated Abū Bakr came out of his house and addressed the people thus, "After mature consideration I have selected 'Umar. Do you accept his Caliphate. I am not bestowing this office upon any relation. I hope you will give him complete obedience." Every one responded, "We will obey him completely."[1] He then called 'Umar and gave him some useful counsel.

After receiving the allegiance of the people, 'Umar ascended the pulpit and addressed the people. "I went to tell you a few things. The Arabs of the day are like a bridled camel which implicitly follows its leader. The leader should take care where he is leading it. By the God of the Ka'aba I shall lead the people on the straight path."[2] On another occasion he delivered the sermon, "O people! None in authority has reached that stature that he should be obeyed even in matters repugnant to God. I am telling you what rights you have upon me and you can get them enforced upon me. It is your right that I should not tax you, except in accordance with law, upon your property and

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[1] Tabari—History, Vol. IV, page 51.
[2] *Ibid.*, page 54; Ibn Asir, Vol. II, page 208.

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acquisitions. It is also your right to see that whatever is collected as State revenues should be properly expended."[1]

Election of 'Uthmān

When 'Umar was fatally injured some of the eminent companions approached him and requested him to appoint his successor. 'Umar commented that Abū Obeidāh bin Jarrāh was not alive nor Salām the bondsman of Abū Hudhaifah otherwise he would have appointed either of them as his successor. Somebody suggested the name of his son 'Abdullah. 'Umar remonstrated 'that was never in my mind. I admit that Abū Bakr who was better than myself appointed me as his successor. But this is also true that the Prophet who was far better than any of us did not appoint his successor. Rest assured God will protect the religion ordained by Him and will not let it perish." He was again approached by the companions and in defence to their wishes he said "All right, you can select any one as your Caliph from those with whom the Prophet was well pleased till the end and had predicted the dwelling of heaven for them. I mean 'Ali, 'Uthmān, Sa'ad bin Abi Waqās, 'Abdul Rahmān bin 'Auf, Zubair bin 'Awām, Talha bin 'Obeidullah and 'Abdullah bin 'Umar. But 'Abdullah shall only participate in the electoral council and will not be himself a nominee for the office. If, by chance, there is equality of votes, then the candidate of the party which will include 'Abdullah shall be selected as the Caliph. When once you have selected your ruler then give him unflinching support.[2]

The electoral conclave was asked to give its decision within three day. It started its work but could reach no conclusion. To avoid dissension 'Abdul Rahmān offered to forego his own claim if others agreed to abide by

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[1] Imām Abū Yūsuf—*Alkhiraji*, page 117.
[2] Tabari—History, Vol. V, page 34; Ibn Asir, Vol. III, page 57.

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his decision. This was agreed to by all the members of the Council. Zubair and Sa'ad withdrew and Talha was away. The contest remained between 'Ali and 'Uthmān. Each pressed his own claim but conceded that the other was the next best. 'Abdul Rahmān conferred with prominent persons of Madinah and other places who had come for the pilgrimage. The majority favoured 'Uthmān. 'Abdul Rahmān announced the selection of 'Uthmān and pledged his own allegiance to him. All the people assembled in the Great Mosque followed the example. In his address 'Uthmān exhorted the people "The life of this world is ephemeral. Perform as many good deeds as possible before death overtakes you. Let not the life of this world beguile you and make you unmindful of God. Draw lessons from past events and strive in good deeds. Let there be no latches on your part for your Creator is not unaware of what you do…Now listen, I am a follower and not one to lay down a new path. I shall follow the Book of God and Traditions of the Prophet and I give you three assurances. First, I shall follow the principles and regulations you had laid down by mutual consultation before my accession. Second, in matters in which there are no precedents, I shall consult the knowledgeable. Third, I shall not lay down my hand on any one unless it becomes imperative for sake of justice."

'Ali was elected on the assassination of 'Uthmān by the rebels. At first 'Ali declined to accept the office but ultimately he yielded under the entreaties of his friends and threats of the regicides.

These Caliphs not only themselves practised what they preached to others but also directed their governors and officials to act uprightly for the welfare of the people. Despatching 'Amr bin al 'Aas on Syrian expedition, Abū Bakr exhorted him, 'O Amr fear God in your open and concealed deeds for He is seeing you and your actions. Prepare for the Hereafter and keep the good pleasure of

God as your objective in every act. Behave with your companions as if they are your children. Do not pry into the secrets of people and accept the outward presentations. Keep yourself upright and your subjects will follow your example."[1]

'Umar used to tell his officials, "I have not appointed you officials over the community of the Prophet so that you may ensure observance of prayers by the people and for deciding their disputes with justice and giving their rights with equity."[2] He publicly announced, "I have not appointed any official to beat up people or to snatch away their property but for the purpose of teaching you your religion and the way of the Prophet. If anybody has been treated otherwise he can come forward with his complaint and he will get full recompense."[3]

While appointing Qais bin Sa'ad as governor of Egypt 'Ali sent a letter to the people of Egypt which read—

"Beware! You have a right upon us that we should act in accordance with the Book of God and Traditions of the Prophet and we should guide your affairs in the manner ordained by God. We should strive openly as well as behind your backs for your well-being." The letter concluded, "If we do not conduct ourselves accordingly we have no right for your allegiance."

Writing to a governor 'Ali said, "Let there be no barriers between you and your subjects. Erection of barriers by the authorities is short sightedness and deficiency of acknowledge. Because of these veils they do not get to know the real state of affairs and small things appear big

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[1] *Kanzul Ammāl*, Vol. V.
[2] Tabari, History, Vol. III, pagd 273.
[3] Abu Yusuf – *Kitab Al-Khiraj*, page 115.

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and big things appear small. Virtue is presented as evil and evil as virtue and truth and falsehood get inter-mixed."[1]

'Ali himself acted upon this advice. He used to go round the markets of Kūfa with a whip in his hand but unaccompanied by any escort or servant. He would advice the people and would personally see that the businessmen were not committing any dishonesty in their dealings.[2]

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[1] Ibn Kathir, Vol. III, page 8.
[2] Ibn Khatir, Vol. III, page 8.

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14
Civil Administration

For purposes of civil administration Abū Bakr divided the country into a number of governorettes and posted the following governors therein:[1]

	Seat of government	Name of the governor
1.	Makkah (Hejāz)	‘Attāb bin Usaid
2.	Tāif (Hejāz)	‘Uthmān bin Abi Al-‘Aas
3.	Sana‘ā (Yemen)	Muhājir bin ‘Ali Ummaiya
4.	Hadhramaut (Yemen)	Zaid bin Labid Ansāri
5.	Khulān	Y‘āla bin Ma‘viya
6.	Zabid Warema (Yemen)	Abu Musā Ash‘ari
7.	Jind	Ma‘āz bin Jabal
8.	Bahrein	‘Alā’ bin Hazrami
9.	Najrān	Jarir bin ‘Abdullah
10.	Dumatul Jundal	‘Ayāz bin Ghanam
11.	Iraq	Muthannā bin Hāritha
12.	Jarsh	‘Abdullah bin Thour
13.	Hems (Syria)	Abu ‘Obeidah bin Jarrāh
14.	Jordon	Shurabhil bin Hsana
15.	Damascus	Yazid bin Sufiyān
16.	Palestine	‘Amr bin Al-‘Aasl
17.	Madinah	Caliph himself

Duties of Governors

Governors were also commanders-in-chief of the army. It was their duty—

1. To look after the army and to arrange distribution of pay to the soldiers.

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[1] Saye‘ed Ahmad Akbarābādi—*Sidaiq Akbar*, page 319.

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2. To lead prayers in the mosque and to give sermons at the time of Friday prayers.
3. To arrange collection of revenues and to keep proper stock of things collected.
4. To maintain law and order in the territory.
5. To look after the moral conduct of people.
6. To give punishment of offenders according to *Shari'a* law.
7. To meet aggression and to arrange proper distribution of spoils of war among the soldiers and to send one-fifth thereof to the Caliphate headquarters.
8. To provide facilities to caravans of people going for the annual pilgrimage and to ensure their safe journey.
9. To distribute pensions to retired soldiers and to look after the welfare of their families.
10. To see that the tenancy flourished and to take steps for promotion of agriculture and horticulture.

Appointment of Officials

Abū Bakr acted upon two principles in the matter of appointment of officers—

(1) The officer posted to any post in the time of the Prophet was retained at that post like 'Attāb bin Usaid, 'Uthman bin Abi Al-'Aas, Muhājir bin Abi Ummaiya, Zaid bin Labid and 'Alā' bin Hazrami. The Prophet had selected Osāma to lead an expedition but that expedition did not come off in Prophet's time. Objections were raised against the young age of Osāma but Abū Bakr did not change the appointment.

(2) In selecting officials he used to give preference to those who were closest to the Prophet (PBUH).

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Thus those who had accepted Islam before the fall of Makkah were given preference over others.

(3) He eschewed nepotism. In posting Yazid bin Abū Sufyān as governor of Damascus he advised him as follows—

"O Yazid! You have your relations and kith and kin there. It is likely you may give them preference in appointing officials. This is one of my greatest fears. The Prophet (PBUH) had said that if any one in authority appoints an officials merely because of his relationship with him, he will be accursed of God."[1]

(4) Even differences with the Caliph in any matter would not disqualify a person from appointment to a high post if he was otherwise competent and suitable as happened in the case of Khālid bin Saye'ed who had opposed the election of the Caliph. He was appointed to lead the Syrian expedition.

(5) Officers were appointed on probation and they were confirmed on giving an account of their efficiency and capability. While sending Yazid bin Abū Sufyān as commander of a military column to Syria he was directed, "I have appointed you commander in order to test you. This is also to train you. If you will fare well you will be confirmed in this post and given promotion. If you do not give good account of yourself you will be removed."[2]

(6) If any officer showed incompetence or disobedience of orders he was removed from the post as happened in the case of Khālid bin Saye'ed who

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[1] Imam Ahmad, *Musnad,* Vol. I, page 6.
[2] Ibn Athir, Vol. II, page 276.

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was deputed to patrol the Syrian border but who had, without orders, advanced to attack the Romans.

Besides the institution of governors a number of offices like judiciary, police, *Baitulmāl* or Treasury, authoritative interpretation of law, writing of documents, etc. were set up, which will be discussed in later chapters.

'Umar divided the country into eight provinces—Makkah, Madinah, Syria, Jazira, Basra, Kufa, Egypt and Palestine. In the territories annexed by him no changes were made in the territorial limits of provinces—Khurasan, Azerbaijan and Persia besides Iraq. The limits of these provinces were retained. In some provinces commanders of the army were separate from the governors while in others governors were also the commanders. Within the provinces were districts each having a collector. At some places collectors were the heads of the police while in others there were separate police officers. At the provincial headquarters were also posted scribes or *Mir Munshis,* scribes for the army headquarters, superintendents of police, treasury officers and Qāzis.[1]

'Umar used to take very great care in selecting officers for the various posts so that they could be manned by fittest persons. In his time there were four great statesmen—Mu'āviya, 'Amr bin al-'Aas, Mughira bin Sha'iba and Ziyād bin Sumya. Mu'āviya, 'Amr and Mughira were appointed governors while Ziyād because of his young age was placed under Abū Mūsā Ash'ari who was directed to consult him in every matter.

Advisory Council

Abū Bakr used to consult eminent companions particularly 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Ali, 'Abdul Rahmān bin 'Auf, Ma'āz bin Jabal, Abi bin Ka'ab and Zaid bin Thābit

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[1] Yāqūbi—History, Vol. I, page 201-202.

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in important state matters. 'Umar set up a regular advisory council. Selection of important office bearers was one of the functions of this council. Occasionally provincial governors or district collectors were asked to nominate able and honest persons for various posts and their recommendations were duly considered by the council.

Duties and authorities of the various officers used to be recorded in edits which were read out in public assemblies. In a conference of these officers 'Umar proclaimed, "Remember! I have not appointed you as *Amirs* or tyrants. On the contrary I have sent you as *Imāms* so that people should follow you. You should give the due rights of the Muslims and should not beat them nor humiliate them. You should not unduly praise them that they may become a victim of pride or error nor should you close your doors to them that the strong may overpower the weak nor should you give to yourselves preference over them in any matter as that would be an act of injustice."[1]

Every officer was asked to take a pledge that he would not ride a Turkish horse nor wear fine clothes nor eat fine flour nor keep a guard at his door and that he would keep his doors open at all times for the needy.

A detailed inventory of all the properties and goods of officers used to be prepared at the time of their appointment and if there was extraordinary increase in them he was called upon to account for it.[2]

All the senior officers were required to attend Makkah at the time of annual pilgrimage and people were encouraged to voice their complaints if they had any against them. Once a person complained that a particular officer had inflicted a hundred stripes upon him without any justification. When this was established 'Umar

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[1] Ibn Sa'ad—*Tabaqat*, Vol. III, page 109.
[2] *Fatuhul Buldan*, page 219.

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permitted the man to give hundred stripes to that officer. With great difficulty 'Amr bin Al-'Aas persuaded to him to take two gold coins in place of each stripe.[1]

Enquiries against officers

A distinguished companion Muhammad bin Musallama Ansāri was placed in charge of an office for looking into complaints received against officers. Sometime commissions consisting of few persons were set up for making on-the-spot enquiries. Serious notice was taken of any latches or delinquency on the part of governors and senior officials, in particular, of assumption of air of superiority or pomp and show. They were straightaway dismissed if it was reported against them that the weak and the poor could not reach them for redress of their grievances. While going round the market one day 'Umar was questioned by somebody whether he thought he would escape God's chastisement just because he had laid some rules of conduct for the governors and whether he knew that 'Ayāz bin Ghaman, governor of Jazira, wore fine clothes and kept a watchman at his door. 'Umar sent Muhammad bin Musallama to make an enquiry and to bring 'Ayāz with him if there was truth in the allegations. When 'Ayāz reached Madinah he was made to wear a shirt made of coarse blanket and to tend a flock of goats in a nearby jungle. 'Ayāz protested that death was better than this humiliation but he dared not disobey the Caliph. After sometime he realised the reason behind Caliph's harshness and expressed sincere regrets and led an austere life thereafter as a governor. But 'Umar's political sagacity led him to permit some departure here and there from this rigid code. Mu'āviya governor of Syria lived in great style. Questioned by 'Umar he explained that he had to deal with Romans who would not be at all impressed about the

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[1] Abu Yusuf—*Al Kharaj*, page 66.

strength of the Muslim Empire and treat it with contempt if he did not exhibit some pomp and grandeur. 'Umar raised no further objection.

To keep his officials incorruptible 'Umar gave them high salaries. Even in those days of extremely low prices of commodities Mu'āviya was given a salary of fifteen thousand *dinars* per month equivalent to five thousand rupees.[1]

Following is the list of governors appointed by Umar:

1.	Abū 'Obeidah	Syria
2.	Yazid Bin Abi Sufiyan	Syria
3.	Amir Mu'āviya	Syria
4.	'Amr bin Al-'Aas	Egypt
5.	Sa'ad bin 'Abi Waqās	Kufa
6.	'Atba bin Ghazwān	Basra
7.	Abū Mūsā Ash'ari	Basra
8.	Attāb bin Usaid	Makkah
9.	Nafey bin 'Abdul Hārith	Makkah
10.	'Uthmān bin Abi Al-'Aas	Taif
11.	Ya'la bin Maniya	Yemen
12.	'Atā' bin Al Hazrami	Yemen
13.	'Ayāz bin Ghanam	Jazira
14.	'Umar bin Sa'ad	Hems
15.	Huzaifa bin Al Yamān	Madain

'Uthmān had retained the advisory council set up by 'Umar and it was quite active in the early part of his reign. He, sometimes, invited the influential people to give their opinions in writing and occasionally held administrative conferences at the headquarters.

Though a tender hearted person he exercised effective supervision over his governors and officials.

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[1] Shibli Na'umani—*Al-Farooq*, page 248.

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Walid bin 'Aqba was removed from his office on charges of drinking liquor and he was given the punishment prescribed for it by the *Shari'a.* Sa'ad bin Abi Waqās, Governor of Kūfa, had taken a big loan from the State Treasury. He was directed to refund the amount and was suspended. Abū Mūsā Ash'ari was removed from the office of governor of Basra as he had started living luxuriously. 'Amr bin Al-'Aas, governor of Egypt, was removed as he could not increase the state revenues. 'Uthmān used to send commissions of enquiry against delinquent officials. They were generally composed of Muhammad bin Musallama, 'Abdullah bin 'Umar and Asad bin Zaid.[1]

'Uthmān used to listen to the grievances of the people every Friday before the prayers and every one had a right to freely criticise. 'Uthmān had given one fifth of the booty of the naval engagement at Tripoli to his commander 'Abdullah bin Abi Sarh as a reward but when this was criticised by the people he got the amount refunded. 'Uthmān had retained the administrative set up of 'Umar making a few changes here and there. Thus 'Umar had divided Syria into three provinces of Damascus, Jordan and Palestine. 'Uthmān grouped them into one province. The new territories annexed in his time like Tripoli, Cyprus, Armenia were declared new provinces.

'Ali also followed the pattern laid down by 'Umar. Once some Jews of Hejaz who had been exiled by 'Umar and who had settled in Najrān approached 'Ali to let them go back to their original residence but 'Ali rejected the request on the ground that no decision could be wiser than that of 'Umar.[2]

Like other Caliphs, 'Ali kept careful watch over the work of his officers. He deputed Ka'ab bin Mālik to go to

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[1] Tabari, History, page 2943.
[2] Abu Yusuf, *Al-Kharoj* reproduced in *Khulafi'-e-Rashidin,* page 328.

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Iraq with the instructions: "You should go to Iraq with your assistants and go round all the districts to ascertain how the officials did their jobs and comported themselves."

Masqala, Governor of Ardesher, had obtained a loan from the treasury to free five hundred bondsmen and women. 'Ali insisted upon the refund of the amount. The governor said that 'Uthmān would not have demanded refund of the amount and he went away to join Mu'āviya. When 'Ali heard of it, he said, "By God, he acted like a Saiyyad, but he ran away like a bondsman and misappropriated like a culprit. If he had stayed I would not have given him a great punishment than imprisonment and if he had money with him I would have taken the amount, otherwise I would have let him go."[1]

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[1] Tabari, History, page 3441.

15
Economic System

The Quranic concept of economy postulates, inter alia, equality of opportunity in building up economy but permits certain differences in various levels, and rejects principles of capitalism and distribution according to which wealth may remain confined in a limited circle or group. It also demands fair distribution of wealth among all members of society and forbids transactions which may promote an evil economic system and nullify efforts for making an honest living. It attaches greatest importance to the offering of economic aid to the needy and the poor.

Equality of opportunity

According to Qur'ān God alone is the real Sustainer and Providence. Though in His Infinite wisdom God has permitted differences in the quantum of sustenance, yet no one is to be deprived of means of living. In fact, God has taken upon Himself the responsibility to provide for every living creature. Says the Qur'ān:

> "There is nothing that moveth on earth the nourishment of which doth not depend on God."
>
> (11:6)

> "Verily it is God who is the source of all sustenance, its possessor, the Unshakable power."
>
> (51:58)

> "And the earth have We stretched forth and fixed mountains thereon, and caused therein to grow everything in a form suited to its very nature. And We have provided them as sustenance for you and

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also for those whom you do not provide for. Not a thing is there which is not with us in abundance and We provided it not except in appropriate measures." (15:19—21)

To certain extent differences in economic levels are but natural but every one has a right to good things of life and the wealth of the wealthy is not meant to accentuate the poverty of poor but is to be treated as a trust from God which under a collective system should be spent to reduce poverty and want. It should be a source of bounty for the people and not a means of oppression.

"God enhanceth the sustenance of such of His servants as He pleaseth and limits it for whomsoever He pleaseth. Truly God knows the needs of all things". (29:62)

"And God hath granted the provisions of life to some of you more than to others; yet they to whom He hath so granted give not out of it to those whom their right hands possess, so that they may together profit by it. Do they then assert that this bounty is not from God?" (16:71)

Extension of equality of opportunity does not necessarily argue equality of economic standards which are to vary by the very nature of things but the differences in the levels should not be too wide and should not divide the people into haves and have-nots.

'It is He who hath appointed you to succeed one another on earth, and raised some of you over others in diverse ways in order that He might try you in what He hath given you.' (6:166)

The Qur'ān calls upon the rich not to treat his riches as exclusively his own but that the poor have a right to be benefited thereby. It also asks the poor not to be faithless

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and ungrateful but to remain contented over his small means and not to let jealousy or greed overtake his heart but to exert and utilise his talents to promote his wellbeing. "And covet not that of which God has given to some more than to others." (4:32)

The system laid down by Qur'ān is opposed to capitalism and accumulation of wealth among a group of persons.

> "But to those, who hoard up gold and silver and do not expend them in the way of God, announce tidings of a grievous chastisement. On the day of their punishment when their wealth shall be heated in Hellfire, their foreheads, and their sides and their backs shall be branded therewith, it will be said to them that is what ye had treasured up for yourselves, taste then your treasures." (9:34—35)

> "And spend in the way of God and do not with your own hands work for your ruin and do good, for God verily loveth those who do good." (2:195)

Giving of financial assistance to the poor and the needy has been made a necessary ingredient of piety. The Qur'ān says that "Piety does not consist in merely turning your faces (for prayers) towards the east or the west, but true piety is this; that one believeth in God, in the Day Hereafter, in the angels, in the scriptures and in the Prophets and despite his love of it, giveth of his wealth to his kindred and to the orphans and to the needy and to the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and for the redemption of slaves and who observeth prayers and payeth the poor due." (2:177)

In transactions of sales, purchases and exchange everything is forbidden which may promote an evil economic system or discourage endeavour for honest living or disturb the balance between labour and capital. For this

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reason it declares illegal usury, gambling, shady deals and hoarding and insists that all transactions must be governed by justice and fair-play. So mindful is the Qur'ān of the economically depressed classes of society that while declaring unlawful all usurious transactions it calls upon every earning member of society to share his earnings with those who are not economically well off.

> "You shall never attain piety till your share with others (the poor or the needy) what you cherish (particularly your wealth). And whatsoever, you give away God surely knoweth it." (3:92)

It postulates the principle that what is termed wealth instrinsically belongs to God since the land, the resources of which man exploits to produce wealth in diverse forms is God's and the talent which man applies to the process of production is but a gift from God. Hence it is, that God claims a share in what is produced and announces that His share should go to those who, for one reason or another, cannot meet the material needs of life satisfactorily. So, apart from the *Zakāt* and the poor-due levied on the well-to-do, it calls upon the rich to pool together voluntarily, under the auspices to them (2:219) for suitable distribution among have nots of society. In fact, it discountenances so strongly the accumulation of wealth in but a few hands, (59:71) that it has had to promulgate, for instance, a law of inheritance which allows an equitable share in what is left by the deceased to every member of his or her family, both near and distant, whether male or female.

It assures people that this parting away a share of one's wealth will not in any way diminish his wealth but would, by grace of God, lead to further prosperity. It treats this financial assistance to the needy as a loan to God which would be returned increase manifold. It says:

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"Who is it that will lend to God a goodly loan? He will double it to him over and over again." (2:245)

"Those who spend their wealth in the way of God are like a grain of corn, which puts forth seven ears, each ear containing a hundred grains, and God multiplieth for whom He pleaseth. And God is Liberal, cognizant. (2:261)

Injunctions in the Qur'ān regarding the individual fall in three categories :–

(1) What should be earned?
(2) How should it be earned?
(3) How should it be spent?

The Qur'ān exhorts the individual to strive to earn his living. God has provided all materials for sustenance but quest has to be made to obtain them. "But when the prayer is ended, disperse in the land in quest of the bounties of God" (28:10). They whom ye worship instead of God can give you no subsistence, so seek your means of subsistence from God, and serve Him and give Him thanks (29:12). The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Quest for lawful sustenance is the greatest obligation after worship of God!"[1]

In this quest man is directed to follow two principles:

(1) that what is earned is lawful;

(2) the means to attain it should also be lawful. Says the Qur'ān:

"O People!, Eat of the things of the earth which are permissible and welcome, and do not follow the way of Satan, for he is your avowed enemy." (2:168)

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[1] Kanzul Ammāl, Vol. II, page 2.

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Islam does not prohibit acquisition of wealth but insists that it must be acquired by lawful means and there must be a share in it of the poor and the needy. It prohibits extravagance as also stinginess.

> "And give to him who is of kin his due (share in what you have), and also to the poor and to the stranded, but do not indulge in wilful extravagance, for the wilfully extravagant belong to the fraternity of Satans and Satan has always been ungrateful to his Lord." (17:26)

> "And let not thy hand so tightly be tied up to the neck (so that thou shouldest deny thyself the opportunity to help others) and not let it to be so wide open that nothing is left (with thee to meet thine own needs) and thou be reduced to destitution." (17:29)

The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Moderation is half part of prosperity."

The economic system of Islam lays down regulations both for the Caliphate and the people. So far as the Caliphate is concerned it provides for:

(1) Establishment of *Baitulmāl*.
(2) Collection of statistics.
(3) Grant of stipends and aids.
(4) Development of economic resources.
(5) Placing of limitations on individual rights.
(6) Laying down principles for effecting balance between labour and Capital.
(7) Regulations regarding land.

So far as individuals are concerned it gives directions regarding:—

(1) Giving of alms.
(2) Creation of *awkāf*.

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(3) Gifts and bequests.
(4) Advancement of loans.
(5) Creation of trusts.

Baitulmāl or State Treasury

Every property which belongs to Muslims in general and not to any Muslim in particular constitutes a part of the assets of the public treasury. It is not necessary that the property should actually lie in the vaults of the treasury because the concept of *baitulmāl* refers more to the destination of the property than to its location. According to Shaf'ite view the term public treasury applies only to those revenues of the Muslim community or State whose disbursement has not been prescribed by the *Shari'a* in favour of definite classes of Muslims but which belong to the community at large and are disbursed by the *Imām* for the common interest of the community, namely, in meeting the general expenses of the State. According to Hanifite view *baitulmāl* means every revenue which accrues to the State whether or not the *Imām* has a free hand in its disbursement.

The State Treasury can have its branches in provinces or districts. Principles of its income and expenditure are fixed but the details can be worked out by the Caliph or his advisory council. Its sources of income are (1) *'Ushr* or tithe (2) *Kharāj* or land tax (3) *Fizyah* or poll tax (4) *Zakāt* (5) *Sadaqāt* (6) *Fayor* booty obtained from enemy without a fight (7) *Khums* or booty obtained in conquests (8) *Zarā'ib* or taxes imposed on a temporary basis for public good (9) *Karlaz* or rent of Government land (10) *'Ushoor* or duty on imported goods (11) *Wakf*, (12) miscellaneous sources like mines and minerals etc.

'Ushr or tithe

Lands belonging to Arabs and of those who willingly accepted Islam, land conquered by force and

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divided among the victorious Muslim armies, waste lands developed for cultivation by *Imām's* permission are tithe lands. If such lands are irrigated by rivers, ponds or rain water one tenth of the produce is taken as tithe. But if they are irrigated by wells, one twentieth is taken as tithe.

Kharaj or Land Tax

Land tax is imposed on the land of non-Muslims who are allowed to retain their lands after conquest by Muslim armies and acquire the status of *Zimmis*. *Kharāj* is of two kinds—proportional *Kharāj* and fixed *Kharāj*. Proportional *Kharāj* consists of a proportion like one-third, or one-fourth or one-fifth of the produce of the land. The fixed *Kharāj* is a fixed charge on the ground at so much of natural produce, or money per unit area or per tree. It is levied on land irrespective of the fact whether the owner is male or female, minor or adult.

In case of fixed *Kharāj* the rates imposed by Caliph 'Umar on lands of Sawad in Iraq constitute the lawful rates and may not be enhanced. These rates were imposed on land fit for cultivation and accessible to water. In other cases, *Kharāj* is assessed according to the tax bearing capacity of the land. Al-Mawardi discusses the factors determining the tax paying capacity of land as being the quality of land, the kinds of crops grown therein and the method of irrigation. Irrigation may be done in four ways (1) artificial irrigation i.e. by means of running water derived from spring and rivers by diverting it to fields; (2) artificial irrigation by utilising instruments of carriage like buckets, waterwheels, etc. (3) natural irrigation by rains or snow (4) irrigation by means of humidity of soil or by water concealed underground. Distance of the land from cities and markets is recognised by some as an additional factor.

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When *Kharāj* has been fixed in accordance with these principles, it is assessed on the ground according to the most profitable of the following ways:—

(1) It is assessed on the area of the land;
(2) Or on the area of the cultivated land;
(3) Or on the produce as a definite portion.

Kharāj remains unaffected by any increase in productivity or by any decrease due to the negligence of the cultivator but losses caused by natural calamities are reckoned and *Kharāj* can be remitted. *Kharāj* is due even if the cultivator does not cultivate the land provided he had means to do so. If the owner is unable to cultivate the land, the Imam is entitled to lease the land to another person by way of *muzarah* and collect the rental from the owner's share. If people abandon their lands, the Caliph according to Abū Hanifa, is authorised to get the land cultivated at public expense or lease it to others, the entire income becoming public property.

Kharāj is due only once a year even if many crops are grown in an year.

According to Hanifite school, a land subject to *Kharāj* does not also pay tithe but other schools permit combination of the two.

According to al-Ramli, the proportional *Kharāj* is like the fixed *Kharāj* as regards its appropriation but like tithe in all other respects. According to Jami the proportional *Kharāj* is not due if the land has been allowed to remain idle, the farmer may consume a reasonable part of the produce before the tax is paid, the tax is remitted if the produce is destroyed even after harvesting, but indebtedness alone does not exempt the cultivation from payment of *Kharāj*.

According to al-Mawardi, if *Kharāj* land is leased out with or without rental, the tax is to be collected from the land owner and not the lease holder but according to Abū Hanifa the tax is paid by the lease holder if the lease was made without a rental but by the land holder in the other case.

If one is unable to pay the *Kharāj* dues he is allowed to defer payment till his financial condition improves but if he delays the payment, notwithstanding his ability to make payment, his property can be sold if he has property or the land is sold or the defaulter is put in prison.

If the tax collector and the land owner disagree about the status of land i.e. *Kharāj* or tithe, the claim of the owner is given preference. In case of serious doubt, the public register (*Diwān*) is consulted.

In order to ensure that there was fair-play and no harassment, the officials responsible for collection of revenue such as *Kharāj* and *Fizyah* were required to possess some basic qualities. Besides being reliable and active they were required to be free men, Muslims, *mujtahids* and conversant with arithmetics and survey work. If the land had already been assessed, the qualification of being *mujtahid* was not insisted upon but other qualifications were necessary for appointment.

Jizyah or Poll Tax

The word *Jizyah* is derived from *Jaza,* which means compensation or requital of good or evil. This tax owes its name to the fact that it was collected from *Zimmis* as the price for protection they got from the Muslims. According to Al-Sarakhsi the *Jizyah* is taken from the *Zimmis* in lieu of the assistance they would have been liable to give if they had not persisted in their unbelief. Normally it is the duty of every citizen of the State to defend it but as the *Zimmis* were favourably inclined towards the enemies of the

Muslim State and could not be wholly trusted to make sacrifices for the State, they were required to give part of their wealth instead of personal service to meet the expenditure on defence. The *Jizyah* was levied only on those who were admitted to the status of *Zimmis*, namely, Christians, Jews, idolators and the fire worshippers. According to Al-Shafi'i *Jizyah* may be accepted only from Christians, Jews and fire worshippers but not from idolators but Hanifites considered that as idolators could be made slaves it should be permissible to collect *Jizyah* from them provided they were not Arabs.

Jizyah is not imposed upon children, the insane, the blind, the cripples and imbecile old people who do not possess legal responsibility. Likewise, the poor who are not engaged in business as also monks are exempt. Slaves of every description were not to pay any *Jizyah*. *Jizyah* is cancelled by conversion of Islam, by death and according to Abu Hanifa, by non-collection.

The *Jizya* was of two kinds:

(1) The *Jizyah* imposed by agreement and treaty the amount of which is fixed by terms of the agreement and is not changeable. The amount may be a lump sum both for their persons and their lands and it may be distributed among the individual tax payers according to the principles governing the *Jizyah* and *Kharāj* in general. If the number of tax payers decreases due to death or conversion the tribute is reduced in proportion to the decrease or entirely removed and charged to the land if the latter can stand it otherwise it lapses. If, on the contrary, the *Imām* had specified the shares of the lands and the persons, then neither bears the share of the other. On conversion to Islam, the part assessed on persons lapsed but the liability to pay the portion assessed on land remained regardless of the conversion.

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The Shaf'ite agree with Hanifites but they hold that *Jizyah* per individual should never fall below one *dinār* and if by agreement the infidels retain ownership of their cities or villages, a provision should be made in the agreement for entertainment of Muslim travellers in such cities or villages for a period not exceeding three days, who may like to stay in these places, but the infidels are not to be forced out of their houses to make room of the travellers.

(2) The second type of *Jizyah* was the one imposed by the *Imām* upon the population of a district conquered by force of arms. The yearly rate in the times of 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Ali was forty-eight *dirhams* for the rich, twenty-four for the middle class and twelve for the earning poor. According to Al-Tahevi a person was considered rich who owned 10000 *dirhams* or over, one owning between 2000 and 10000 *dirhams* was taken to belong to middle class and anyone having less than 2000 was considered poor.

According to both the Shaf'ites and Hanbilites if the infidels refuse to pay as *Jizyah* more than the minimum of one *dinar*, the *Imām* may not fight them to obtain a higher rte but is obliged to accept that rate.

Zakāt

Zakāt literally means growth or increase and, according to some, purity. The tax has been named *Zakāt* with respect to the first meaning of the word because its payment increases prosperity in this world and enhances religious merit (*Sawāb*) in the next and with respect to the second meaning because its payment purifies one from sins. God said, "Take from their property alms (*Sadaqah*) in order thus to purify them from their sins." (87:14)

Hanifite doctors define *Zakāt* as giving of a legally prescribed portion of one's property to a poor Muslim, who does not belong to Hashim family or their clients in such a

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way as to preclude any benefit to the giver thereof. *Zakāt* also means the thing so given. *Sadaqah* is another name for *Zakāt.* By general usage, however, *Sadaqah* is considered as the more general term covering alms the payment of which is obligatory as also that which is given voluntarily. In other words, while every *Zakāt* is a *Sadaqah* only obligatory *Sadaqah* is *Zakāt.* According to Al-Shafi'i and Al-Māwardi both the terms connote the same thing.

Qur'ān lays utmost emphasis on payment of *Zakāt,* almost as much as on saying of prayers. It is set down as the third item of faith "And if they (i.e. the infidel) have repented, and performed the prayers and paid the *Zakāt* they are your brethren in religion." (9:11)

The Prophet described it as one of the five pillars of faith. Said he "Islam has been built on five (things) namely, testimony that there is no God but God, the performance of prayers, the giving of *Zakāt,* the fast during the month of Ramadhan, and the pilgrimage to Makkah when one can afford it."

The Prophet (PBUH) said to Mu'āviya 'Tell them that God has prescribed for them *Sadaqah* to be taken from the rich among them in order to be given to their poor."

Giving of *Zakāt* purifies ones heart by promoting generosity and largeheartedness and eradicating niggardliness. According to Muhit, failure to believe that *Zakāt* is a *fard* entails unbelief (*Kufr*) and refusal to practice it involves death penalty.

Zakāt becomes due only when one has in his full ownership a productive *nisab* (minimum) of property. Productivity is either real as in trade or procreation or hypothetical as, for example, in the cases where productivity has been possible, though not actual, in that the property was in the possession of the owner or his

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agent. Real or hypothetical productivity is considered to exist in any of the following three cases:—

(1) When property is gold or silver,
(2) When animals are pastured,
(3) When property is intended for trade.

Zakāt is payable on gold or silver whether it is meant for personal use or for trade.

Besides being productive the *nisab* has to be in full ownership i.e. ownership along with possession. It must also be over and above what is necessary for the satisfaction of primary necessities of life. It must also be free from debt. According to Al-Shafi'i indebtedness does not affect the obligation of *Zakāt*. According to Malikites indebtedness exempts from the *Zakāt* of gold and silver and the articles of trade but not of crops, cattle and mines. According to Hanifites indebtedness exempts one from payment. In one of his sermons in the month of *Ramadhān*, Caliph 'Uthmān had said, "Behold the month of Ramadhān has come. Whoever has property and debts, let him deduct from what he owns that he owes and pay *Zakāt* from the remaining property."[1]

Articles like dwelling houses, wearing apparel, household utensils, slaves employed as servants, riding animals, arms kept for use, food meant for oneself or family, articles of adornment if not made of gold or silver, gems, pearls, rubies, emeralds and the like, books and tools are exempt from *Zakāt*. Properties of minors and insane are also exempt.

Conditions of payment of *Zakāt* are—

1. Reason and maturity for there can be no responsibility without these.

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[1] Mahsut P. 160.

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2. State of Islam because payment of *Zakāt* is an act of worship and as such it can validly be performed only by a Muslim.

3. Freedom of person for the slave cannot own any property.

4. Lapse of a year. No *Zakāt* is due on property before there lapses over it an year. For determining the *nisāb* the rule is to add together articles belonging to the same genus.

In regard to articles of trade, the *nisāb* is determined by ascertaining their value and, therefore, so far as *Zakāt* is concerned they constitute a single genus.

The *Zakāt* of *Sawai'm* animals is dependent upon their number and not on their commercial value and each separate genus constitutes a separate legal genus. It is not, therefore, permissible for computing the *nisāb* of say camels to make up the shortage of camels by adding together with them sheep or cattle.

According to Abū Hanifa the *nisāb* of gold or silver may be completed by the other or even by articles of trade and *vice versa*. According to Abū Hanifa, gold and silver are added in terms of value but according to his disciples Abū Yūsuf and Muhammad they are added in terms of weight.

In reckoning the *Zakāt* of cattle jointly owned each share is considered separately.

According to Abu Hanifa *Zakāt* debt lapses the death of the owner of the property without his having made a will directing settlement of the *Zakāt* from the third portion of his estate. It also lapses if the *nisāb* is accidentally destroyed after the lapse of the year, that is, after the *Zakāt* fell due, whether the property was apparent

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or non-apparent, whether it had meanwhile been possible to pay the *Zakāt*.

According to Al-Kāsāni, another ground on which *Zakāt* debt, after it becomes due, can lapse is apostasy. This is the Hanifite and Malikite view but al-Shafi'i holds a contrary view.

Zakāt of Sawā'im or Flocks and Herd

Sawā'im literally means a pasturing animal. It does not, however, cover those pasturing animals which are to be later on used for riding or carrying of loads because *Zakāat* is never paid on such animals. *Zakāt* is, however, paid on animals which are pastured in order to be sold later on for other purposes.

The spoils of war

The word 'Spoil' (*ganimah*) means property taken by force of arms from the infidels in a war. When the *Imām* conquers a city or territory after a war, he may take one-fifth share of the property taken, whether land or chattel, and divide the rest among the victorious army, or he may leave the land in the possession of the original holders and such chattels as are indispensable for cultivation. Caliph 'Umar had left the lands and houses of Sawād to the original owners. He may also expatriate the original settlers, being other non-believers in their place and impose *Jizyah* and *Kharāj* upon them. The *Imām* may promise the army a greater share in the spoils than they are entitled to before the war has ended in order to induce them to greater valour. Generally horsemen were given two shares and the footsoldier one share after deduction of one-fifth as the state's share.

Fay is property given by the enemy without any fighting. Four-fifth of *fay* revenue is a part of the public treasury and its disposition is made according to the

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personal judgement of the *Imām*. The fifth part of the *fay* revenue like the one-fifth of the booty revenue consist of three parts (a) part of it, that is, the Prophet's share belongs to the treasury (b) part of it, that is, the share of Prophet's relatives does not belong to State treasury as is its beneficiaries are known (c) finally the third part is kept as a trust fund for the orphans, the indigent and the wayfarer. According to al-Sarakhsi the share of the relations of the Prophet (PBUH) lapsed after his death. According to the Hanifites a fifth part of the *fay* revenue is not set apart but the whole is disbursed for purposes of general utility to the Muslim community such as the stipends of soldiers, the fortification of cities, the maintenance of stations on the highways for protection of travellers, the dredging of rivers, building of dikes, the stipends of the *'Ulemā*, judges, *Muftis*, inspectors, collectors, governors and others.

Mines

Hanifites distinguish three types of mines—those which are solid but can be melted like silver or gold, those which are solid but cannot be melted like gypsum or coal and those which are liquid like oil. Only the mines of first kind are subject to tax and the fifth belongs to the state. According to Mālik, mines, like crops, are kind of produce derived from the earth and, therefore, if they are gold or silver they pay *Zakāt* subject to the requirement of *nisāb* though not that of the lapse of a year.

According to Abu Hanifa there is no tax of one-fifth on pearls and ambergris and in general on anything taken out of the sea.

This elaborate system was not in operation from the very beginning. At first the Muslims were a handful, later they formed a small group which migrated from Makkah to Madinah. The *Muhajirin* formed a brotherhood with *Ansārs*. As the Jews entered into a pact with them, the

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foundations of a State were laid down which began to grow and extend its frontiers. Injunctions relating to finances and taxation and revenues of the State were accordingly gradually laid down. In the beginning the Prophet (PBUH) had only encouraged his followers in Makkah to spend on charity. He used to say, 'you should spend on charity to save yourself from Hell fire even though it might be a date.' The rehabilitation of migrating Muslims at Madinah had posed a big problem. It was partly solved by creation of a brotherhood with *Ansārs* but money was needed for other purposes. Accordingly, giving of charity and alms was declared to be an act of piety. The Prophet used to collect them and distribute them himself among deserving persons. He forbade acceptance of alms by Bani Hāshim and thus precluded any possibility of exploitation or injustice by the collectors. In A.H. 2 was revealed the verse regarding *Sadaqat-ul-fitr.* When he was asked what should be spent, he said anything left surplus after meeting the necessities of life. Upto this time there was no State which may requīre detailed rules relating to revenues and expenditure. After the fall of Makkah in A.H. 8 a State came into existence and with it some rules of business were laid down. Came the revelation "O Muhammad, you should collect alms from the properties of these people so that it may serve to purify them." In A.H. 8 the *Sūra* Repentance was revealed which provided some detailed instructions regarding *Zakāt* and *Jizyah*, their importance and necessity and the manner of spending them. In the light of those instructions the Prophet issued regulations and appointed collectors for purposes of assessment and realisation of the taxes and set up a *Baitulmāl.* The Prophet had got his instructions written but could not get the edict despatched to collectors when he died. On ascension to the caliphate Abū Bakr got the edict copied out and sent to all the collectors. 'Abdullah bin Ans has reported that his father Ans was appointed a collector

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by Abū Bakr and he was given the edict bearing the Prophet's seal.[1]

Assessment of Kharaj

After the conquest of Khaibar Jews of that place had approached the Prophet (PBUH) for settlement of land with them and they had agreed to give half of the produce to him. The people of Fidak had negotiated a similar settlement. Abū Bakr had continued the arrangement with them in his time but when parts of Syria and Iraq were subjugated Abū Bakr had settled definite sums of *kharāj* instead of a part of the produce of a land.[2]

In A.H. 16 after the victory of Yarmūk and complete conquest of Iraq, 'Umar proceeded to organise the system of *Kharāj*. The army insisted that the conquered lands should be distributed among the soldiers and the subjugated people should be made their slaves. 'Umar deputed Sa'ad bin Waqās to carry out a census of Iraq. He was of the view that the land should be left with no owner's thereof, but some important companions like 'Abdul Rahmān bin 'Auf, bin Bilāl agreed with the army. 'Umar countered their arguments by pointing out that if the conquered territories were to be distributed among the soldiers wherefrom would come the finances for maintenance of the army, maintenance of internal law and order and defence against external aggression. 'Abdul Rahmān was of the opinion that those who had brought about the conquests were best entitled to the lands and not the posterity. 'Umar collected a number of leading *Muhajirin* and five *Ansārs* from the tribe Khazraj and five from Aus.[1] 'Ali, 'Uthmān and Talha concurred with 'Umar. After great deliberation 'Umar had his way on recital of

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[1] Abu Dawood, *Sunan*, Chapter 2 *Zakat*, page 245.
[2] Abu Yusuf, *Kitab-ul-Kharaj*, page 50.
[1] Abu Yusuf, *al-Kharaj*, page 14.

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Qurānic verse in support of his view. The principle was then laid down that on conquest of any territory it will not belong to the soldiers but would be property of the State and people in possession of the land will not be disturbed. 'Umar then started to find out the systems prevailing in various lands. He deputed 'Uthmān bin Hanif and Huzeifā bin al Yamān to carry out survey of the land. They exercised very great care in carrying out the duty assigned to them. After several months of hard labour they reported the area as 375 miles in length and 240 miles in breadth i.e. ninety thousand square miles. The cultivable land was measured as 3 crore 60 lakh *jarib* (*Jarib* being three quarters of a *bigha*). The jagirs of the royal family, *Awkāf* of the land of persons dying heirless, or of absconders and rebels, land under water or covered with forest and land reversed for construction of roads etc. were declared *Khālsa* land whose income was to form part of State revenues. The rest of the land was given back to owners thereof and the following annual rentals were fixed for the various grown therein—

Wheat per jarib (or three quarters of a bigha)		2 Dirhams
Barley	"	1 "
Sugar cane	"	6 "
Cotton	"	5 "
Grapes	"	10 "
Other orchards	"	10 "
Mustard	"	8 "
Vegetables	"	3 "

At places the rentals on wheat or barley were raised to 4 and 2 *dirhāms* depending on the quality of land. The total *Kharāj* of Iraq came to 8 crore and 60 lakh *dirhāms*. Before confirming the assessments 'Umar satisfied himself by discussing the matter with 'Uthmān bin Hanif and Huzeifā that there would be no hardship to the people. With this assessment 'Umar allowed the landlords and

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proprietors to retain all their rights and privileges. The assessment was so fairly done that more areas went under cultivation and the *Kharāj* rose next year to 10 crores 20 lakh *dirhāms* recorded further increase in future years.

No survey was done in other provinces but the settlement existing therein was allowed to operate. Even the languages of the offices were not changed.

The settlement was to operate for four years. *Kharāj* was to be collected both in cash and kind and the average produce of several years was reckoned in computing the *Kharāj* which was to be collected in three instalments.

'Umar rescinded the practice of Romans who used to collect substantial quantities of grains from Egypt in addition to the *Kharāj* for the capital of the Roman Empire and for the supplies of the army.[1]

In Egypt estimates were got prepared for every district and pargana and the landlords and headmen were associated in forming the estimates. Estimates were then got prepared for the whole of the province. In this way settlement was effected every year. The rate of rental was one dināar and three *ardab* grains per *jarib*. The total *Kharāj* for Egypt amounted to 1 crore 20 lakh *dināar*. This figure was never reached in subsequent times.

In Syria the *Kharāj* based on classification of land which was imposed by the Romans, was retained. It came to 1 crore 40 lakh *dināars* or 5 crore and 80 lakh rupees.

'Umar had made radical changes in settlement of land. He abolished the practice of the Romans whereby proprietorship over the land vested in the hands of army officers and other high officials connected with the court and some estates were declared jagirs of the royal family and some were dedicated to churches. The actual tillers of

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[1] Shibli Na'omani—*Al-Farooq*, page 263 quoting Maqrizi.

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the soil were given only tenancy rights. With the conquest of Syria many of the Romans migrated to other lands and those who remained were deprived of their proprietary rights which were conferred upon the tenants who were the original proprietors. Not only that land was not given to Arab soldiers and chieftains but the Muslims were restrained even from purchasing land. This regulation remained in force for a long time after 'Umar. 'Umar had forbidden Arabs from taking to cultivation in the conquered lands.[1] History probably cannot cite another example of such a benevolent measure having been taken by any other conquering race. This led to increase in agricultural production for the original owners and the actual cultivators knew much more about cultivation than the nomadic Arabs. This measure alone ingratiated the Arabs with the local populace so much so that they never rose up in arms against the Arabs and preferred them in every way to the Romans. It also benefitted the Arabs in an altogether different way. By not getting occupied in agriculture the Arabs retained their sterling qualities of valour, bravery, hardiness and resolute courage. 'Umar also used to consult the *Zimmis* who were mostly Parsis or Christians, before finalising the settlements. Before starting settlement in Iraq he had called two nobles from there alongwith translators for consultation. He had also directed that Mocoucus, the former Governor of Egypt, should be consulted in finalising arrangements of *Kharāj*.

'Umar also gave attention to reclamation of land and promotion of agriculture. Accordingly, he directed that if any one will cultivate a barren land, he would become owner thereof but if he does not start cultivation within three years of occupation the land will revert to the State. Proclamation was issued that people who had run away at the time of invasions could come back and occupy their

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[1] Abu Yusuf, *Al-Kharaj*, page 68.

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lands in perfect safety. Many a cultivator thus regained his holding. A person of Syria had complained to 'Umar that his forces had damaged his crops. He was given the thousand *dirhams* as compensation.[1]

The Caliph got canals and ponds dug, bunds made and water channels and distributaries provided and set up a department to look to extension of irrigation facilities. According to Maqrizi 1 lakh and 20 thousand labourers used to work daily on these projects in Egypt alone.

'Ushr

One tenth of the produce of land was taken from the Muslims in the time of the Prophet (PBUH) if the land was irrigated by natural sources or canals and those irrigated by wells were charged only one-twentieth of the produce. This was continued in the time of Abū Bakr and 'Umar and the other two Caliphs. *'Ushr* land comprised of lands which:

(a) belonged to Arabs who had accepted Islam,

(b) or was settled with a Muslim when any *zimmi*, landlord died heirless or absconded or relinquished his holding or his land was confiscated due to his rebellion,

(c) or which was lying barren and was broken up by a Muslim.

The quantum of *'Ushr* was one tenth of the produce. If such land was irrigated by canals or wells dug by the *zimmis* then *Kharāj* was levied thereon, but if the canals or wells were constructed by the Muslims themselves only *'Ushr* was taken. *Kharāj* was taken only once while *'Ushr* was taken from every crop. This distinction between the Muslims and *zimmis* in the matter of taxation was not unfair because the *zimmis* had to pay *kharāj* alone while the

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[1] Abu Yusuf, *Al-Kharaj*, page 68.

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Muslims had in addition to pay *Zakat* on cattle, horses and money.

'Ushore or duty on imported goods

Duty on imported goods was introduced for the first time by 'Umar. He was informed by Abū Mūsā Ash'ari that Muslims traders visiting other countries were subjected to a tax of ten percent on their sale proceeds. 'Umar directed that a similar tax be levied in his country. At first some Christians from outside applied for permission to trade in Arabs territories on payment of *'Ushore*. They were given permission. Later on the tax was extended to *zimmis* and Muslims with the difference that *zimmis* had to pay five percent and the Muslims two and a half percent. A separate department was set up for this purpose. The tax was imposed on articles of trade and was realised from a trader only once in a year. If the value of the goods was less than 200 *dirhams* :ney were exempted from the tax.

In the time of 'Ali the staff for collection of *kharāj* was separate from the staff deputed to collect *Zakāt* and alms. Some of them were appointed by the Caliph at Madinah, but most of them were appointed by the Governors.

No fresh survey was carried out for assessment of *kharāj* but if any objections were raised they were enquired into by responsible officers known for their piety and integrity. The collectors were directed not to be too exacting or rough in their behaviour. In one of his epistles 'Ali had said:

"O servant of God. This is from *Amirul Mominin* 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib to collectors of *kharāj*. The person who has not to fear what has to befall him or who has not such things as he has to guard he can rest content that his obligations towards God are few but there is ample reward in their discharge. If God had not provided punishment for

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evil deeds then there would have been only reward for good deeds in this world, but no reward for giving up evil deeds. Now about your duties. You should have due regard for justice in every individual case and should not show negligence in meeting the requirement of people because you are the trustee of the people as also their spokesmen besides being envoy of your Caliph. Do not deny what is due to any one nor be so exacting as to take off the winter or summer clothes of people in realisation of *kharāj*. Do not auction them in the market nor sell their riding horses nor take away their bondsmen or bondswomen nor whip them for their arrears nor destroy their property. You should show kindness to those of your faith or those who pay *jizyah* but you can confiscate the properties of those who do not belong to your fold and who do not give *jizyah*. If you will show too much leniency to the latter they will assume supremacy over the Muslims. If you have to caution or guide Muslims, do it openly and do not hesitate in performing the duties enjoined by God."

Kharāj used to be remitted to the capital after meeting expenditure on staff, etc. But if it did not exceed the expenditure the amount was given to the Governor who used to maintain accounts. The rates of *kharāj* were as follows:—

1. On good cultivation 1½ *dirhams* per jarib i.e. ¾ bigha.
2. On average cultivation 1 *dirham* "
3. On poor cultivation *dirham* "
4. On grapes 10 *dirhams* "
5. On orchards in general 10 *dirhams* "

Once some *zimmis* of Basra reached Madinah and complained to the Caliph against the ill treatment of their officer 'Abdullah bin 'Abbās. 'Ali wrote to him as follows:—

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"The peasants of your district have complained to me against your harsh behaviour towards them and have narrated how you are oppressing them. I have cross-examined them çlosely and I feel they deserve to be called by you and to be given a place in your assembly. The only thing against them is that they are infidels but this is no ground for keeping them at a distance or to oppress them. These are the people with whom you have covenanted. You should, therefore, behave in a manner which may be a combination of strictness and gentleness, for instance, you should occasionally call them to your presence and some time deny them this privilege."

Another set of instructions to the Governors read as follows:—

"You should not harass the defaulters of *kharāj*. If you take *kharāj* from land and if the land gets uninhabited and people die, the security of the State will get in peril. If payees of *kharāj* complain of excessive rate of *kharāj* or against the conduct of collectors or put forward the excuse of low production due to drought or other natural calamities like flood or excessive rain, you should consider their request sympathetically and reduce the *kharāj* to the extent necessary for their welfare. In such matters make things easy. In reducing the *kharāj* also keep in mind that things are not made difficult for the State for upon revenues depend the income and development of the State. If with it you keep the welfare of the people in mind, you will shine over your compatriots because you have allowed fairness and equity to prevail and your subject will be prosperous. Because of this you will acquire a sort of share in their property and their savings will be your savings. Then if you will ever face a difficult time and you cannot get over it by your own efforts, in such an event if you have maintained proper relations with your subjects they will come forward to assist you to the extend that they are capable of and they

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will not turn down your request. The country is strong only so long as the subjects are contented and happy. If, on the other hand, you will oppress them they will initially bear it with fortitude but as the State will deteriorate the people will not be of any assistance. You should know that the deterioration of the State is caused by the poverty of the people and their worry and poverty is caused by the greed and avarice of the rulers and generally this is the root cause."

Zakāt and alms were also a sort of a tax imposed upon the Muslims. It was levied on their incomes and property like gold, silver, camels, cattle, horses etc. This revenue was spent on the poor and the indigent, collectors of the tax, freeing of bondsmen, payment of debts, and assistance to needy persons going on *Jehād* or *Haj* and on those hearts had to be won over. The collectors of *Zakāt* were also given a code of conduct. It read, "You should be steadfast in righteousness, nor ascribe any partners unto God nor frighten or terrorise any Muslim. You should not approach them when they not like to be approached and do not tax them beyond what God has ordained. And do not injure any creature. If you sojourn near their springs do not put to trouble their animals. You should contact them in a gentle and dignified manner. You should wish them and pay due respects and then say; 'O servant of God I have been sent by the friend and Caliph of God so that I may collect from your property what is due to God. Do you think God has no share in your property.' If anybody answers in the negative and does not pay willingly do not force him to pay. If the answer is in the affirmative then you ask him to pay but do not pester him with repeated demands and show of anger nor put him to fear nor hurt him. Take of silver and gold whatever quantity they give and do not take what they do not want to part with. If they want to give camels and cattle in lieu thereof do not enter their herds without their permission. For taking the small

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share of God do not make them miserable. If you accompany them with their permission to the place where they keep their herds do not try to grab all their animals. Do not be hard or harsh and do not scorn them nor disturb their animals. Do not treat them in a way that may make them sad. First divide their lot into two, and give the lot they prefer. Then divide the other again into two and let them have their preference again and thus proceed to have God's share and take it in possession as *Zakāt* but if they are not happy with this division, divide it afresh till they are satisfied. Do not take old camels, nor take lame, ill and useless animals. Entrust the animals to a dependable person and do not send them through a person who has no soft corner for property of a Muslim nor can take them to the leader of Muslims so that he can divide and apportion them in accordance with *Shari'a.*

Give the custody of animals to a person who is sincere, trustworthy and kind, who does not make the animals run too long, or give them pain or make them lean and weak. Go on sending the things to me as they collect so that I may give them to deserving persons as ordained by God. When you give the animals in anybody's custody instruct him to ensure that the young ones of animals are not separated from their mothers nor milk the latter to leave nothing for the calves nor beat up the animals while riding nor ride the same animals every day....."

Jizyah was realised from non-Muslims who were under the protection of Muslims. It was paid annually on the basis of number of individuals and not on the basis of income or property. It was imposed in accordance with rates indicated below:—

Rich people	48 *dirhams*
Average income group	42 "
Traders	42 "
Ordinary people	12 "

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The poor, and feeble and people of small income were exempted at the time of collection while the following categories were altogether exempted:—

1. People above 50 years
2. People below 20 years
3. Disabled person of any age
4. Blind
5. Imbeciles
6. Destitutes possessing less than hundred *dirhams*

The *Jizyah* money was spent on equipment and raising of the forces, guarding of frontiers and building of fortresses and savings were utilised on construction of roads and buildings.

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16
Judicial System

It is generally thought that the office of Qāzi was organised by 'Umar but this is not a correct supposition. This office had come into existence in the time of the Prophet (PBUH) who had laid down some basic rules regarding the duties and functions of Qāzis, conditions of their appointment and the outlines of procedure to be adopted in deciding cases at the headquarters of the State. The Prophet (PBUH) used to decide cases himself but with expansion of Islamic territory it became impossible to try centrally all the cases arising in various parts of the country. Accordingly, the Prophet had appointed 'Ali as Qāzi of Yemen. 'Ali had felt some diffidence in assuming the office and had said, "I am young and I am not fully conversant with law" but the Prophet had encouraged him by saying, "God will show you the way and make your speech forceful. When you proceed to decide any dispute between two persons, do not reach any conclusion till you have heard both the parties. This will facilitate proper decision of matters."[1] While appointing Ma'āz to this office the Prophet had enquired from hi, "How will you proceed to decide disputes when they come up before you?" Ma'āz had replied, "In the light of Qur'ān." He was asked, "If you do not find solution in the Qur'ān, what will you do?" He had answered "In that case in the light of traditions of the Prophet. Asked, "if that also does not help what will you do?" Ma'āz had said, "In that case I shall decide it myself as correctly as possible." The Prophet (PBUH) patted Ma'āz and said, "All praised to God who has bestowed this

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[1] Abu Dawood, Sunan, Chapter Justice.

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quality upon the messenger of the Messenger of Allah which is so pleasing to him."[1]

Abū Bakr had appointed 'Umar as his Chief Justice but in his time there was no separation of the executive from the judiciary for the State was yet in incipient stage. In the provinces and districts the Governors and the executive officers discharged judicial functions as well. In the beginning of his caliphate 'Umar followed the same pattern but when the administration had been set on sound lines, the judiciary was separated from the executive. Courts were opened in all the districts and Qāzis were appointed. He sent an epistle to Abū Mūsā Ash'ari, the Governor of Kūfa which gave detailed instructions for conduct of cases. It read, "After adoration of God, justice is a great obligation. Deal equally with people in your assemblies and courts of justice so that the weak may not despair of justice and the rich and the elite may not expect favours. Whosoever files a claim the burden of proving it lies on him and whosoever refutes it can seek a compromise provided it does not make what is lawful, unlawful and that which is unlawful, lawful. You can review any decision taken by you. If you are in doubt and do not find an answer in Qur'ān or *Hadith* you can reflect over the matter and seek precedents or give your own decision. If a person wants to adduce evidence fix a date for producing it. If he gives it, let him have what is his due otherwise dismiss the case. All Muslims are equal barring those who have been given stripes as a measure of punishment or who have given false testimony before or whose ancestry is doubtful."

This edict laid down the following principles of law:—

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[1] Abu Dawood, Sunan, Chapter Justice.

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(1) As a judge the Qāzi should treat everyone equally.

(2) Generally the burden of proof lies on the plaintiff or complainant.

(3) If the defendant has no evidence he can be put to oath.

(4) The parties can always reach a settlement but there can be no compromise in what is unlawful or is against the law.

(5) The Qāzi can review his own decision.

(6) A date should be fixed for hearing of the case.

(7) If the respondent does not turn up on that date the case can be decided ex-parte.

(8) Every Muslim can give testimony but a previous convict or one who has been proved to have earlier given false testimony is disqualified from giving evidence any further.

The proper functioning of the judiciary depends on:—

(1) A comprehensive and good set of laws for deciding cases.

(2) Selection of capable judges of unquestionable integrity.

(3) Adequate number of judges so that there may be no delay in disposal of cases.

The Qur'ān and the *Hadith* served as a certain and true guide and no new law had to be laid down. Details had, however, to be worked out. Writing to Qāzi Shuraih, 'Umar advised, 'In the first instance try to decide cases according to Qur'ān. If, however, there is no specific injunction on the point, resort to *Hadith* and if that be also not available,

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then to consensus of opinion and if there is none, then use your own judgement and discretion.' On important matters he often sent out edicts of facilitate the work of Qāzis.

In the selection of Qāzis, 'Umar took great pains. He had appointed Zaid, who knew quite a few semitic languages and was a good jurist, as Qāzi of Madinah. 'Ibādah bin Sāmit who remembered the Qur'ān by heart and was greatly respected by the Prophet (PBUH), was appointed Qāzi of Palestine. The Qāzi of Kūfa was 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd, a man of great piety and distinction and after him the office was held by Qāzi Shuraih who was renowned for his sharp intellect and profound ability. Ka'ab the Qāzi of Basra, was another luminary.

'Umar had adopted a number of measures to stop corruption and taking of illegal gratification:

(1) The Qāzis were given high salaries so that they may have no need to supplement their income. Salmān Rabiya and Qāzi Shuraih were each paid five hundred *dirhams* monthly.

(2) Only well-to-do and prominent people were appointed Qāzis so that they may not stoop to taking of illegal gratification or be over-awed by rich and influential persons.

(3) Qāzis were not allowed to enter into trade or business.

'Umar insisted that in matters of law and justice everybody must be treated equally and no distinction should be made between high ups and low downs. He had himself a dispute with 'Ali bin Ka'ab which was referred to the court of Zaid bin Thābit. 'Umar appeared as a defendant. When he entered in the room Zaid got up. 'Umar told him it was not correct on his part to do so and sat down with 'Ali bin Ka'ab. 'Ali had no evidence in

support of his claim. He wanted to put 'Umar to oath. Zaid requested him to have some regard for the high office held by 'Umar but the latter remonstrated with him and said that unless and until a common man and 'Umar were equal in his eyes he was not fit to hold the office of Qāzi.

Each district had a Qāzi and he could cope with the work as litigation was not heavy. There were no separate court rooms. The Qāzis used to sit and decide cases in mosques. Litigation was simple and decisions were quickly taken.

Institution of Muftis

For resolution of legalistic problems, for carrying out analytical studies and for affording convenience to the public Abū Bakr had started the institution of Muftis. They had to be well versed in law and jurisprudence so that they could give authoritative interpretations. Abū Bakr had appointed 'Umar, 'Ali, 'Uthmān, 'Abdul Rahmān bin 'Auf, 'Ali bin Ka'ab, Zaid bin Thābit and Abū Huraira as Muftis. 'Umar had also appointed these persons as Muftis. Besides these Muftis no one else was allowed to give *fatwās*.

The Qāzis appointed in the time of 'Umar continued to hold office in the time of 'Uthmān for they were all men of unimpeachable integrity, and men of learning and piety.

'Ali was himself a grate jurist and exponent of law, who knew exactly when and where and in what circumstances the verses of Qur'ān were revealed and was a master of *Hadith* literature. He had issued detailed instructions to his Governors regarding appointment of Qāzi. He had directed, 'you should appoint a person as a Qāzi who is most trustworthy and should ensure that he should be a person who is not perplexed by largeness of disputes and if he ever errs he does not persist in erring. If he reaches a finding after full deliberation, he does not delay execution of his order and shows no self interest or

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greed. He should be one who tries to reach the depth of a matter and does not rest content on superficiality or inadequate knowledge. If he has doubts in any matter he shows no hurry but ponders and reflects. If that does not help him he should go by reasoning and should rely on what is proved to be correct. He should not show any temper or misbehaviour at the time of conduct of proceedings and should not speak arrogantly. If people praise him he should not lose his balance and he should not go by recommendations." He had also directed the governors to keep themselves fully informed about the work and conduct of Qāzis and to disburse their salaries from the *Baitulmal* and to assign them high positions in their assemblies and sittings. 'Ali had desired that Qāzis should maintain a high standard of rectitude. A report reached him that Shuraih, the illustrious Qāzi of Kufa, had purchased a big house in addition to his residence. He was told, "Oh Shuraih! beware you have to face one who will not look into the document relating to this house nor question the attesting witnesses. He will expel you from this house alone and unaided and throw you into a pit. He is not a human being but it is your own death which will overtake you today or tomorrow. Look Shuraih! I caution you to see for yourself that you have not purchased the house unlawfully. In that case you will have to suffer a double loss—loss in this world and loos in the life beyond."

In matters of justice 'Ali had insisted that no prefential treatment should be extended to anyone. In the battle of Siffin he had lost his armour. After some days he noticed a Christian putting on that armour. He referred the case to Qāzi Shuraih and appeared before him along with the Christian and said that the armour was his and he had neither sold it nor gifted it to that man. The Christian claimed it as his own and argued that his possession was proof of his ownership. 'Ali could not produce any witness to support his claim. Qāzi Shuraih had some hesitation in

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announcing his judgement. The Caliph exhorted him to have no regard for his high office. The judgement went against him and he accepted it cheerfully.

General administration and police

'Umar had set up the department of Police on a permanent basis and it was then known as *Ahdas*. The police officers used to investigate cases. Officers were also appointed for vigilance and enforcement in order to ensure that there was no underweighment, that no encroachment on roads was made, that no overloading on animals was done, that liquor was not sold openly etc. It is not, however, known whether a separate department was set up for vigilance.

'Umar had also opened jails in all the districts but there were very few convicts to be confined in them. One 'Abu Mahjān Thaqafi was punished several times for drinking. On getting the last sentence he was put in jail and was later on exiled.

17
Public Works

There was no department of public works as such in the time of 'Umar but objects of public utility like Government buildings, canals, roads and bridges were present and were well taken care of.

Besides getting a number of irrigation canals constructed, the second Caliph had got a number of other kinds of canals also dug.

Canal Abi Mūsā

A deputation had come from Basrā to meet the Caliph. They complained that there was dearth of water in Basra and it had to be brought from six miles. 'Umar instructed the Governor Abi Mūsā Ash'ari to get a canal made to bring water from Euphrates. The canal was named after the name of the governor.

Canal Ma'akal

It was also an important canal which carried water of Euphrates to a number of places. It was constructed under the supervision of one of the companions Ma'akal bin Yasar.

Canal Sa'ad

On the request of people of Anbar the Governor of Kūfa Sa'ad bin Waqās had got this canal constructed. It was completed by Hajjāj.

Canal Amirul Mominīn

It was the most important waterway which had connected river Nile in Egypt with Red Sea. In 18th A.H.

famine had overtaken Arabia and 'Umar arranged despatch of grains from other provinces. Because of the distance involved grain from Egypt came late. 'Umar summoned the Governor of Egypt 'Amr bin al-'Aas and some other prominent people of Egypt to discuss the feasibility of getting a canal constructed to join the waters of Nile and Red Sea for swift transport of grains. On return to Egypt 'Amr got a canal constructed from Fustāt, sitauted at a distance of about 10—12 miles from Cairo to Red Sea. It enabled navigation of ships from the river Nile to Red Sea from where they could go to a port near Madinah. This canal was sixty-nine miles long and was constructed in the record time of six months. It was in use for a long time and promoted Egyptian trade. It was neglected after the time of 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Aziz and was breached at a number of places. At one time 'Amr bin al-'Aas had thought of joining the Mediterranean and Red Seas but 'Umar had disfavoured the idea on the ground that such a connection will provide Romans with an easy access to Arabia.

Buildings

Three types of buildings were got constructed:—

1. Religious
2. Military
3. Offices and treasury

Religious Buildings

According to Jamāluddin, author of Rauzat-ul-ahbāb, about four thousand mosques were constructed in the time of 'Umar. They were generally simple and unostentatious buildings made of bricks and mud mortar. The governors Abi Musā Ash'ari, Sa'ad bin Waqās and 'Amr bin al-'Aas were instructed to get mosques constructed. Many of these mosques are still named after 'Umar.

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With the spread of Islam the Haram of Makkah became insufficient for the devotees praying in it. In 17th A.H. 'Umar purchased a number of surrounding houses and after demolishing them included their land in the compound of the Haram. A boundary wall was also constructed. The Ka'aba used to be covered by cloth from even before but 'Umar got the covering made of silk in Egypt. The precincts of the Haram ranging from three to nine miles on various sides were got demarcated in all directions by erection of boundary pillars. Simultaneously the Prophet's mosque at Madinah was considerably extended by purchasing and demolishing houses in the vicinity. Only the houses of Prophet's widows were left intact. The length of the mosque was extended from 100 yards to 140 yards while 20 yards were added in breadth. The pillars, however, continued to be of tree trunks. Arrangements for lighting and burning incense at times of Friday prayers were also made.

Military Buildings:

A number of fortresses, cantonments, barracks and stables etc. were constructed at various places.

Other official Buildings

Buildings were constructed in all the provinces and districts for residences of officials as also for setting up offices. *Baitulmāl* or Treasuries were opened in strong buildings. Jails were constructed in many cities. Besides these buildings guest houses were constructed at various places for the facility of travellers.

Roads

There were a number of roads and bridges but generally their construction, repairs and maintenance were left to the conquered races in terms of agreements entered into with them.

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Outposts

A large number of outposts and wells were constructed on the road from Madinah to Makkah in 17th A.H.

Founding of cities

In 14th A.H. 'Umar deputed 'Atba bin Ghazwān to lay down the foundation of a city near the port of Abla in Persian Gulf. 'Atba started from Madinah with eight hundred persons and selected a site which is present Basrā. The land was divided into a number of sectors for settling down various tribes and clans and they erected thatched houses. A central mosque, some office buildings and a jail were constructed. In 17th A.H. the thatched houses were gutted by fire. Sa'ad bin Waqās sought the permission of the Caliphs to get pucca houses constructed. The permission was given with the stipulation that no one should have a house having more than three rooms. On the instructions of the Caliph a ten mile canal was dug from Euphrates to Basrā. Basrā soon developed into a flourishing city of 1 lakh population and became a centre for education and learning.

Another important city which was built was Kufa. The climate of Medāi'n which was conquered by the Arabs did not suit them. 'Umar, therefore, directed that a new city should be built which may have the features of a port town as also an inland town. Salmān and Hudhaifa were deputed to select the site. They selected a place about two miles away from the river Tigris. The foundation of the town were laid in 17th A.H. Houses were built to accommodate about forty thousand people. 'Umar had given written orders that the main roads should be sixty feet wide and smaller roads should be thirty to forty-five feet wide and the lanes should have width of eleven feet. The Jām'ā Masjid was built on a raised platform and it was spacious

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enough to accommodate forty thousand people and open spaces were left all round. In front of the main building of the mosque of verandah, 200 cubit in length was builg having pillars of stone. These pillars had been taken out of buildings built by Nausherwan of which there were no heirs but even then 'Umar got compensation paid to the erstwhile subjects of Nausherwan. Hundred cubit away from the mosque were built government offices including a treasury. Kufa soon grew up into an important and expanding city and became a seat of learning.

Fustāt

On the conquest of Alexandria by 'Amr bin al-'Aas majority of its Greek residents had abandoned the city. 'Amr thought of making it the capital of Egypt but the proposal did not find favour with 'Umar. Accordingly, 'Amr bin al-'Aas returned to Qasar-us-Sham from where he had mounted up the Alexandrian expedition. His tent was still pitched there and he alighted in it. Tents were also pitched for his people and very soon sectors were carved out for various clans and the foundations of a new city were laid. It soon grew into the capital city now known as Cairo, Balādhuri visiting it in the fourth century after *Hijrah* described it as a city eclipsing Baghdād, the treasure of the west and the pride of Islam.

Mosul

It existed from before but had only a fortress and some churches. It grew into a city in the time of 'Umar. A number of Arab clans were settled here and situated as it was at the meeting point of East and West in assumed an importance of its own.

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18

Military System

In the early days of Islam no regular armies were kept in Arabia. Whenever conflict was apprehended tribes and clans used to muster with requisite number of fighting soldiers. They were not given any salary but they used to share the spoils of wars and they were disbanded soon after the conclusion of the wars. In the neighbouring Roman and Persian Empires, which were the biggest in the world in that age, large forces used to similarly gather but there were no standing armies. In the Roman Empire there were nobles and knights renowned for their valour who were designated as barons and who were assigned estates on the condition that whenever necessity would arise they would attend the summons of the Emperor with specified number of soldiers. This feudal system had a big drawback that when the barons became too powerful they could raise the banner of revolt. Even so, more or less the same system prevailed in Persia. In Arabia, the warring tribes indulged in guerilla warfare but then they were faced with squadrons of organised armies they put up an organised front. The fighting force used to be split up into five columns. The central column headed by the commander-in-chief was the main squadron. It was supported by a squadron each on right and left side called *Maimna* and *Mayesra*. The force in front was called *Muqaddamat-ul-Jaish* and the rest was called *Saqa*. Depending upon the situation these columns operated near one another or were stationed at some distance from one another. In the time of the Prophet (PBUH) the columns generally operated in close proximity to one another. In the time of the first Caliph when Khālid bin Walid was faced in Syria with an enemy force of two

lakhs and forty thousands, Khālid splitted his own force of thirty-six thousands into thirty-six columns each of one thousand soldiers under separate commanders.

Abū Bakr used to depute orators to accompany the armies in order to inspire them by their oratory and recital of Qur'anic verses to deeds of valour. After the Battle of Badr, the Prophet (PBUH) used to himself recite the verses of Sura *Infal* in front of the armies before commencement of the actual engagements and this tradition was followed by the four Caliphs.[1]

The Battle Array

In the battle of Badr, the Prophet had arrayed the Muslim army in rows and columns, and had appointed standard bearers and commanding officers for each column. The were instructed not to break up the rows till permitted to do so and not to start the fight themselves. If the enemy was at a distance beyond the reach of arrows they were not to waste their arrows. The arrows were to be used only when the enemy force was within striking distance. Spears and swords were to be taken out in hand to hand fighting.

In his time the Prophet (PBUH) himself commanded the armies and inspected their formations. Abū Bakr had appointed commander-in-chiefs to do the job and this was followed by the other Caliphs. 'Ali had himself led the forces in most of his battles.

Recruitment of Soldiers

There was no regular army during the short reign of the first Caliph and there was no system of training or drill and parade. Almost the entire nation was equipped for the job. The people were by nature warriors and were experts in archery and swordsmanship. Whenever the nation was faced with a war a proclamation was issued and the people

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[1] Tabari, History, page 594.

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voluntarily offered their services. At the time of selection care was taken not to enlist doubtful people such as apostates.

Weapons of War

The army consisted of cavalry and infantry. The cavalry men had long spears, swords, helmets and armour. The foot soldiers carried smaller spears, swords, bows and arrows. They also carried shields. The soldiers used to put on cloaks coming down upto knees, trousers and shoes. Other weapons that were used were—

(i) *Manjanīq*: or big catapults which were employed to throw stones on the enemy. According to Ibn Hishām they were used for the first time by the Prophet (PBUH).[1]

(ii) *Zabāba*: A number of soldiers could sit in it and it could be rolled upto the walls of a fort so that the soldiers could escape the volley of arrows and attack the fort.

(iii) *Zaboor*: It was another variant of *Dabāba*. It was made of wood and was covered with leather. It also used to be rolled upto the walls of a fort.

Arms and Equipments

The soldiers brought their own arms and equipments but funds were raised for procuring them for those who could not afford them. The portion reserved for God and His Apostle in the spoils of wars was also utilised for the purpose. A place known as Baq'i near Madinah was reserved for pasturing of horses employed in wars. Lean and thin camels given by people by way of *Zakāt* were sent to Rabaza for pasturage.

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[1] Ibn Hisham, *Sirat*, Vol. III, page 303.

Participation in Wars by Women

Women used to accompany the forces to battlefields. Their job was primarily to give drinking water to soldiers and to dress up the wounds. They also beat up drums and tambourines to incite the men and occasionally participated in the actual fighting.

Instructions to Commanders

Abū Bakr used to accompany the forces for some distance whenever they were sent out of Madinah and would not himself ride inspite of persistence requests of the commanders and others. He would explain the purpose of *Jihād*, its necessity and importance, the reward and good pleasure of God attained thereby, the bliss of the life beyond and the fleeting and ephemeral nature of this world. He would also give instructions regarding the fighting. When he sent Khālid to Zul Kissa he told him, "You will pass through the tribe of Tay. Though you have to go to Buzākhā you should deal with the people of Tay first. After subjugating Buzākhā you should proceed to Batāh and after conquering it wait there till I send reinforcements." He made it widely known that he was going to Khaibar and from there he would join Khālid in Aknāf Salmā. The tribe of Tay got so alarmed by this news that they readily surrendered.[1]

He deputed Khālid and 'Ayāz bin Ghanam to lead the Iraqi expedition. He instructed Khālid to advance to the lower portion of Iraq while 'Ayāz was to proceed to the upper part. They should then aim to reach Hira and whoever reached first would be the Commander-in-chief. They should overrun the enemy cantonments lying in between and on reaching Hira one force was to stay there and the other should advance to meet the main enemy army. "And bear in mind that you should beseach God for

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[1] Tabari, History, Vol. II, page 483.

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help and fear Him. Give preference to Hereafter over this world. If you do so, you will succeed in both. And do not prefer this world to the next for then you will be loser in both. Abstain from what God has ordained you to abstain from and avoid vices. If you ever commit a vice, then repent and do not repeat it."

The first Caliph had instructed Khālid bin Sa'id not to take the initiative on reaching Taima but in his zeal he ignored the instructions and humiliation was the punishment he got. Khālid bin Walid, a more seasoned general, knew better. He was instructed by the Caliph not to advance further after the conquest of Hira. He remained inactive for one year and fretted over the inaction and described the year as a feminine year but he dared not disregard the Caliph's instructions and said the Caliph's opinion was equal to the opinion of the whole community.[1]

Abū Bakr had issued strict instructions to his commanders to ensure that the Muslim forces did not indulge in any excesses or misbehaviour, that they should not interfere with priests and places of worship, that sword should not be lifted on women, children and old persons, nor should they cut any green trees or orchard nor interfere with peasants and their cultivation. According to Prof. Hitti the reason for the astonishing victories of the Arabs did not lie in superiority of their arms or better organisation but in the loftiness of their character and excellence of their conduct as also in their great steadfastness and endurance which had been prompted by their desert life.

C. Karalevski has affirmed that the Jacobites had looked upon the Muslim victors as their saviours for the Romans had ill-treated them while the Muslims had allowed followers of every religion to maintain their

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[1] Tabari, History, Vol. III, page 574.

identity and to get their dispute decided by their own leaders.

In the flush of their victories the Muslim commanders did not humiliate their defeated foes. Ibn Haloba, a chieftain of Iraq, had been vanquished by Khālid. When he surrendered Khālid wrote to him, "You are now in the protection of God. On giving *Jizya* your life is safe. Your offer of one thousand *dirhams* by way of *Jizya* on you own behalf and on behalf of your people is acceptable to me and to my fellow co-religionists. Now you have become the protégé of God, His Messenger and the Muslims."[1]

In the treaty of Hira, the following terms were incorporated:

(1) No church or monastery or any fortress standing in the overtaken territory would be dismantled;

(2) Christians will be allowed to continue the practice of ringing Church bells;

(3) They will not be prohibited from taking processions carrying crosses on festival days;

(4) Those who will continue paying *Jizyah* will be treated as protected people and their safety and security will be the responsibility of the State;

(5) Religious and spiritual leaders, priests and monks will be exempt from payment of *Jizyah;*

(6) The old, disabled and destitutes among the Christian subjects will be given maintenance allowance from the State treasury;

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[1] Tabari, History, Vol. II, page 537.

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(7) They will be allowed to put on any clothes except the military uniform of Muslims;

(8) If any of their slaves will become a Muslim the maximum market price that he could have fetched in open sale will be paid to his master for his redemption.

(9) If these people will need any financial assistance it will be given to them from the State treasury.

Leaving aside the destitutes, the disabled and the religious leaders and priests, who had been exempted, the populace had to pay *Jizyah* of 10 dirhams' per year per individual.

The humane and enlightened policy which Abū Bakr adopted resulted in return of peace and security immediately after conclusion of wars and ensured protection of crops, orchards and groves and resumption of vocations by the people without fear of any harassment by the Muslims.

In 15 A.H. 'Umar set up a permanent department of defence and got names of all serviceable men registered. The task of registration was entrusted to Makhramā bin Naufil, Jābir bin Muta'am and 'Aqil bin Abi Tālib. The list was headed by the family of the Prophet. The following annual salaries were fixed for various categories of persons.

(1)	Participants of battle of Badr	Five thousand dirhams
(2)	Migrants to Abysinnia and participants of battle of Uhad.	Two thousand dirhams
(3)	Those who migrated before fall of Makkah	Three thousand dirhams

(4)	Those who accepted Islam when Makkah was conquered.	Two thousand dirhams
(5)	Those who fought in the battles of Qadisiya and Yermuk.	Two thousand dirhams
(6)	People of Yemen.	Four hundred dirhams
(7)	Migrants after the battles of Qadisiya and Yermuk.	Three hundred dirhams
(8)	Others	Two hundred dirhams

Wives and children of soldiers were also given allowances of two hundred to two thousand dirhams each annually.

Among the recipients of these salaries and allowances were regular soldiers as also volunteers who could be called up at times of emergency.

For purposes of civil administration the country had been divided into districts and provinces. For military purposes the country was divided into areas and sub-areas with their headquarters at Madinah, Kūfa, Basrā, Fustāt, Damascus, Hems, Jordan and Palestine. At all these places barracks were built for use of the soldiers. Kūfa, Basrā and Fustāt were essentially cantonments. Stables were constructed to keep four thousand horses at each place so that the cavalry could have a strength of thirty-two thousand. The horses were well cared for and at Madinah the Caliph used to himself give attention to their upkeep. Pastures were maintained at various places for grazing of horses and camels. The biggest pasture, which was ten square miles in area, was at Rabaza. Great attention was given to breeding of horses so that the army could have thoroughbred horses. Stocks of foodgrains and other supplies were also maintained at these places. Besides these

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places cantonments were spread over many cities and some force was maintained at every city which was conquered. In 17 A.H. 'Umar had toured the province of Syria and had looked up all the places where the frontiers of his country met that of the Romans. Cities situated on banks of rivers which could be easily attacked by enemy forces were particularly guarded. In 19 A.H. Mu'aviya had advised the Caliph to strengthen the forces on the Syrian coast. All the forts situated thereon were repaired and secured and additional forces were sent and outposts were erected to maintain constant vigil.

In Egypt one fourth of the forces under the command of 'Amr bin Al-'Aas was kept at Alexandria, another one-fourth was spread over the remaining coastal region and half of the force was stationed at Fustāt.

Forty thousand soldiers were stationed at Kūfa out of whom ten thousand used to man frontier outposts. Ten thousand forces were kept in the cantonments of Ray and Azerbaijan.

Till then Arabs had not possessed a navy. Even though no internal commotion was feared in Egypt, its coasts had to be guarded against a naval attack. Asia Minor was still in the possession of Romans and, therefore, the frontiers of Syria were vulnerable. In Iraq there were a number of Persian chieftains who were conspiring to regain their territory and not much reliance could be placed upon their loyalty. It was, therefore, necessary to station sizeable armies at all these places. According to Tabari one lakh able-bodied persons were settled at Kūfa out of whom forty thousand were in the regular army who used to be sent out by turns in expeditions. The names of able-bodied persons of the entire country were registered. According to Ibn Sa'ad thirty thousand new troops used to be sent out in expeditions every year.

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As time passed, non-Arabs including Persians, Indians, Jews and Romans were recruited in the army. Many of them had accepted Islam and had settled in Kūfa and Basrā, the non-Muslims were given salaries equal to Muslims.

Since the soldiers were not permitted to take to cultivation or to enter into trade and business their salaries were raised to meet their daily needs. The lowest salary was raised from 200 *dirhams* to 300 *dirhams* and pays of commanding officers was raised from seven thousand to ten thousand *dirhams* per annum. Salaries were also raised on the basis of performance in wars. Spoils of wars were also distributed among the soldiers.

The forces were sent out to cold countries during the hot season and to hot countries in the cold season. In the spring the troops were stationed at places having salubrious climate and good pasturage. In their march the forces were directed to halt for a day and night on Fridays and not to cover too long distances on anyone day. They also halted at places where they could replenish their supplies. The soldiers were given leave once or twice a year to join their families. While full attention was given to their convenience and comfort it was seen that they did not abandon hardiness. There were standing orders of Caliph 'Umar that soldiers should not get on horse backs with the help of stirrups nor put on soft clothes nor avoid sun nor bathe in bathing saloons. They were also directed to acquire proficiency in horsemanship, to learn swimming, to practice archery and to walk barefooted. According to *Futūhul Buldān* every soldier had to keep needles, thread, scissors, sieves and other articles of daily use.

Every regiment had its own treasury officer, accounts officer, Qāzi and translators besides physicians and surgeons.

Sappers formed part of every troop and it was their job to clear the way, to build roads and culverts. Generally this work was assigned to conquered people.

Intelligence and Spying

This branch of military science had also been developed. A large number of Arabs were settled in Syria and Iraq from before and many of them had accepted Islam. Some of them were advised not to disclose their conversion to the new faith. By their costume they looked Parsis and Christians and could easily mix up with the enemies without arousing any suspicion and pass on useful information to the Muslims. In Syria the local chieftains had appointed their own informers to spy on Roman preparations and their troop movements. In Palestine a sect of Jews known as Samra had specialised in intelligence work and they were given land free assignments.

'Umar had attached reporters to each force so that he could keep himself fully informed about every development.

'Uthmān had not only consolidated the conquests made by 'Umar but after carrying out a number of successful campaigns had greatly extended the Muslim Empire all round. He had further developed the military system evolved by 'Umar. Stipends of persons who had rendered military service were increased by hundred *dirhams*. He separated the military from the general administration and posted commanders at all important places. In addition to the military basis fixed by 'Umar, forces were kept at several other places like Tripoli, Cyprus, Armenia. A large number of new pastures were opened for rearing and pasturing of camels and horses. 'Uthmān was the first to establish a naval force under the command of Abū Qais. The navy consisted of 500 ships and the first naval expedition was ordered by 'Uthmān.

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'Ali's four year reign was spent in almost constant fighting. He had, therefore, to give great attention to the organisation of his forces. Himself a valiant fighter and hero of many a battle he knew precisely what was required. He had ensured that salaries of soldiers were disbursed from the State treasury as the first charge and insisted that the soldiers should receive all necessary convenience. He had written to the commanding officers, "Your troops are the bulwark of the people. They are the ornament of the country, the protector of religion and instrument of security. Without them it is difficult for the people to live peacefully." He had advised the commanders "Treat your men as you treat your sons and meet with them in a manner that they may always like to meet you. If you will treat them well it will strengthen their morale. If you will treat them kindly you will earn their gratitude which will stand you in good stead. By praising them and recognising their labour and toil you will keep them happy. Recounting of their good qualities makes them courageous and valiant and encourages those who are timid."

He had also issued instructions for guidance of his forces in actual fighting:

"When the enemy mounts an assault upon you or you attack them try to select a raised ground or hillock for your men or the bank of a river so that you may have some natural protection and access to you by the enemy may be difficult. Keep the forces well knit and do not disperse them. Keep a portion of the army in reserve so that it may meet any sudden or unexpected assault of the enemy. Remember the advance guard (*Muqaddama*) is the eyes of the army and *Taliya* are their eyes. It is their duty to find out the whereabouts of the enemy forces and spy on them. Send them, therefore, in advance. Where the force has to stay, it should stay together and when it has to march it should march together. If it reaches a place of halt at night,

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spears should be dug all round for ready use and the men should not sleep too much or unwarily."

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19

Summing up

The exploits of the Caliphs in the temporal field may give an impression to the less-informed person that they were only seeking to expand the frontiers of their State by force. Such a conclusion will be far from the truth. Their brilliant achievements in the temporal field present only one side of the picture. In the cause of religion they were, no doubt, uncompromising and resolute. When a sizeable section of the new converts refused to abide by one of the fundamental teachings of Islam, namely payment of *Zakāt*, Abū Bakr, though faced with numerous problems at home, had no hesitation in taking up arms against them. The commanders were, however, directed to reason with the seceders and to try to bring them round to acceptance of Islam in its entirety and not to weaken its structure by discarding what they wished and selecting what they pleased. Again when apostasy raised its ugly head and some self-styled pseudo-prophets wanted to shake the very foundation of Islam, the Caliph fought bitterly with them and succeeded in either annihilating them or forcing them to unconditional surrender and return to the fold. To let the seceders from the faith or its avowed enemies have their way, would have meant acquiescing in demolition of the entire edifice of Islam. The Prophet (PBUH) had come to eradicate sins and vices, wickedness and evil, and to lay down a new order of life. In doing so he had to fight in every way against the forces of evil, corruption and disbelief. Not to do so would have meant smothering of the new movement almost immediately after its inception. Islam was born in an atmosphere of conflict, physical, mental and spiritual. When ignorance, disbelief and

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wickedness prevail the soul in search of God has to fight. However, strife was not the creation of Islam. Islam is the way of equilibrium, of balance and moderation and of completion submission to the will of God. The Prophet had laid down a firm and sure foundation and had enunciated the basic principles of life leading to peace and happiness. The State was, however, yet in its infancy. It had to be fostered, strengthened and protected from the onslaughts of opposing forces. It is good fortune of Islam that the immediate successors of the Prophet were giants and stalwarts not only in the mundane but also in the spiritual field.

These successors did not live only in an aura of spiritual halo and contemplative detachment. On the contrary, they lived squarely in the midst of the world with all its imperfections, to share its agonies and joys and to eradicate sins and evils permeating the society. The process had begun in the time of the Prophet and his companions were actively and closely associated with that process. In their own time they had to continue, enlarge and intensify the process. They had to interpret, elucidate and amplify the code of legislation or way of life laid down by the Prophet and the Qur'ān and to struggle to reform the world on the basis of better humanity.

Any new religion which aimed at restoring pristine purity of the revealed messages and at removal of accretions, distortions and innovations accumulated over a long period of time was bound to come into conflict with those it intended to reform. A newly created state which took up the banner of reformist movement was bound to clash with its mighty neighbours who saw in the movement serious danger to their security and existence. There were, therefore, wars in the lives of the Caliphs but they were fought in the cause of truth and goodness, in the way of God. They had nothing to do nor can they be equated with

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the ambitions of a worldly ruler trying to expand the frontiers of his empire to afford him a larger field for exploitation and subjugation of a yet larger section of mankind into his bondage. The moral principle was never lost in these wars and detaching themselves from mundane conflicts and clashes there was in these Caliphs a superhuman grandeur of the soul.

Their primary and foremost concern was whole hearted attachment to God, a living sense of the Beyond and absolute sincerity. Remembrance of God and a living sense of the Reality requires some fundamental virtues like humility and self effacement, charity and generosity, truthfulness, sincerity and impartiality, watchfulness and perseverance, contentment and patience. The four Caliphs possessed these virtues in unsurpassing measure. Even as undisputed rulers of their country, as Supreme Commanders of their forces, as leaders and chief judge of their men, these Caliphs led the lives of divines and saints and did not allow an iota of change to appear in their personal lives.

Abū Bakr was one of the leading merchants of Makkah. He had given up all his wealth in the cause of Islam and cheerfully bore the pangs of hunger and privation. In the first six months of his short reign he travelled back and forth daily from Sunah, a suburb of Madinah, where he lived in a modest household, to transact the business of State in the courtyard of the Prophet's mosque. For long he did not accept any remuneration from the Public Treasury and accepted a modest stipend only when affairs of the State prevented him altogether from carrying on his own business. Acceptance of this small remuneration for carrying out official duties made him suffer such qualms of conscience that on his death-bed he directed return of the total amount to the State Treasury by sale of a piece of his land. He also directed that no new

cloth should be purchased to serve as shroud of his dead body and he should be buried in the clothes he was wearing.

'Umar had contributed half of his wealth to meet the cost of one expedition alone. He led a frugal and simple life before ascending to the Caliphate and did not change a whit on assumption of office. He owned one shirt and one mantle only, slept on a bed of palm leaves and had no concern other than maintenance of purity of faith, the upholding of justice and the ascendancy and security of Islam.[1]

Though virtual king and master of the Muslim Empire he was the same man who humbled himself before a rustic bedouin. In a fit of anger he had given some stripes to the bedouin who had come to seek redress. When calmness returned, the Caliph repented and asked the bedouin to inflict the same number of stripes on him which he refused to do. 'Umar gave vent to his feelings thus,

'O Son of Al-Khattāb: humble thou wert and Allah hath elevated thee; astray, and Allah hath guided thee; weak, and Allah hath strengthened thee. Then He caused thee to rule over the necks of thy people; and when one of them came seeking thy aid, thou didst strike him; what wilt thou have to say to thy Lord when thou presentest thyself before Him.' Though clad in patched clothes and living in a humble dwelling, without any retinue of servants and guards and show of any semblance of pomp and power, yet he was firmness personified; a towering personality of undaunted courage who struck awe among friends and foes alike. Nobody could take any liberty, nobody could dare to transgress the limits set by the *Shari'a,* nobody could ignore his instructions. He made a governor of a province wear clothes of the coarsest cloth and to tend a flock of

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[1] Hitti, *The Arabs*, page 54.

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goats and sheep when he learnt that the governor had started putting on fine clothes and to keep a guard at his house. The governor obeyed without demur. There was no question of any protest. Pulled up by an ordinary soldier on expressing dissatisfaction over his deposition by the Caliph, the great generalissimo of Islam, Khālid bin Walid, admitted that with 'Umar as Caliph there was no question of any turmoil or anarchy. Such was the veneration and awe in which he was held. Yet he was the same man who carried a bag of provisions on his back to feed a hungry family living in a tent outside the city and declined the offer of his servant to carry the load. Simple and unostentatious, upright and just, solicitous of the welfare of the poor, the disabled and the weak, and ever mindful of his duty to God and to society yet withal so majestic, indomitable and grand—such was the character of 'Umar.

'Uthmān was one of the richest persons of Meca. He had donated his riches generously and wholeheartedly to the cause of Islam. As a Caliph he did not take a single penny from the Public Treasury by way of remuneration. He was nobility, generosity and kindness personified. He calmly faced certain death and gladly accepted martyrdom but neither did he agree to the importunate demand of the rebels to lay down the reigns of office under duress and threat of violence nor did he call his army to check and punish the rebels simply for the reason that civil war should not overtake the land. The man whose armies had triumphantly marched over vast territories of Byzantine and Persian Empires and whose navy had given a crushing defeat to the mighty naval force of the Romans would not lift the sword against his own men and sacrificed himself to maintain the stability of the State.

'Ali used to earn his living through manual labour and he saw nothing below his dignity to continue the vocation and his austere life on ascending to the Caliphate.

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As rulers of their country, the Caliphs had necessarily to give time and attention to matters of State and administration, to conduct of wars and other mundane affairs but that too, had become, under the guidance of the great Master, the scene of religious activity. Consciousness of moral obligation and employment of rectitude and sincerity had converted these worldly affairs into acts of merit and service of God. They did not allow their rulership to remove the vigours of poverty, vigil and fasts. On the contrary, they found in them supreme contentment and satisfaction. Their great piety, spiritual mould and disposition to saintliness had given them serenity, generosity and strength. They aimed at perfecting of civil life through a process of perfecting of the individual, his faculties, sentiments and ideas. Possessing uprightness of character and honesty of purpose and gifted with the talent and zest to help people, they could influence others to live equally upright lives.

In the political sphere they rigidly adhered to democratic principles of government based on the wishes of the people and discountenanced any notion of hereditary succession so much so that 'Umar, while appointing his son as a member of electoral council, debarred him from setting himself as a candidate to the election. The Caliph was the supreme head of the State but he was assisted by a Council of Elders composed of foremost companions of the Prophet and often by bedouin chiefs and city notables. They struggled against a social order organised on heriarchial basis, one layer of society resting on another, each again divided on the basis of birth and ethnic considerations and succeeded in establishing a social pattern based on equality of opportunities, justice and human considerations unsullied by any wide gulf between the rich and poor.

They raised revenues to finance the government and administration and to take up measures of reform and uplift

but the taxation was light and equitable which could be easily borne by the people. No discrimination was made against conquered people of different religions. *Jizyah* was only a tax in lieu of military service and for the protection given to them and exempted the non-Muslims from payment of *Zakāt* and alms. This term has been given an odious meaning by orientalists in their calculated attempt to malign Islam and its leaders. How scrupulous the Caliphs and their governors were in this regard can be judged from one event alone. Abu 'Obaidah bin Jarrāh was the supreme commander and governor of Syria in the time of 'Umar. In the face of a massive attack by the Romans he had to quit the city of Hems to group the scattered Muslim forces in the rear. While quitting the city he returned the entire *Jizyah* money taken from the populace as he could no longer give them protection.

All the Caliphs had ensured that there was no over assessment of taxes and that no hardship was caused to the people in collection. Uprightness and fair-play were insisted upon in every activity and in every field. The criteria and method adopted by 'Umar for assessment of land revenue have not been bettered till today. With a remarkable far-sightedness 'Umar perceived that the stability of the State and its material development lay in the prosperity of agricultural classes. With that end in view he forbade sale of agricultural land in conquered territories and debarred the Arabs from purchasing land from the original land holders.

They set up a judicial system which ensured quick and inexpensive justice in the real sense of the word. Everyone, be he Caliph or slave, was equal in the eye of law and no one was above the *Shari'a*. Great care was taken in appointment of Qāzis. Only those were eligible for the post who were men of unimpeachable integrity, and reputed for their piety, knowledge of law and intelligence.

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Their military system was one of the best. Though ill-equipped and inferior in numbers, the Muslim force under the overall supervision of the Caliphs, was fired with holy zeal and humbled the greatest powers on earth namely the Byzantine and Persian empires. They won victories after victories but there was no enslavement of conquered people, no despoliation of property, no general massacre of the civil population, no lifting of sword against children, women, old and pious persons, no cutting of trees or destruction of crops. There was no vainglorious pride or drunken orgies. Worship of God, moral principles and spiritual orientation were never lost even in thick of battles or flush of sensational victories.

They took steps to spread education and learning. Regular discourses were given on Qur'ān and *Hadith* and teachers were appointed to impart the teaching. Remembrance of Qur'ān by heart as well as reproduction of its copies was encouraged and beginning was made to record and preserve *Hadith.*

'Umar's sole concern was establishment on earth of a reflection of the kingdom of God. A part of the reign of 'Uthmān was marred by sedition and turmoil but that did not affect the manner of administration or principles of equity and justice. Inspite of the constant wars that beleaguered him, 'Ali, the Lion of God and Gate of Knowledge shone as a resplendent star in the spiritual world so much so that three of the four spiritual orders of Islam emanated from him.

As Ibn Taimiyah says, "Any one who has studied history of various religions would know that there never has been a group of persons more pious and devout and more mindful of avoiding any schism or departures in religion than the companions of the Prophet (PBUH). These were the persons about whom God had said, 'Ye are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind.

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Ye enjoin right and forbid evil, and Ye believe in Allah' (Q:3:110). What ever goodness or virtues Muslims shall possess till the end of the world, whether it be faith, knowledge or prayers, entry in Paradise or safety from Hell, ascendancy over non-believers or glorification of God, shall all be the fruit of earnest efforts made by the companions of the Prophet (PBUH) who preached the religion and fought in the way of God. Every man who embraces Islam shall lie under an obligation to them till the Doomsday. Even the virtues which Shi'ās and others have are patrimony from the companions who in turn had been embellished by the rightly guided Caliphs, for they were the fount of blessings, whether of this world or the next."[1]

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[1] Ibn Taimiyah, *Minhaj as Sunnah,* Vol. III, page 241.

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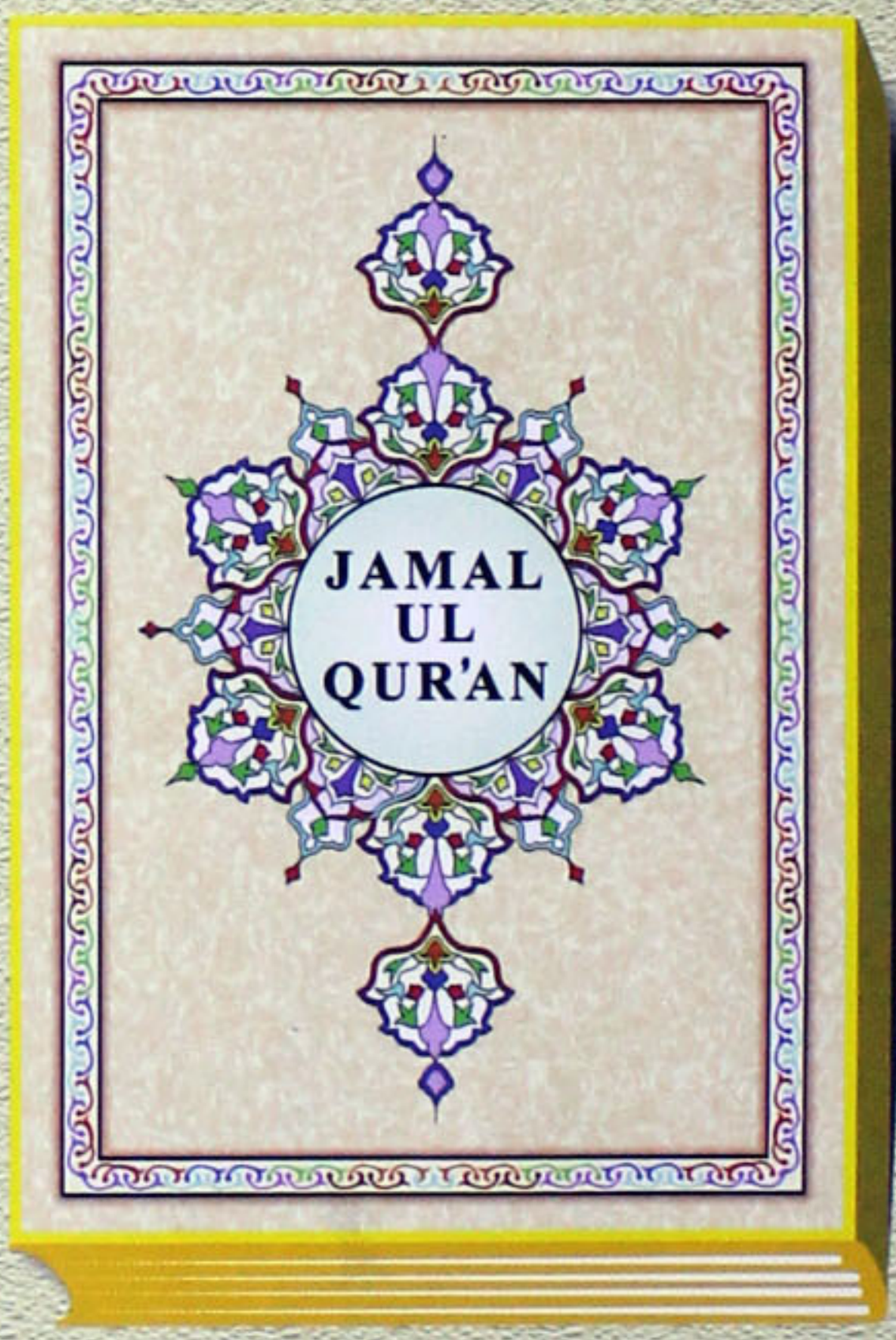
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