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Chapter 6: Concerning the Caliphate

The Caliphate! And what do you know of the Caliphate? It was something which Allah sent as a test to this *umma*. It divided the *umma*; the hungry ones yearned for it. Because of it, innocent blood was shed; for it, Muslims became *kafirs*; it deceived and distanced them from the straight path; it made them enter the hell fire. We have to make a study which, despite its brevity, should cover the inner plots and twists of the Caliphate which were gradually exposed just before and after the death of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.).

The first thing that comes to mind is that leadership among the Arabs was an essential issue in every age. You will see them giving preference to the leader of the tribe or the head of a clan over themselves. They do not decide anything without him; they do not take [a course of action] without his counsel and do not speak before he does.

The head of the clan is usually the oldest of them, the most learned in all matters, and the most noble in terms of personality and lineage. It would appear that this leader, in dealing with his clan, exhibits wisdom, sagacity, bravery, knowledge of current affairs, generosity, kindness towards guests and all the other praiseworthy attributes.

Often, the leadership is inherited, not subject to election. We also find that the tribes and clans, despite their independence, all submit to the leadership of a single tribe which may be larger in number and property; and it has heroes in battles that protect the rest of the tribes that are under its sovereignty. An example of that is the [tribe of] Quraysh, which assumed the leadership over the rest of the Arab tribes that submitted to it, based on the rule of chieftaincy and leadership, which entailed responsibility of [looking after] the house of Allah, the sanctuary.

When Islam came, the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.), to some extent, accepted this system of operation. He used to appoint, over the tribes that sent emissaries to him and had accepted Islam, leaders and nobles to be his deputies to lead them in prayer, collect their *zakat* and be the means of communication between he and them.

Then, by Allah's command, Muhammad (S.A.W.) founded an Islamic State whose laws and regulations were subject to the revelations of Allah. Thus social and individual laws like marriage contracts, divorce, selling and buying, taking, giving, inheritance, *zakat* and everything that concerned the individual and the society as a whole, in war and in peace, transactions and acts of worship came under the laws of Allah. The role of the Apostle (S.A.W.) was to ensure the implementation and application of those laws.

Naturally, the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) used to think about who he would appoint as his successor for this important role since it involved the leadership of the *umma*. It is natural that every head of state (if he cares about his people) pay special attention to the person whom he has selected to be his deputy on every occasion that he himself is absent from; he becomes his first minister as well as his close confidant who is present when other people are absent. It is also natural that his deputy be well known to all the ministers, as well as to the people at large.

The intellect cannot believe that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) was heedless of all this and paid no attention to it. There is no doubt that it was uppermost in his mind, just as there is no doubt that the *hadiths* related to the topic were subjected to the restrictions imposed by the Caliphs who maintained the theory of consultation.

They spent all their efforts in contradicting the texts which specified and identified the Caliph. Part of this effort was the denigration of the sanctity of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and accusing him of hallucination. The denigration was directed to him as well as to the leader whom he had appointed to lead the army, for they claimed that he was not fit to be the leader and *amir* due to his young age. Then they created doubt about the death of the Prophet of Allah (P) so that the matter becomes confusing and the people do not proceed to pledge allegiance to the Caliph who the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) had previously appointed.

As a part of that effort, they used the opportunity, while 'Ali and his helpers were busy with the preparations for the Prophet's burial, to hold an emergency meeting at Saqifa for selecting one whom they were pleased and comfortable with and in whom their hopes lay.

They then coerced the people, by threats and promises, into taking the pledge of allegiance and they completely removed any opposition from the political field. Then they took a firm and harsh stance against anyone who resolved to break his allegiance against the Caliph, or had any doubt in the legality of the new Caliphate, even if it be Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet (S.A.W.).

Then restrictions were placed and people were forbidden to relate the noble *hadiths* of the Prophet in public, so that the clear texts might not become known to the people, thereby causing chaos. [This was enforced] even if it meant the assassination of an individual, or killing of groups so as to stifle any opposition under the pretext of preventing mischief on the one hand and [fighting] apostasy on the other.

We know all this from what the historians have written, even though some of them have attempted to hide the truth by forging some contradictory *hadith*, or making far-fetched explanations and excuses, the secrets of which have been exposed with [the passage of] days, events that occurred, and by research.

Some of the historians can probably be excused as they took their information from the early sources which were written under political and social influences following the great discord and after the events which transpired when the Banu Umayya took over the Caliphate and bestowed wealth and appointments liberally on some companions and followers whom they hired.

Some of the historians reported from these sources because they thought well of them and were unaware of the treachery of the eyes and what is hidden in the hearts. As a result, the authentic narrations got mixed with the spurious ones, and it became difficult for the researcher to know the truth.

To bring the reader and researcher closer to these facts, it is essential to provoke and pose these questions, so that during these questions and answers, some realities will be exposed, or some indicators which lead to the truth, will be known.

Questions and answers which are indispensable for every researcher

Numerous letters have been sent to me from many places, carrying in them important questions which were indicative of the desire of the noble readers for a greater search for and knowledge of the truth. I replied to some of these questions, and left some alone, not with the intention of ignoring them, but because the answers are in my books "Then I was Guided" and "So that I should be with the Truthful Ones."

For general benefit, I will publish them with the answers in this chapter. The reader should note, however, that certain *hadiths* and events have been repeated in one book, or in all three. I have deliberately done this, following the pattern in the dear Qur'an, which repeats events in numerous chapters so that they become embedded in the mind of the believer, and so that it may benefit everyone.

Question 1: If the Prophet knew about the conflict and differences which would afflict the *umma* because of the Caliphate, why did he not appoint a Caliph?

Answer: He appointed his successor after *hajj al-wida'* (The Farewell Pilgrimage) and this was 'Ali b. Abi Talib. He called to witness his companions who had made the pilgrimage with him. He knew that the *umma* would ignore it and turn back upon its heels.

Question 2: How is it that none of the companions asked the Messenger about this matter when they used to ask him about everything?

Answer: They did ask him and he replied: **"Allah, the Highest said: 'They say: 'Do we have any choice in the matter?' Say certainly the matter, all of it, is with Allah'"** (3:154). They asked him and he said: **"Indeed Allah and his Prophet are in authority over you and the believers, those who observe the prayer and pay zakat whilst in ruk'u"** (5:56). They asked and he said: "Certainly this is

my brother, my successor and my Caliph after me".

Question 3: Why did some of the companions disagree with the Prophet of Allah when he wanted to write for them a letter which would save them from going astray after him, and instead they said that he was hallucinating?

Answer: Some of the companions went against the Prophet (S.A.W.) when he wanted to write for them that which would save them from going astray; and they instead claimed that he was hallucinating because they knew that he wanted to appoint 'Ali b. Abi Talib in writing. For he had told them before at the farewell pilgrimage that one who adheres to the book and the household will never go astray.

They therefore understood that the contents of the letter would be in the same words, for 'Ali was the master of the household. Instead, they accused the Prophet of hallucinating; to divert him from writing the behest. The discord and disagreement was about the letter before he wrote it. If the Prophet (S.A.W.) was hallucinating (according to their belief) then his letter would be pointless and common sense dictated that it should not be written.

Question 4: Why did he not insist on writing the letter, specifically as it would prevent the Islamic *umma* from going astray?

Answer: It was not within his capability to insist on writing; for the prevention from going astray was nullified by the agreement of many companions that the Prophet was hallucinating. The letter then became the source of misguidance rather than preservation against it. Had the Prophet (P) insisted on writing the document, there would have arisen, after his death, false claims which would raise doubts even on Allah's book and the texts of the Qur'an.

Question 5: The Prophet (S.A.W.) made an oral testament of three things before his death. How is it that only two have reached us, the third one being lost?

Answer: The matter is clear – the first item is the one that was lost because it concerned his designation of 'Ali as his successor. Furthermore, the Caliphate that came into being prohibited *hadith* about it. Otherwise, how can an intelligent person believe that the Prophet would make a behest and his testament would be forgotten as reported by al-Bukhari?

Question 6: Did the Prophet (S.A.W.) know about the time of his death?

Answer: There is no doubt that he knew beforehand exactly the time of his death. In fact, he knew this before he set out for the farewell pilgrimage. As a result, he named it "The Farewell Pilgrimage" and most of the companions knew of his imminent demise.

Question 7: Why did the Prophet prepare an army, enlisting notable Muhajirun and Ansar among the elderly companions in it, and ordered them to proceed to Mu'ta in Palestine two days before his death?

Answer: When the Prophet (S.A.W.) became aware of the plots that the Quraysh had planned, and that they had agreed among themselves to discard the agreement after him and to distance 'Ali from the Caliphate; he decided to send them away, to remove them from Medina at the time of his death so that they would not return until the matter of the Caliphate had been settled. After that, they would not be able to implement their plots.

There is no [other] acceptable explanation besides this for Usama's expedition. It was not wise for the Prophet to empty the capital of the Caliphate of an army and forces a mere two days before his death.

Question 8: Why did the Prophet not send 'Ali in Usama's army?

Answer: Because it was not fitting for the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) to depart without leaving a Caliph to administer the affairs after him; and therefore he could not send 'Ali in that army which contained notable Muhajirun and Ansar, like Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf. This astute behavior proved that 'Ali was the Caliph after the Prophet directly. Those whom the Prophet of Allah did not send in the army were not those who coveted the Caliphate, nor those who hated 'Ali, or deceived him.

Question 9: Why did he place at the head of the army a youth who did not even have hair upon his cheeks?

Answer: When those who were envious and against 'Ali sought to disparage him because of his young age, and the Quraysh nobles who had reached sixties would not submit to 'Ali since he was not much past thirty, the Prophet (S.A.W.) put Usama in charge of them; and he was then seventeen with no hair on his cheeks. He was the [son of] an emancipated slave; [this was done] so as to bend their necks and to break their egos. He wanted to show them firstly, and all the Muslims secondly, that a believer, true to his belief, must listen, obey and accept, even if what the Prophet decides hurts his inner self.

Where is Usama b. Zayd b. Haritha in comparison to 'Ali b. Abi Talib, Commander of the Faithful, master of the successors, the door to the knowledge of the Prophet (P), the all-conquering lion of Allah, and Muhammad's Aaron? As a result, they were upset at the Prophet's handling of affairs and his appointing Usama over them.

They found fault in his leadership and refused to rally forth with him, remaining behind. Let us not forget that in this were shrewd persons of whom the noble Qur'an says: **"And they plotted their strategies but their plots were known to Allah even though their plots were of such magnitude that they could destroy mountains"** (14:46).

Question 10: Why did the Prophet's (P) anger over those staying behind become so severe that he cursed them?

Answer: His (S.A.W.) anger on them intensified when he learnt that they found faults in his appointment. This deprecation was directed towards him, not towards Usama. He realized their lack of faith and

sincerity for Allah and His Prophet (P). [It also proved that] they were resolute in carrying out their strategies at whatever cost.

Upon that he sent his last curse on the dissidents so that they, their followers and all Muslims may understand that the matter had reached its conclusion; and those who are destroyed are destroyed after clear signs [come to them] and those who are saved are saved after clear signs [come to them].

Question 11: Is it permissible to curse a Muslim, especially when this is from the Prophet (P)?

Answer: If one's Islam is simply the uttering of the two *shahadas*, i.e., a person says: "I bear witness that there is no deity but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Prophet" and then he does not submit to their commands nor does he listen to, or obey, Allah and His Prophet (P), then cursing him is allowed. In the noble Qur'an there are many verses [on this].

We quote here Allah's words: ***"Those who conceal the clear proofs and guidance that have been sent unto them, after we have explained them for the people in the book, upon them is Allah's curse and those entitled to curse"*** (2: 159). If Allah curses those who conceal the truth; what do you think about those who oppose the truth and work to nullify it?

Question 12: Did the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) appoint Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer?

Answer: From the study of contradicting narrations, we understand that the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) did not appoint Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer, unless we believe what 'Umar b. Khattab said concerning his hallucination, and whoever believes that has committed *kufr*. If not, how can any intelligent person believe that he ordered Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer at the same time that he had enlisted him in Usama's army and made the latter his leader and Imam?

How can he appoint him as an Imam in prayer in Medina when he was not in it? History testifies to the fact that he was not present in Medina the day the Prophet (S.A.W.) died. The established fact, according to some historians from whom Ibn Abi'l-Hadid reported, is that 'Ali (A.S.) blamed 'A'isha for she was the one who sent for her father to lead the people in prayer, and that, when the Prophet (P) learnt of this, he became angry and said to her: "You (women) are like the women of Yusuf."

He then went out to the mosque and removed Abu Bakr, and led the 'emergency' prayer so that there would be no argument left for them afterwards.

Question 13: Why did 'Umar b. al-Khattab swear that the Prophet of Allah had not died and threatened to kill whoever said he had died, not being calm until Abu Bakr intervened?

Answer: 'Umar threatened to kill anyone who attempted to speak of the death of the Prophet (S.A.W.), to cause doubt and leave the people in difficulties so that they would not complete their pledge to 'Ali and until the heroic plotters could reach Medina. They had agreed to take the reins of power but had not yet reached Medina. He found that he had preceded them and played the role of one mad with grief, and so

he drew his sword, intimidating the people.

There can be no doubt that he prevented the people from entering the Prophets' room to confirm the matter. If not, then why didn't anyone dare to enter except Abu Bakr? When he arrived, he then entered, uncovered his face and said to them: "Whoever worships Muhammad, surely Muhammad has died. Whoever worships Allah, indeed Allah is the ever living and never dies."

It is necessary for us to attach a small comment to Abu Bakr's address. Did Abu Bakr believe that there was any Muslim who worshipped Muhammad? Most certainly not! Rather, his words were a figurative expression to insult and belittle the Banu Hashim in general, and 'Ali b. Abu Talib in particular, for they used to take pride over the rest of the Arabs that Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, was from them, that they were his people and his clansmen and the most deserving of the people to him.

This was also an expression uttered by 'Umar b. al-Khattab on the disastrous Thursday when he said: "The Book of Allah is sufficient for us." His tongue was implying: "We have no need of Muhammad, his term is finished and he has reached his end." This is exactly what Abu Bakr confirmed by his words: "Whoever used to worship Muhammad, indeed Muhammad has died."

He meant by that: "O you who used to take pride over us in Muhammad, step back today for his term is ended, and the book of Allah is sufficient for us, for Allah is the ever living and does not die." It must be noted that 'Ali and the Banu Hashim knew more than others the truth about the Prophet (P), and would go great lengths in showing respect and veneration for him and in implementing his commands.

The manumitted slaves amongst the companions and those who were not of the Quraysh followed them in this. If the Prophet (S.A.W.) spat upon the ground, they used to race each other to wipe their faces with it! They also used to vie with each other to get water left over from his *wudu'* or even his hair. All these poor and oppressed people were the followers of 'Ali from the time of the Prophet (S.A.W.) and he was the one who gave them this name.

On the other hand, 'Umar b. al-Khattab, and some of the companions from the notables of the Quraysh, often disputed the rulings of the Prophet (P), debated with him and disobeyed him. In fact, they even dissociated themselves from his actions. 'Umar chopped down the tree of "*bay'a al-ridwan*" because some of the companions used to take pride in it.

The Wahhabis did likewise in this century when they obliterated the relics of the Prophet (S.A.W.); they did not even leave the house he was born in. They now try, with every effort and wealth, to prevent the Muslims from celebrating his birth and from sending blessings and salutations to him. They even tell the heedless ones that the sending of complete blessing upon him is, in fact, *shirk*.

Question 14: Why did the Ansar secretly get together in the Saqifa of Bani Sa'ida?

Answer: When the Ansar came to know of the plots planned by the Quraysh to distance 'Ali from the Caliphate, they gathered together on the death of the Prophet (P) and wanted to decide the matter

between them so that the Caliph should be from them. If the leaders of the Quraysh, the Muhajirin, [who were] the close ones and clan of the Prophet, had wanted to break the pledge to 'Ali, then the Ansar were more deserving of the Caliphate than others for they believed that Islam was spread by the blades of their swords.

The Muhajirin were their dependents. Had it not been for their (the Ansar) opening their city and their houses and their properties, there would not have been any mention left or any merit for the Muhajirin. Had there not been the difference between the Aws and Khazraj who were competing for the leadership – for each wanted it for his own tribe – Abu Bakr and 'Umar would not have found an opportunity to take the Caliphate from them nor to compel them to follow them.

Question 15: Why did Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Abu 'Ubayda hurry to the Saqifa and surprise the Ansar?

Answer: When the Muhajirin, i.e., nobles of the Quraysh, had eyes noting the movement of the Ansar and what was transpiring in their affairs, one of them, Salim, the manumitted slave of Abu Hudhayfa, hurried and informed Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Abu 'Ubayda of the secret meeting. They hurried to the Saqifa to disrupt the plans and decisions of the Ansar and surprise them into believing that they knew everything that went on in their absence.

Question 16: Why was 'Umar b. al-Khattab all along providing words to placate the Ansar?

Answer: No doubt 'Umar b. al-Khattab feared the repercussions of the Ansar's action, as he feared that they might not agree with the distancing of 'Ali. This would cause the destruction of all they had planned and plotted. All their efforts would be in vain, their spirits would have fallen; all this after they had even defied the Prophet himself and thwarted all his plans for the Caliphate. As a result 'Umar, on his way to the Saqifa, was practicing what he would say to them so as to gain their support and agreement on the stratagem.

Question 17: Why did the Muhajirin win over the Ansar and submit the matter to Abu Bakr?

Answer: There are several factors that played [different] roles in the defeat of the Ansar, and the victory of the Muhajirin. The Ansar were, in fact, two tribes; both competing for the leadership since the times of *jahiliyya*. Their struggle had subsided with the coming of the Prophet (P) in their midst.

Now that the Prophet (P) was dead and his community wanted to usurp the Caliphate from its divinely ordained person, the Aws rose up under the leadership of Sa'd b. 'Ubada. However, Bashir b. Sa'd, the leader of the Khazraj, was jealous of his cousin. He was certain that he would not attain the Caliphate whilst Sa'd b. 'Ubada was present. He therefore refuted the position of the Ansar and instead joined the ranks of the Muhajirin, pretending to play the role of a trustworthy advisor.

Abu Bakr also stirred up the *jahiliyya* haughtiness in them, and touched on a sensitive spot by his words: "If we were to surrender this matter to the Aws, the Khazraj would never be pleased, and if we

surrendered it to the Khazraj, the Aws would never be pleased.” Then he tempted them by [offering to] divide the rulership saying: "We are the chiefs, and you are the ministers, and we will never force our views upon you.”

Then he astutely played the role of the trusty advisor to the *umma* by disqualifying himself and showing his distance from the Caliphate and that he would not desire it, by declaring: "Choose whom you wish from these two men, i.e., 'Umar b. al-Khattab and Abu 'Ubayda Amir b. al-Jarrah.”

This step was effective and the play successful. Both 'Umar and Abu 'Ubayda said: "It is not fitting that we supersede you when you were the first among us in accepting Islam, you were his companion in the cave, so stretch your hand that we may give our pledge. Upon these words, Abu Bakr stretched his hand and the first to give it was Bashir b. Sa'd, the leader of the Khazraj. All the rest followed with the exception of Sa'd b. 'Ubada.

Question 18: Why did Sa'd b. 'Ubada refuse to give his pledge and 'Umar threaten to kill him?

Answer: When the Ansar rushed to give their pledge to Abu Bakr, so that they might gain thereby fame and closeness to the Caliph, Sa'd b. 'Ubada refused to pay allegiance and tried his utmost to stop his tribe from it, but he was unable to do so because of the severity of his illness as he was bedridden and his voice could not be heard.

At that, 'Umar said: "Kill him for he is a mischief monger, so that the root of dissension might be destroyed and so that no one may dissent from the pledge as this would destroy the Muslims and would cause fragmentation of the *umma* and create discord.”

Question 19: Why did they threaten to raze the house of Fatima al-Zahra?

Answer: A large number of those companions who dissented from giving the pledge to Abu Bakr had taken to the house of 'Ali b. Abi Talib. Had 'Umar not hurried and cordoned the house with firewood and threaten to burn it, the matter would have escalated and the *umma* separated into two parties – the 'Alawis and Bakris.

However, 'Umar, in following the dictates of reality, went overboard when he said: "You will come out for the pledge or I will burn the house and everyone in it.” By that, he meant 'Ali and Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W). With these words, no one could let himself be seduced into revolting or not entering the pledge of allegiance, for what sanctity was greater than the sanctity of the leader of the women in paradise, and of her husband, leader of the successors?

Question 20: Why did Abu Sufyan stay quiet after having at first threatened and promised them?

Answer: When Abu Sufyan returned to Medina after the death of the Prophet (S.A.W.) (he had been sent to collect the *sadaqa*), he was surprised by the Caliphate of Abu Bakr and hurried to the house of 'Ali b. Abi Talib. He incited him to revolt and wage war against the community, promising him money and

people. 'Ali, however, rejected him for he was aware of his intentions.

When Abu Bakr and 'Umar came to know of this, they went to Abu Sufyan and offered him money, promising to give him all the *sadaqa* that he had collected, and to give him some participation in the affair, by appointing his son as the governor in Syria. Abu Sufyan was happy with this and did not speak out against them. They then appointed Yazid b. Abi Sufyan as the governor over al-Sham, and when he died, they appointed his brother, Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan, in his place, thereby enabling him to attain the Caliphate.

Question 21: Was Imam 'Ali pleased with the reality, and did he give them his pledge?

Answer: Never. Imam 'Ali was not happy with the reality and he did not keep quiet. Rather, he argued with them and refused to give his pledge in spite of the threat and warnings. Ibn Qutayba related in his history that 'Ali said to them: "By Allah! I will never give a pledge to you when you should be giving a pledge to me." He came with his wife Fatima al-Zahra to the assembly of the Ansar.

They excused themselves, saying that Abu Bakr preceded them. Al-Bukhari reported that 'Ali did not give his pledge during the lifetime of Fatima. When she died, the people were turning away [from him], he was therefore forced to reconcile with Abu Bakr. Fatima lived for six months after her father's death.

Did Fatima die without having taken a pledge when her father, the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) said:

"Whoever dies without having given a pledge has died the death of *jahiliyya*?" Did 'Ali know that he would live until after Abu Bakr, and delay giving his pledge for those six months? 'Ali, in fact, never stayed quiet and, throughout his life, whenever he found the opportunity, he used to relate of his being oppressed and the usurpation of his rights. There is sufficient proof for this in what he said in his well-known *khutba al-Shaqshaqiyya*.

Question 22: Why did they provoke and anger Fatima when they were in need of reconciliation?

Answer: They deliberately provoked Fatima by taking away her land and property and denying the inheritance from her father. They [also] repudiated all her claims, to undermine her standing and honor among the people, so that they (the people) would no longer believe her. The appointment to the Caliphate had no influence; as a result, the Ansar apologized to her, for their pledges had already been given to Abu Bakr. Had her husband come before, they would not have turned away from him.

Because of this, her anger intensified towards Abu Bakr and 'Umar until she began to pray against them in every prayer she prayed. She also left a testament to her husband not to let any of them attend her funeral and to keep her away from the faces she detested.

They also deliberately troubled her to inform 'Ali that he was even lesser in their sight than the Prophet's daughter, who was the leader of the women of the world, the one for whom Allah would be angered if she became angry, and would be pleased if she was pleased. There was nothing left for 'Ali but silence and

acceptance.

Question 23: Why did the notables of the community stay away from the expedition of Usama?

Answer: Once the matter was decided concerning Abu Bakr, and he became the Caliph of the Muslims because of 'Umar's efforts, in defiance of those who opposed him, he asked Usama to leave 'Umar b. al-Khattab to him, so that he could use him in the affairs of the Caliphate. This was because he was not able to complete the strategies alone so it was necessary for him to have active elements that had strength and courage with which they opposed the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.).

They did not care about Allah's anger nor the curse of the Prophet (P) on one who stayed away from 'Usama's expedition which he himself had selected. There is no doubt that the plotters of this matter stayed back from the expedition in order to execute their plans and to help each other plant their foundations.

Question 24: Why was Imam 'Ali distanced from all responsibility, and they did not involve him in anything?

Answer: They approached a large number of those who were freed (on the conquest of Mecca), and gave them positions in their government and involved them in their affairs. Amongst them they appointed chiefs and governors in every part of the Arab peninsula and every part of the Islamic state.

Amongst them were al-Walid b. 'Uqba, Marwan b. al-Hakam, Mu'awiya and Yazid, the two sons of Abu Sufyan, 'Amr b. al-'As, al-Mughira b. Shu'ba, Abu Hurayra and several others who used to crowd around the Prophet (P) but they distanced 'Ali b. Abi Talib, abandoning and leaving him a prisoner in his house, not involving him in anything which pertained to their affairs for a quarter of a century, in order to belittle and denigrate him and to alienate the people from him. The people are slaves of the world, inclining towards the rulers, fame and wealth.

As long as 'Ali could not find his daily bread except what he earned by his hand and by the sweat of his brows, the people would shun him and not incline towards him. In fact, 'Ali (A.S.) remained in that condition during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthman, confined at home. Everyone worked to denigrate him and to extinguish his light and to conceal his merits and virtues, for he had no vanities of the world which would attract people towards him.

Question 25: Why did they fight those who withheld the *zakaat*, despite the Prophet forbidding that?

Answer: Some of the companions who had been present at the pledge to Imam 'Ali at Ghadir Khum, when they were returning from the farewell pilgrimage in the company of the Prophet (S.A.W.), refused to give the *zakaat* to Abu Bakr; for they were not present at the death of the Prophet (P) nor at the events that followed, i.e., the Caliphate being switched from 'Ali to Abu Bakr, since they did not live in Medina.

No doubt some news reached them that Fatima had argued with them and was angry with them, and

that 'Ali had refused to give his pledge to them. Because of all this, they refused to give the *zakat* to Abu Bakr until the matter became clear to them.

From here, Abu Bakr, 'Umar and the government apparatus decided to send an army under the leadership of Khalid b. al-Walid, who was their penetrating sword. He crushed their rebellion, silenced their dissent, slew their men and took their women and children as captives, so that it would be a lesson to anyone who contemplated not to obey, or to challenge the authority of the state.

Question 26: Why did they prevent the writing down and transmission of the *hadith* of the Prophet?

Answer: From the very first days, they prevented the narration of the Prophet's *hadiths*, not only because they contained the appointment relating to the Caliphate and the excellences of Imam 'Ali, but because many of them (traditions) contradicted their words and deeds, by which they (the Caliphs) were administering the affairs of the people. These [acts] laid the foundation of the pillars of the new state which they (the Caliphs) had innovated based on their personal views and acts.

Question 27: Was Abu Bakr capable of bearing the mantle of the Caliphate?

Answer: Abu Bakr was not capable of bearing the mantle of the Caliphate, had it not been for 'Umar b. al-Khattab and some shrewd leaders of the Banu Umayya [he would not have got it]. History has recorded that Abu Bakr was always subservient to decisions and opinions of 'Umar al-Khattab [who was] the actual ruler.

The proof of that lies in the story of those whose hearts were to be placated. They came to Abu Bakr at the beginning of his Caliphate, and he gave them a letter and sent them to 'Umar who controlled the treasury. 'Umar tore the document and dismissed them. They returned to Abu Bakr asking him: "Are you the Caliph or is he?" He responded: "He is, if Allah wishes."

Similarly, Abu Bakr allotted a plot of land to 'Uyayna b. Hisn and al-Aqra' b. Habis; when 'Umar read the document from Abu Bakr, he rejected and spat at it and erased it. The two people returned to Abu Bakr complaining about what 'Umar had done and said to Abu Bakr: "We do not know, are you the Caliph or is 'Umar?" He said: "Rather, 'Umar is the Caliph." When 'Umar came angrily to Abu Bakr and argued with him using harsh words for giving away the land, Abu Bakr said to him: "Did I not tell you that you are stronger than me in this matter, but you overruled me?"

Al-Bukhari reported in his *Sahih* that 'Umar instigated the people to pledge to Abu Bakr, saying to them: "Indeed Abu Bakr is the companion of the Prophet of Allah, the second of the two. He was the best of Muslims to administer your affairs so go forth and pledge to him. Anas b. Malik said: "I heard 'Umar saying to Abu Bakr that day: 'Ascend the pulpit!' Whilst he said this, he (Abu Bakr) climbed up, and the general populace pledged to him."

Question 28: Why did Abu Bakr accept the Caliphate and then give it to 'Umar before his death?

Answer: Because 'Umar b. al-Khattab was the one who played the heroic role in distancing 'Ali from the Caliphate by his fierce opposition to the Prophet (P) initially, and by coercing the Ansar to pledge allegiance to Abu Bakr and by forcing it upon the people by firmness and severity to the point that he threatened to burn the house of Fatima.

And because he was the actual Caliph, as we have already explained, he had the first and last word. There is no doubt that he was amongst the cleverest of the Arabs and knew that the Muslims, especially the Ansar, would not pledge to him due to his harsh nature and hot temper.

He therefore strove to promote Abu Bakr to them since he was soft and weak in nature, and he was the earliest among them to convert; his daughter 'A'isha was a bold woman capable of riding through difficulties and changing conditions. He also knew with certainty that Abu Bakr was under his thumb and would be at his beck and call in anything he desired.

That Abu Bakr would hand over the Caliphate to 'Umar was not hidden from many of the companions before he had actually written it. Imam 'Ali had told him from the first day: "He has milked for you milk, half of which will be for you, so enforce his [command] today and he will return it to you tomorrow." Another one of them said to 'Umar when he brought out the document in which Abu Bakr had appointed him: "I know what is in it! You made him Caliph the first year, and he has appointed you the Caliph this year."

So, Abu Bakr's bestowal of the Caliphate upon 'Umar was known to most people, for, during his life, he used to admit in front of all that 'Umar was more powerful than him in this matter; it was therefore not strange that he would hand to him the reins of the Caliphate at his death.

With this, it becomes clear to us once more that what the *ahl al-sunna* say about the Caliphate being based on consultation (*shura*) is unfounded and was not considered by Abu Bakr and 'Umar in their minds. If the Prophet of Allah (S.A.W.) died and left the matter to consultation [by the people] as they claim; then Abu Bakr was the first to destroy this principle and to contravene the *sunna* of the Prophet (S.A.W.) by bestowing it to 'Umar b. al-Khattab after him.

You always find the *ahl al-sunna* declaring with great pride and glory that they believe in *shura* and that the Caliphate is not proper without this [principle]. They ridicule the statement of the Shi'a who believes that it cannot be except by appointment from Allah and His Prophet (P). You hear most of them criticizing this belief as being an innovation brought into Islam from the Persians, who believed in the transmission of divine ruler ship.

Quite often the *ahl al-sunna* use the verse: "And ***their affairs are by shura between them***" as proof, saying that it was revealed especially regarding the Caliphate. Thus, we have the right to say that Abu Bakr and 'Umar contravened both the Qur'an and the *sunna*, and did not give them any importance in the question of the Caliphate.

Question 29: Why did 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf stipulate the condition on 'Ali b. Abu Talib that he should rule according to the *sunna* of the two Caliphs?

Answer: From his preference of this world over Allah, 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf became the one to dictate the course of the *umma* after 'Umar; he chose for them whoever he wished, and pushed aside whoever he wished; all of this having been planned by 'Umar who preferred his palm rather than the rest of the companions. 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf was the last one amongst the shrewd Arabs and there is no doubt that he was a member of the party plotting for the Caliphate, diverting it away from the divinely legislated person.

Even al-Bukhari admitted that 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf was afraid of something in 'Ali; and it was natural therefore that he would also work towards distancing him from the Caliphate as much as possible. 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf knew, as did the other companions, that 'Ali did not agree with the *ijtihad* of Abu Bakr and the rulings of the Qur'an and *sunna* that they changed, and he tried his utmost to oppose and refute both of them.

As a result, 'Abd al-Rahman imposed the condition on 'Ali that he must rule according to the *sunna* of Abu Bakr and 'Umar. He knew better than others beforehand that 'Ali would not cheat or lie, and would never accept that condition. He also knew that his father-in-law 'Uthman would be the one to whom the Quraysh and all the members of the plot would consent to.

Question 30: The *hadith* pertaining to twelve Imams: Is there any mention of it amongst the *ahl al-sunna*?

Answer: Muslim, al-Bukhari and every *hadith* reporter from the *ahl al-sunna* has reported the *hadith* of the Prophet (S.A.W.): "The religion will remain [steadfast] until the final hour or until there are 12 Caliphs, all of them from the Quraysh". This *hadith* has remained among the difficult puzzles for which there is no answer amongst the *ahl al-sunna wa'l-Jama'a* and none of their scholars has been able to count after the four rightly guided Caliphs except 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz; these amount to five. There remain seven which cannot be accounted for.

They have to either admit the Imamate of 'Ali and his progeny, which the Imamiyya ascribe to and, in doing so, become the followers of the Prophet's household, or they refute the *hadith*, the "*Sahihs*" become isolated from the truth, carrying nothing but lies.

I would add that this *hadith*, which specifically concerns the Caliphate in the Quraysh, alone nullifies the principle of *shura* which they ascribe to. This is because choice and democracy includes every individual in the *umma*, and is not confined to a specific tribe over others. Indeed, it transcends the Arab tribes to other non-Arab Islamic tribes.

These are quick and concise answers so as to explain to the reader some of the issues that may have perplexed his mind. He can find more detailed answers in the books of history as well as in my two

books "Then I was Guided" and "So that I may be with the Truthful ones."

It is up to the researcher to refer to the reliable sources, to devote himself to the truth, to sift through the narrations and historical events to discover, in the process, the truths enshrouded in cloaks of falsehood, to uncover them and to look at them in their original garb.

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