

Chapter 11: The Day of Yamama

Not a few months had passed since the installation of Abu Bakr to ruler ship when the followers of ‘Ali felt that his silence and relinquishment of his admitted right was a rational and moderate policy and his opponents who had deprived him of his right also realized their mistake.

The later events and occurrences, which took place one after the other also confirmed the reality of this fact.

Were the consecutive events, which revived the spirit of apostasy and reaction among the Arabs and severance of connections with the Government of Madina, and refusal to pay zakat by another group, not a practical reply to the delay in granting ‘Ali his right and giving precedence to another person?

It was definitely so and had no meaning other than this. Incidentally all these events proved that the self sacrifice, fortitude and resignation of ‘Ali and his steadfastness in deprivation was proper and purposeful in all respects.

Of course, keeping in view both sides of the proposition, whether from the viewpoint of the supporters or that of the opponents, all these things had taken place as an accomplished fact in such a way that amends could not be made either for the mistake of the opponents or for the confirmation of the supporters. And as all was over, split, debate, contention, and vilification was of no use. The best thing to do, therefore, was that all should put in continued efforts for the preservation of security, integrity of the State and defence of faith.

Under these circumstances and keeping all these realities in view ‘Ali was the first and foremost in responding to the call of conscience for the preservation of the prevailing conditions and the defence of the faith, as he said: "By Allah! It never crossed my mind that after the Holy Prophet (S) the Arabs would take away this thing from the people of his House and would deprive us of our established right after his death. The thing which made me observe silence was the oath of allegiance taken by the people to Abu

Bakr. For this reason I kept aloof until I felt that the conditions had assumed such a shape that the people were inclined to deviate from Islam and were endeavouring to destroy the religion of Muhammad (S)!

I therefore feared that if I did not lend support to Islam and the Muslims there was a real danger of Islam becoming extinct. And it is evident that it was a much greater and a much heavier calamity for me than being deprived of ruler ship and Caliphate. This is so because ruler ship is something transitory and nothing can be found in it except temporary delight, and its sight is just like a deceptive mirage or like a piece of cloud which appears in the atmosphere and passes away soon. For this reason I rose at the proper time so that falsehood was subdued and the structure of the faith became firm!”

Of course, ‘Ali was not interested in anything other than the safety of Islam, and his only worry that this religion was going to be destroyed. And as he saw that if he rose and acquired his right people would turn away from Islam, so he overlooked his established right of Caliphate. Instead he equipped himself for the defence of Islam and also mobilized all his companions and followers for this purpose. He thus showed that he was the foremost defender of Islam and became the leader of the defenders of Madina. Then others marched behind him and he took his position against Tulayha bin Khuwaylid and his supporters, belonging to the tribes of Asad, Qatfan, Tayy and Kanana, who were planning to capture Madina.

In this battle also it was observed that *Sayfullah* i.e. Imam ‘Ali terrified the reactionaries and the apostates with his usual strength in the same manner in which he had fought with the polytheists in the past and no power could have the courage to face him.

The fact is that in order to safeguard monotheism and the unity of Muslims ‘Ali preferred cooperation with Abu Bakr's government to seclusion and retirement and, as you have read and heard, after his having achieved the object viz. subduing the opponents and reactionaries of Yemen, he returned to his house and busied himself in collecting the Qur'an, spreading knowledge and administering intellectual movement. And on appropriate occasions when Abu Bakr or the distinguished men of government needed his advice they consulted him freely.

In the last mentioned battle ‘Ammar was one of the soldiers of ‘Ali's army and was performing jihad under the banner of the command of Khalid bin Walid.

The details of the event are given here: The affairs of Musaylima, the impostor and Bani Hanifa, who were the successors of Tasam and Judays, took such a turn that they made an attack. The two armies met each other. In this battle the Muslims had to face the furious enemies in an unprecedented manner. When fighting commenced the apostates put up severe resistance and the Muslims lost heart and began to flee in such a way that Khalid lost the command.

In the meantime Musaylima and his followers who were lying in ambush attacked the Muslims. The Muslims were faced with great trouble and began running away like a scared flock of sheep.

Historians like Waqidi, Ibn Sa'd and others who have recorded the biography of 'Ammar have written that Abdullah bin 'Umar said: "I saw 'Ammar Yasir on a hillock while his detached ear, wounded by a sword, was bleeding, and he was going on fighting in the same condition, and was calling out the fleeing Muslims and saying "O' Muslims! Are you running away from Paradise?" Then again he raised his voice and said: "I am 'Ammar! I am 'Ammar! Come to me, and run towards me!"

"I (Abdullah) saw that the ear of 'Ammar was hanging and I also saw that in that very condition he was killing the enemies, reciting epic verses, shouting and encouraging others so that eventually the Muslims gathered round him. When the Muslims had gathered near him he attacked the enemies and came out victorious from the battlefield."

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