



# **The Caliphate; Its Conception and Consequences**

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## A Short Biographical Sketch Of The Author

AGHA MUHAMMAD SULTAN MIRZA was the only child of Professor AGHA MOHAMMAD SAJJAD MIRZA, who served, inter ALIA, as the second Principal of SIND (MADRASAT AL-ISLAM) (1886 to 1887), Karachi, and was himself an author. He was born in 1885 at Delhi, and passed his Matriculation Examination from the Anglo-Arabic School, and B.A., LL.B., and M.A. Examinations from the Muslim University, ALIGARH.

He passed the Provincial Civil Service (Judicial) Competitive Examination with distinction in 1910, and was posted in the Punjab. In recognition of his meritorious awarded the title of Khan Sahib in 1930. After giving served in various cities of the Punjab, he retired as District & Sessions Judge, from GUJRANWALA, in 1944, and settled in Delhi.

After his retirement, and until the Partition of India, he served as, Honorary Special Magistrate, member of the Delhi University Syndicate, President SHIA MAJLIS-E-AWQAF, and member of the Provincial Council of ANJUMAN SHIAT-AS-SAFA. He migrated to Pakistan in January 1948 and re-settled at Karachi. In order to utilize his vast judicial and administrative experience, the Government of Pakistan appointed him as a Special Magistrate, and in addition, entrusted him with the task of inspecting and re-organizing all the City Courts. He prepared a voluminous Report, and as result of recommendations made therein, separate Copying and NAZARAT Branches and Mal KHANA, were set up de novo. He laid foundation of the RIZVIA Housing Society, and was elected unopposed as its President for several years.

From the beginning of his career, his one consuming hobby was the pursuit of knowledge, literary and religious studies, and research. He assembled a most valuable library, comprising several thousand books, on all topics and in all the important languages.

Apart from a number of scholarly treatises and articles, he has written the following historical-cum- religious-cum- biographical books in Urdu:

- 1-AI-BLAGHUL MOBEEN (three volumes):
- 2-KITAB-UT-TAFRIQUE-WAT-TAHREEF FIL ISLAM:
- 3-NURUL MASHRIQAIN-min- HAYAT-IS-SADIQAIN:
- 4-FALSAFA-L-ISLAM (two volumes):
- 5-SEERAT-L-FATIMA -TUZ-ZAHRA.

The most famous and highly appreciated of his books is, "AI-BLAGHUL MOBEEN", which was published in Delhi, in 1944, and numerous Editions thereof have been published since. It is generally recognized by the scholars and ULEMA, that such an authoritative, well-argued, and irrefutable book on the historical-cum-religious subject of "KHILAFAT" has not been written in the Urdu language until now, as the following excerpt from a letter of Professor MIRZA MOHD: SAEED, a prominent member of the Indian Education Service, addressed to the author, indicates;

*"I have read 300 pages of your book (AI-BALAGHUL-MOBEEN) so far, and the effect it had on me, is, that the beliefs and views which I had formulated after years of studies and research, have been shaken to the core..."*

He had set for himself highest standards of integrity moral probity, during his Government service, and never bargained on principles, nor allowed his judgment to be influenced by any SIFARISH (recommendation), or consideration for his own worldly interests. One example would suffice here. The students of various Colleges in Lahore had formed a procession, to protest against the hanging of BHAGAT SINGH, a well-known revolutionary.

The British Senior Superintendent of Police, Mr. HARDINGE, and the British Superintendent of Police, Mr. Neal, after dispersing the procession, entered the premises of D.A.V College, in pursuit of the students, and gave a thrashing to Professor SANT RAM SIAL, who was taking a Class at the time. The Professor filed a criminal suit in the Court of AGHA Muhammad: Sultan MIRZA, who imposed heavy fines, and passed severe strictures against both the British Police Chiefs. Mr. Gordon WLAKER, the British District & Session Judge, Lahore, at the time, told AGHA SAHIB, that he was very unhappy with his decision in the case, and so also was the Government. He replied that his Judgment was based on facts, relevant law, and justice, according to his lights, and was not intended to make him or the Government happy. As a consequence thereof, his increment and promotion were stopped for a number of years.

He breathed his last peacefully, on 17th December 1965) 24 SHA'BAN, 1385, A.H.), and lies buried in the BAGH-E-KHORASAN graveyard.

**(AGHA ZULFIQAR ALI)**

**B.A, LL.B. C.S.S (RTD.)**

**Son of the author**



## **EDITOR'S FORWARD**

### ***IN THE NAME OF THE MOST HIGH***

Editing this worthy book has been an honor and a privilege, but it has not been without its difficulties. The book was written late in the Author's retirement, and had he lived longer, he would doubtless it into a condition suitable of presentation to the publishers. However, after the elapse of almost forty years, this daunting task has finally fallen to myself: it has been my prayer that Almighty God might guide me in it. It is inevitable that in a book being published so long after it was written, the style acceptable to the reader of today is somewhat different to that of the Author's day, and this has obliged me to take a certain amount of liberty with word order and word usage. However, in quotations taken from other authors I have tried to leave the text alone.

While the basic subject matter of a book of this kind stands independently of time, it shows its age in the use of example, and I have seen fit to delete from the survey of democracy in "modern" states the passages on the Soviet Union of Stalin and the China of Chiang KAI-SHEK as inappropriate, Conversely, I have added as footnotes a few more modern examples.

In addition to the eleven chapters of the book, the manuscript contained an unfinished twelfth chapter entitled "To Sum Up". This I have omitted: it contained no new material or discussion that was not already present in the book, but was an incomplete attempt at a summary, which it was clear had been added by the Author as an afterthought, and its omission in no way detracts from the book.

Finally, I have admitted defeat on editing the spelling of names, and pass this task to others more versed in the accepted forms. I ask for the Reader's forbearance for any errors that might remain, and wish him the best in his search for truth.

**HAIDER R. REEVE,**  
**23rd October 1988**

## Preface

Three revolutions of the greatest magnitude and importance, and having extremely far-reaching consequences, took place in Islam on the death of its Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.). Those revolutions were firstly political, secondly religious, and thirdly social. They are all interrelated, having a common origin. Towards the close of the Prophet's career, when the whole of Arabia had well nigh been conquered, a party arose among his companions, which wanted to seize power on his death. In the execution of their designs they found themselves face to face in opposition to IMAM ALI, whom the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) had designated as his successor. For the reasons detailed in this book, the political coup d'état staged at the SAQIFA succeeded in transferring power to that party. This political revolution led to the other two revolutions.

The Party Government formed as a result of this coup was quite naturally subjected to severe criticism by those -and they were many- to whom wisdom came after the event. The ANSAR, without whose help this party could not have succeeded, realized, though too late, that they had been duped, and the nation was at once divided into two hostile camps: the ANSAR, who had relented, and the MUHAJIRIN, who did not wish them to do so. For the Government, it was a very dangerous situation. The brain that devised the plan that averted the imminent catastrophe deserves the admiration of the statesmen of all ages: the whole nation was at once ordered out on expeditions to Iran and Syria. The device well suited the Arabs, who loved only two things in this world: women and booty:

This device provided the means to get both. Having been accustomed to depredatory raids, which had been almost the only source of their livelihood for countless centuries (agriculture coming later, and that too for the rich only), the Arabs took this order of their rulers as a boon, and the feelings of hatred and chagrin at once gave place to love and gratitude. Thus, Medina, which was the only seat of political power, became calm and quiet. The victories, which attended these expeditions, silenced the rich, and the streams of wealth, which flowed into Medina, satisfied the poor. The fickle-minded greedy Arab forgot the rights and wrongs of a question, which ceased to have any practical importance for him.

These expeditions came just at the moment when the two great empires of the ancient world, the Iranian and the Roman, enervated by luxury and weakened by internal dissensions and religious disputes, stood on the brink of their graves: the final push from behind was given by the Arab armies, who overran their countries in the twinkling of an eye. The Iranian Empire was gone forever, and the Roman armies were finally expelled from Asia.

On the heels of the political revolution, and closely connected with it, came the religious revolution. Those were the days of faith, and the Government, knew full well that they had to justify their action from the religious point of view. Therefore, professing themselves to be the successors of the Prophet (P), they invented certain dogmas to suit their case, and took care to incorporate them into the everyday religious philosophy of the common man. Even MAWLAWI SHIBLI, the great Indian historian of this distorted Islam, who in religion is the follower of the

Government Party of those days, is constrained to admit that most of the religious dogmas which we find current today had their origin in politics, and were invented to shield the rulers from adverse criticism and to meet the arguments of their detractors. SHIBLI, however, lays the blame at the door of BANU Omayya his childhood education and inherited religious traditions prevented him from probing deeper. I have proved in my other writings that these dogmas were invented during the time of the first Caliph, when they were most needed.

This was a revolution whose effects are felt even today. Religion was assimilated into politics and made subservient to it. All those devices in the shape of dogmas and beliefs, which could go to strengthen the position of the Party, were invented and utilized. The influence of the politics of that period on Islam greatly damaged its purity. The premature embarking on foreign expeditions, which was also due to home politics, resulted in further injury to Islam, and it subsequently became tainted with the customs, manners and beliefs of the Christians, Jews and heathens.

The Muslims themselves had not by that early stage become well enough versed in the religious philosophy of Islam, and were not able to meet the cleverly worded arguments of Christian wranglers and Greek philosophers. The influx of thousands of slaves, male and female, travels into foreign lands, and intercourse with strangers, all resulted in the adulteration of the religion and corruption of the morals of the Muslims, whose head was completely turned by the ruddy wines of Syria and the charming songstresses of Persia. Wine, women and music became the fashion of the day. AMIR ALI informs us that, "The women of the northern city were good singers; and according to the chroniclers, the austere UMAR often stopped in his rounds to listen to their music". The simple social life that was Arabia in the days of the Prophet (P) was gone never to return; its place was taken by that artificial life of gaiety, levity and laxity, which has always been the curse of humanity. This social revolution was unique in the history of humanity on account of its sudden and speedy appearance and permanent stay.

It is not within the compass of this book to describe fully the religious and social revolutions of that period. It will suffice to say that they had very far-reaching consequences. It is certain that they were the direct result of the political upheaval, which took place on the death of the Prophet (P) due to the passions, prejudices and jealousies of the tribes that comprised the Islamic community in those days. It is the Islam thus tainted and adulterated that has reached us, not the pure, unalloyed Islam which was taught by Muhammad (P). Though the un-Islamic nature of their Islam is universally admitted to the Muslims, they dread to probe deep below the surface for fear of exposing the very delicate nerves of their religion, which do not brook close examination.

The purpose of this book is to describe this political upheaval, together with its causes and consequences.

The pent-up feelings of years found free vent on the death of the Prophet (P), who had been the only controlling force that had kept knit together-and even then with great difficulty- the conflicting elements of Arabia. Jealousy

and mutual distrust were born instincts in the Arabs; implicit obedience was not rendered even to the Sheikh of their tribe, whom they followed only on the occasions of actual warfare. By nature, the Arab was haughty, insolent, jealous, distrustful and impatient or restraint in any sphere of life, whether moral, religious, social or political.

These traits of his character were responsible for his unpopularity with subject races, and also for his eventual downfall. To have kept together these unruly and fiery people, and to have welded together into one nation these jarring and troublesome elements, was the greatest social reform for the Prophet (P) to have effected. This unity might have continued even after his death, had not the dazzling glare of "HUKUMA" and the overwhelming passion for power rudely subjected the fidelity of the Prophet's followers to a severe test.

In his plan of a universal religion, the Prophet had intended to base the structure of Islamic society and government on the fear of God, an all-seeing, all-pervading being who rules the world and shapes the destiny of man. In this scheme, society was to be graded not according to his piety and fear of God, the Holy QUR'AN says, "The most honored of you in the sight of God is he who fears God most". This was the standard prescribed by Islam by which men were to be judged, and their rulers selected. An impartial and thoughtful consideration of this rule will convince that it revolutionizes the whole structure of society, which must be regarded and reformed. It assigns quite different values to ideas and things, and opens up to man's eyes a totally different vista. Respect and honor are no longer to be dealt out on the basis of power and wealth; henceforth power is to be weaned away from wealth, and assigned instead to character, in which fear of God is to be the dominant feature. In disregard of all worldly possessions, honor must go to the man who fears God most, even if he is the poorest of the poor. Money is no longer to be the arbiter of man's fate and the goal of his life. All types of "isms" -Communism, Capitalism, Socialism, Marxism, Existentialism, etc, -are done away with at a stroke; all schism between poverty and privilege, that has on so many occasions shaken human society to its foundations, is gone; all disputes between labor and capital, that are a menace to modern society, are settled. The incentive to accumulate wealth disappears, and contempt is no longer an accompaniment of poverty. Poverty loses its sting and wealth its glamour, both meeting on the same level. High, middle and low strata of society are formed not according to the level of wealth possessed, but according to loftiness of character. There are to be no disputes between the serf and the Lord of the Manor, between plebeian and patrician, between laborer and employer, as their relations are to be regulated by fear of God, the Justest of the most just. Serenity and perfect peace prevail in society, and the oppression of the poor by the rich is unknown; in short, perfect justice is the order of the day. This, without doubt, was the state of affairs at MEDINA during the lifetime of the Prophet (P). This dream of a utopian state on a wider scale was well nigh realizable at the time the Prophet died. But the whole aspect was changed at once, and the new lessons were soon unlearned. The Prophet (P) had left a state, which was to be captured at any cost, and it had to be done with the help of the rich

and powerful. Fear of God receded into the background, and power and wealth came again to the fore. The lessons had been perfect, but the time allowed for practice had been too short. The result was moral chaos.

ASH-SHAHRISTANI, the well-known historian of the numerous sects of Islam, has rightly observed that the most disastrous dissention in Islam has been over the question of the succession to the Prophet (P), and that over no other religious dispute has so much blood been shed or so much misery caused. This being the case, the distortion of history by the winning party was a foregone conclusion.

As a matter of fact, the whole structure of KHILAFAT (succession) has been based on the wrong notion that the Prophet of Islam did not designate anyone as his successor in the spiritual and temporal government of Islam. Moreover, according to this theory, he observed total silence with regard to his successor, not even hinting how he was to be appointed or selected.

This means that he entirely overlooked a most important part of the constitution of the State he founded. The object of this treatise is to show that this notion is founded on a misapprehension of facts, and that in fact the Prophet (P) designated Imam ALI for the vicegerency, and duly announced it on many occasions, notably on the occasion of the return journey from the performance of the "Farewell Pilgrimage" during a halt at a place called KHUM.

That an attempt to secure the headship in the theocracy founded by the Prophet was started on his death cannot be denied, and it is also certain that the aspirants to that exalted office could have no locus stand unless they could prevail upon the people to believe that the Prophet himself had failed to make any provision for that eventuality. This was the *raison d'être* of this view. The question then arises as to who those persons were, and how this incorrect view has come to be accepted throughout the ages. These questions have been fully investigated and answered in the following pages, and the erroneous nature of this view has been brought into full relief. Throughout this book I have termed this mistaken view "The Non-appointment Theory".

I have sought to maintain a historical and rational line of treatment throughout the discussion of this subject; the religious and passionate sides of it have been largely ignored. But at the same time, historical personages who are held in esteem by any faction or class of the Muslims are spoken of with great respect. It must however be admitted that in the discussion of a subject like the present one, a criticism of their words and deeds is unavoidable. The book is an attempt by a seeker after truth to ascertain the real facts, and should be read in that spirit. It is really a matter of history to know whether the founder of a great system, a great empire, and a great nation was far-sighted enough to select, train and nominate his successor, or whether he gave no thought to the future and left everything unsettled in an "after-me-the-deluge" spirit.

It is one of the chief concerns of any student of history to know the rules of the constitution laid down for his State by the Great Founder:

whether he meant it to be republic, in which authority is divided and placed in several hands, or whether he desired the centralization of power in

one strong and competent hand; whether he wished the head of the state to be elected by several parties, which in the case of Arabia meant tribes, or whether he preferred to make the nomination of his successor himself; whether the Islamic state was intended to be run on democratic lines; whether any rules to that effect were laid down by the Prophet (P), or whether there is anything in the QUR'AN to indicate that sort of thing.

The student of history must also question the events themselves. Were the rules of democracy honestly and sincerely followed in the election of the first Caliph, or was it more in the nature of a political coup than an election? If nomination was to be discarded by the nation, why did the first Caliph nominate his successor? Why did nomination become the rule ever after (except in the case of Imam ALI, when there was no-one to nominate and no-one to accept the Caliphate due to the confusion that followed the murder of UTHMAN)? When, during his last illness, the Prophet wanted to write his will and asked the Companions present there to supply writing material, why was it not supplied to him, and why was his wish passed off as the ravings of delirium; why was it pleaded that no further directions were needed due to the Book of God being sufficient for all eventualities? Why was the same thing not said to ABU BAKR when he caused his will to be written under worse circumstances, and why was his will accepted and acted upon? Did the Companions form one solid block, as has been urged for political reasons, or were they divided into two great camps corresponding to these two great parties? What was the nature of the SHURA of six men appointed by UMAR to select his successor? Why was no ANSAR, included in it? Why were all the members of the SHURA, excepting Imam ALI, men of great riches, having relationships with and inclinations towards UTHMAN? Why was UTHMAN, a scion of the house of Omayya selected for this favor? Did the constitution of the SHURA and the directions given to its members by UMAR not indicate that he intended UTHMAN to be selected as the Caliph? Why was a strong Omayyad kingdom allowed to grow and take root in Syria under MU'AWIYA?

These and the like are the questions that arise in the mind of a student of Islamic history, and demand a solution. An attempt has been made in this book to supply satisfactory answers to these important questions. As a matter of fact, no intelligible Islamic history worth the name can be written without discussing and explaining all these crucial issues. Books on Islamic history written by Muslim historians tend to fight shy of these important points, and the European authors have followed suit. Those of them who, like MARGOLIOUTH, try to find solutions to some of these matters, find themselves landed in a quagmire of absurdities when they follow the Theory of Non-appointment and the data on which it is based through to its legitimate conclusion. Some instances of this awkward situation have been cited in this book. To merely shut a door to all enquiry into these questions by the evasive remark that they are religious questions concerning two factions of the Muslims, is to deny the writing of Islamic history on rational lines.

DR CONDE, the historian of Muslim Spain, has rightly observed "that a sort of fatality attaching itself to human affairs would seem to command that



in the relating of historical events, those of the highest importance should descent to posterity only through the justly suspect channels of narrations written by the conquering parties". He goes on to remark that "a sound and just discrimination forbids us to content ourselves with the testimony of one side only; this requires that we compare the narrations of both parties with careful impartiality, and commands us to cite them with no other purpose than that of discovering the truth". My only wish is that this wholesome rule be observed in ascertaining the true facts about the history of the early Caliphate, which has been written by the conquering party, that is, those who succeeded in securing the throne and occupying it almost down to our own time when an end was put to the Caliphate by the Young Turks. The need for precaution is all the greater, as the very existence of the Caliphate depended on this Theory of Non-appointment. By way of comparison, the majority sections of the Muslim nation have felt the necessity of rewriting the history of their period of domination in India, as it has been written by the conquering party, that is the British, who were naturally interested in showing their predecessors to disadvantage.

The semi-government organ of Pakistan "Dawn" in its issue of 22nd October 1948, contains an exhortation to write a new history of Muslim Rule in India, as the British, for reasons of their own, have written a false history of this period. The effect of the British rulers having merely put their own version of the case, has been that a number of so-called Muslim historians have either accepted the perversion as truth, or at least, write as half-hearted apologists. The Government of Pakistan has taken up the suggestion, and a committee is to be established, entrusted with the task of rewriting the history of the Muslim rule in India (as announced on Pakistan Radio on 9th February 1949). I fail to understand why the same steps should not be taken with regard to the history of the early Caliphate, and an examination be made of the Non-appointment Theory, which have come down to us as written by the conquering party, whose kings, unlike the British, did not rest content with the merely passive measure of foisting on the world their own perverse view, but suppress the correct position.

This book is intended to expose to the world the correct position of affairs that existed at the time of the Prophet's death, and to remove the thick fold of veils that has remained hanging over the true facts for full fourteen centuries. I can well imagine that this veritable revolution in the realm of Islamic history will give rise to vehement opposition from various quarters, and I am perfectly aware of the Herculean nature of the task that I have set before me. I have to face the fanaticism of religion, the prejudice of ancient and inherited opinions. The dread of disturbing the status quo, "the awe of the majority", and the cumulative effect of the propaganda of over thirteen centuries.

Add to this the fact that has been so frankly admitted by MAWLAWI SHIBLI, that all the books on Islamic history have been written by SUNNIS, that is, by persons who hold it as a religious belief that the Prophet of Islam did not nominate anyone as his successor and KHALIFA and that therefore ABU BAKR was validly elected or selected as Caliph at the SAQIFA on the death of the Prophet (P), and you will in some measure

realize the Himalayas of difficulties that bar my to truth, and will apprehend the almost superhuman exertion that I will have to make in unearthing the truth that lies buried under the mountains of debris that have accumulated over this long period, and the effort required by the reader in recognizing and admitting it. In this arduous task I have two helpers: Reason and Justice.

I beseech my Reader to commence the reading of this book with a clean, unbiased mind, free of any preconceived ideas or prejudices. His solitary object should be to ascertain the truth and to do justice to personages of history who have long since left the stage, and who now expect justice at the bar of posterity, their contemporaries having failed to fulfill that duty. I appeal to his reason and sense of justice, and claim no other indulgence. If he finds what I have to say to accord with reason and justice, then let him accept it: if not, then let him reject it and think no more of it.

In order to close all avenues to doubt or uncertainty, I have made it a point to base my arguments only on the books written by the learned men belonging to the faction with whom the Non-appointment Theory is an article of faith, and in the learning and veracity of whom the whole community has had full faith and confidence for generations. There are some five hundred notes of reference, and not in a single one of them is there included any book written by a member of the opposite party.

I have referred only to those authors and books that are held in the highest esteem by the learned men of the Sunnis, for example- AL-BUKHARI, Muslim, IBN MAJA, IMAM AHMAD IBN HANBAL, AT-TABARI, IBN AL-ATHIR, IBN HISHAM, IBN KHALDUN, TARIKH AL-KHAMIS, SHIBLI, SHAH WALI ALLAH, AS-SIRA AL-HALABIYYA, MISHKAT, etc. (See Bibliography). This is the chief characteristic of the book, and should greatly enhance its reliability and augment its worth, as the most conclusive demonstration of the strength of case is that it can be built on the arguments of its adversaries.

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**27th February 1949**



## **Chapter One: The Theory Of Non-Appointment and Why It Was Invented**

Very soon after the arrival of the Prophet at MEDINA, it became evident to all that a Muslim state was in the making. With this knowledge, the idea naturally entered every mind as to who the next ruler of this state after the Prophet would be. As time went on and the state expanded, this idea took deeper root and different shapes in the minds of different persons.

It was all too plain that the Prophet (P) had selected Imam Ali to be his successor. But this was not to the liking of many people, and their sullen mood was fed and fostered for their own ends by those who thought themselves to be in a position to make a bid for the prize. They set about canvassing and inviting people to their way of thinking, with the result that a party comprising this ambitious and refractory element was soon formed. By the time the question of the succession arose, this opposition party had gained considerable strength and momentum of its own.

The gradual acquisition of power and the cause that led to their ultimate success, form the subject matter of the following pages. But a formidable difficulty faced the opposition from the outset. According to the tenets of Islam and the behests of the QUR'AN, they had to yield unquestioning submission to the will of the Prophet and were to carry out his orders without demur, nay without feeling even the slightest disinclination in their hearts. They were to take these orders with a joyful acceptance springing from their firm conviction in the infallibility of the Prophet and the honesty of his purpose.

In fact this was the main condition of their being accepted into the fold of Islam. Without this unquestioning submission and unhesitating obedience, they could not be Muslims. Now the dilemma before them was this; if they unquestioningly accepted and obeyed the orders of the Prophet designating Imam Ali as his successor, they would have to give up the long cherished desire of their hearts and lose the Caliphate for ever; yet if they were to declare themselves openly in opposition to the wishes of the Prophet, they would be stigmatized as KAFIRIN (unbelievers) and so losing the caliphate anyway as no opponent of the Prophet could be his successor. It was certainly a mastermind of politics who devised the means to steer clear of this rock. The device was this; instead of openly disobeying the orders of the Prophet, they feigned not to believe that the Prophet (P) had designated Imam Ali, or anyone else for that matter, as his successor. This is the *raison d'être* of the Non-appointment Theory.

The person who formulated this Theory was definitely UMAR, and it has become an accepted article of faith with one of the two factions of the Muslim nation into which it has since been divided on the question of the Caliphate, as we have learnt before. On his deathbed, when asked to nominate his successor, UMAR said that if he did so he would be following the example of one who was better than himself, namely ABU BAKR, and that if he did not designate anyone as his successor, he would be following the example of one who was also better than himself, that is, the Prophet. It has been an article of faith with this faction ever since. They have proclaimed it as an established fact that the Prophet (P) did not designate

anyone as his successor, whether Imam Ali or ABU BAKR. Not only this; they maintain that the Prophet did not give any direction as to how the succession should be regulated. At the SAQIFA, where ABU BAKR was selected as Caliph, no definite direction of the Prophet was cited and none was followed.

The so-called election at the SAQIFA, the arguments that were advanced there, and the conduct of UMAR and ABU BAKR in abruptly leaving the dead body of the Prophet and hastening to the SAQIFA to get ABU BAKR selected as the Caliph, can have a meaning only on the assumption that the Prophet did not nominate his own successor.

All the Muslim writers whose on Islamic History have been acknowledged as authentic have been Sunnis, that is, belonging to the majority party who formulated the Non-appointment Theory, and they believe as an article of their faith that ABU BAKR was rightfully elected by the UMMA as Caliph. This explains why they are unanimous in saying that the Prophet did not nominate his successor. But as a piece of historical evidence, this unanimity is of no value.

## Chapter Two: The Parties

We have seen that the birth of the Islamic State gave rise to speculation regarding the ruler after the Prophet, and that this made certain people take stock of their own possibilities and potentials. They were determined to make a bid for the throne. The result was that the companions of the Prophet were, during his life, as his UMMA has been since his death, divided into two groups, viz. (a) those who accepted and were prepared to obey the Prophet's orders nominating Imam Ali as the successor, and (b) those who were opposed to this. The opposition party comprised by far the majority of the companions, and was headed by many influential persons.

But for obvious reasons this opposition was kept screened from the public view. There were however occasions on which the leaders of the opposition would discard their mask when silence would have greatly jeopardized their cause. One such occasion was the time when the Prophet expressed his desire on his deathbed to write a will in favor of Imam Ali, and demanded writing materials for the purpose. Silence on that occasion would have been fatal to their cause; the mask was, therefore, taken off.

The Prophet (P) was fully aware of the existence of this party. He used to say to Imam Ali, "The hearts of these people are filled with jealousy and animosity towards thee, which they conceal now, but will disclose after my death". The Prophet was quite right when he said, "O Ali, this nation will play you false when I am gone". The members of this party used to talk among themselves about ways and means of taking possession of the Government after the death of the Prophet.

It can well be believed that whenever they met in groups, they used to engage in propaganda work against the AHL-AL-BAYT (family) of the Prophet (P). This is evident from the following observation of the Prophet (P); "What has become of these people; whenever they see a man of my family. They at once cut off their talk. By God, true faith does not enter the heart of anyone unless and until he loves my AHL-AL-BAYT for the sake of God and on account of my relationship with them". It appears they criticized the Prophet's laying emphasis on the importance of this relationship; they refuted the Prophet's remark with the assertion that relationship to him could be of no avail in the next world.

He had, therefore, to repeat the fact in these words; "What has become of these people; they say that my relationship will be of no use. By God, it will benefit the people of this world and the next. Take note that I will arrive at the HAWD AL-KAWTHAR on the Day of Resurrection before you. A group of people will be brought to me who will try to make me recognize them by letting me know their parentage. I shall reply; "Indeed I know you, but you reverted to disbelief and disobeyed my order after my death". This last HADITH is called "HADITH AL-HAWD". It has been mentioned by several eminent writers that it was in these words that the Prophet (P) spoke; "On the Day of Resurrection, I will arrive at the HAWD AL-KAWTHAR long before you. Some of my companions will be brought there. I shall recognize them, but when I am about to give them water from the HAWD, I shall be told; "They do not deserve this; you do not know what ill deeds they did after you". I will then have them removed from my presence".

Reading these sayings together, it becomes abundantly clear that the Prophet's meaning was that the companions who would thus be deprived of the benefit of the HAWD would be those who had been Imam Ali's opponents and enemies in this world. This conclusion receives support from another saying of the Prophet, which says that it is Ali who will thus drive away the guilty ones from the HAWD.

From whatever point you argue, the same conclusion is reached; the companions who are driven away from the Prophet's HAWD will be the persons who have gone astray. Who learn from another HADITH too that those who leave Ali will go astray. This HADITH runs as follows:

"I am leaving behind me two very precious things: the Book of God and my ITRA (progeny); these two will never leave each other until they both appear before me on the Day of Resurrection at my HAWD (Fountain). Let us see now you behave towards them after my death. You will never go astray so long as you follow them".

The abandonment of the one is the abandonment of the other, as the two are inseparably linked together. The companions who have gone astray and will, therefore, be driven away from the HAWD, are thus those persons who had left Imam Ali and deprived him of the leadership of the Muslims. These were the persons whom the Prophet in this life also drove away from his presence by saying "QUMU ANNI" (Be you gone from me!) on the occasion when at his deathbed they disobeyed him, and stood in the way of him writing his will in favor of Imam Ali.

The existence of this party and their objectives are conclusively proved from the conversations UMAR had with ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS, as related in "Al-FARUQ" of SHIBLI says: "AT-TABARI and other books. In quoting them, MAWLAWI SHIBLI rightly says that those conversations reveal UMAR'S real mind. SHIBLI says: "AT-TABARI has set forth the ideas of UMAR on this point in the shape of conversations. We reproduce them below in this connection, because they disclose the secret mind of UMAR. The conversations took place with ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS, who belonged to the tribe and party of Ali". He then reproduces two conversations, as follows:

UMAR: But I know your nation did not wish you to be the leader and head. ABDALLAH: Why?

UMAR: They did not want the NUBUWWA Prophet-hood and the Caliphate to go to the same family. Perhaps you will say that ABU BAKR deprived you of the Caliphate. But by God, this is not the fact. ABU BAKR did what was proper. Had he intended to give the Caliphate to you, it would not have benefited you.

The first conversation ends here. The other conversation, MAWLAWI SHIBLI says, is fuller. It covers some of the points already given in the first one; but it has more besides. Here it is:

UMAR: Hallo, ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS, I have been hearing many things about you. But I did not make further enquiry regarding them, lest your respect in my eyes should suffer.

ABDALLAH: what are those things?

UMAR: I have heard that you have been complaining that the Caliphate has been taken out of your family unjustly, on account of jealousy. ABDALLAH: I do not like to say anything about the word "unjustly", as it is known to all. As to jealousy, why the surprise? IBLIS envied Adam, and we are the children of Adam; it is no wonder if we are envied.

UMAR: Alas, old grudges and ancient malice remain ever engraved on the hearts of the children of HASHIM. ABDALLAH: Do not say this: the Prophet (P) belonged to the family of HASHIM.

UMAR: leave this topic. ABDALLAH: very well.

MAWLAWI SHIBLI has related only these two conversations. There are some more, which I take from the "Commentary" of IBN ABI-AL-HADID.

UMAR: O ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS, whence are you coming?

ABDALLAH: From the mosque.

UMAR: In what state have you left you cousin?

ABDALLAH: (Thinking he meant ABDALLAH IBN JA'FAR) I left him playing with his playmates.

UMAR: I do not mean IBN JA'FAR: I mean Ali, the head of your family.

ABDALLAH: He is watering the garden of a certain person, and is reciting the QUR'AN while watering the trees. UMAR: ABDALLAH, tell me the truth, and if you conceal anything then the sacrifice of camels will become incumbent on you, as I am putting you on oath. Is anything even now lurking in the heart of Ali regarding the Caliphate? ABDALLAH: Yes, it certainly is. Why not?

UMAR: Does Ali think that the Prophet designated him to the Caliphate?

ABDALLAH: Certainly, and what is more I have heard from my father that this contention of Ali regarding his designation to the Caliphate is right.

UMAR: There is no doubt that the Prophet said and did many things in this connection which does not support our view that he did not nominate Ali as his successor. The fact is that on many occasions the Prophet did go to the extreme in favoring Ali. It is a fact that during his last illness, the Prophet wanted to write a will designating Ali expressly to the Caliphate; but I prevented him from doing so. By God, the QURAIISH will never unanimously agree to Ali's Caliphate, and if he is ever direction.

IBN ABI AL-HADID says that he has copied this conversation from the History of Baghdad by Ahmad IBN TAHIR.

There is yet another conversation which took place in Syria where ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS had accompanied UMAR.

UMAR: I must complain to you about your cousin Ali; I asked him to accompany me, but he refused. I often find him angry with me. What is the reason for that?

ABDALLAH: He believes that the Prophet (P) reserved the Caliphate for him. UMAR: O IBN ABBAS, it is true that the Prophet intended and wished that Ali should attain the Caliphate. But the wish of the Prophet can carry no weight, as God did not will it to be so. The Prophet wished that Ali should attain the Caliphate, but God wished it otherwise. The will of God prevailed, thus the Prophet's desire could not be fulfilled. See, the Prophet wished that his uncle should embrace Islam, but God willed that he should not embrace Islam, and therefore he did not become a Muslim. The Prophet wished to

write a will giving the Caliphate to Ali, but I prevented him from doing so in the interests of Islam. The Prophet also came to know what was in my heart, and refrained from writing the will. The will of God prevailed.

One day, while walking in the streets of MEDINA, the following conversation took place between UMAR and ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS:  
UMAR: O IBN ABBAS, I think much injustice has been done.

ABDALLAH: (Thinking to himself not to let this opportunity slip) O AMIR AL-MU'MININ, the return to him what has been snatched from him unjustly. (ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS says that upon hearing this, UMAR took his hand away from that of ABDALLAH, and walked ahead murmuring something. Then he stopped and ABDALLAH caught up with him).

UMAR: I think, IBN ABBAS, that your people considered Ali to be too young for the Caliphate, and therefore prevented him from succeeding to the Prophet (P).

ABDALLAH: (Thinking this reply much more vicious than first one).by God, Allah and his Prophet (P) did not consider him too young when they took the verses of SURAT AT-TAWBA away from your friend ABU BAKR and gave them to Ali to announce to the MAKKANS.

Hearing this, UMAR turned his face, and went away without giving any reply.

These conversations are very helpful, as they conclusively prove the following facts:

1. There was a strong party opposed to Imam Ali succession.
2. Tribal jealousy and enmity towards BANU HASHIM, especially Imam Ali, and not the love of Islam, were the motivating drive of the opposition.
3. Umar was in the confidence of this party, and was aware of their secrets.
4. Imam Ali and all other members of BANU HASHIM held that Imam Ali had been deprived of the Caliphate unjustly, through jealousy.
5. Imam Ali, ABBAD, ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS and other BANU HASHIM maintained that the Prophet (P) had designated Imam Ali as his successor.
6. Umar was of the opinion that the families of BANU HASHIM were actuated by motives of ancient grudge and deep-rooted malice.
7. There is an admission here by UMAR that the Prophet (P) had designated Imam Ali as his successor, that UMAR was opposed to it, and that it was, chiefly he who had stood between Imam Ali and the Caliphate.
8. These conversations clear up all doubts about the incident of the writing of the will on the deathbed of the Prophet (P) when he demanded writing materials for the purpose. They prove beyond all doubt that the Prophet wanted to write his will in order to nominate Imam Ali to the Caliphate, that those present there knew that this was his intention, that UMAR knowing this prevented the Prophet from writing the will, and that his talk about delirium and the Book of God was merely a political move to create an atmosphere of confusion and contumely.

It is thus clear as day that there was an opposition party among the companions of the Prophet on the question of the Caliphate, and that the



object of the party was an opposition party among the companions of the Prophet on the question of the Caliphate, and that the object of the party was to prevent Imam Ali from succeeding the Prophet (P). It was in fulfillment of this objective of the opposition party that ABU BAKR, UMAR and Abu UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH went to the SAQIFA to contest the Caliphate, and therefore these three companions belonged to the opposition party.

It may be argued that the ANSAR had the objective at the SAQIFA of electing their own man as the Caliph, and that therefore the motive of these three gentlemen in going there was to oppose the ANSAR and defeat their objective, not that of the Prophet regarding Imam Ali. This is a very interesting question, and we reserve it for later discussion when we come to write about the SAQIFA affair, suffice it to say here that they did not go to the meeting with the object of preventing the ANSAR from electing their own man; they went there with the determination to get their own man elected. There is a great difference between these two aims.

If their objective had simply been to prevent the ANSAR from proceeding to the end, then their line of argument would have been quite different from what it actually was. They would have tried to impress their point upon the ANSAR in a reasonable manner in words such as the following; "This is a matter of far-reaching consequences, it should not be decided in a hurry; let us first attend to the obsequies of the Prophet, and after that we should assemble in the Prophet's mosque and find out whether he has nominated anyone to the office; if not, then we should select the best man from among us, and ignore any divisions by clan or tribe, ANSAR or MUHAJIRIN. We should regard the Islamic UMMA into ANSAR and MUHAJIRIN, and utilized the opportunity for getting their own man elected. They purposely avoided making it a representative body, for only in this way and no other could Imam Ali be ignored.

The first item on the agenda of this party was to acquire strength by numbers. Every man, every party that was against Ali was welcome. The MUNFIQIN, who though really pagan at heart concealed their feelings of animosity towards Islam and its leading proponents under an outward show of Islam and friendliness, are frequently mentioned in the QUR'AN. They were always on the lookout for opportunities to undermine the State of Islam by spreading disaffection against the Prophet (P). The frequent conversations and lectures of the Prophet in which he dwelt on the right of Ali to succeed him, and his final announcement to that effect, provided them with a good opportunity.

They argued with great vehemence that Muhammad's claim to inspiration from on High was only a cloak to cover his-cupidity to create an empire for himself and his family. This argument, which was very appealing to the Arabs, seething as they were with tribal jealousy and feuds, also provided a good excuse to the faction that was bent upon securing the throne for itself at any cost. The MUNAFIQIN were the greatest enemies of Imam Ali, whom they regarded as the person solely responsible for all their misfortunes and mishaps.

The extent and importance of the service rendered by Imam Ali to the cause of Islam will be apparent as we proceed further in our narration.

Suffice it to say here that the Prophet (P) was fully aware of their feelings of animosity and hatred towards Imam Ali, and was therefore able to guess rightly that they would vent their feeling after his death. The attitude of the MUNAFIQIN towards Imam Ali is abundantly clear from remarks made to him by the Prophet from time to time, such as the following:

"No-one except a true Muslim will love thee, and no-one except a MUNAFIQ (hypocrite) will be thy enemy".

"But for thee, the true Muslim would not be able to be distinguished from the MUNAFIQ after my death".

"True faith lies in thy love, and jealousy of thee is the symbol of hypocrisy. The first man to enter Paradise will be thy friend and the first man to enter Hell will be thy foe. Happy is he who loves thee, and woe to thy enemy". JABIR and Abu DHARR, the well-known companions of the Prophet (P), used to say:

"During the lifetime of the Prophet we used to distinguish a MUNAFIQ by his enmity to Ali". The concurrence of interests led to a complete union between the MUNAFIQIN and the opposition party. This gave rise in turn to a unity of action: and this unity of motives and actions caused them to coalesce into one whole. The evidence of this coalescence is supplied by AL-BUKHARI himself, from whom we learn the following information:

HUDHAIFA son of YAMAN says: "Today the MUNAFIQIN are more dangerous than they used to be in the time of the Prophet, because in those days they used to conceal their nefarious activities, whereas today they openly and freely come out in public and carry out their ulterior objectives".

Why was this so? For the simple reason that the men in authority were their friends and comrades-in-arms against Imam Ali. During the Prophet's mission the MUNAFIQIN and their deeds were mentioned frequently in the QUR'AN. An instance of their attitude can be seen on the occasion of the expedition to TABUK, which was the only time when Imam Ali was not included on an expedition. It is said by the chroniclers that it was the MUNAFIQIN who made much of this fact, as in their opinion it cast a slur on Ali. The MUNAFIQIN were so jubilant over the matter that the Prophet (P) had to clear up the misunderstanding by saying that this posting of Ali to MEDINA was for other reasons, and that Imam Ali was to him what Aaron was to Moses.

This proves beyond all doubt that hostility to Imam Ali was the chief characteristic of the MUNAFIQIN. With the commencement of the Caliphate, their separate identity ends and they become verged with the common people. This was anticipated by the Prophet when he said that after his death the MUNAFIQIN would find themselves so favorably placed that they would appear just like ordinary Muslims, and that in that situation the only thing that would distinguish them from the rest of the Muslims would be their hostility to Imam Ali. (This saying has already been referred to above).

In order to prevent the people from finding fault with the MUNAFIQIN and from accusing the Government of associating with them, a HADITH was fabricated; it is called "HADITH al-NUJUM", the word "NUJUM" meaning "stars". The Prophet (P) is represented as saying that all his



companions were like stars shedding the light of truth, and that the UMMA was at liberty to follow any of them who were equally learned, pious and God-fearing. That this is an invention is obvious; many companions were addicted to drinking, many were caught in adultery, many were ignorant of the true interpretation of the QUR'AN. UMAR himself had to punish his son for drinking. Even the learned Sunnis have now found by thorough enquiry that this HADITH is a fabrication. But it did the work for which it had been intended-it shielded the MUNAFIQIN who were, of course, the companions of the Prophet (P), as they came under the definition of a "Companion of the Prophet". (See in this connection Al-BUKHARI, who says that anyone who associated with the Prophet, or who, from among the Muslims, saw the Prophet, was a Companion). There were many persons who though not well known as MUNAFIQIN, in reality were.

There was yet another class of men whose relatives had been killed by Imam Ali in the battles for Islam, and they were very many in number. There was hardly a family, which had not had one, or two members thus killed by him, and they entertained the bitterest feelings against him. They carried this feeling of animosity with them even after their conversion to Islam, and it was fanned to white heat by interested persons. The following anecdote fully illustrates this latter point; once UMAR met SA'ID, son of Al-A'AS, while on his way.

UMAR stopped him and said, "I think you have a grudge in your heart against me; I presume that this grudge is on account of the death of your father, whom you think I killed in the Jihad. But this is wrong; I killed my own maternal uncle Al-A'AS son of HISHAM son of MOGHIRA. It is true; I passed by your father, whom I found wallowing in his own blood like a wounded bull. I avoided him, but just then I saw Ali coming toward your father and killed him".

There was a fourth party who must also be included in the category of MUNAFIQIN, which in reality they were. But I mention them separately, as within a very short time they captured the Caliphate as a direct result of the efforts of the opposition party. I am referring to BANU Omayya Writing about the accession of MU'AWIYA to the throne of Muhammad; SYIID AMIR Ali quotes a European historian thus: "Thus, by one of the strangest freaks of fortune ever recorded in history, did the persecutors of Muhammad usurp the inheritance of his children, and the champions of idolatry become the supreme heads of his religion and empire"

BANU Omayya the MUNAFIQIN and the other QURAIISH whose relatives had been slain in the Jihad by Imam Ali never forgave him and never forgot that Imam Ali had been the chief cause of their disgrace and discomfiture. Ali the enemies of Islam, and they were many, knew that Islam could not have won but for the sword of Imam Ali. In short, by his zeal in the cause of Islam Imam Ali had earned for himself the deadliest and everlasting enmity and hatred of the enemies of Islam, who looked upon him as the sole cause of their misfortune and miseries. From the first they had been the enemies of Islam and Muhammad; but matters had now reached such a stage that it was not safe for them to show that enmity openly, and after the battle of KHAIBER, no occasion was left for

translating those feelings into action. As they were able to successfully conceal their emotions against Islam and the Prophet (P), they could not be distinguished from the rest of the Muslims. But they had no such pressing need to conceal their feelings against Imam Ali. Moreover, in order to gain their object, it was necessary for them to create an atmosphere of ill will and hatred towards Imam Ali by propaganda and intrigue.

Feelings of animosity against Imam Ali, lurking paganism, tribal jealousy and ambition, all combined together to make these parties coalesce into one solid block against him.

## Chapter Three: Hadith and History

In an enquiry into the question of the Caliphate, too much emphasis cannot be laid on the very important fact that the collection and compilation of HADITH and History, the only two sources of our information on the point, was under the complete control of the opposition party, whose very existence depended on the suppression their views. And they made thorough use of their power in stopping spurious HADITH to substantiate their Theory and establish a position for their leaders, who had ousted Imam Ali. In those days the only position that a companion of the Prophet could enjoy in the eyes of the public was that created by the Prophet (P), and his appreciation of their merits was the only source whence could be derived their prestige and prerogative. How this was done in the story told in this chapter.

The period of the Caliphate began when ABU BAKR succeeded the Prophet (P) as his Caliph in June A.C. 1258. This period falls into three well-defined divisions, viz.

1. That of the first four Caliphs (632-661).
2. That of the OMAYYADE Caliphs (661-749); Mr. Browne calls this the "period of Arabian Imperialism and Pagan Reaction".
3. That of the ABBASSID Caliphs (749-1258).

With the exception of the short rule of Imam Ali (June 656 AC-January 661 AC), the whole of this long period of the Caliphate is characterized by fierce hostility to Imam Ali and his children, who are referred to in history collectively as "The ALIDS". Violence and hostility against them was an article of faith with the rulers; it is the one principle on which all are agreed, the one motive which underlies all their actions. It is the basic policy on which their state is run. Any fault may be overlooked, but not the love of Imam Ali; every virtue may pass unnoticed, but not the "virtue" of hating Imam Ali. The reason is not hard to find. Two facts must be borne in mind for a correct appreciation of the history and policy of this Caliphate, taking all the three divisions together. The first is that the lifeblood of this Caliphate is the theory that the Prophet (P) did not designate anyone as his successor, for in the contrary case his nominee, and not ABU BAKR, would have been the rightful Caliph, and the whole edifice of the Caliphate erected at the SAQIFA would tumble. They therefore took care to ensure that the people were fed on this theory, and their children nursed and brought up in its atmosphere.

And to make it still stronger, it was consecrated as a part of Religion. The second fact is that their firm conviction that Imam Ali was the rightful claimant to the caliphate, which they had deprived him of by intrigue and clever moves, naturally made them see in him a most formidable rival who must be carefully watched and strictly kept down if they were to breathe easily in their usurped power. This caliphate owed its life to the opposition to the Prophet's scheme in which Ali was to be the first caliph. For reasons, which will become apparent as we proceed, this opposition succeeded, and Imam Ali was brushed aside after the death of the Prophet (P).

But the position which the Prophet (P) had created for Imam Ali, coupled with the deeds of heroism which Imam Ali had performed to save Islam,

and the sacrifices which he had made at the risk of his life to establish the Islamic state, made him a formidable rival in the eyes of the rulers who never forgot that what they had obtained by a coup d'état was not theirs by right. They therefore regarded Imam Ali with that dread mingled with hatred and enmity which is generally the hallmark of a precarious position obtained by fraud and held up by force, and they used those devices and stratagems which are generally resorted to by persons similarly holding office without legitimacy, employing all the available means in their power, which will become apparent as we proceed. They tried to keep Imam Ali down and erected enormous barriers between him and the Caliphate. One of these, which in the end proved insurmountable, was the push to prominence given by the first two caliphs to BANU OMAYYA the hereditary rivals and inveterate foes of BANU HASHIM, with the result that when Imam Ali's precarious rule began, he found himself surrounded by hostile elements with an independent and antagonistic kingdom in Syria confronting him. Eventually this kingdom expanded into the fully-fledged Caliphate. BANU OMAYYA inherited the policy as well as the Government of the first three Caliphs, and the circumstances under which they wrested power from BANU HASHIM added even more venom to the already poisoned sting.

The barbarities and cruelties perpetrated against the children of the Prophet (P) by BANU OMAYYA especially the unparalleled atrocities committed on the field of KERBALA'A at least opened the eyes of a section of the people, and as one man they rose to avenge those wrongs. The children of the uncle of the Prophet (P) saw their opportunity in this swing of the people's feelings towards the children of the daughter, and at first posed as the avengers of the wrongs done to them. It was in their name that they rose; but once success was attained, deceit, treachery and fraud came into play, and BANU ABBAS, passing over BANU FATIMA, occupied the throne.

And they ill repaid those in whose name they had obtained the empire. The pages of history tell a long and continuously mournful tale of horrible atrocities, unparalleled barbarities and unspeakable cruelties against the children of the prophet (P), for example, burying the ALIDS alive in the foundations and walls of the palaces those same palaces which are now held up as evidence of a glorious age of Islam. The jugular vein of this dynasty was also the same theory of Non-appointment, and the basis of its policy was similarly the persecution and oppression of the children of the Prophet (P).

Having cleared the ground so far, I will now proceed to describe by whom and under what circumstances and influences the HADITH and the Historical Records were collected and compiled.

The power of the HADITH was recognized by the Government from the very beginning. They also knew that the sayings of the Prophet (P) were full of praise for Imam Ali. They therefore, in the first instance, passed orders prohibiting people from mentioning or circulating the HADITH. Although they were asked not to mention the HADITH at all, they soon realized the impossibility of completely avoiding doing so. It was much too natural for the people to relate among themselves what their Prophet (P) had said.

It served as a legal digest, and was useful as a guide in deciding legal cases. The first order was therefore amended to the extent that the QADIS (judges) were authorized to refer to the HADITH in deciding cases where they could not find in the QUR'AN any express orders applicable to the case in hand. The third stage in the control of the HADITH was reached when orders were passed that those HADITH in favor of imam Ali or in his appreciation should not be permitted currency. The fourth stage was when the people were ordered to coin HADITH in favor of the first three caliphs and the Companions, and to circulate them freely. A short account of these four stages is given below.

### **The First and Second Stages:**

ADH-DHAHABI, in his "TADHKIRAT AL-HUFFAZ" under the section of ABU BAKR, says that ABU BAKR summoned the people after the death of the Prophet (P) and said to the, "Do not relate among yourselves the HADITH of the Prophet (P); the HADITH are liable to differ. The variation will be much greater among the people who come after us. I warn you not to narrate the sayings of the Prophet (P). If anyone makes any enquiry regarding them, tell them that the Book of God is sufficient for all purposes", but that one day during his caliphate, he took all of them her and threw them into the fire. Similarly, UMAR passed orders requiring the people not to relate the sayings of the Prophet among themselves, lest the people leave the QUR'AN and stick to the HADITH. People asked Abu HURAIRA whether he used to relate the Prophet's HADITH in the time of UMAR. He replied that had he done so, UMAR would have beaten him mercilessly.

QURAIZA IBN KA'B says that when UMAR sent the armies to Iraq, he accompanied them for some distance, QURAIZA also being in the army. UMAR enquired of them whether they knew why he had accompanied them. They replied that it was in order to honor them. UMAR said, "That might be one reason, but the chief reason is that now you are going to foreign lands where they recite the QUR'AN in a buzzing voice like the bees, I wanted to tell you not to mention the prophet's HADITH to them, lest their recital of the QUR'AN might be interrupted. Stop at the QUR'AN; abstain from relating the HADITH of the Prophet (P). I am with you in this matter". When QURAIZA arrived in Iraq, people requested him to narrate to them the HADITH to the Prophet (P). He replied that UMAR had prohibited him from doing so.

Consider what a keep policy this was, and of what far-reaching consequences. The limits of the Islamic State were expanding far and wide. UMAR took care that the HADITH in favor of Ali or in his appreciation did not spread with it. Notice also the insult to the Prophet that is implied in the order. Was it that those sayings went against the QUR'AN, so that the people's interest in them would make them deviate from it? What was there in them that was injurious to Islam or against the QUR'AN? UMAR'S anxiety shows that there was something he found unpalatable in them, and this could have been nothing other than the appreciation of Ali.

UMAR sent to prison three of the Prophet's companions, viz. IBN MAS'UD, Abu AD-DARDA and AABU MAS'UD AI-ANSARI of violating

this prohibition. An Egyptian writer of repute says that AS-SYYUTI has related an incident in his book called "TANWIR AL-HAWALIK" (being a commentary on Imam MALIK'S "MOTA"), the narration of which is related back to URWA IBN AZ-ZUBAIR, namely that UMAR once intended to have the HADITH reduced to writing. However, he hesitated for a period of one month while considering the matter. Finally he formulated his opinion and told the people that he had come to the conclusion that the HADITH should not be reduced to writing, as "before you many of the peoples of the Book wrote other books along with the Book of God, and eventually abandoned the Book of God and followed those other books". He therefore gave up the idea. IBN S'A'AD has related this incident in his "TABAQAT"

The same writer says: "MU'AWIYA used to exhort the people to adopt the same attitude towards the HADITH of the Prophet (P) as had been adopted by UMAR, who threatened the people not to narrate them. This conclusively proves, among other things, my contention that MU'AWIYA followed the policy of UMAR in all matters, including the control of the HADITH.

Now let us consider UMAR'S own explanation of his conduct, and also the justification of it invented by SHIBLI.

The explanation given by SHIBLI is that UMAR'S object was that false and spurious HADITH should not get currency.

The explanation given by UMAR is that had the HADITH been reduced to writing, the Muslims would have given up the QUR'AN.

Side by side with these explanations, it may be argued that as the orders were general, it is not proven that the prohibition was limited only to the HADITH in favor of Ali. I will proceed to clarify these points.

Let us consider the first explanation. If the intermingling of the spurious with the genuine HADITH caused any misgivings, it could have been very easily provided against. The companions of the Prophet (P) were still alive: a committee of some of the reliable and pious companions could have been formed and entrusted with the task of collecting the authentic sayings of the Prophet (P). A very useful work would have been accomplished, and all the trouble that was taken later in testing the veracity of persons who had not heard the sayings from the lips of the Prophet himself, and in tracing the traditions through the various authorities up to the man who had heard it himself from the Prophet (P), would have been avoided.

Imagine the huge amount of time and labor now spent on this stupendous task that would have been saved. And in spite of all that trouble there is still a large number of fake HADITH mixed with the genuine ones. All this uncertainty would have been avoided. It is impossible to believe that such men of genius as UMAR and ABU BAKR were ignorant of the value and usefulness of the HADITH, for after all, they themselves had recognized its utility when they ordered that the HADITH should be resorted to wherever the provisions of the QUR'AN were not clear. Indeed the whole of the QUR'AN was compiled in this fashion. It is said that the idea of collecting the QUR'AN and reducing it to writing originated with UMAR when he saw that many of the HUFFAZ (that is, persons who had committed the QUR'AN to memory) had fallen in the battle of YAMAMA.



He came to ABU BAKR and urged that unless the QUR'AN was reduced to writing, a major portion of it would be lost when all the HUFFAZ were dead. ZAID IBN THABIT, to whom this duty was entrusted, says that he collected the major portion of the QUR'AN from the chests (i.e. memories) of the HUFFAZ. The HADITH could have been collected in the same manner. But it appeared to them a dangerous thing, as many of the well-known Companions who would have insisted on the inclusion of the genuine traditions in favor of Ali were still living. There were no grounds or excuse, which could have formed a basis for those traditions alone to be avoided.

One month's thoughtful consideration convinced UMAR that there was no way out of the difficulty, and so the idea was given up. Let it be said to the credit of UMAR that he did conceive this magnificent idea, though eventually political considerations prevailed and it had to be given up.

Let us turn now to the second of the above explanations. UMAR refers to certain other peoples of the past who had abandoned the Book of God and taken to other writings. He does not mention expressly what those writings were or who those peoples. The writings could not be the sayings of their prophets, as no prophet would say anything in contradiction to the Book of God. I am unable to find any nation of the past who would answer to the description given by UMAR. He names neither the Prophet (P) nor the Book, not the collection of writings that displaced that Book of God. The sayings of the Prophet (P) interpret and explain the complex portions of the Book of God, and are a useful rather than a harmful thing, and indeed come within the scope of the necessary duty of the Prophet (P).

The Prophet (P) said that any saying that was alleged to be from him, but conflicted with the Book of God, must be rejected as spurious. As there could thus be no conflict, the question of a danger of one being followed to the exclusion of the other did not arise. Also, the suggestion of contradictions would imply an insult to Prophet (P).

In objection to these two explanations we repeat the allegation that the orders of the first two Caliphs prohibiting the circulation of the HADITH were intended to apply only to the HADITH that were in favor of Ali or in his appreciation. We will proceed now to prove it. The mode of their deciding legal cases was that if in their opinion there was no rule or principle in the QUR'AN applicable to the case in hand, they referred to the HADITH of the Prophet (P), and made enquiries from the people in the mosque whether they were aware of any HADITH of the Prophet (P) applicable to the facts of the case, and they decided in accordance with the ruling thus obtained. MAWLAWI SHIBLI says, "Many occasions necessitating the ascertaining of such HADITH arose in the time of ABU BAKR, and therefore there were frequent opportunities for electing numerous HADITH from the Companions; thus rules of drawing the conclusions from and of determining the authenticity of the HADITH were framed. In the time of UMAR, the expansion of the State and the influx of the converts gave rise to hundreds of novel problems. For this reason he made greater efforts to collect the sayings of the prophet (P), so that the problems might be decided in accordance with those sayings. It often

happened that a new problem cropped up for UMAR to deal with. He would then convene an assembly of the Companions and enquire whether anyone knew any HADITH applicable to it. In this way he came to know many HADITH of the Prophet (P). There were many such problems, for example, "TAKBIR" at funerals, ablutions after "JINABAH" (coition), and the "JIZYA" of the MAJUS, in respect of which UMAR thus ascertained the HADITH".

It appeared that during the lifetime of the Prophet (P), UMAR was too preoccupied with other matters to be aware of the HADITH, for such ordinary things as TAKBIR at a funeral or ablution after JINABAH were not new, and occasions for them must have arisen during the lifetime of the Prophet (P). After all, other people knew the HADITH pertaining to these matters. Anyhow, it is evident that the two Caliphs took great pains to ascertain, trace and collect the sayings of the Prophet (P) regarding the problems that arose in deciding cases of all kinds", that is, FIQH (Theology), FARA'ID (Inheritance) etc.... JIZYA, KHARAJ and matters relating to DHIMMIS and converts, and compiled the HADITH covering these. It should also be borne in mind that when UMAR was fatally wounded, and A'ISHA and other people exhorted him to nominate his successor, UMAR mentioned many dead companions of the Prophet (P), e.g. MA'ADH IBN JABAL, KHALID IBN AL-WALID, Abu UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH and SALIM, adding that had any one of them been alive he would have nominated him as his successor, because there were sayings of the Prophet (P) in praise of them. He then mentioned those sayings. Now consider what other kinds of sayings remain to which the orders of prohibition could be taken to apply; obviously the only class of sayings that are outside this circle are those in favor of Ali. Note another thing: when mentioning the HADITH in favor of those persons, he omitted to mention even a single HADITH in favor of Ali, showing by this conduct that the prohibition related only to the HADITH in favor of Ali and to no other HADITH, Speaking of the KHAWARIJ, MAWLAWI ABDAS-SALAM AL-NADAWI writes:

"The KHARJIS accepted only the plain meaning of the QUR'AN; as to the HADITH, these people accepted only those HADITH which had been related and accepted by their own men and friends. Accordingly, they accepted and relied upon only those HADITH, which had been current during the Caliphate of ABU BAKR and UMAR.

This clarifies the situation. It is well known that the KHARJIS were the inveterate foes of Ali. Of course they did not and could not accept or rely upon the HADITH in favor of Ali or in his appreciation; yet they accepted and relied upon all those HADITH, which had been current during the Caliphate of ABU BAKR and UMAR. The obvious conclusion is that the HADITH in favor of Ali were not allowed currency during the Caliphate of ABU BAKR and UMAR, and that they had been expressly prohibited by those Caliphs. From the writing quoted above, it is proven that the KHAWARIJ, who were the bitterest enemies of Ali, were the friends of the first two Caliphs. The friend of one's foe is never one's friend, and therefore it is proven that the first two Caliphs were the opponents of Ali.



### **The Third and Fourth Stages:**

In his commentary on NAHJ AL-BALAGHA, IBN ABI AL-HADID writes:

"ABU AL-HASSAN ALI IBN ABI SAIF ED-DINE (AL-MADA'INI) writes in his "KITAB AL-HADITH" that MU'AWIYA circulated a letter to all his governors after the year of the JAMA'A (that is, after the peace with AL-HASSAN saying that he was withdrawing his protection from everyone who related anything or any HADITH in praise of Ali or his children. The result was that in every town and from every pulpit, the speakers began to curse Ali and his children, to speak ill of them and show enmity towards them. The people of KUFA suffered the greatest harassment in this connection, for there were many SHI'AS of Ali in that town. For this reason MU'AWIYA appointed ZIYAD son of SUMMYYA to the governorship of that town, also adding Basra to it.

ZIYAD knew each and every SHI'A because he had been one of them during the time of Ali. He therefore turned them up from under every stone and in every corner and killed them. He cut off their hands and feet, blinded them, and crucified them on the branches of trees. He banished them from Iraq. The result was that not a single SHI'A survived. MU'AWIYA then wrote to all his governors telling them not to accept the evidence of any SHI'A of Ali or his children. He asked them to shower their favors on the friends and followers of UTHMAN, and to bestow rewards and positions of distinction on those who related HADITH in praise of UTHMAN, adding "write for me the HADITH which they thus relate in praise of UTHMAN, together with the particulars of the name and address of the narrators of those HADITH, and also the names of their parents and relatives". The governors all obeyed these orders with the result that the people fabricated numerous HADITH in praise of UTHMAN, knowing that MU'AWIYA would give rewards for this in the shape of money, dresses and JAGIRS, as incentive used to circulate these false HADITH among the people. Every town became full of such men and their HADITH, and the people inclined towards worldly things. Any mean or lowly person who went to MU'AWIYA and related false HADITH in favor of UTHMAN was handsomely rewarded. MU'AWIYA would note down his name, and give him a position of importance. A long period passed in this manner.

Then MU'AWIYA wrote a letter to his governors saying "Verily, numerous HADITH have sprung up in every town and place in favor of UTHMAN, and have been publicized in every corner of the land. Now, when this letter of mine reaches you, you should induce the people to relate the HADITH in praise of the first two Caliphs and the Companions. If you hear any HADITH in praise of Ali, you should coin a similar HADITH in favor of the first two Caliphs and the Companions, and send it to me, as this is very pleasing to me and cooling to my eyes, and it will break the arguments of the SHI'A. This will be more bitter to them than the HADITH in favor of UTHMAN". These letters of MU'AWIYA were read out to the people.

The result was that many false HADITH without foundation were fabricated in praise of the first two Caliphs and the Companions. The people

acted to diffuse these false HADITH, which were read from the pulpits. They were given to the schoolmasters to teach to their pulpits and boys, and they were learnt by heart as the QUR'AN was learnt. These teachers also taught these spurious HADITH to their wives, daughters and servants. These things went on, as people passed their lives, for a long time. After that, MU'AWIYA wrote a letter to his governors and AMILS in all the towns to the effect that if it were proved by evidence against any person that he loved Ali and his children, they were to remove his name at once from the registers of the Office, withhold his maintenance, and stop anything that was being paid to him. To emphasize these orders he sent another letter to them, saying that "If the offence of loving Ali and his children is proved against any person, then ruin him and demolish his house, and do the same to those who love him". This misfortune chiefly befell Iraq, and especially KUFA. Things came to such a pass that when a SHI'A of Ali came to the house of one in whom he had full confidence, and opened his heart to him; he still had to fear his servants and slaves. And he did not talk even to him until he had put him under solemn oath to keep it secret. Consequently, numerous false HADITH in favor of the first two Caliphs and the Companions came into existence, and many HADITH were coined to injure the reputation of Ali. All the QADIS, theologians and officials followed the same path. The persons who most readily and frequently busied themselves in fabricating false HADITH were the recites of the QUR'AN, those who professed piety for show, and those poor people who paraded their piety in prayers and worship for appearance. Having succeeded in impressing the people with their piety, prayers and professions of faith, they got down to forging false HADITH, so that by means of those HADITH they might reap the benefit from their rulers and gain influence and position by associating with them, and on account of this association, accumulate riches and acquire lands and house. Time rolled on in this matter, till at last these HADITH came to the knowledge of genuinely pious men who abhorred falsehood, but who accepted these HADITH in the belief that they were genuine. Had they known them to be false, they would never have accepted them and would never have related them. Matters remained in this condition until Imam Ali AL-HASSAN son of Imam Ali died. After his death, this calamity increased in intensity and extent until there was no SHI'A who did not go in fear of being killed or banished.... (The author goes on to say that this calamity increased still more after the martyrdom of Imam AL-HUSSAIN in the time of ABD AL-MALIK and AL-HAJJAJ IBN YUSUF) ... Indeed, IBN URFA alias NAFTAWAYH, who is a very learned man in HADITH, records similar events in his "History". IBN URFA says that many false HADITH were fabricated in the time of BANU OMAYYA in favor of the first three Caliphs and the Companions, for the purpose of acquiring influence with the OMAYYAD rulers, who thought that by means of these false HADITH they were humbling to dust the BANU HASHIM.

Now the reason becomes all the more clear why the first rulers to succeed the Prophet (P) tried to elevate BANU OMAYYA and create a high position for them. Syria was permanently given to them as a stepping-stone to the Caliphate, which eventually came to them. The policy of those who

had ousted Ali was carried through by the OMAYYAD to its logical conclusion, and this policy is clearly discernible in the orders of BANU OMAYYA. We have already learnt that MU'AWIYA used to say to his people that they should adopt the same attitude to the HADITH as had been adopted by UMAR. It is thus beyond all doubt that MU'AWIYA adopted the policy of UMAR with regard to the HADITH.

Before proceeding further we must introduce our readers to the above-quoted persons through whom we have received this very important and pertinent information relating to the enquiry in hand, namely IBN ABI AL-HADID along with those whom he in turn quotes, IBN URFA ALIAS NAFTAWAYH, and SH. ABUL HASAN MADAINI.

IBN ABI AL-HADID: by religion he was a Sunni, being a MO'TAZILI. The MO'TAZILAS are a branch of the Sunnis from whom they differ only in minor points of theology. But they are at one with the Sunnis on the question of the Caliphate. (On this subject the reader is referred to page 3 of the book entitled "AQA'ID AL-ISLAM" by the famous Sunni writer SH. ABDU MOHAMMAD ABD AL-HAQ of DELHI, who has written a commentary on the QUR'AN; he says that the SHI'AS and the MO'TAZILAS differ on the question of IMAMA and Caliphate). The famous Muslim historian of India, SAYYID AMIR ALI, was also a MO'TAZILAS. The best evidence of their beliefs is their own books. On page 3 of the first volume of his "Commentary", IBN ABI AL-HADID describes the religion of the MO'TAZILAS. He says: "In the matter of the Caliphate, we MO'TAZILAS maintain that ABU BAKR was the rightful Caliph, that his election was valid, that the Prophet (P) did not designate anyone as his Caliph, and that the UMMA has the right and title to choose their own Caliph". He goes on to say that all the sects of the MO'TAZILAS are unanimous on this point. I need not mention the other details, which he relates of their religion. (On pages 46 and 52 of the same book he reiterates his beliefs and defends them by argument). Similarly SAYYID AMIR ALI, who is a MO'TAZILAS, upholds the election of ABU BAKR and the nomination of UMAR and regards them both as the rightful Caliphs.

(See his "History of Saracens"). That he was a MO'TAZILA is evident from his book entitled "The Spirit of Islam". KAMALUDDIN RAZZAQ BIN AHMAD BIN MOHAMMAD BIN ABI AL-MOGHAZILI has greatly extolled the theological learning of IBN ABI AL-HADID in his book entitled "MAJAMI AL-ADAB"; and FAZAL BIN ROZBAHAH cites him in support of his arguments against the SHI'AS. It is accepted beyond doubt that the MO'TAZILAS are included among the Sunnis. After all, IBN ABI AL-HADID copies extracts from two writers. He would not copy them incorrectly; it was an age of learning, and for the sake of his own reputation he could not have done that.

IBN URFA alias NAFTAWAYH: JALALUDIN AS-SAYYUTI says, "IBRAHIM BIN MUHAMMAD BIN URFA BIN SULAIMAN bin MOGHIRA BIN HABIB, called NAFTAWAYH on account of his color resembling "NAFT", a black substance, was learned in Arabic language and grammar and HADITH, which he learnt from THALIB and MUBRAD. He was very courteous, and of good morals and manners. He was very truthful

in relating the HADITH, remembered the QUR'AN well and was well versed in its interpretation; he was a good theologian, reliable in HADITH and TARIKH, and knew the biographies of great and learned men. He taught the QUR'AN or fifty years".

ABU AL-HASSAN AL-MADA'INI ABU SAID AL-SAMAMI writes, "ABU AL-HASSAN AL-MADA'INI, MAWLA of ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN SUMRA AL-QARASHI, was a resident of BASRAH. He then came to reside at Medina, and thence went to Baghdad where he lived until his death. He wrote many books. ZUBAIR BIN BAKR, AHMAD BIN KHSIMA and HARITH BIN ABI UTHMAN accepted the HADITH from him. YAHYA BIN MU'IN says that he took extracts from the books of AL-MADAINI many a time. ABU ABBAS used to say that whoever wished to learn History of Islam must study the book of AL-MADA'INI. HARITH BIN ABI UTHMAN says that ABU AL-HASSAN kept fast every day continuously for the last thirty years of his life. He lived for about a hundred years, and died in the month of DHUL QIDA in the year 224 A.H. He was well versed in the history of men in general and of Arabia in particular. He knew their pedigrees, was well versed in the knowledge of wars and victories, and was truthful in relating the HADITH.

We now look at another source. Abu UTHMAN AL-JAHIZ, who was one of the bitterest enemies of Ali, wrote a book called "KITAB AL-UTHMANIYA". It was written with the solitary object of vilifying Ali. A Sunni learned man, ABU JA'FAR AL-ASKARI, wrote a book in its refutation called "NAQD AL-UTHMANIYA", in which he says:

"Had not ignorance and a love of blindly following their forefathers taken possession of the people, we would not have felt the necessity of confuting book called UTHMANIYA. Everybody knows that the persons having views and beliefs similar to those of the author of UTHMANIYA were in power and authority, and everybody has a knowledge of the great influence exercised so easily, so they have no need to conceal their opinions. Everybody who related HADITH in praise of Abu BAKR used to be rewarded and honored: these were the orders of BANU Omayya. The traditions, therefore, fabricated all sorts of HADITH in praise of the first three Caliphs and the Companions and concealed the HADITH in favor of Ali and his children so that they might receive rewards and honors. Pressure was put on the people to curse Ali and his children from the pulpits. The ALIDS were small in number and their enemies were legions, yet always the blood of the ALIDS kept dripping from the swords of their enemies. They were killed and imprisoned; they fled hither and thither for fear of their enemies; they were dishonored and lived in constant dread of their enemies. By means of rewards and threats of severe punishment the theologians, traditionalists, historians and public lecturers were prevented from relating any of the virtues or praises of Ali and his children; no one was allowed to visit them.

To such an extent had the traditionalists been subjected to the intimidation of the enemies of Ali and his children that whenever they had to relate a HADITH, one of the narrators of which was Ali, they dared not mention his name explicitly, but merely spoke in hints, using such

expressions as "one of the QURAISH said that..."; they would never mention Ali by name. The result of all this is that all parties has combined together to conceal or explain away the virtues of Ali. This is the reason why the KHAWARIJ and the partisans of UTHMAN managed to get the opportunity to vilify Ali. But persons having the knowledge know the real facts.

The opponents of Ali deny the HADITH, which extol his virtues. But those HADITH which are so well known and so frequently recited that they cannot deny them, they try instead to explain away. Sometimes they give such an absurd interpretation that it is at once seen through; sometimes they try to minimize those virtues. But in spite of all these efforts, the virtues of Ali still get currency, and like Divine light they are diffused throughout the world. All of us know that MU'AWIYA and YAZID, and BANU MARWAN after them in this long period of eighty years, spared no pains to forcibly make the people curse Ali from the pulpits and conceal his virtues. As is known, when any king started a new religion or set down any novel theory, he would put all possible pressure and use every form of compulsion to make the people accept no religion or theory other than his own.

For instance, HAJJAJ IBN YUSUF compelled people to adopt the QUR'AN collected by UTHMAN and abandon the reading (QIRA'AH) of ABDALLAH IBN MAS'UD and UBBAY IBN KA'AB. In the same way one can imagine the barbarities that were committed by him and the tyrants of BANU MARWAN and BANU OMAYYA on the SHI'AS of Ali and his children. His rule continued for about twenty years, and by the time he died the people of Iraq had all agreed on the QUR'AN of UTHMAN. This is because their forefathers had known only the version that their teachers had taught them. Now they know of no other (QIRA'AH) than that of UTHMAN. The result is that if the (QIRA'AH) of IBN MAS'UD or UBBAY were to be read out to them, they would be quite strangers to it. This is due to the fact that they developed an attachment to this QUR'AN, and did not know the others.

Similarly in the matter of ignoring the worth and lowering the position and dignity of Ali and his children and cursing them, terror, tyranny, force and compulsion had complete control of the people, and fear and horror took complete possession of them during the long period of this rule. As time passed on they all lost sight of the virtues of Ali, and their respect for him in their hearts entirely ebbed away, with the result that the cursing of Ali came to have the authority of a SNNA with them, which they were under an obligation to follow. The fact is that HAJJAJ and those who had appointed him, ABD AL-MALIK and AL-WALID, and those of the OMAAYAD tyrants who had preceded them, were all diabolically determined to suppress the HADITH which were in favor of Ali, his children and his SHI'AS, and to conceal their virtues and deprive them of the influence and respect which they had acquired. Their zeal in this respect was greater than their zeal in the matter of the QUR'AN, as no danger to their State could be apprehended from the variation in the QIRA'AT. Any circulation of the HADITH in favor of Ali and his children, and any public knowledge of their virtues, tended to ruin their kingdom. They therefore

made strenuous efforts to throw a veil over the rights and virtues of Ali and his children, and compelled the people to conceal the HADITH in praise of them. But God wished that the light of Ali and his children should cover the world, and that their love should take root in the hearts of the people, and their name and fame reach the four corners of the world, and that their rights, virtues, and the HADITH in their favor should be made known to all, so that all should know their real worth and value. Thus, BANU OMAYYAD tried to lower their dignity; but it only heightened. They wanted to suppress their name; but it expanded and filled the whole world with its fragrance. The means by which they wanted to condemn them to lasting damnation became the cause of their celebrity. The result was that the reputation and virtues of Ali and his children and the HADITH in their praise, have reached us. Imam Ali's merits and virtues are of such a high order that they are beyond the capacity of any who would seek to emulate him. So strong and drastic were the measures that had been taken to suppress them that had they not been of such a very high order, and had their reputation not spread far and wide in the Prophet's time, not a single virtue of Imam Ali would have been known to us".

ABU JA'FA AL-ASKARI was a very famous MO'TAZILA of Baghdad noted for his learning, uprightness and truthfulness, and he wrote many books, IBN ABI AL-HADID greatly extols him, and ABD AL-JABIR AL-MOTAZILI, who is the leader of the SUNNIS in their polemical battle with the SHI'AS, speaks very highly of him.

There are numerous SHI'A writers who describe, in the most pathetic terms, the pitiable condition in which the SHI'AS passed their lives during the OMAYYAD rule and a major portion of the ABBASSID period. I would refer to one of them only, ABU BAKR AL-KHAWARIZMI. But I will not give any extract from his writing, as I have made it a point to base my arguments on the writings of the Sunnis only. It is therefore evident that under these circumstances, when even genuine HADITH in favor of Ali and his children had been proscribed and were certain to bring untold misery in their train, no one would think of fabricating false HADITH in his favor or singing his praises. But it is a well-known fact that many HADITH were forged at that time. The only conclusion is that they must have been fabricated in favor of the first three Caliphs and the Companions. If any doubt still lurks in the mind of anyone, it should be removed by the following writing of MAWLAWI SHIBLI:

"Imagine ABU NA'IM, AL-KHATAB AL-BAGHDADI, IBN ASAKRI, HAFIZ ABD AL-GHANI and others are considered Imams in the art of compiling HADITH. But even they rely on forged HADITH in favor of the Caliph and the Companions without any hesitation... Among the outside influences, which affect the compilation of History and HADITH, the greatest is that of the State. The HADITH were collected and compiled in the time of BANU OMAYYA who, for full ninety years from SINDH to Asia Minor and Spain, disgraced the children of FATIMA and on every Friday in the principle mosques caused curses on Ali to be uttered publicly from the pulpits. But it will always be a matter of pride to the Muslims that their pen never bowed to the State.



The rustle was that hundreds of false HADITH were coined in praise of MU'AWIYA and others. In the time of the ABBASSIDS, prophecies foretelling the future of every king by name were entered in the books of HADITH, but what was the result? During that very period, the traditionalists openly declared that they were all false HADITH. Today the books of HADITH do not contain that rubbish; and BANU OMAYYA and BANU ABBAS who were considered the "shadows of God on earth" and the successors of the Prophet (P), are seen in their proper position and true proportions.

From this testimony the following facts are proved:

The HADITH and the History were collected and compiled in the time and under the direct influence of BANU OMAYYA and BANU ABBAS kings. These kings used their influence to have false HADITH forged in praise of the first three Caliphs and Companions, and also in their own favor. These ruling dynasties were the enemies of Imam Ali and his children.

They used their influence on the collection and compilation of History and HADITH.

The obvious conclusion is that they were so framed as to be against Imam Ali on all the points of controversy between them.

In the writing quoted above, MAWLAWI SHIBLI, who is more of a religious writer than a historian trying to mould history to fit in with his religious dogmas, anticipates the objection as to the authenticity of the HADITH and the History, as the same were compiled under the instructions and influence of the OMAYYAD and ABBASSID kings who were the enemies of Ali and his progeny, and meets it by adding his parenthesis extolling the courage of the Muslim writers. We shall soon have the occasion to examine this courage more closely, but even this writing exposes it by observing studied silence with regard to the disputed points. Being fully aware of the fact that no instances of this courage are available with regard to the HADITH in favor of the first three Caliphs and the Companions, he adopts a convenient silence on this point, and goes on to mention the HADITH on the other subjects, for example prophecies, "shadow of God", and the OMAYYAD and ABBASSID kings, and with them his parenthesis ends. There is no doubt that the genuineness of the HADITH relating to these and other matters, for example the created nature of the QUR'AN, freedom of the will etc.

has been disputed by many traditionalists. But the HADITH relating to matters that go to the root of their case against the SHI'AS were never questioned, and have been accepted by all the SUNNIS as formed and shaped by the OMAYYAS excepting of course those that went to the extent of offending against common sense. But the criticism of even these HADITH was not undertaken in the time of the OMAYYAS it came long after that. Those HADITH which went to the root of major events on which the edifice of their religion stands, were never questioned. As to the HADITH in praise of MU'AWIYA and other OMAYYAD and ABBASSID kings, there are two sets of writers, one of which regards them as genuine, and the other as forged.

(See "TARIKH AL-KHULAFÄ by AS-SAYYUTI and "TARIKH AL-FIQH" by ABD AL-SALAM AL-NADAWI). The former class of writers have adopted all the rubbish that has been collected or spoken by anyone in favor of these kings and the first three Caliphs. And what about the suppression of the HADITH in favor of Ali and his children? MAWLAWI SHIBLI observes a convenient silence on this point. These AHADITH were allowed to remain hidden from the public view. Only such of them as, on account of their wide publicity, could not be suppressed have found their way into the books of the SUNNI writers.

We have the authority of MAWLAWI SHIBLI on the very important point that the History and HADITH were collected and compiled for the first time under the instructions of MU'AWIYA. But the matter is so important and of such far-reaching consequences that we think it proper to mention it in detail. The sources of information on all questions in Islam are three viz. The QUR'AN, HADITH, and History. There is no dispute about the provisions of the Holy QUR'AN; the dispute arises only in respect of its interpretation, and it is to the interpretation of the Holy QUR'AN alone that all the numerous sects, said to be seventy-three in number, appeal as the basis of their cult.

All interpretations are, of course, traced to the Prophet (P), and the interpretation put on the different verses of the QUR'AN by the Prophet are known only through the HADITH. Thus, so far as disputed questions in Islam are concerned, the sources of their solution or information are two, viz. HADITH and History. It is also an undoubted fact that from the very beginning, the Islamic Nation has been divided into two factions, SUNNIS and SHI'AS, and that the division is on the question of the succession to Prophet (P). The other undoubted fact which we have just mentioned is that many HADITH were coined under threat of punishment and promise of reward from the State. As in an enquiry into which of these two parties to favor and support there is likelihood, nay certainty, of the HADITH being forged, the following questions are relevant:

At what time in the history of the nation and under whose order and influence the collection and compilation of HADITH and History was undertaken. For or against which of the two parties of that age those domineering personages were.

To which party the compilers belonged.

The following quotations from SHIBLI (in English translation) will clarify all these points. He says:

"Though HADITH and FIQH were promulgated to a considerable extent in the time of (AL-KHULAFÄ' AR-RASHIDIN) and the Companions, and many centers of learning and been established, yet all of its was by word of mouth only. But the OMAYYAD kings ordered the 'ULAMA' to reduce it to writing. In "JAMA'BAYAN- AL-ILM", QADI ABDAL BAR has quoted Imam ZAHRI' as saying "we loathed to confine learning within the pen, until the rulers compelled us to do so".

First of all, MU'AWIYA sent for UBAID IBN SHARRIYA from YEMEN, and got him to prepare the history of the ancients. Its name was "AKHBAR AL-MAHDI". After him, ABDAL MALIK IBN MARWAN,



who ascended the throne in A.H. 65 (684 A.C.), ordered the ULAMA to write books on every art. He commanded SA'ID IBN JUBAIR, who was the most learned man of the age, to write a commentary on the QUR'AN. He therefore wrote the commentary as ordered and sent it to the king, who kept it in the Royal Library, in fact the commentary thought to be by ATA' IBN DINAR is really that commentary; ATA' had got it from the Royal Library, and published it in his own name".

The heading under which this extract appears runs as follows:

"The Collection and Compilation of Learning Commenced at the Instigation of the Rulers". MAWLAWI SHIBLI goes on to say:

"During this time, Imam ZAHRI wrote a voluminous book on the wars of the Prophet (P). As Imam SUHELI says in "RAWD-AL-ANF", this was the first book on the subject. Imam ZAHRI was the most learned man of the time. No one equaled him in FIQH and HADITH. He was the SHAIKH of IMAM BUKHARI. In collecting the HADITH he took great pains. He would go to the house of all the ANSAR in Medina and would interrogate young and old, men and women, anyone who was available for eliciting the sayings of the life of the Prophet (P), and then write them down. He was a QURAISHI, and was born in A.H. 50 (670 A.C.). He had met many Companions. He became attached to the DARBAR of ABDAL MALIK IBN MARWAN who honored him greatly. It must be particularly remembered that the said Imam was connected with the DARBAR of the kings, and was among their closest friends; the education of MARWAN'S children was entrusted to him. He died in A.H. 124.

From among the pupils of ZAHRI, two persons have attained a high reputation in the art of writing history, and it is with these two persons that this art ends. They are MUSA IBN UQBA and MUHAMMAD IBN ISHAQ. MUSA IBN UQBA was a slave of the family of ZUBAIR. He had known ABDALLAH IBN AMR; Imam MALIK was his pupil in this art. Imam MALIK was full of praise for him. MUSA'S book is not extant today but it had been in circulation a long time, and is frequently referred to in the books of History.

MUHAMMAD IBN ISHAQ acquired great renown in the art of writing history. He is popularly known as TABE'I. He had known many of the companions of the Prophet and attained the highest pinnacle of learning in HADITH. There was a DARBAN sentinel at the door of Imam ZAHRI so that no one should come in without permission; but MUHAMMAD IBN ISHAQ had full permission to enter at any time he wished.

The book of MUHAMMAD IBN ISHAQ became very popular, and many famous traditionalists copied it. IBN HISHAM prepared an abridged edition of this book; it is known as the "SIRAT IBN HISHAM". IBN HISHAM'S name is ABDAL MALIK. He was a very pious and famous historian and traditionalist. He belonged to the tribe of HIMYAR. He died in A.H. 213 (828 A.C.). In his biography of ABU HANIFA, named "SURAT AL-NO'MAN", MAWLAWI SHIBLI says:

"First of all, imam ZAHRI prepared a collection of HADITH under the orders of the OMAYYAD ruler of the time. Copies of this collection were sent by the ruler to all the Islamic countries.

From that time on, this collection of HADITH became common".

This imam ZAHRI was among the enemies of Ali. Note the manner in which he collected the HADITH. He went to the house of every ANSAR in Medina for this purpose, but he studiously avoided the children of the Prophet (P). From these extracts, the following points are proved without doubt: The interpretations of the QUR'AN, HADITH and History were written, collected and compiled under the orders of the OMAYYAD kings. All those books were written in accordance with the policy of the State and were kept in the State Library. Imam ZAHRI was connected with the Royal DARBARS and was their trusted companion.

Imam ZAHRI was the father of HADITH, History and the art of the interpretation of the QUR'AN. He lived with royal pomp and show.

HISHAM IBN ABDAL MALIK, the OMAYYAD king, entrusted the education of his sons to Imam ZAHRI. Imam ZAHRI, therefore, could not write anything, which would offend or be displeasing to his royal patrons. Clearly Imam ZAHRI was not among those courageous ULAMA who, in the opinion of SHIBLI, could resist the illegal, unlawful and unjust orders of the kings, for the obvious reason that if he had been plucky enough in the matter, the OMAYYAD kings would not have placed their confidence in him and would not have entrusted their children's education to him.

It is an admitted fact, even by SHIBLI himself, that MU'AWIYA and his successors ordered the fabrication of false HADITH in praise of the first three caliphs and the companions, and against Ali and his children. 10. The writings of Imam ZAHRI were in accordance with the taste of these OMAYYAD tyrants, and it therefore follows that Imam ZAHRI fabricated false HADITH or connived in and supported their fabrication.

11. Imam ZAHRI was the SHAIKH, and therefore the model, of IMAM BUKHARI, to be copied and followed.

12. BUKHARI'S "SAHIH" is therefore a political composition full of false HADITH against the SHI'AS of Ali.

13. Imam ZAHRI and his pupils, MUHAMMAD IBN MUSA, are the fathers of Islamic History and HADITH, and the models for those who came after them; the kind of "offspring" these "fathers" must have begotten can well be imagined, as also the ensuing generations. It is certain that their books are the source of all books of HADITH and History that came after them.

14. All the books of HADITH and History written by the SUNNIS must, therefore, be rejected as unreliable so far as the moot and controversial points between the SUNNIS and the SHI'AS are concerned.

15. It is therefore no wonder that in these books there is not to be found any statement showing that the Prophet (P) designated Imam Ali as his successor.

16. This omission must, therefore, be entirely ignored.

## **Chapter Four: Why The Theory Of Non-Appointment Is Highly Improbable and Entirely Illogical**

One fact, which cuts to the root of the Theory of Non-appointment, is that its advocates are unable to find any sensible explanation or show any reasonable grounds for why the Prophet (P) should have adopted this attitude of "non-cooperation", so to speak, towards this very important problem of the Caliphate. Without this explanation, no intelligible history of the Caliphate can be written. In fact, a true conception and thorough understanding of the History of Islam and the Muslim peoples is absolutely impossible without a correct answer to this very essential question.

The entire course of Islamic History, for good or for bad, was shaped by the way in which this problem was handled after the death of the Prophet (P). The innumerable wars and massacres which throughout the long period of Islamic rule almost continuously drenched the Muslim world with blood and eventually brought it to a sad close, and the sighs and sorrows of countless Muslim widows and orphans that saddened the heart of man and brought the wrath of God upon erring humanity, can be traced directly, with not a single "missing link", to the wrong and sinful manner in which this problem was approached on the death of the Prophet (P), I say sinful, because it implied a contumacious disregard of the orders and wishes of the Prophet (P), implicit obedience to which had been enjoined by the QUR'AN. On account of this, Islamic History became a long tragedy of errors, from the horrible massacre of KARBALA' to the more recent times of AURANGZEBE whom a misguided zeal to serve his religion induced to invade the SHI'A States of DECCAN, and thus clear the way right up to Delhi for the pagan MARAHATTAS. How the succession to the state acquired by Muhammad was to be regulated was the question. They rejected the principle of selection or nomination as not having been ordered by the Prophet (P); but at the same time they could not formulate any rules of their own. Sometimes the nomination of one man, sometimes the nomination of six candidates, out of whom the candidates themselves were to select one man -a queer method of succession- but no definite rule was fixed. The organizers of the opposition to the Prophet were afraid of an open and free election; UMAR said publicly that the manner in which ABU BAKR was elected to the Caliphate was a calamity from whose evil effects God saved the Muslims; he ordered that no one in future should attempt that method, and in the event that anyone did, both he and his candidate would be beheaded. From all the different methods adopted, only one principle seems to emerge, and that is "Get your man in by any means you can". Obviously the result was reversion to the Rule of Might, which destroyed the spirit of Islam. Any rational human being would realize that the Theory of Non-appointment is untenable, unreasonable and illogical, and this will be apparent when we consider the following points:

There is no explanation of, nor reasonable grounds for the silence of the Prophet regarding the Caliphate.

There is nothing in the QUR'AN requiring the Prophet to observe this silence.

The first Caliph nominated UMAR as his successor, and UMAR nominated six persons as the only allowable candidates, from amongst whom one candidate was to be selected as the Caliph by those candidates themselves. As affirmed by the first two Caliphs, they were anxious to nominate their successors for two reasons, viz. In the interests of Islam, and to guard against confusion and commotion, the nomination of their successors was absolutely essential; They would have to answer before God as to what arrangement they had made for the leadership of the UMMAH after them, and also as to the personality of the Caliph they had appointed.

Was not the Prophet then also aware of this immediate necessity and of his liability to answer before God? The people themselves never demanded the right to appoint the Caliph; on the other hand, they would implore the dying Caliph to nominate his successor.

Did the constitution of the theocratic state founded by the Prophet demand that he should not select or nominate his successor, or that he should put a seal on his lips on this point? There was no precedent of a Prophet keeping silence on this point. On the contrary, every one of them nominated his own son or relative as his successor.

Did the Prophet consider each and every one of his followers to be equal in the qualifications required of his successor, and thus not mind which of them happened to step into his place? Was there no likelihood of an undesirable person installing himself in power and elbowing out, by fair means or foul, a more fit and deserving person?

10 Were the people fit and qualified to choose the Caliph by election?

11 In view of the Prophet's claim that he was the last messenger of God to man, and that Islam was to continue till the end of the world, does it stand to reason that he would not give even a passing thought to the question of the succession? 12 In view of the fact that the Prophet claimed to have direct communion with God, is not this omission unbelievable? I will now expand on most of the above points in turn.

### **Point (1): No Reasonable Grounds for the Prophet's Silence:**

Mr. S. KHUDA BAKHSH, a famous SUNNI historian, thinks, that he has discovered the reason. He says "Muhammad, who issued laws and directions regarding quite unimportant questions and ceremonies, maintained as regards the constitution of the state the profoundest silence. The unbiased reader can scarcely find the smallest hint in the QUR'AN as to how the newly founded Islamic Empire was to be governed after his death. Not only as an inspired Prophet did Muhammad fail to give any direction as to the most important branch of the law of the constitution, but even as a temporal ruler he made no arrangement as to be governed. No other reason for this silence can be suggested or accepted than his desire to avoid all reference to his death".

S. KHUDA BAKHSH is a staunch SUNNI historian, and he has said many nasty things about the SHI'AS. His well considered opinions quoted

above are, therefore, of immense value in the present enquiry, and they conclusively prove many important points. I invite attention to the following: There is not the smallest hint the QUR'AN that democracy is favored by Islam. This knocks the bottom out of the whole controversy. To say that all persons are equal in the eyes of Islamic law is one thing, and it is true; but to say that the constitution of the Islamic State is democratic is another, and there is no authority for it.

The Prophet (P) maintained (as believed by the majority section) the profoundest silence about the important question of the Caliphate. The question of the succession to the Prophet was the most important branch of the Islamic law of the constitution.

The "profoundest silence" of the Prophet on this most important branch of the law of the constitution is inexplicable, incomprehensible, unintelligible, and inconceivable from every point of view except the one discovered by the writer. The sole reason discovered by the writer is that Muhammad desired to avoid all reference to his death.

It is an undeniable fact, and is evident from the writing quoted above, that no other explanation has ever offered by any other writer and that none else is possible. As to the explanation offered by Mr. S. KHUDA BAKHSH, it is obvious that it cannot hold water for a single moment. The QUR'AN expressly states that Muhammad will die like other prophets that have gone before him, that he is subject to all the physical laws just like any man, and that he will die as other Prophets before him have died. This takes him out of the category of the one or two Prophets who are believed to be still alive (e.g. ISA, KHIDR). The final illness of the prophet extended over a period of no less than fourteen days.

Is it possible that during all this time he was concealing his coming end from his companions, or was it even possible to so conceal it, especially in view of the fact that his house was open day and night for the anxious visitors? The Muslims of those days were constant readers of the QUR'AN, some of them reading it daily from cover to cover. Thus, the fact of Muhammad's certain death being mentioned in the QUR'AN meant that it must have been constantly before the Muslim's eyes. How could reference to it be avoided? And what could be the object of avoiding reference to it? Had he ever claimed that he was immortal? In his last speech to the congregation he expressly informed them that he was leaving them for his eternal abode.

During his journey to and from MAKKA to perform his last Hajj in February 632 A.C., he unequivocally told the audience on more than one occasion that it was his last Hajj and that he would soon die. On the return journey at KHUM he collected almost the whole of his UMMA and expressly said, "I am soon to respond to Call from on High, and will be leaving you shortly. I am leaving behind two precious things, namely the QUR'AN and my children. You shall never go astray so long as you follow them both".

Gibbon gives an account of the Prophet's end in these words:

"As soon as he was conscious of his danger, he edified his brethren by the humility of his virtue of penitence". "If there be any man" said the

apostle from the pulpit, "whom I have unjustly scourged, I submit my own back to the lash of retaliation. Have I aspersed the reputation of a Muslim? Let him proclaim my faults in the face of the congregation. Has anyone been despoiled of his goods? The little I possess shall compensate the principal and interest of the debt". "Yes" replied a voice from the crowd, "I am entitled to three drams of silver". Muhammad heard the complaint, satisfied the demand and thanked the creditor for accusing him in this world rather than at the Day of Judgment. He beheld with temperate firmness the approach of death, enfranchised his slaves (seventeen men, as they are named, and eleven women), minutely directed the order of his funeral and moderated the lamentations of his weeping friends, on whom he bestowed the benediction of peace".

It is therefore patent that the explanation for the Prophet's "profoundest silence", and do not go beyond mentioning it. This one fact alone is sufficient to take the wind out of the sails of this theory!

### **Point (2): Nothing in the QUR'AN Requiring the Prophet's silence:**

This point is amply proved by the statement of MR. S. KHUDA BAKHSH quoted above. It is also obvious to any careful reader of the QUR'AN. On the other hand, there are clear indications in it to the contrary. From the instances of the previous Prophets cited in the QUR'AN, it is evident that the KHALIFA or Imam, meaning ruler, is always designated by the Prophets in compliance with divine injunction. IBRAHIM was expressly appointed an Imam by God Himself, and for his progeny it was ruled that this office would not be given to those of them who were ZALEMIN. This word is fully defined and illustrated in the QUR'AN. Those who usurp the rights of others are ZALEMIN, as well as those who wrongfully assign the attributes of God to others whom they worship as gods. David was made a KHALIFA by God, and not by the people.

The Israelites asked their Prophet SAMU'IL to appoint a king over them. SAMU'IL informed them that God had appointed TALUT as their king. They objected to his appointment on the grounds that he was not as wealthy as they, and said that it was they therefore who were better fitted to exercise authority. SAMU'IL silenced them by saying that God had chosen him above them and had gifted him abundantly with knowledge and bodily strength. Similarly, God gifted Adam with the KHALIFA, silencing the angels, who had protested, with the reply that Adam had been endowed with more knowledge than they.

The Holy QUR'AN makes it quite clear that no one can be a ruler in the theocracy of Islam unless he has been gifted with this peculiar knowledge as a precondition. We have seen some instances above; here are some others. In respect of all the Prophets the QUR'AN says: "We gifted all of them with knowledge and right judgment". Prophet ISA is thus addressed: "I taught thee the Book and wisdom, the Law and the Gospel". "Verily we gifted David and Solomon with knowledge".

It was the one who had been given some of the knowledge of the Book who undertook to bring the throne of BALQIS in the twinkling of an eye.



(Here the reference is to ASIF IBN BARKHIYA, the Vizier of Solomon). This knowledge of the Book is given only to those whom God selects out of His creatures. In respect of Moses and Aaron, the QUR'AN says; "To both of them we gave (knowledge of) the Book which makes things quite clear".

Thus it is obvious that no one can be a Prophet or a Prophet's KHALIFA (successor) unless he is given this knowledge of the Book. It is plain that this condition is just as necessary for the KHALIFA carries on the same kind of word as the Prophet had been doing. In fact, KHALIFA involves something of NUBBUWWA (Prophet-hood). MAWLAWI SHIBLI says, "The imamate contains something of the NUBBUWWA, and the nature of the Imam is created almost similar to that of the Prophet". SHAH WALI Allah says that among the peoples there is a class of men whose inner self has been created by God almost similar to that of the Prophets. This class of men by their very nature are the leaders and rulers of the UMMA in place of the Prophets".

SHAH WALI ALLAH, very well respected and acknowledged as a learned man of the highest authority among the SUNNIS, also says "The possession of the highest qualities of the heart and head is an essential condition for the Caliphate. And those persons alone are entitled to be the Caliph who possess these qualities to a greater degree than the rest of the people". From all this it follows that the Caliphs or IMMAS are created for this very purpose by God, and that they cannot be manufactured in the factory of elections.

It is therefore up to the Prophet to declare his Caliph, created and appointed by God for this purpose, and not fore the common folk to sit together and elect one from among themselves according to their own likes and dislikes. A reference to the discussions that took place at the SAQIFA at the time of the selection of the Caliph should that the solitary question which they formulated for determination and consideration was as to which group the Caliph should be taken from, the two groups being the MUHAJERIN and the ANSAR. No thought was given to the really vital problem as to who was the ablest and fittest person in the whole of the UMMA to be installed as the Caliph, nor any regard given to the criterion laid down by the Book of God.

### **Point (3): The Conduct of the Immediate Successors of the Prophet (P):**

The attitude of the immediate successors of Muhammad towards the problem of the succession in their own case is a matter in point. They did not leave the question open for the people to elect their Caliph.

In his last illness, when ABU BAKR felt that he was dying, he sent for UTHMAN, and asked him to write down his will. ABU BAKR began dictating it, but had given only a few preliminary sentences when he became unconscious, and UTHMAN extemporized by inserting the following sentence: "I have nominated UMAR as my successor". This sentence was the core of the will; in fact it alone was the will. When consciousness returned to ABU BAKR, he asked UTHMAN to read what he had written. UTHMAN read out the will with the added sentence. ABU BAKR was

relieved to know that UTHMAN had of his own accord written down the name of UMAR, and applauded his action, saying "You perhaps feared that if I died while the name of UAMR was not there, serious differences might arise among the Muslims". UTHMAN replied in the affirmative, and ABU BAKR sought God's blessings for this insertion and interference in the will, and completed it.

When the people came to hear of the nomination of UAMR, they came and remonstrated with ABU BAKR, saying that his choice had fallen on the wrong person, and that they wondered what answer he would give to God for selecting the wrong person to guide and lead the Muslim nation. TALHA and ZUBAIR also came and said the same thing. ABU BAKR asked his attendants to help him sit, and when he had sat up said "You threaten me with God's displeasure. When questioned by God, I shall reply that I put Muhammad's UMMA into the charge of the best man of that UMMA". He then announced this nomination from his own house, and gave the written will to UAMR, asking him to go and reconcile the people to it. The people meekly submitted. UAMR took the written will, went out, sat in the mosque, and with his rod in his hand, asked the people to promise obedience to what was written in that document. The slave of ABU BAKR was by his side. In pondering over this affair, the following points deserve consideration:

The nomination of UAMR was against the wishes of the people.

The people were not consulted.

Nonetheless the people never maintained that they had a right to elect the Caliph. The clique against Ali was so strong and determined that they were prepared to go to the extent of forging a will, this being applauded by the Caliph.

1. It further shows that the designs of the party were well known, and everybody knew even before the actual nomination that UMAR would succeed ABU BAKR.

2. When the Prophet (P) had intended to write a similar will nominating Ali as his successor, and demanded writing materials for the purpose, UMAR interposed between the Prophet's desire and its fulfillment, obstructing the supply of writing materials, and asked the people not to listen to the Prophet as the Book of God was sufficient for all purposes, adding that it was due to febrile delirium. But now the Book of God was forgotten, no delirium was suspected, even though ABU BKAR had actually fainted during the writing of the will, and the writer had made an insertion in it. Yet a will written under such suspicious circumstances was accepted and acted upon.

3. All the people, including the Caliph himself, realized that the ruler of this Islamic State would be answerable to God as to the man in whose charge he left the UMMA when on the point of himself leaving the world; yet according to this Theory of Non-appointment, we are expected to believe that Muhammad himself had no such sense of answerability.

4. It is thus obvious that it was the duty of the dying ruler to nominate his successor.

The manner in which UMAR nominated UTHMAN was one of those deep-laid plans whereby Ali was kept out of the Caliphate. I will be discussing it in its proper place. Suffice it to say here that when UMAR was fatally wounded, people came in groups to request him to nominate his successor, and A'ISHA sent word to him asking him not to leave the UMMA leaderless, entreating him to nominate his successor as she feared serious disturbances and grave consequences if he failed to do so. It surpasses one's comprehension why of all persons Muhammad alone should be unmindful of his duty to man, this answerability to God, this liability as a Prophet, this responsibility as a king, and this need as the founder of a religious state. This then is the Non-appointment Theory.

Reason refuses to accept it, common sense scoffs at it, and sanity rejects it. The matter does not end here, none of them thought to remind the Prophet of this urgent need, yet this same crying need for the appointment of a successor to the Prophet, which brooked no delay, is cited as an excuse for the unseemly haste with which they hurried to the SAQIFA, leaving the body of the Prophet unburied while they attended to the election of a caliph. But when it comes to the Prophet, they say no, he did not think of it.

#### **Points (4) & (5): Was the prophet Unaware of the Need?**

These points have already been discussed above. The prophet could not have been ignorant of the necessity of nominating a successor before his death.

#### **Point (6): The People Made no Demand:**

This also has been dealt with above. Not only did the people make no claim to a right to appoint the caliph, but they implored the dying caliph himself to nominate the next one.

#### **Point (7): The Constitution:**

In an enquiry into the form taken by the government of the state founded by the Prophet, it is necessary, as a preliminary step, to ascertain whither the control of human affairs was included in the mission which Muhammad was to fulfill, or in other words, whether the Church and the State go together in Islam, or whether each was to have a separate and independent sphere of its own. If the latter were the case, then the mission of Muhammad could not have been accomplished and his duties as a Prophet could not have been discharged in their entirety, unless he had also had the direction of the affairs of his people in his hands.

Before I proceed further, I must refer to two formidable, almost insurmountable difficulties that lie in my way when discussing this subject. In the first place, I am supporting theories which have become out of date and are diametrically opposed to the common perception of the people, bred and brought up as they are in the materialism of today, for example the combination of Church and State, and the rejection of Democracy as a form of government. In the second place, the claim of Muhammad as the last of the prophets and the most complete specimen of humanity, and of Islam as the last and, therefore, most perfect religion revealed by God to man, go directly against the grain of the non-Muslim world. Even though his own

religion may have lost all influence with him, a non-Muslim is not prepared to listen to these claims. In addition to all this, it must be borne in mind that such words as God, Prophet, Book of God, Inspiration from God to Man, all jar on the ears of a modern man for whom the only viewpoint from which to judge the progress of a class or community of men, is their propensity to discard these ideas as suitable only for a man of the Dark Ages.

The reader, to understand fully the scope and meaning of this enquiry, in fact of the whole book, must try to imagine himself living in Arabia in the company of Muhammad in the seventh century A.C., when these concepts were in full force and these words understandable everywhere. In an enquiry into whether the HUKUMA (governance of men's affairs) was included in the NUBUWWA (Apostolic Mission) of Muhammad, we must bear in mind the claims that have been made by, and on behalf of, Muhammad and Islam. They are as follows:

1. Muhammad is the last of the Prophets, and closes the long list of messengers that have been sent by God to his creatures from the beginning of the world to the time of Muhammad.

2. His mission, being final, is complete and comprehensive, embracing all items of human existence, and providing the most perfect guidance, both as needed at the time the mission was sent, and also as might be needed by man in times to come. This final code of laws is to last until the end of the world.

3. This mission is for the whole world, and not just for one country or race.

It is hardly necessary to give references to substantiate these claims as they are conceded by every Muslim and are known to every reader of the QUR'AN and HADITH. The QUR'AN addresses itself to the whole of mankind, and describes the Prophet as having been sent to all races in all countries. This is sufficient for my present treatise; to establish that these claims are beyond doubt is outside its scope, and for that purpose I have written a separate tract.

Now, think for yourself; and then think again very deeply, and answer my question: Does it stand to reason that a Prophet who claimed and taught that he was the last of the Prophets, that his religion was the final and complete word of God to Mankind, and that his message was to continue until the end of the world, would not bestow even a single thought on the most difficult of all problems, namely what arrangements to make for its continuance in its pristine glory and purity after his death; and that he would not select, train, and designate a fit person for this very difficult task? Whatever Muhammad's enemies may say about him, even they cannot deny the keenness of his intellect, the depth of his thought, and the penetrating reach of his foresight. Could such a man leave this important question, indeed the life and soul of his mission, to the chance of an election where merit is sacrificed at the altars of selfishness, wealth, and friendship, personal likes and dislikes, hopes of personal gains, and fears of possible pains, and other motives of like nature?

As the final Divine dispensation to mankind, made to last till the end of the world and intended to provide a complete code of human conduct, Islam

must govern and control all the activities, desires, and emotions of man from the cradle to the grave, and must lay down rules to regulate his entire life. It is also relevant to know how a Muslim is required to live his life on this earth. The QURA'N ordains: "Say, truly my prayer and my service of sacrifices, my life and my death, are all for Allah, the cherisher of the worlds. No partner hath He: to this I have been commanded, and I am the first of those who are Muslims, that is, who bow to His will". It is enjoined upon every Muslim that when any misfortune befalls him or he faces any calamity, he should say that we are all from Allah, and that in the end we shall all return to Him.

This absolute submission to the will of God, this clear realization of a Muslim's life being wholly for Allah, is the distinguishing feature of Islam. This realization must mould every idea, direct every action, and guide every step of a Muslim. Thus is to be fulfilled the will of God, who says, "I have created the Jinn and Man only that they should serve and obey Me". From this it clearly follows that the Islamic laws ordained by God must govern the entire life of a Muslim and regulate his whole conduct. In Islam there is no separation between public and private life. Putting this argument into a nutshell, HUKUMA was included in the NUBUWWA of MUHAMMAD.

As a matter of fact, there is now a consensus of opinion among Muslims on this point. SAYYID ABU AL-HASSAN AL-NADAWI says:

"To establish God's kingdom upon earth and to enforce His heavenly code of politics, morals, and social life was one very important task of Muhammad on earth and the chief purpose of his mission... Another important point is that without an Islamic State, the rules of the QUR'AN cannot be enforced. Islam has given the world a competitive system of its own which is entirely based on "HUKUMA". Without HUKUMA, a considerable portion of Holy QUR'AN remains un-enforced. It is not possible even to defend Islam without HUKUMA. For instance, the whole of the revenue, civil and criminal systems are in abeyance without this force.

For this reason, the QUR'AN lays emphasis on securing strength and enforcing respect, and for this reason the setting up of the caliphate on the death of Muhammad was considered a very important matter by the companions who left the dead body of the Prophet, and preferred the settlement of the caliphate to the interment of the body. (Author's note: but this unseemly haste points to something more significant than this anxiety; Ali and the relatives of the Prophet remained at his bedside.

If there was no intention to steal a march over Ali, the nominee of the Prophet, this matter could have been settled amicably a few hours later with the consent of all). To order the people to observe the commandments and to abstain from breaching the rules is a very important duty in Islam, so much so that it is declared to be the sole object of the existence of the UMMA of Muhammad (SURA III.104)... But remember, the words "AMR" (order) and "NAHI" (forbid) have been used. They carry a sense of dignity and command. It is not said that they should make a request to the people to be so kind as to do-good deeds. Thus, for "AMR" and "NAHI", political supremacy and political force are required".

Again, while speaking of UMAR IBN ABD AL-AZIZ, an OMAYYAD ruler, the same MAWLAWI says, "Once more, by his ability and excellent management of public affairs, he disproved the un-Islamic view that church and State should not be combined".

The well-written introduction to the study of the QUR'AN, "TAZKIRA" by ALLAMA ENAYAT ALLAH AL-MASHRIQI, concerns itself entirely with proving that the object of Islam was to establish God's kingdom on earth, and the "HUKUMA" was an integral part of Muhammad's mission. Another thinker of Islam, SAYYID ABU AL-A'LA AL-MAWDUDI, has stressed the same truth in his tract entitled "HAQIQAT- AL-JIHAD". Even the foreign scholars of Islam have not failed to notice this fact. MR. D.B. MACDONALD writes as follows:

"Life is manifold; it is also one. So it is seldom possible and still more seldom advisable, to divide a civilization into departments and to attempt to trace their separate developments; life nowhere can be cut in two with a hatchet. And this is emphatically true of the civilization of Islam.... In Europe, the State may rule the church or the church may rule the State, or they may stand side by side in somewhat dubious amity, supposedly taking no account of each other. But in Muslim countries, church and State are indissolubly one, and until the very essence of Islam passes away, that unity cannot be relaxed. The law of the land is, too, in theory the law of the church; in the earlier days at least, Canon and Civil law was one. Thus we can never say in Islam "he is a great lawyer", "he is a great theologian", "he is a great statesman". One may be all three, it is almost a case that he must be all three, if he is to be any one".

Another scholar writes:

"Since the Muslim church and State are essentially one. It is impossible to treat politics apart from religion, nor can religious phenomena be understood without continual reference to political events".

Now we come to the main question. Was the Constitution of the Islamic State founded by Muhammad democratic? Obviously it was not. From its very nature it could not be democratic. A Prophet who claimed his office from Divine source, and exacted implicit obedience to his command, would not frame a democratic constitution, which rests solely on the votes of the public. He had a bitter taste of such voting when he was condemned to death by the unanimous suffrage of this nation without a single dissenting voice. The lifeblood of democracy is the vote of the majority, and the Holy QUR'AN abounds in declarations condemning the majority. To mention but a few of them are the following examples:

1. "The majority of men have no knowledge". (SURA VII,187).
2. "(WERT) thou to follow the majority of those on earth, they would lead thee away from the way of God". (SURA VI,116).
3. "The majority of the people do not believe". (SURA XI,17).
4. "Verily most of you are rebellious and disobedient". (SURA V,62).
5. "But most of them follow nothing but fancy". (SURA X,36).
6. "But most of them have no understanding". (SURA XXIX,63).
7. "But most of them ignore the truth". (SURA VI,11).
8. "Yet most of them turn away, so they hear not". (SURA XLI,4).



The famous poet IQBAL condemns democracy in these words:

"Flee from democracy, and obey one with mature experience and wisdom; for the brains of two hundred asses cannot think life the mind of one human being".

We reproduce below the sayings of European philosophers and intellectuals in condemnation of majorities and democracy:

1. "Public opinion, a vulgar, impertinent tyrant, who deliberately makes life unpleasant for anyone who is not content to be the average man".

2. "There is not a more mean, stupid, dastardly, pitiless, selfish, spiteful, envious, ungrateful animal, than the public".

-WILLIAM HAZLIT

3. "when a genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign, that the dunces are all in a confederacy against him". -JONATHAN SWIFT

4. "I hate the vulgar herd and hold it far".

-HORAC

5. "The first and last thing that is demanded of a genius (or a righteous person) is truth".

-GOTHE 6. "Who over the herd would like to reign, fantastic, fickle, fierce and vain? Vain as the leaf upon the stream. And fickle as the changeful dream. Fantastic as a woman's mood. And fierce as Frenzy's fevered blood. Thou many-headed monster thing. Oh who would wish to be thy king?" -WALTER SCOTT

7. "Avoid the reeking herd, Shun the polluted flock, Live like that stoic bird, The eagle of the rock". Writing about the state founded by Muhammad, WELLHAUSEN says:

"Nor did the theocracy resemble a republic, notwithstanding the idea that all the subjects of Allah stand in equal relationship to Him. The chief characteristic of the republic, election through the people, was absent altogether. The supreme power rested not with the people but with the Prophet (P). He alone had fixed - even Divine- office; all authorities had their origin in his supreme authority. However, he did not appoint actual officials, but only gave certain commissions, after the execution of which the commissioners retired of themselves. His advisers too, were private individuals with whom he was on terms of friendship, and whom he gathered into the circle of his society".

On the death of the Prophet (P), his successor stepped into his place and occupied exactly the same position. The constitution could not change on his death: no one had the right to change or amend it. It could not swerve round from monarchy to democracy. VON KREMER thus describes the position of the caliph:

"At the head of this mass of tribes, risen suddenly to worldly powers and united by one common interest, stood the caliph who, in the earliest times, simply passed as the representative of the deceased Prophet (P). He commanded expeditions, which were undertaken with the advice of the most important Companions of the Prophet (P). He organized and conducted military affairs. He administered the state revenue and dealt with the finances. He had full powers of disposal over the treasury, "Bait al-Mal", the name by which the treasury is known to this day. He even exercised judicial

functions and administered criminal justice, and finally - this was the most important of his duties- he led the entire Divine Service, and was, so to speak, the supreme pontiff of the religious community of the Muslims".

As a legitimate inference from all this, it follows that the caliph could be lawfully entitled to his office only in he had been appointed thereto by the Prophet himself. There could be no other legal source of his authority as a caliph, which means "successor". This fact was clearly recognized by those "Caliphs" themselves. Writing about UMAR IBN AL-KHATAB, WELLHAUSEN says:

"He first supported ABU BAKR, Muhammad's most trusted friend, and it was not till after the latter's death, which took place soon after, that he took over the ruling power in name. ABU BAKR transferred it to him, in his last will and testament, but that was only a confirmation of what was already an accepted thing. ABU BAKR was quite aware that they had no legal title to the ruling power but had usurped it. All they could do was afterwards to legitimize their original illegitimate power by wielding it according to the idea of theocracy".

Those of the Muslim writers, who have thought closely and carefully, have come to the conclusion that democracy has no place in Islam. In its issue of December 1939 "TULU' AL-ISLAM", a respectable monthly journal, carried an article on "Islam and Democracy". The writer, speaking about democracy, says:

"We challenge the whole group of the nationalistic ULAMA' to show from the QUR'AN or the HADITH that Islam prescribes this form of government (democracy) for its followers to live under, calling it liberty. I wonder what has become of the reasoning powers and wisdom of these gentlemen. According to them, if one man singly commits dacoit, he is guilty, but if a number of dacoits combine together to commit dacoit with the votes of their majority, then this dacoit is entirely in accordance with the precepts of Islam (God forbid), because this dacoit has taken place according to the principles of Democracy. In their opinion, if one man as against two says that two and two make five, he is wrong, but if the same thing is said by five men against two, it is wholly correct, as then it will have the certificate of the democratic sanction.

If this alone is sufficient to decide the correctness of a dogma or principle, then why do you contradict those who say that Christ is the Son of God, as they are in the majority? Do not go so far. Take the case of Hindus: they form the majority, while the Muslims are in the minority. If it is admitted that what the majority says is correct, then you will have to admit that the Hindus are in the right. Perhaps, you may say that these are religious matters, having no connection with the affairs of State. But the question is not of religion or politics: it relates to the foundation on which Democracy rests. And that foundation is, that the majority is always in the right. This foundation itself is wrong. And when the foundation is unstable, the whole of the edifice that is built on it will be shaky, no matter if the departments of the church and state are separate in it". A famous Muslim historian, S. KHUDA BAKHSH of BANKURA, belonging to the majority section of the Muslim, says:

"Muhammad not only founded a new religion but established a new polity. By converting his countrymen to the faith in one God, he destroyed the old constitution of his native town, and in place of the old aristocratic tribal constitution, which meant conduct of public affairs by the ruling families, set up an out-and-out theocratic constitution at the head of which he stood as the representative of God on earth. Even before his death, almost the whole of Arabia- which had never bent its neck to a prince or ruler- lay all of a sudden at his feet, as a national unit, paying homage to the will of an absolute master".

Two points have been established, namely (a) the control of the affairs of the UMMA, that is HUKUMA, was within the orbit of Muhammad's NABUWWA, being an integral part of it, and (b) the constitution of the state founded by him was not democratic. Both these matters are so obvious and plain that one wonders why they should have been brought under discussion at all. The controversy has been created intentionally to serve political ends, and to confuse many issues, as will presently be shown.

As we have definite knowledge of how Islam has solved these two important problems, we have no need to stop and consider how they are solved by others. I am aware of the fact that Europe does not agree with Islam on these points. But Europe is liable to make mistakes, and we have had many examples of them to our great misfortune. One of those mistakes is the craze for democracy. The natural form of government as evolved out of the exigencies of human society was kingship. From the head of the family to the chief of the tribe, and thence to the chief of a combination of tribes, that is, the king, the stages were natural and evolved. Every country in the world has started from kingship. At times, the kings exercised their powers arbitrarily and tyrannically, with heartless disregard for the happiness of the people. This naturally led to opposition by the people, who would combine forces to overthrow the tyrant. This is the origin of democracy, which in the beginning was nothing but a contrivance for self-defense. The important thing to bear in mind in this connection is that the tyranny of the king was generally directed towards one class of people, who in many cases happened to be the rich and influential persons, as the king apprehended danger from that side, and therefore his engines of oppression were directed towards them. When the tyrant was overthrown, this class of people stepped into his place.

Kingship yielded place to an oligarchy of rich and influential persons; one tyrant was gone, but his place was taken by many tyrants. This, in effect, is the real nature of democracy. This oligarchy, to achieve its end with the help of the mob, had adopted the slogan of "The government of the people, by the people, for the people", but once the object was achieved, the spirit of the slogan was strangled, though the slogan itself was kept to please the fools and hoodwink the mob; and to perpetuate the fraud, the oligarchic government christened itself with the name "Democracy" or "Republic", whichever name suited itself at the time. Even a cursory glance at the Roman Republic, the most ancient democracy in the world, will fully illustrate the views expressed above, and bring into relief the native features of modern democracy, which is modeled on its ancient prototype.

Rome, like other countries, started with kingship, and Romulus, its fabulous founder, was the first king. He chose a senate of one hundred as an advisory body to aid him by their counsels. This may be placed somewhere around B.C. 753. The kings ruled, one after the other, until the last king, TARQUIN, ascended the throne. How royalty came to an end is an interesting story to tell. It was ended not by the spontaneous suffrage of the people, but by the ambition of one man who, as a sympathizer of one class of people, that is the rich and influential, called "patricians", and avowedly in their interests only, seized power and started the Republic. It happened in this way. While TARQUIN was away, his son SEXTUS violated the honor of LUCRITIA, a Patrician Roman lady. She summoned her relatives, and having informed them of the outrage, committed suicide.

LUCIUS JUNIUS Brutus, who held an important magistracy, convened an assembly of the people, and exhibited the bleeding body of LUCRITIA to the multitude (B.C. 509). A decree was immediately passed expelling the TARQUINS and abolishing the Royalty. A celebrated historian says: "The abolition of royalty was a purely patrician revolution, from which the great body of the people gained no immediate advantage. Two annual magistrates, initially called Proctors, but afterwards called Consuls, chosen from the patrician ranks, inherited the entire royal power but did not, like the kings, possess any priestly dignity. The first magistrates elected under the new system were Brutus and COLLATINUS, the husband of LUCRITIA. A revolt headed by the nephews of the late king TARQUIN and the sons of this same Brutus was put down. Brutus not only pronounced the sentence of death upon his sons, but witnessed their execution without shedding a tear. This is typical of the way burning ambition consumes every softer and nobler feeling. This was not done on account of patriotism; it was purely due to a desire to retain power. To earn popularity and security of position, ambition frequently adopted such heartless tactics; Napoleon, in order to procreate a progeny of kings and to connect himself with royal blood, put away the loving Josephine, his partner in life for sixteen years, with the excuse "My dearest affections must yield to the welfare of France".

From the very beginning of her existence, the population of Rome had been divided into two classes, namely the Patricians, who were the rich and influential section of the people, and the Plebeians, who were poor and belonged to the inferior ranks. The Republic always represented the interests of the patrician class from whom the senate was formed. The consuls, who wielded kingly powers, were always patricians. In B.C. 450 a new constitution was established, known to historians as "The Laws of the Twelve Tables", which continued right down to the time of the emperors to be the basis of all civil and penal jurisprudence.

It established the legal equality of all citizens; but it also preserved some of the most odious privileges of patrician over plebeian. This state of affairs continued almost without change until the end of the Republic in B.C. 48, when the people became thoroughly disgusted with it and reverted to kingship. Now arose that famous and magnificent Roman Empire which ruled the world for centuries. And the struggle between the patricians and the plebeians, which had distracted the peace of the country from the

foundation of Rome till the end of the Republic, disappeared in a moment. By no stretch of the imagination could this one-sided Government have been called a government "of the people, by the people, for the people". More than half the nation had been un-represented and had nothing to do with government. The poor are always more in number than the rich; and this was the Government of the rich only.

This was the democracy of the ancient world; let us turn to the modern world for a better insight. It is only a truism to say that present civilization is based on the past, and that the modern world has copied the institutions of the old Roman Empire. By "modern world", one generally means Europe, America and Japan. Of these, Britain and the United States are commonly upheld as shining examples of democracy, and will certainly suffice to apprise us of what democracy really signifies.

Taking first the case of Britain, an Englishman, H.G. Wells, has described the democracy of Britain in these words:

"The disintegrating British Empire is now, one has to recognize, a system of government almost completely out of popular control. Practically, it has undergone a reactionary revolution in the last decade, and loose knit combination of court, churches, army and wealth, intensely class conscious, intensely self-protective, has resumed control of affairs. It is an oligarchy, skilful in the assimilation of useful or formidable individuals, but without the slightest disposition to amalgamate with anything else on earth.

Its ruling motive is the fear of dispossession. Decisions involving peace or war are made without any pretence of consulting any surviving popular will, and the whole capitalist press, the cinema, the radio, and indeed all possible means of influencing opinion concentrate upon the assertion of the rightness and inevitability of these decisions. Dissent is a muffled and ineffective squeaking, and inconvenient facts are kept from the public by requests for suppression that are in effect commands.

There is a special "form D" ("D-note") sent round to the press which it is extremely unwise to defy. Many of the acts of Mr. Chamberlain since September 1933 were as irresponsible as those of any dictator, equally unscrupulous and far more shameful. He made himself a dictator by tact and betrayal instead of by violence. There is in the long run very little to choose between a bully dictatorship and a "tacit" dictatorship. The latter may be less crushing but is more insidious in its attack upon human dignity".

From this writing, we can discern the following facts:

1. The so-called democratic government of Britain is nothing but an oligarchy, intensely class-conscious.
2. Important decisions such as those involving peace and war are made without consulting the people.
3. Democracy is unable to cope with situations requiring important decisions.
4. All manners of tricks and fraud are practiced to keep the public ignorant of the real facts.
5. When all is said and done, democracy can be worse than dictatorship. Mr. Wells speaks of Mr. Churchill's time will not hesitate in saying that he was a greater dictator than Mr. Chamberlain.

Our second example is the United States of America, said to be the home of democracy, bred and brought up there from its childhood. But the treatment meted out to its native Red Indian inhabitants is a blot on democracy, which cannot be washed away. And the power that the dollar has over the deliberations of Congress is too well known to need discussion. It wages wars, enters into alliances and makes peace; in fact everything that it does is done in the interest of the wealthy only.

It is evident that there is no real democracy anywhere. In an article on democracy in the Encyclopedia BRITANNICA, it has been said that if there has at any time been any form of government bordering on democracy, it has been in the city-states of Greece, and that thereafter there has never been democracy anywhere. But an English writer has made it abundantly clear that even in the city-states of Greece there was no genuine democracy. He says:

"It follows that, as slave population in Athens, for example, was as great or greater than that of the freemen, and as women took no part in the assemblies, there has never been a perfect democracy, according to modern political ideas, in the history of the world, nor is there any likelihood of one in future"

Modern parliaments and congresses have been modeled after the Roman Republic in which one party that is the patrician, alone was represents. In the modern age, the same thing is attained by other means. All parties are permitted inside the hall but the power is exercised by the majority determined? By the counting of the votes. How are the votes attracted? By means of wealth. Then, comes to govern the country? The rich. The same patrician class has come in by the back door.

Take whatever precautions you any contrivance that your ingenuity can suggest, you cannot prevent wealth from ruling the world unless man first changes his entire mental outlook, and comes round to the view shown by the QUR'AN that "The most honored of you in god is he who fears God most (is the most righteous of you)". (SURA 49/13). In other words, the recognition of a man's rank should be according to the extent of his purse. The world will never know peace until it is ruled by righteous, God-fearing people. This is both the teaching of the QUR'AN and the lesson of history. In party governments, which are the fashion of the day, only half of the population of the country has any voice, if at all.

In fact, my view is that in effect only a few of the upper rank actually rule the country, with the rest as mere tools to bring those few to power. But no one would deny that in a country ruled by party government, only the majority rule the nation. The rest are helpless lookers-on. This is one defect; let us proceed further. The division of the population of a country is made solely with a view to each party having a chance to rule. To deal out equal justice to all is neither their motto nor their motive. Equal justice is impossible with party government. The members of the minority must remain out of office, and cannot secure important posts.

Is not this an injustice? The courts of justice are open to all: but not so the administration. The men in office, who depend on the votes of the party for the position they hold, cannot afford to offend them. This is another



serious defect of democracy. Then again, as every child is taught, unity is better than discord. The nation is one; but parties are a source of discord thrown among the people, resulting in dissention and disunity. This is also a very serious defect of democracy, as discord is created solely to enable a few of the upper rank to take the reins of power by turn.

Government by numbers can lead to ludicrous results. Take the example of a country with a population of four million. The election takes place, and a party with two million and one supporters comes to rule the other party, which has two million less one. In this way, so-called "representative" government passed on the principle of the greatest good for the greatest number, can lead to an absurd situation.

The ideal government according to the QUR'AN is one under which there should be no injustice even to a single man. The QUR'AN lays down that "if anyone slays person, unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land, it is as if he has slayed the whole people; and if anyone saves a life, it is as if he has saved the whole people". Just look at the standard of justice fixed by Islam and the rule of conduct laid down by the majority-ridden world of today.

The one criterion by which to judge the correctness of a rule of law or administration, as with a theory of science, is that it must hold good at all times and under all circumstances. History tells us that whenever put to the test of emergency, or under circumstances when exceptional qualities of the head and heat are required, the Rule of the Majority has invariably failed. When a man of genius appears on the scene, can this medley of mediocre men find it within themselves to give directions of him or lay down a code of do's and don'ts? Had they attempted to do so, neither Hannibal nor Napoleon would have been allowed to cross the Alps, and two of the greatest lessons of history showing the capacity of human determination would have remained untaught. The proponents of democracy are themselves conscious that in moments requiring extraordinary abilities or quick decisions, their democracy cannot stand, and the instinct of self-preservation compels them to yield to one-man rule. There is ample evidence of this in ancient annals, and this is abundantly corroborated by modern history too.

During the Acquaint war (B.C. 457), a consular army was intercepted by the enemy in the defiles of mount AEGIDUS, and so closely blockaded that there seemed no choice but death or disgraceful submission. Some horsemen, breaking through the hostile lines, brought the news to Rome, and the Senate, in alarm, resolved to appoint a dictator. Titus QUINCTIUS CINNCINATUS, a patrician violently opposed to popular claims, became dictator and delivered the army from the danger.

Manlius, who had bravely defended the capital during the Gallic invasion (B.C. 383), finding himself excluded from office by the jealousy of his brother patricians, declared himself the patron of the plebeians. This revived the old dissentions with all their former virulence. This was too much for the Republic to cope with, and Camillus was at once appointed dictator. By his orders Manlius was brought to trial, convicted of treason and thrown from the TARPEIAN rock (B.C. 382). What a close parallel to the modern

"trials" of the defeated war "criminals" and the ready convictions, which ensued.

During the Punic wars this occasion arose many a time. When FLAMINIUS, the Roman consul was ambushed and slain with the greater part of his army (B.C. 216), the senate was alarmed, and FABIVS MAXIMVS was created dictator.

As I have stated above, the Roman Republic, from its inception, was completely captured by the patricians, and remained under their domination until its downfall. If foreign wars are excluded, Roman history is a long drawn-out story of the struggle between the patricians and the plebeians. From time to time persons arose to root out the corruption that had crept into patrician senate, but except for certain minor improvements, the situation remained unchanged. The last attempt to reform it was made by TIBERIUS GRACCHUS. He gained some initial success, and the senate, thoroughly alarmed, hastily assembled and passed a vote investing OPIMIUS with dictatorial powers. GRACCHUS, with his men, fell (B.C. 120). A historian says, "With GRACCHUS perished the freedom of the Roman Republic; henceforth the supreme power of the state was wielded by a corrupt, avaricious and insolent aristocracy, from whose avarice and oppression even the worst tyranny of the worst of the emperors would have been a desirable relief".

Another serious drawback in the democratic form of government is that in its climate genius cannot thrive. The vice of jealousy implanted into the nature of man finds a congenial soil there for its speedy growth and easy propagation. In a democracy-ridden country, men have no encouragement or incentive to indulge in healthy rivalry with each other, because what decides fate there is not merit but votes, and votes can be had for money. It thus becomes a nation of mediocre talents. Men like Hannibal, Caesar, Charlemagne, Louis XIV, Philip II, Napoleon, and William would find no scope for the exercise of their God-given gifts in a democratic country. Jealousy nips budding genius in its first spring of flowering.

The fate of Hannibal and Scipio AFRICANUS is an apt illustration of this jealousy that governs the "home" policy of democratic governments. Having performed the superhuman task of crossing the Alps, Hannibal carried the war right into the heart of the enemy. For full fifteen years the Lion of Carthage was thundering at the gate of Rome and kept her trembling.

With all his supplies having to come from home, beset all round by enemies, and with lines of communication at the mercy of doubtful allies, Hannibal continued the war against the Mistress of the Ancient World solely to enhance the prestige and glory of Carthage. But his government became jealous of him and failed to send him succor, leaving him at the mercy of his and their enemies. His historian remarks, "the Carthaginian Government, never well inclined to Hannibal, sent MAGO to Spain with the large contingent which it had promised to land in Italy, neglecting the decisive point in the theatre of war and sacrificing the principal to a subordinate interest". Even after the victory of CANNAE, Carthage failed to support her general in Italy. The historian says, "it is evident that for some time after

CANNAE, Carthage had again, to some extent, the command of the sea; her conduct towards Hannibal is all the more to be condemned". In the end Hannibal was, so to speak, besieged and cornered in the south of Italy. In the hope that he might obtain some help from his country, he firmly held on to the Greek port of Croton, which gave him a good harbor. But, the historian rightly laments "he received no assistance from his ungrateful and base government".

There he maintained his position, his name still inspiring terror in Rome, when he was recalled home, and thus the Lion of CANNAE was balked of his prey. Carthage met the fate she deserved at the battle of ZAMA (B.C. 201) and an ignominious peace ended the glorious career of the hero of a hundred fights. But the "offence" of having ability and genius had yet to be sufficiently punished. Hannibal tried to improve the affairs of his country. But he was denounced to the Romans by his treacherous countrymen, being accused of having secretly intrigued with Antiochus of Syria, who had caused a renewal of the wars in Greece. Having fear that he would be surrendered to his enemies, Hannibal fled his country and took refuge with Antiochus, who, when eventually defeated by the Romans, promised to give Hannibal up to them. That illustrious exile fled for refuge to the Prussian king of BITHNIA, but finding that he was still pursued by the vindictive hatred of the Romans, he put an end to his life by taking poison.

Now we turn to the conqueror of ZAMA, Scipio AFRICANUS, who saved Rome from certain death. Scipio AFRICANUS, and his brother LUCIUS Scipio, were sent to Antiochus. They pacified Greece and crossed into Asia, where they forced Antiochus to a general battle near the city of Magnesia where they completely routed him. He was forced to sue for peace by renouncing all his possessions in Europe, as well as those in Asia north of Mount Taurus, paying additionally a fine of about three million sterling, and promising to give up Hannibal (B.C. 189). But the SCIPIOS had won too many laurels to be allowed to wear them peacefully; the jealousy of the senate had been excited. On their return home the SCIPIOS were accused of having taken bribes from Antiochus and embezzling public money (B.C. 186). AFRICANUS refused to plead and went into voluntary exile at LITURNUM, where he died. LUCIUS was condemned, and on his refusal to pay the fine imposed, had all his property confiscated. This is the government "of the people, by the people, for the people".

History records many cases of faithful servants being degraded by their masters. To mention but three of them are General BELISARIUS, the BARMECIDES and WOLSEY; but their monarchs, JUSTINIAN, HARUN AL-RASHID and HENRY VIII respectively, convinced by the evidence, believed that their servants had ceased to be faithful. Anyhow, they were tyrants, and that is the nature of tyrants.

The above instances illustrating the defects of democracy have been drawn from ancient history. As the modern institutions are based on the old ones, their defects have crept into these modern ones too, with perhaps even greater force and effect. He, who says that there is democracy in Islam or that Islam favors it, must be entirely ignorant of the principles and spirit of

Islam. Would Islam tolerate this glaring "DHULM" inherent in the nature of democracy?

It is sometimes suggested that the Prophet copied the institution of the tribe, in which the oldest man was selected as the leader. The following points deserve consideration in this connection:

1. The whole teaching of Islam is against division by tribe; as a matter of fact Islam leveled all such divisions to the ground. One united nation of Islam was evolved out of all these jarring elements. The Prophet could not follow the constitution of the tribe.

2. The tribe was a stage in the evolution of society, and had ceased to exist as a living institution by the time Muhammad appeared on the scene, though in the deserts of Arabia certain nomadic tribes still survived. The institution of tribe is based on joint ownership of land. The office of leader of chief is no doubt elective, but election is confined to one line and generally follows the rule of primogeniture. The Prophet had no grounds for following a dying institution and selecting it for his Islamic community, which was a progressive one that was to last for ever.

3. However, even if that rule is used, ABU BAKR had no place, for according to it Ali was the rightful heir.

4. If it is true that the Prophet wanted to follow the tribal law, why was this not pleaded at the SAQIFA? It was not even mentioned.

5. If tribal law was to remain, why did the Prophet not say so? As everything else relating to the "JAHILIYYA" (pre-Islamic days of ignorance) was being discarded, it would have been of immense importance to mention any such exception.

6. The tribes comprised only the BEDWINS of the desert; in the QUR'AN, they are described as the greatest enemies of the Prophet and God: "The Arabs of the desert are the worst in unbelief and hypocrisy, and most fitted to remain in ignorance of the laws laid down by God in the QUR'AN sent by God to His apostle; and God is All-knowing, All-wise". In view of this, would the Prophet imitate them in the way they conducted their government, bearing in mind that imitation always implies an acknowledgement of the superiority of the thing imitated?

7. Roaming with herds of cattle from pasture to pasture indicates a lower stage of society than settling down in cities and engaging in trade and agriculture. If the Prophet had any need to imitate anyone, why would he not imitate the most settled and advanced communities of HIRA and GHASSAN? R.A. Nicholson says, "In the kingdoms of HIRA and GHASSAN, pre-Islamic culture attained its highest development and from these centers it diffused itself and made its influence felt throughout Arabia". Both of them were kingdoms ruled by hereditary princes, and were on the northern borders of Arabia.

8. If the Prophet had needed to imitate anyone, why would he not imitate the government of MAKKA, which was confined to the men who served the KA'BA. The servant of the KA'BA used to be the ruler of MAKKA. This service was confined to the QURAIISH who divided it into different departments entrusted to different families. These offices were hereditary and descended from father to son. There was no election here. In fact the

Prophet was not to imitate anyone. He was commissioned to establish God's kingdom on earth, and was to lay down that constitution most suited to this objective. It was theocracy, in which the only ruler was God and the only law was that of the QUR'AN. For a knowledge of the constitution of this theocracy we should closely study the Holy QUR'AN, and find out whether it requires the government to be democratic or monarchical. The following verses are relevant in this connection:

"Tell them, obey God and His apostle. But if they turn back, God does not love the disbelievers. (SURA III, 32) "Those who obey God and His apostle will be admitted to paradise with rivers flowing beneath". (SURA IV, 13) "O ye who believe, obey God and obey His apostle and those who have received the commandment, if you are in dispute regarding anything, refer it to God and the Prophet, provided you believe in God and the Last Day". (SURA IV, 59)

"But no, by thy Lord, they can have no real faith until they acknowledge thee as their overlord in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against thy sentences, but accept them with the fullest submission". (SURA IV, 65) The requirements of a theocracy are (1) implicit obedience to the king, (2) a fixed and fully known law based on strict justice, and (3) gradation in society that is not according to wealth but according to piety and fear of God.

The QUR'AN says: "The most honored of you in the sight of God is the most righteous and pious of you". (SURA XLIX, 13). Status in society is determined according to the honor and respect to which each of its members of society is entitled. To acquire as much honor and respect in eyes of his fellows as possible has been the ambition of man from the beginnings of society. Personal valor, beauty, learning and wealth have been the chief means of attaining this object. Of these, the first three are neither easy to attain nor of permanent effect. Moreover, the notions about them have been changing with time. There was an age when personal valor was everything, and the knights of Middle Ages were the most respected members of society. But the present age of technology has entirely changes the angle of vision.

Beauty has been relegated to the region of taste, and the effects of learning can be purchased by wealth. Now wealth has come to stay as the solitary criterion of social honor, and yet this is the main source of all evils and vices, allowing free course neither to justice nor to sanctions. The Holy QUR'AN does away with this source of evil, and says that the criterion of social honor should be virtue and not wealth. If a man fears God, he may be safely trusted to act with justice between men, and will not intentionally do anything, which may incur the displeasure of God, and this entails exhibiting every virtue.

Useful hints on the subject are to be had from the story of TALUT. The rich chiefs of the Israelites objected to his being the king on the grounds that he was not as wealthy as they were, and urged that a king be selected from their rich men. The Prophet replied, "God has chosen him above you, and has gifted him abundantly with knowledge and bodily prowess. God grants

His authority to whom He pleases. God cares for all, and He knows all things".

From this story of TALUT, the following principles can readily be inferred:

1. In the kingdom of God on earth, that is, the theocracy, it is for God to appoint a king.
2. The people have no hand in that appointment.
3. Wealth or influence is not the determining factor.
4. The appointment is made on the basis of personal valor and knowledge. Personal valor in a king is necessary even in this age of technology; and the type of knowledge required is that which is gifted by God to the selected few, as is mentioned in the QUR'AN in many places.
5. The obvious conclusion is that the ruler of a theocracy cannot be appointed by the suffrage of the people.

The QUR'AN also prescribes the qualities, which must be present in a person who is to rule the theocracy. Personal valor and divinely-gifted knowledge have been mentioned above. Besides those qualifications, there are other requisites. He must be the most honored man in the community; honor being based on the fear of God, he must therefore be the most God-fearing of all his subjects. Now, God ordains that implicit obedience must be rendered to Him, the Prophet and the rulers of the theocracy, which is in fact the kingdom of god on earth. From this it follows that the head of this theocratic state must always be immaculate, the most learned in law, the best in knowledge of the correct interpretation of the QUR'AN, and entirely free from personal bias or selfish considerations, and must always follow the straight path prescribed by God, fearing or favoring no one, and making every decision and giving every order strictly in accordance with justice, equity and QUR'ANIC law, correctly understood and rightly interpreted. In short, he must never perform even a single act which is not in conformity with QUR'ANIC law, otherwise it could be argued that God, in having unequivocally and unconditionally commanded the Muslims to implicitly obey the ruler of the theocracy appointed by Him, had condoned that unlawful, unjust or incorrect order. In anticipation of this argument, the theologians have laid down that obedience is not due in matters of sin. But a flaw in this dogma is that in the relevant verse of the QUR'AN, the order to obey them is unconditional, and does not say that obedience is due only if their order is in conformity with God's law. This un-conditionality is based on the idea that the men of authority appointed by God, like the prophet to whom obedience is made obligatory, are the vicegerents of God on earth in the true sense of the word, and are so learned in law that they are sure not to commit any mistake or sin, in either their words or deeds. A second flaw is that this dogma of the ULEMA could be true only so far as it goes, but this is not far enough. Words and deeds can be of two kinds, namely (a) those words and deeds whose sinful nature is apparent on the surface, and (b) those whose sinful nature is not commonly known, and can be disclosed only by a close reading of the QUR'AN and its correct interpretation. Further compounding this problematical flaw of how to readily differentiate a ruler's sinful acts is that, just as ordinary people are loath to admit their



guilt even in glaring cases of sin, with some explanation always ready, so too rulers and men in authority. History does not record a single instance of a ruler having confessed his guilt before his subjects. NERON burnt Rome without remorse or regret, though Rome's are not burnt every day. In such glaring cases of tyrants who are also fools, sins may be obvious, but then it is rare to find tyranny combined with stupidity. Tyrants always have explanations ready to hand. With Muslim rulers the case was much more difficult. The QADIS and Muftis were at their beck and call to pander to their wishes by giving a "FATWA" legalizing their actions. I give below an English translation of an extract from "TARIKH AL-KHULAFAH" of JALAL-ED-DIN AS-SAYYUTI to illustrate my point:

"When HARUN AL-RASHID ascended the throne, he fell in love with a concubine of his father, who objected to his advance by urging that as she had shared a bed with his father, according to the QUR'ANIC law she could not lawfully submit to his embraces. He sent for the famous ABU YUSUF, pupil of Imam ABU HANIFA, and ordered him to find a means of making her lawful for him. ABU YUSUF told him to adopt the easiest course, which was not to believe that she had been the concubine of his father.... What is one to think of the QADI of the town, who allowed the king to indulge in his unlawful lust, and thus took the sin on his own neck? ABDALLAH IBN YUSUF says that once HARUN told his QADI ABU YUSUF that he had purchased a slave girl and wanted to have sexual connection with her before the prescribed period of "ISTIBRA", and asked him to devise a means of avoiding the Islamic law. The QADI replied that the device was to gift the girl to one of his sons, and then marry her. ISHAQ IBN RAHUYA says that one night, HARUN sent for ABU YUSUF, took a FATWA from him according to his desire, and ordered one hundred thousand DIRHAMS to be paid to the QADI by way of reward. ABU YUSUF prayed that the money should be paid to him at that very moment. HARUN asked his servant to pay the amount to the QADI there and then. The man said that it was night, the treasurer had gone home, and that all the gates of the town had been closed. ABU YUSUF said that the city gates had been closed even when he had been sent for. On his insistence, the money was then paid to the QADI".

The facts speak for themselves and fully demonstrate the impracticability of the dogma that there is no obedience in matters of sin. Sinful potentates can compel obedience even in matters of sin. The only conclusion is that this verse of the Holy QUR'AN is applicable only to those successors of Prophet who were created and intended by God to succeed Muhammad, and in whose nature both justice and knowledge were blended. The check on power, to be effective, must come from within; the check from without has always proved ineffective.

It is admitted by all Muslims that in the Islamic State, the real ruler is God, and the only law is His Book. But then why is it that in spite of God and His Book, there has never been Islamic rule in any Islamic country from the death of the Prophet up to the present time? All the Muslim historians agree on this point; however, they make an exception for the thirty-year period of rule of the first four Caliphs. This exception is based on religious

scruples, and not on the testimony of facts. Many instances may be cited to disprove this exception. To quote but one of them, was it justice to invade Persia, kill her inhabitants, loot their property and bring ill repute to their religion by pleading that it was in the interests of Islam, when Persia had given them no cause to justify the invasion? Was it justice to kill thousands of Muslims, simply because they had refused to pay the ZAKAT, when death was not the penalty for non-payment of ZAKAT? Anyhow, it is certain that strict, impartial justice is impossible for a man who depends for his authority on the votes of his partisans.

It is, therefore, patent that the head of a theocracy having the necessary qualifications can be selected and appointed by God alone. He is, of course, to be declared by the Prophet, as was the case with TALUT.

### **Point (8): Precedents of the Previous Prophets:**

The QUR'AN says that God's ways are the same as they have been with those who have gone before, and that "You will never find any change in God's ways (of dealing). Therefore, what God's ways have been with regard to the succession in the case of the Prophets before Muhammad is a very relevant question? An enquiry into those cases thoroughly disproves the Non-appointment Theory. Such accounts of the previous Prophets as were available have been very carefully collected and arranged by TABARI, IBN AL-ATHIR, AL-MAS'UDI, and ABU AL-FIDA in their Histories. Those Histories, the Bible and the QUR'AN are the authorities for what follows in this connection.

We learn that when Moses went to the mountain to "meet" God, he appointed his brother Aaron as his Caliph among the children of Israel to represent him during his absence. Moses prayed to God to associate Aaron with him in the work of his NUBUWWA. We further learn from the Bible that God selected Aaron and his sons out of all the Israelites, and appointed them as the representatives of Moses in the matter of officiating as priests at the altars. This reminds us of the prayer of Muhammad to God at the commencement of his ministry that He might associate Ali in the work of his mission, just as He had accepted the prayer of Moses regarding Aaron. The following table is prepared from the various historical books; it shows that each Prophet appointed his own brother, son or relative as his Caliph or successor after him.

Name of Prophet Nominee (and also nominator of successor) ADAM (His son, SETH) SETH (His son, ENOS (ANUSH) ENOS (His son, CAINAN) CAINAN (His son, MAHALALEEL) MAHALALEEL (His son, JARED) JARED (His son, ENOCH(IDRI) ENOCH (His son, METHUSELAH) METHUSELAH (His son, LAMECH) LAMECH (His son, NOAH) NOAH (His son, SHEM)

In the Bible, the message, which is thus transferred, is called "God's Covenant", and in Muslim theology it is called AL-WASIYYA. TABARI writes, "When death approached METHUSELAH, he nominated his son LAMECH as his successor, and transferred God's covenant to him". In the same manner, JACOB nominated YUSUF, one of his younger sons, and YUSUF appointed his brother YAHUDHA as his successor. The principle of heredity was carried to such an extent that the elder brothers of YUSUF,

who were by another mother, were not appointed, while YAHUDHA, who was by the same mother as YUSUF, was preferred. Job nominated his son as his successor. Christ also nominated his own successor. In "MURUJ AL-DAHAHB" of AL-MAS'UDI, we find a very relevant passage, which is translated as follows:

"This WASIYYA (God's Covenant) continued to be transferred from time to time, until God entrusted the NUR (Light) to ABD AL-MUTTALIB, and then to his son ABDALLAH. Here the Muslims differ; one party believes in "NASS", that is, express nomination by the Prophet Muhammad (P), and the other section believes that the people had the right to select the Caliph. Those who believe in the nomination by the Prophet are the SHI'AS of Ali and his children. They are of the opinion that the Prophet nominated Ali as his successor, and that in every age there is bound to be an Imam appointed under the express command of God; he is either a Prophet, as was the case before Muhammad, or the Prophet's WASI, as in the case of Ali. Those believing in selection by the people are the SUNNIS, including the MO'TAZILA, KHAWARIJ, MURJI'A and ZAIDIYYA, who believe that God and the Prophet delegated the power of appointing the Imam to the UMMA, and that there are intervals of many ages when there is no Imam".

This passage deserves careful consideration, as it clarifies many important points:

(a) It shows that the main divisions of the Muslims are only two, the SUNNIS who believe in the Non-appointment Theory, and the SHI'AS who believe in the Nomination Theory and maintain that the Prophet (P) designated Imam Ali as his immediate successor. (b) This division has been created only on the question of the Imamate or Caliphate.

(c) Notice the word "WASIYYA" in this passage. It is the same WASIYYA, which the Prophet wanted to set down in writing on his deathbed, but which UMAR prevented him from doing for obvious reasons. This will be narrated in its own place shortly.

(d) Notice the "NUR". In Muslim theological parlance, "NUR" is much more subtle and ethereal than "soul". It is generally spoken of as the source of the soul of those persons of a high, sublime and celestial nature who are intended by God to be far ahead of ordinary people in spiritual matters. It is impossible to define it more accurately or to know its nature more exactly. And no wonder, because science, in spite of the miraculous discoveries and inventions that it has made, still does not know exactly what light is, beyond the fact that it comes to us from bodies which themselves give out light, such as the sun, the stars and some meteors in the heavens, and from burning substances on earth. Here it refers to the Prophets and their Caliphs. Now remember the saying of the Prophet (P) "I and Ali are portions of the same NUR". I will have to come back to this saying later.

(e) Note the belief of the majority section that there are many intervals when there is no Imam of the Muslims, and contrast it with the recognized saying of the Prophet that the man, who dies without recognizing and acknowledging the Imam of his time, dies the death of a heathen. The belief in intervals without any Imam is therefore wrong, as it is in direct conflict

with this saying of the Prophet, which is admitted to be genuine by the whole of the UMMA. If this belief is proved to be wrong, then the main belief of which it is a corollary, that is, the Non-appointment Theory, must also be wrong.

If the reader belong to that class of "learned" people who do not believe in God, Prophets, God's Covenant, and so on, it is have no matter for the present argument. The prophet, Muhammad (P), believed in all these things, and we are concerned only with what in all probability Muhammad did, or should be presumed to have done, considering his knowledge and beliefs, and what God (whose attributed were related to us by the Prophet, one of which is that his orders, dispensations, laws and rules are immutable and liable to neither conflict nor contradiction with each other) did in the case of the succession to Muhammad, or should be presumed in all probability to have done in the matter. Can anyone honestly say that with these precedents before him and his UMMA, he did not nominate his successor? Reason refuses to believe it. Did God change his own established law in this solitary case? I for one could not believe so.

### **Point (9): The Electors and the Candidates - What the Prophet Thought to them:**

To secure ideal results at an election, the electors, or at least the majority of them, must be scrupulously honest, selfless, intelligent, sufficiently educated to realize the requirements of the office for which they have gathered to elect a person, and must be entirely without bias or selfish motives, so that they may coolly, calmly and dispassionately discuss and discriminate between the qualifications of all the persons from whom they are to elect the most able. The names and information about the abilities of the candidates should also be in front of them. We shall come to see the qualities of the electors of the SAQIFA, and their propensity or ability to select the most suitable person to the Caliphate, when we come to narrate that momentous event, which had such a potent influence on the course and shape of Islamic history, and which entirely changed the character of Islamic theology through the adverse influence of this political coup d'etat. UMAR, realizing the full significance of the action, exhorted the people not to emulate it in future; but it was so closely in consonance with the tendencies of the flesh that in spite of this exhortation, political maneuvers on the lines of this coup d'etat became the order of the day. Each successful party tried to justify its actions from the principles deducible from this first great political act of the companions of the Prophet (P). Muslim theology thus became subject to many and various changes, conflicts and contradictions, as those political actions, based on the exigencies of the moment, were bound to be contradictory and conflicting, and the actors had thus to mould the shape of Muslim theology to suit their own ends. Suffice it to say here that the Prophet knew full well that the majority of his companions were not up to his standard, and were quite unfit to elect the head of this theocracy, and that therefore he should not leave this matter of far reaching consequences to their own will.

Every book wherein the sayings of the Prophet have been collected contains a chapter headed "KITAB AL-FITAN" containing the Prophet's predictions, and describing the men left behind on his death. They are more in the nature of foresight than prophecy. Even "SAHIH AL-BUKHARI" has this ominous chapter. I quote from it very briefly below.

The Prophet said: "Tumult, oppression and faithlessness will arise when I am gone; they will attract towards themselves every man that stops to look at them".

Looking down from a hillock, the Prophet said: "I see what you do not see. I see tumult, oppression and tyranny entering your houses as do the drops of rain".

"Just after my death, confusion, tumult, oppression and faithlessness will arise and surge like waves of the sea. They will be as dark as the darkest night".

(See also in this connection the HADITH of HAUD, mentioned on pages 24-25 of this book). The Prophet said: "Just after me, there will come rulers who will lead you to ungodliness and heathenism if you obey them, and they will kill you if you refuse to obey them".

The Prophet said "After my death, my children will literally meet usurpation, oppression and assassination at the hands of my UMMA". The Prophet likened his UMMA to that of Moses, who asked Aaron to make a god for them when Moses had gone to the Mount to meet God; the Prophet added that they would commit all sorts of iniquities that had been committed by the UMMA before them. It is Imam Ali who will drive away the guilty companions from the Prophet's HAUD.

The Prophet said: "By God, after me, tumult, oppression and iniquities will arise from this mosque of mine". This means that people would gather there on the pretext of saying prayers, but would collude with each other to deprive his children of their rights. The Prophet said: "After my death, there will come a time when a man will be Muslim in the morning, and KAFIR in the evening, MO'MIN in the evening and KAFIR in the morning, and they will sell their faith very cheaply".

I ask you in the name of justice and equity whether the Prophet was likely to leave the question of his successor to the tender mercies of such people, and whether he would have been unconcerned as to who out of such people would succeed him.

### **Point (10): The Dangers of Leaving the Question of Succession to the Votes of the People and the Prophet's Knowledge of those Dangers:**

In view of the condition of the people, as related above in the words of the Prophet himself, the danger of leaving the succession to be made the plaything of trivial jealousies and individual ambitions must have been obvious to the Prophet (P). The fact that in the case of the majority of the people the training and education received from the Prophet was only a veneer over their native ungodliness and refractoriness, as observed by various writers and proved by subsequent events, was of course known to the Prophet, as has been shown above. S.KHUDA BAKHSH of

BANKEPUR says: "The most striding feature in the character of the Arabs is their nervous excitability; the Arab character may accordingly be divided into two classes.

In the one, the wild, unrestrained BEDWIN disposition shows itself. Its characteristics are greed, fondness for plunder, excessive sensuality, and an unrefined pride. In the more enlightened nature, where these wild impulses were suppressed or controlled by a more highly developed sense of morality, one finds a deep pervading melancholy, insensibly passing into religious fervor and ecstasy.... We notice the two aspects of the Arab character in the companions of the Prophet. The majority of the companions fall under the first heading; gold and property were everything to them. The most distinguished companions of the Prophet, especially those nominated by UMAR to the Council of Regency, acquired immense wealth".

Referring to the change wrought by the QUR'AN and Muhammad's teachings, AL-ALLAMA ENAYAT ALLAH AL-MASHRIQI writes in his "TADHKIRA".

"All this was the undeniable miracle wrought by Islam and the QUR'AN. But no one could change the nature and character of the Arabs. Those habits and peculiarities of character, which had been ingrained in their nature for thousands and thousands of years, could not leave them in such a short time. Those paganistic ideas, which had become part of their nature for aeons could not but leave their effect on them. Under the influence of the monotheistic and orthodox teachings of the QUR'AN, they could change the superficial form of their rituals and customs and could also appear to have left their forefathers' beliefs and traditions outwardly; but they could give up only outwardly their family disputes and tribal feuds.

They could also take leave, though very reluctantly, of their personal pride in their beauty of speech; but they could in no case change their nature inclinations and habits of thought.... They were in fact the same superstitious dwellers of that very land, and had been bred and brought up in that very atmosphere of feuds, disputes and factions, as the Israelites who, after accepting the teachings of Moses, had discarded them during his short absence on the mountain of Sinai, and had begun to worship the calf in place of the true God".

Another, German, scholar says:

"In Arabia, the transformation of conditions had been effected far too rapidly and radically to alter the Arab nature". S.KHUDA BAKHSH again:

"The pagan Arab still lurked behind the thin veneer of Islam. He could not imagine Muhammad's prohibition of wine, which according to the Arab was the fountain of honor, virtue, bravery and generosity.... It seems that the Arabs did not very scrupulously observe the laws of the Prophet concerning matrimony and the relation of the sexes".

MAWLAWI SHIBLI says that in the case of a majority of the Companions, the only incentive to war against the infidels was not the love of Islam but the love of booty ("GHANIMA"). He recites many instances of their improper and inordinate indulgence in this passion. Once an army was sent by the prophet to fight a tribe of the infidels. One man was walking ahead, when a man of the enemy tribe met him, and asked if there was any



means of escaping their fate. He replied that it was the acceptance of Islam. The entire tribe adopted this method, and the war was averted. The whole army was greatly incensed against the man who had suggested this remedy, as they were balked of their prize, namely the booty. When the prophet was apprised of this, he approved the conduct of the man. Here is yet another instance. Once they were reduced to great straits. They espied a flock of goats belonging to the infidels, and looted it, killing the goats. When the flesh was being cooked on the fire, the prophet was informed about it. He came to the spot and threw away the contents of the pots, saying that the looted property was as unlawful as the dead animals' flesh. Another example is the battle of HUNAIN, which was lost because the Muslim soldiers occupied their selves with looting.

It is obvious that it was very dangerous to leave question of the succession to be solved by such people through election, and that the prophet knew this.

**Points (11) & (12):**

These have been dealt with above under the other points.

## Chapter Five: The Nomination

To appreciate fully how wisely and cautiously the delicate problem of the nomination was handled by the prophet, we must realize the awkward situation created for him by his enemies and by the attitude of his companions towards this problem. From the very beginning, QURAISH had accused Muhammad of seeking personal aggrandizement in the garb of a prophet, and had been harping upon this theme ever since the message was announced.

What was worse, among his own followers there had arisen a faction which had an eye on the throne, and were ready to exploit any rumor or murmuring against the prophet and his mission. And the nomination of Ali, which appeared to them to amount to the perpetuation of rule in his family, was a theme well worth building a huge edifice of calumny and vilification on.

The prophet (P) knew full well that they were likely to stop at nothing, however damaging to the interests of Islam, to achieve their object. As a matter of fact, when the nomination became well known it at once brought about a fusion between these two parties, that is, the pagan Arabs with their veneration of Islam, generally known as the MUNAFIQIN, and the party of ambitious companions of the prophet who were determined to make a bid for the throne. The existence of such a party among his followers, and the prophet's knowledge of it, have already been discussed.

The prophet (p) therefore had to take every step in this direction with a caution bordering on hesitation. But at the same time he had to proceed in the matter as it was imperative for the continuance and development in the right direction of his mission, which, as he honestly believed, was to endure for all time to come. The message could not be completely and entirely executed unless and until he had made arrangements for its continuance after his death.

Therefore, keeping in view all these things, the prophet proceeded cautiously but firmly and with undaunted determination. His method, which was characterized by caution, clarity and thoroughness was this; to prepare the people for the final announcement, he declared on every proper occasion that in Ali were combined those qualities of head and heart -and indeed he possessed those requirements- which are essential and indispensable for a successor of the last of the prophets. In between these declarations, he also made statements indicating, sometimes by implication, sometimes expressly, that Ali was to succeed him.

To refute his enemies and confound the MUNAFIQIN, it was necessary to establish beyond all doubt that Ali's appointment was not due to nepotism or a selfish desire for personal or family aggrandizement. This object was achieved by announcing Ali's appointment at the very beginning of his ministry at MAKKA, when no one could dream of a worldly position for Muhammad, not to speak of an empire, when forlorn and forsaken he wandered from place to place meeting with derision and scorn everywhere, and when his very life was in danger. This announcement came at a time when the great events of his life were yet to follow; he was to be pursued and persecuted from place to place; he was to have to seek the protection of

his uncle Abu TALIB, without which his life was in danger; he, with all the children of HASHIM, was to be confined in a cave and to be excommunicated. "After a time the situation became intolerable. The resources of the believers who were independent were insufficient to support the strain of their starving brethren, nor was the life of the latter endurable, amid ceaseless vexations and persecutions". In the end, life at MAKKA became so intolerable that flight from the place was thought the only means of safety. All these events were yet to come when this nomination was made. The announcement of Imam Ali's nomination as a Vizier and successor of Muhammad (p), coming as it did at a time when despair and disappointment stared Muhammad in the face, proves conclusively the sincerity of his heart and the truth of his mission. We proceed to describe this very important event.

### **THE ANNOUNCEMENT AT THE FEAST:**

Ali's Caliphate was announced at the same meeting and at the same time, as the prophet's own NUBUWWA was announced. This was done under express divine command. I refer to SURA XXVI, 213, which translated into English runs as follows: "Admonish thy nearest relations". Muhammad had not as yet publicly announced his mission, for he could not do so without God's permission. Now this permission had been given, but it was restricted to his nearest relatives. I quote from ABU AL-FIDA?

"For the first three years, the prophet carried on his work of conversion secretly. After that, God commanded his Prophet to invite people openly. This AYA was therefore revealed to the Prophet (P). Upon this, he sent for Imam Ali and asked him to prepare food consisting of goat meat and milk and invite all the children of ABD AL-MOTALIB, so that he might talk to them and convey to them God's message. Ali did so; they numbered about forty persons, including the Prophet's uncles, ABU TALIB, HAMZA and ABBAS.... When those persons had finished eating, the Prophet wanted to speak to them; but ABU LAHAB forestalled him, and the assembly dispersed without hearing Muhammad. The Prophet (P) asked Imam Ali to do the same thing on the following day. When they had finished eating, Muhammad spoke to them thus; "In the whole of Arabia, I do not know anyone who has brought better things to his nation than what I have brought to you, which is good both for this world and the next. Verily God has commanded me to incite you to Him. Who is there among you ready and willing to assist me and share my burden in this mission of mine, and be my vizier, my colleague, my WASI, and my KHALIFA". All of them remained silent. Then Ali, who was the youngest of all, stood up and said, "Oh Prophet of God, I am prepared to be your vizier, to share your burden with you, and be your KHALIFA". Upon this the Prophet (P) caught hold of the neck of Imam Ali and said, "Oh people, this Ali is my colleague, my WASI, and my KHALIFA. You are all to hearken unto him and obey him". All of them got up laughing, and turning to ABU TALIB, they said, "Listen to thy son and obey him!".

This is a very important matter and must be given due weight. The unequivocal term KHALIFA should be notices. After that solemn declaration of nomination, coming as it did in the form of an offer being

accepted, did anything unusual happen to cancel it? Its cancellation without good cause would have been very damaging to the reputation of a Prophet who claimed God's inspiration for his words; for of what use was that inspiration if it failed him on this momentous occasion and in this very important matter, arranged as it was under God's command? From Muhammad's circumspective nature, it is evident that he would not have made this declaration in respect of a boy in his teens, especially in the presence of the elders of the family, many of whom were in the habit of deriding him and his uncles, among whom was the father of Imam Ali himself, unless he had been driven to do so God's command. The evidence that this nomination and its announcement were under the command of God is inherent in the very nature of the nomination itself.

Who except God could have known at that time that this boy would prove himself worthy of the position that was being reserved for him? At a time when nothing certain could be known about Ali's character and qualities, he being yet a raw youth, Muhammad says with a certainty that is obviously prophetic that Ali is his vizier, WASI, KHALIFA and a sharer in the great responsibility that has been placed on his own shoulders. What if in later years Ali turned out to be a coward, running after the joys of this world and shunning the hardships and toils of warfare, lukewarm, in his profession of the faith like so many others, and avoiding the brunt of battle, fleeing for his life as others had? Friend and foe alike would have tauntingly said that the God of Muhammad could not foresee of what stuff the successor of Muhammad had been made. But the events of Ali's life that took place in the ensuing years, being quite in keeping with this prophetic declaration, clearly prove that the declaration was one of the ways in which "God fulfils Himself".

The story of his life shows that Imam Ali completely fulfilled the promise that he had made to the Prophet (P) at the Feast. Was the Prophet to break his own promise, and leave the succession to the chances of an election? Were there for that matter any grounds to break that solemn promise? Two objections may be anticipated here. Firstly, the assembly was a limited one comprising only the relatives, and so the whole UMMA cannot be bound by the declaration. Secondly, a successor should be chosen only towards the end, when the true character of every man is pretty well known, and when the mission is just entering its first stage. I will proceed to meet both these objections.

Regarding the first objection, God had willed that Muhammad's successor should be from among the nearest of kin. The same principle had been observed by the previous prophets, and there were no grounds for deviating from that well-established rule, which among other reasons had the law of transmission through heredity in its favor. It has now been established that experience and habits pass on from father to son through the hereditary process. Anyhow, I need not pursue this subject any further, as I have another mathematically exact argument that will carry conviction to even a biased mind. At the momentous meeting of the SAQIFA where ABU BAKR was declared Caliph through the efforts of UMAR, this latter, cornered from every side, took refuge not in the Book of God but in the

HADITH of the prophet, and declared that the prophet had said that the Imams (leaders of the Islamic Nation) must only be from the tribe of QURAISH. This was to meet the arguments of the ANSAR, who had been maintaining that the Caliph should be from them. At the time of appointing the SHURA, UMAR said that the ANSAR had no claim to the Caliphate. But why not? The reason given by ABU BAKR at the SAQIFA was that it was because the prophet did not belong to that tribe. If this principle is accepted, and there is no reason why it should not be as it effectively silenced the ANSAR at that critical moment, then it must also devolve from within the tribe to the family, and from within the family to the nearest relative.

I turn now to the second of the above objections. This earliest announcement was absolutely essential. It served many purposes, and I invite attention to the following.

1. The situation pertaining to crown princes in all monarchies is so well known that little needs to be said about it. The prince designated as the crown prince is given special education to prepare him for the high position that he is to fill and the onerous duties he will have to discharge.

2. This earliest announcement at a time when there was no kingdom and thus no attached worldly glamour prevented any doubts or sinister suspicions from crossing the minds of friends or foes when the announcement was finally made at the place called KHUM, after an empire had been established.

3. It served as a clear demonstration of the truth and genuineness of the NUBUWWA of Muhammad, as no one except a prophet could have known at that time this boy of fourteen would prove himself worthy of this great task being entrusted to him at such a tender age.

### **The Condition For The Making Of an Ideal Caliph**

For the efficient running of an institution, it is absolutely essential that the successor, who follows the founder in the management of that institution, be an exact similitude of the founder, a mirror in which he is reflected in his true exactness, a faithful facsimile. That Ali fulfilled this condition to the greatest possible extent was disclosed by the prophet in the following sayings. I have divided these sayings into four sections.

#### **1. HADITH AL-NUR:**

The prophet (p) said:

"Ali and I have been created out of the same NUR. This NUR has been engaged in worshipping God on the right side of His throne for fourteen thousand years before the birth of Adam. After his birth, this NUR was being transferred from the same parents, all of whom were immaculate, until finally it was deposited in the back of ABD AL-MUTTALIB, whence it was divided in two; half of it went to my father ABDALLAH of whom I was born, and the other half was transferred to ABU TALIB of whom Ali was born".

I have already explained what "NUR" means in Muslim theological parlance. The language of this HADITH is no doubt unintelligible to those born and brought up under the "modern" atmosphere of atheism. But this

atheism is of a fairly recent growth. Not so long ago, even in the latter half of the nineteenth century, European philosophers could write in language such as this; "All truly historical events are brought about by God's raising up of gifted men, or "geniuses", and breathing into them his own light and life". What is this light? The same NUR spoken of in this HADITH.

It is comparatively recently that Frederick Von Schlegel wrote; "For this organic frame of the human body, which has become a body of death, is still endowed with many and wonderful powers, and still encloses the hidden light of its celestial origin". What is this celestial origin? This same NUR. Nor should those who claim to have understood and appreciated the intricate problem of "three-in-one-and-one-in-three" and to know the nature of the "Father" from the nature of the "Son" or the "Holy Ghost", look askance at those who believe in this theory of NUR. Even in this modern age, and even in Europe, we find an increasing number of people who believe in the existence of the soul after the death of the body. If the soul can exist after death, it must have existed before birth. That state of the soul before the birth of its body is what is termed NUR in Muslim theology.

As to worshipping God before the birth of the body which it was to inhabit, we must admit that the problem of the "chance of birth" has not so far been satisfactorily resolved; why one soul should be "born" into a royal family and another into a beggar's hut; how it is that one man is born a genius and another a dunce; or one man born with virtuous proclivities and another with vicious propensities. How is this to be explained?

Brahmanism purports to explain it by means of a theory called "transmigration of souls". The modern philosopher is almost silent over the main problem, though he conjectures that transmission of vice and virtue may be through the law of heredity. The former is a very defective explanation, and the later is no explanation at all. Heredity does not take into account the main problem concerning the "chance of birth". As to vice and virtue, it may explain their existence in the sons, but how they first came into the nature of the fathers it does not say. Why should Cain feel a desire in his heart to kill his brother Abel, and why should Abel not raise his hand against his brother? The theory of heredity cannot explain it.

To let things remain stationary is not the law of God. Is it not reasonable belief that before its birth in a body, the soul had a sphere of activities, and that the differences of birth are the result of those activities?

## **2. Brothers in this World and the Next:**

Earlier at MAKKA, and later on his arrival at Medina, the Prophet (P) declared the formation of fraternal relationships among his companions. He also included himself in this. It involved one man being proclaimed to be the brother of another. The chief consideration in pairing the brothers was their similarity of character and mental capacity; I quote below the English version of a passage from the "Life of Muhammad" by IBN-ISHAQ, as arranged by IBN HISHAM, the earliest work extant on Muhammad.

"Saying "Let you be brothers, one man a brother of the other", the Prophet (P) caught hold of the hand of Imam Ali, and said, "This is my brother". Thus, the Prophet (P) who was the head of all the Prophets, the



leader of the virtuous, and the messenger of God, having no like of his among the creatures of God, became the brother of Imam Ali".

IBN-ISHAQ then goes on to mention who was the brother of whom JA'FAR, brother of Imam Ali, though in ABYSSINIA at the time, was made the brother of MA'ADH and HAMZA, the uncle of the Prophet, was made the brother of ZAID, a freedman. ABU BAKR was made the brother of "UTBA", son of MALIK, and so on.

IBN-HIJIR AL-ASCALANI has written a very good note about this event.

MAWLAWI HAFIZ MUHAMMAD ALI HAIDAR HANAFLI, a SUNNI historian, says "The word "MU'AKHAT" means brothers. This is a proof of the fact that the two men who have been made brothers are similar in character and equal in qualities". On two occasions, once at MAKKA and again at Medina, the Prophet (P) made Imam Ali his brother. This is an established fact, and every historian has mentioned it.

This event must be given the weight it deserves. It clearly indicates the Prophet's scheme to install Ali in his place. I would like to point out, as an aside, the manner in which the historians of the majority section write their histories. MAWLAWI SHIBLI, that great historian of India, who has written his histories simply to distort and mould the facts in order to suit or support his religious beliefs, has prepared a statement showing who was made the brother of whom, and a footnote says that his statement has been prepared from the "SIRA" of IBN HISHAM. But significantly enough, the names of Ali, HAMZA and JA'FAR, though given in IBN HISHAM'S original book, are omitted from this statement.

The reason why is obvious; MAWLAWI SHIBLI has mentioned this event in such a way as will minimize its importance. He means to convey instead the idea that this was simply a temporary arrangement to provide for the homeless MUHAJIRIN who had come from MAKKA, and who in their turn educated the ANSAR in the tenets of Islam by example. Had the learned "historian" mentioned Ali, JA'FAR and HAMZA in this statement, he would not have been able to propound his pet theories intended to minimize the importance of this event.

HAMZA was made a brother of ZAID, freedman of the Prophet (P), and both were MUHAJIRIN; JA'FAR was not in need of help from MA'ADH IBN JABAL, whose brother he was declared to be, as JA'FAR was in ABYSSINIA at that time. Thus neither the question of education nor that of support arises here. Imam Ali and the Prophet (P) were both MUHAJIRIN, yet Imam Ali was not paired with any one of the ANSAR of Medina. This was something far higher than mere relationship; JA'FAR and Ali were real brothers, yet they were not made brothers at this function. HAMZA too was not given to anyone of his own kin. Now it is clear as day why the great historian of Muslim India did not mention JA'FAR, Ali and HAMZA in his statement, even though their names appear in the original book of IBN HISHAM.

### **3. "Both as One":**

The Prophet (P) said:

"Ali is from me and I from Ali, and no one can execute this mission of mine except Ali or I".

"He who abandons Ali abandons me, and who abandons me abandons God".

"He who is spiteful towards Ali is spiteful towards me, and he who is spiteful towards me is a KAFIR".

"He who obeys me obeys God, and he who disobeys me disobeys God; and he, Oh Ali, who obeys you obeys me, and he who disobeys you disobeys me".

"He who causes pain to Ali causes pain to me".

"He who curses Ali, in fact curses me".

"He who deprecates Ali deprecates me".

#### **4. Exhortation to Love Ali"**

We often hear such expressions as "love of God", "love of the Prophet (P)", "love of one's leader", "love of one's parents". Let us see what love of a superior implies. It implies the following:

1. To obey his orders willingly and with pleasure.
2. To follow his actions with a view to imitating his conduct.
3. To be always ready to please him, and never to think of displeasing him.
4. To yield to him what he wants.
5. Never to give him any cause of grief, sorrow or pain.

When the Prophet (P) required his UMMA to love Imam Ali, he meant all these things. He wanted them to obey and follow Imam Ali, to yield themselves entirely to his will, and never to do anything that would cause him pain or sorrow. In view of the Prophet's exhortations, they ought not to have disputed the Caliphate with Imam Ali. How these orders of the Prophet were obeyed by the UMMA we all know. The Prophet (P) said:

"He who loves Ali loves me, and he who loves me loves God. He who offends Ali offends me, and he who offends me offends God". "One who desires to live a life like mine, and to die a death like mine, and then to dwell in the abode of everlasting bliss, let him love Ali son of ABU TALIB, as he will never lead you away from the right path, and will never lead you into error". (Addressing Imam Ali) "No one but a true faith, and enmity against thee is hypocrisy to Islam. The first person to enter paradise will be thy friend, and the first person to enter hell will be thy enemy. Happy is he who loves thee, and woe to thy enemy".

"He who loves Ali during his life and also after his death will be blessed by God with peace and protection against the fire".

During the time of the Prophet (P), people used to distinguish the MUNAFIQ from the true Muslim by the former's enmity to Ali (see note 44); and the Prophet (P) used to say that but for Imam Ali, the true Muslims would not be known after his death (see note 42). This is obvious, because it was love of Ali, alone which discriminated between the Muslim and the MUNAFIQ, as the latter could never love Ali. The question naturally arises as to why this was so, and why the love of Muhammad should not be the distinguishing criterion; for if loving anyone were to be a precondition of salvation, why would it not be love of the Prophet himself?

It is on the basis of these sayings that the critics are wont to say that the SHI'AS have installed Imam Ali in the place of God and the Prophet (P). These sayings are found in the books of the Sunnis, and yet the SHI'AS are blamed for them. I proceed to answer their objection.

The MUNAFIQIN, who though really heathen at heart concealed their inner feelings under an outward show of Islam, are frequently mentioned in the QUR'AN. Their contrivances for concealment were so complete that sometimes it was very difficult to know them, and the QUR'ANIC revelations became necessary for apprising the Muslims of their machinations. These MUNAFIQIN were always on the lookout for opportunities to spread disaffection against the Prophet (P). The efforts of the Prophet (P) to secure Imam Ali's succession, or more accurately his sayings in appreciation of Imam Ali, provided them with a good opportunity; they argued with much vehemence that Muhammad's claim to inspiration from one high was only a cloak to cover his ardent desire to acquire an empire for himself and his family. This way of talking, which was very appealing to the Arab nature, saturated as it was with tribal jealousy and love of feuds, also provided a good handle to the faction that was bent on taking the Prophet's place after his demise. The identity of interests, namely the undoing of Muhammad's work, though for different motives, and the identity of their methods for achieving that object, that is, by dislodging Ali from the position which the Prophet had allotted him to ensure the power, continuity and progress of Islam in the right direction, made them join hands in the pursuit of their common objective. There were also other parties who were animated with strong feelings of animosity against Ali, whom I have described in Chapter Three of this book. Thus the enmity of Imam Ali was common to all these parties.

Imam Ali had not had any private dealings with them; the only grounds for this hatred and enmity was that Imam Ali had served Islam, the Prophet (P), and God with a zeal and devotion that totally and finally defeated paganism, and won everlasting victory for Islam. A detailed account of the battles fought by Imam Ali for Islam is given in Chapter Seven of this book. Suffice it to say here that by his selfless devotion in the cause of God and the Prophet (P), Ali had earned himself the deadliest and everlasting enmity of these enemies of Islam, who looked upon him as the sole cause of their misfortunes and miseries.

No doubt they were in the first instance the enemies of Muhammad (P) and Islam, but for obvious reasons it was not safe for them to express those feelings; and at this stage it had become entirely useless for them to give vent to their emotions against the Prophet and Islam, as no hope remained for them to begin the fight afresh. They had, therefore, to conceal their feelings, and on account of this they could not be distinguished from the true believers. But in the case of Imam Ali they had no such need to conceal their feelings of hatred and enmity from the common Muslims. Here the case was quite the contrary; they could not gain their object unless and until they disseminated, by propaganda and intrigue, all those "evil" consequences which in their opinion would result from Imam Ali's taking the place of Muhammad (P), such as the likelihood of Islam becoming

ingrained in the nature of men in its purity and thereby ensuring its permanency.

That was an eventuality, which they could not conceive without horror and anguish. In the case of the Prophet (P), they could not show their hostility for fear of bringing the wrath of the whole nation on their heads. In the case of Imam Ali however, there was no such impediment. They were the enemies of the Prophet and Islam, but without Imam Ali they could not be known. The love of Ali was therefore the touchstone by means of which the genuineness of a man's faith could be tested. IBLIS (Satan) was turned out of paradise and doomed to everlasting perdition because he refused to bow before Adam when ordered to do so by God, maintaining that he was superior to Adam. He never refused to kneel before God, whom he always acknowledged as his Lord. It does not follow that Adam was equal to or greater than God. Similarly, their refusal to acknowledge Imam Ali as the rightful successor of the Prophet meant disobedience to the orders of the Prophet and God.

On the other hand, the love of and submission to Imam Ali, and the acknowledgment of him as the rightful successor of Muhammad (P), in spite of the attraction of worldly gains and advancement in the opposite camp, indicated an unflinching belief in the prophet-hood of Muhammad and a staunch faith in his infallibility as a messenger of God. It can therefore be rightly said that the love of hatred of Ali, more than anything else, has correctly exposed the innermost recesses of the Muslims' hearts, both then and for all time to come.

## **MUHAMMAD'S TREATMENT OF ALI AS HIS HEIR AND SUCCESSOR:**

### **1. Education:**

In this day and age, no long or labored dissertation is required to prove the advantages of an early education and training over a later one. First impressions become ingrained in nature, later images are faint and fading; the former are indelible, the latter liable to be washed away by any storm that blows. Anxious, therefore, to train Ali under his own eyes, Muhammad (P), who had evinced a peculiar interest in him right from the time of his birth (which took place inside the HARAM of the KA'BA under the express directions of the Prophet to Ali's mother when she had felt the onset of travails while engaged in performing the religious circuits of the KA'BA, took Ali from his parents when he was an infant of four or five years, and trained him and brought him up in his own house as his own child. The historians rightly remark that this early training under the very eyes of the Prophet was one of those blessings of God to Ali in which none else shared.

It is true that at the time of Ali's birth and education, Muhammad (P) had not yet proclaimed his Prophet-hood. But both the Bible and the QUR'AN say that the Prophets are Prophets from the moment of their birth. It is immaterial at what point in their life they are called upon to declare themselves to the world as the chosen Prophets of God. Muhammad himself is known to have said that he was a Prophet before Adam's soul had been joined to his body. The QUR'AN declares in unambiguous terms that the

Prophets were given their powers as Prophets at birth. It was as a baby just born that Christ spoke up for the innocence of his mother and declared that he had been given the knowledge and the Book. The Gospel of St Matthew tells us of the prodigies that attended the birth of Christ. The declaring of Ali's succession simultaneously with the announcement of his own Prophet-hood at the meeting of the family members ("Feast of the Relatives") showed clearly that the two were coeval.

## **2. Substitution on the Bed on the Night of HIJRA:**

When threat and persuasion failed to check the advance of the Prophet in his mission, QURAISH assembled in the town hall to devise ways and means to do away with Muhammad. ABU SUFIAN was the soul of this conspiracy. It was suggested by an old man, and finally agreed to, that a number of young men chosen from different families should plunge their swords simultaneously into Muhammad's chest, so that the responsibility for the murder would lie upon all the families, and the relations of Muhammad would be unable to avenge it. Some youths were selected for the sanguinary deed. MR. AMIR ALI says, "As the night advanced, the assassins posted themselves around the Prophet's dwelling. Thus they watched all night, waiting to murder him when he left his house in the early dawn, peeping now and then through a hole in the door to make sure that he still lay on his bed".

He then goes on to say, "In order to keep the attention of the assassins fixed upon the bed, Muhammad put his own green garment upon the devoted and faithful Ali, bade him lie on his bed, and escaped as David had escaped, through the windows". Ali slept soundly, taking no account of what was happening outside. The crowd kept throwing stones and bricks throughout the night. In the early morning they rushed into the house, and were greatly incensed at finding Imam Ali instead of Muhammad (P). They were greatly enraged at Imam Ali, through whose agency Muhammad had escaped.

This rage resulting from the failure of their scheme was greatly heightened by a sense of having been duped, and the person who had been the chief instrument of all this discomfiture was before them. All honor is thus due to Imam Ali for his devotedness and faithfulness in courting death in order to protect the Prophet (P), and thereby save Islam. The majority section of the Islamic Nation would have us believe that the Prophet (P) forgot all these sacrifices of Imam Ali, as well as the promise he had made him in his announcement at the Feast of the Relatives, and that when the time came for rewarding merit and selecting the right person to lead the nation, he left Imam Ali in the lurch by keeping a meaningless silence on the question. The angry crowd asked Imam Ali where Muhammad was. Undaunted by their numbers and unmoved by their threats, the future conqueror of Khyber and HUNAIN replied, "Did you entrust Muhammad to me that now you want him back from me?" overawed by this unprecedented defiance of danger and matchless display of courage, the crowd retreated. The Prophet (P) had asked Imam Ali to return the deposits that had been entrusted to his care by the people to their owners. Imam Ali remained at

MAKKA for three days for this purpose, and having completed the task joined his illustrious cousin at Medina.

ABU BAKR was not aware of the Prophet's having left MAKKA on that night. After the Prophet had gone, he came to his house, and finding Imam Ali in his bed, asked him where Muhammad was. Imam Ali replied that he had proceeded towards the cave of THAUR, and that if he wanted to see him he should go there. ABU BAKR, therefore, proceeded in that direction in haste. When the Prophet heard the sound of his footsteps, he quickened his pace, thinking that some enemy had come in pursuit, as he had not anticipated the arrival of ABU BAKR. He increased his speed so much that his feet began to bleed. ABU BAKR, realizing this, raised his voice. The Prophet, now knowing that it was ABU BAKR, stopped. It was no use sending him back, so he took him with himself into the cave. This stands to reason; it was not a thing to be bruited about, for strictest secrecy was the soul of the whole scheme. It was also a matter of far-reaching consequences and involving unknown dangers. It could not be undertaken by the Prophet (P), who claimed direct union with God, without God's express commands. Muslim historians and traditions are unanimous in saying that after the meeting of QURAISH when this deadly scheme was decided upon, and when the selected youths set out to take up their positions in front of the Prophet's house, JABRA'IL appeared to Muhammad with a message from God, informing him of the designs of QURAISH and asking him not to sleep in his bed that night; he also commanded him to undertake the HIJRA directly. Muhammad (P) made up his mind at once, and asked Imam Ali to sleep in his bed that night, and then come to Medina after discharging the Prophet's debts and returning to their owners the deposits which they had entrusted to him.

In the QUR'AN this plan is ascribed to God Himself. It is obvious that under the circumstances no time was left to go to ABU BAKR'S house, the way to which must have been infested by the Prophet's enemies, who were keeping a watch on him. The saying that it was at ABU BAKR'S house that the two camels were provided, and that the Prophet and ABU BAKR started out from the latter's house by camel, is ascribed to A'ISHA. This is highly improbable under the circumstances then prevailing. A departure on camelback would have drawn everyone's attention to their going. The fact is that the camels were brought to them at the cave when they were leaving it, and the Prophet took one only after first paying for it. Furthermore, AISHA'S narrations in such matters are looked on with suspicion by MARGOLIOUTH. The fact that the two were found in the cave has lent color to this theory, which in fact is incorrect.

The following AYA was revealed in praise of Imam Ali, who saved the Prophet at the risk of his own life: "Among the people, there is a man who sells his life to earn the pleasure of God, and God is full of kindness to His devotees". (SURA,VIII. 207). All commentators of the QUR'AN are agreed that this verse refers to Imam Ali, and is in his praise.



### **3. The Closing of the Doors to the Mosque from the Houses of all the Companions except Imam Ali:**

The Prophet (P) and his companions had built their houses round the mosque and opening into it. Thus ingress to and egress from their houses was through the mosque, which had become, as it were, a part of the houses. Under the Islamic SHARI'A, a man is considered to be impure after nocturnal emissions or coition until he makes the ablution in the prescribed form. It was considered improper that the Companions should pollute the mosque by entering it in this impure condition.

They were therefore ordered to close off the doors opening into the mosque, and open up new doors on the other side. However, the Prophet (P) and Imam Ali were exempted from this order. This exception in favor of Imam Ali greatly annoyed the other Companions, and gave the MUNAFIQIN a chance to sow disaffection among them.

They openly criticized the Prophet for letting the door of Ali's house remain open. This disaffection was so great that the prophet had to tell them from the pulpit that it was not his order, but the command of God, which had closed their doors but allowed Ali's door to remain open. He recited the AYA of the QUR'AN, which states that God sent a message to Moses and Aaron to build houses in Egypt for their community, and to make their own houses into places of worship and establish regular prayers. He likened himself to Moses, and Ali and his sons to Aaron and his sons.

This was certainly an instance of the treatment of Imam Ali as the successor of Muhammad (P), both being treated alike and being given the same position. UMAR used to say that Ali had three distinctions of such a high degree that if he had but one of them it would be more valuable to him than red-eyed dromedaries. Those three distinctions were (a), he had as his wife FATIMA, the daughter of the prophet (P), (b) he was allowed to reside in the mosque by virtue of the opening of his door into it remaining intact, while the doors of the others had been closed up, and (c) he was given the flag at the battle of KHYBER. It is expressly mentioned that the doors of ABU BAKR, UMAR and HAMZA were also closed.

This distinction in Ali's favor was too great to escape the notice of BANU OMAYYA tyrants, and so they had similar HADITH coined for ABU BAKR. Some of the writers say that a window of the house of ABU BAKR was allowed to remain open towards the mosque. In the first place, this is a fabricated story. In the second place, the question is one of ingress and egress through the mosque, and in the regard a window is irrelevant, as it is not used for passing through but is meant only for view or ventilation. AL-BUKHARI set the ball rolling by mentioning this HADITH in his "SAHIH". In one place its "RUWAT" (narrators) are: ABDALLAH IBN MUHAMMAD, ABU "AMA, FALIJ, SALIM, BISR IBN SA'ID and ABU SA'ID AL-KHUDRI.

It has been repeated twice in "KITAB-AL-SALAT", once with the word "BAB" (meaning door), and again with the word "KUWWA" (meaning window). Their narrators respectively are (1): MUHAMMAD IBN SANA'AN, FALIJ, SALIM IBN AL-NADR, UBAID IBN HUNAIN, BISR IBN SA'ID, and ABU SA'ID AL-KHUDRI; and (2): ABDALLAH IBN

MUHAMMAD, WAHAB IBN JARIR, YA'LA IBN HAKIM, AKRAMA, and ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS.

Thus, there are three versions; in two of them ABDALLAH IBN MUHAMMAD is common, and in the third, his father Muhammad appears. Let us see what the evaluators of these RUWAT have to say about some of them:

(a) ABDALLAH IBN MUHAMMAD: He used to narrate fabricated HADITH, and used to "steal" other people's HADITH, as IBN ADEI has said. DAR QUTNI and ABDAL-GHANI say that he is always to be avoided (That is, HADITH mentioned by him are to be avoided). IBN HABBAN says that he used to forge false HADITH. The same thing is said about him by HAFIZ ABU NA'IM.

(b) MUHAMMAD IBN SAN'AN: ABU DAWUD says that he is a liar. IBN KHARASH says that he is not truthful.

(c) FALIJ IBN SULAIMAN: IBN MU'IN, AL-NISA'L and ABU HATIM say that he is not to be relied upon. ABU HATIM says that he has heard MU'AWIYA IBN SALEH quoting YAHYA IBN MU'IN that neither FALIJ nor is son are reliable. UTHMAN IBN SA'ID says that he is very unreliable. ABBAS has said that he heard YAHYA saying that FALIJ should not be relied upon. ABDALLAH IBN AHMAD says that he heard IBN MU'IN saying that the HADITH told by three persons must be rejected: MUHAMMAD IBN TALHA, AYYUB IBN 'UTBA, and FALIJ IBN SULAIMAN: he had heard this from MUZFFAR IBN MUDRAK. MU'AWIYA IBN SALEH reports YAHYA as saying that no confidence should be placed in FALIJ.

(d) AKRAMA: People question his faith. Imam MALIK has avoided him. WAHAB says that he went to YAHYA IBN SA'ID and AYYUB, and both of them spoke about AKRAMA; YAHYA said that AKRAMA was a great liar; AYYUB said that he was a liar to some extent. JARIR quotes ABDALLAH IBN AL-HARITH through YAZID IBN ABI ZIYAD saying that he (i.e. ABDALLAH IBN HARITH) went to ALI IBN ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS, and saw AKRAMA chained at the door, that he asked ALI IBN ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS what he had done, and that he replied that the wicked AKRAMA was narrating false and forged HADITH with his (i.e. ALI IBN ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS) father's references.

TAWUS says that had AKRAMA had any fear of God, and were he not to tell false HADITH, people would have come to him frequently. MUHAMMAD IBN SIRIN says that he would think it strange if God sent AKRAMA to paradise, and that AKRAMA was a great liar. ABI ZAYID says that AKRAMA was not religious. YAHYA IBN BUKAIR says that AKRAMA came to Egypt on his way further west, that the KHAWARIJ of the west were his followers in religion, and that they accepted his HADITH. AL-ZUBAIRI says that AKRAMA was a KHARIJI; the same thing is said by his master ALI IBN ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS. AKRAMA used to visit rich people and demand rewards from them, IBN UL-MUSSAB says. He told his slave Bard not to quote false HADITH with his reference, as AKRAMA used to do.

Such are the RUWAT of the HADITH relating to the door or window of ABU BAKR. On the other hand, let us hear what a great SUNNI divine learned in HADITH has to say regarding the authenticity of the HADITH relating to the order permitting the door of Ali's house to remain open but ordering those of the houses of all other Companions and relatives to be closed. IBN HIJIR AL-ASCALANI, the great commentator of BAKHARI, says:

"Many sayings of the Prophet have been handed down to us relating to the closing of the doors to the houses which had been built around the mosque.

One of them is the HADITH related by SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS, who says that the Prophet ordered all the doors opening into the mosque to be closed, but the door of the house of Imam Ali which also opened into the mosque was allowed to remain open. This HADITH has been testified through reliable narrators by AHMAD IBN HANBAL and AL-NISA'I, and all their RUWAT are very reliable. There is a similar HADITH in the "AUSAT" of AT-TABARANI with some addition. Its RUWAT are also undoubtedly reliable. The addition is this: "They said, "Oh prophet of God, you have closed our doors, but have left open the door of Ali's house". The prophet (P) replied, "I have neither closed your door nor left open his. All this has been done under God's commands". "A similar tradition has been handed down to us through ZAID IBN ARQAM. He says "Some of the Companions had built their houses with doors opening into the mosque. On this the prophet said, "Close all the doors except the door of Ali".

The people began to criticize this order. Upon this the prophet said, "By God, I have neither closed your door nor opened that of Ali. All this I was commanded to do by God and I have followed his commands". "This tradition has been verified through its narrators by AHMAD, AL-NISA'I and AL-HAKIM, and all his RUWAT are pious and reliable. To the same effect is the tradition handed down through ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS, who says, "The prophet (P) ordered all the doors except the door of Imam Ali to be closed? Ali had only this one door. He therefore used to pass through the mosque in every condition, even when JUNUB (i.e. the condition after coition or nocturnal emissions prior to making ablutions). "All the RUWAT of this tradition are also reliable. There is another tradition through JABIR IBN SUMRA, who says, "the prophet ordered us to close all the doors opening into the mosque except the door of Ali. He therefore used to pass through the mosque in all conditions, even when he was JUNUB". This tradition has been verified by AT-TABARANI".

Another learned SUNNI writer criticizes and rejects the HADITH relating to the window or door of ABU BAKR thus:

"But the traditions of AL-BUKHARI relating to the door or window of ABU BAKR appears to be forged. In the first place, in some traditions "BAB" (door) is mentioned, while in other traditions "KUWWA" (window) is mentioned. The meanings of these two words are quite different. Secondly, one tradition of AL-BUKHARI is FALIJ, who is extremely unreliable. YAHYA IBN MU'IN, ABU HATIM and ABU DAWUD say that ASIM IBN UBAIDALLAH, IBN AQIL, and FALIJ are not to be relied

upon in HADITH. ABU DAWUD says that FALIJ is worthless; AL-NISA'I says he is unreliable; IBN ALI says FALIJ narrates false HADITH. AT-TABARI, the historian, says that AL-MANSUR appointed FALIJ to supervise SADAQAT, and that FALIJ imprisoned the children of HASSAN IBN ALI. The other tradition of AL-BUKHARI is from IBN ABBAS. This is also not genuine according to those learned in HADITH, as it involves AKRAMA:

it is he who relates it through IBN ABBAS. AKRAMA is unreliable according to Imam MALIK and other learned men. He is known to be a liar, a KHARIJI, and a NASIBI, as is related by IBN KHALAKAN in his "TARIKH" and other books of reference. Besides this, there are traditions from IBN ABBAS in the "MUSNAD" of Imam AHMAD IBN HANBAL, which contradict this HADITH of AL-BUKHARI.

#### **4.The Placing of Imam Ali under the Subordination of No-one except the Prophet (P):**

This is very important; it unequivocally shows that the Prophet (P) intended Imam Ali to be their ruler, for in this case he could never make him subordinate to any one of them. The fact is undeniable. Even in the battles that were conducted by the Prophet in person, the principal flag of the army was always in the hands of Imam Ali. This was considered to be a unique honor intended only for one specially chosen. ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS says, "Ali has four unique distinctions which did not fall to the lot of anyone else; he was the first man among the Arabs and non-Arabs to accept Islam and read the prayers with the Prophet; he was the man who held the flag of the Prophet in every battle; he was the man who never fled the field of battle, always remaining at the Prophet's side even when all the others had fled and forsaken him; and it was he who gave the last bath to the prophet".

On the other hand, other Companions were placed under the subordination of others superior to themselves. In the expedition called "DHAT-AL-SALASIL" in the month of JUMADA-AL-AKHIRA A.H.8, AMR IBN AL-AS was sent with three hundred soldiers to fight the tribe of QUDA'A. He did not succeed at first, and applied to the prophet for help. The prophet sent two hundred soldiers under ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARAH to help him. ABU BAKR and UMAR were among those who had been placed under ABU UBAIDA. Upon joining up with AMR, AMR was to be the head of the whole army. On one occasion, AMR ordered his army not to light any fires. UMAR disobeyed, and AMR punished him for his disobedience, threatening to throw him into his own fire if he persisted. UMAR remained silent at the time, but when he returned to Medina he complained of this treatment to the Prophet, who asked UMAR what the matter was. UMAR explained that the fires would have indicated their positions and smallness of numbers to the enemy. It may be noted that ABU BAKR had also joined UMAR in making the complaint. On hearing the explanation the Prophet approved of the orders of AMR, and held UMAR and ABU BAKR to be in the wrong.

In the army of OSAMA, which the Prophet ordered to be mobilized during his last illness, all these Companions except Ali were placed under

the subordination of the youthful OSAMA. I give the details of this later in their proper place.

#### **5. The Clearing of the KA'BA of its Idols:**

The chief object of Muhammad's mission was to dispel the darkness of paganism and polytheism and preach the unity of God, to destroy the idols and replace idolatry by the worship of the one true God. To associate Ali with himself in that work was to associate him in his mission. When MAKKA had been subjugated, the first thing the Prophet did was to break and remove the idols that had been there for centuries. The Prophet did not invite anyone to share in this task except Ali. The two alone went into the KA'BA, and began the work of dismantling the idols.

The biggest idol had been installed on the roof of the KA'BA; it was made of metal and was strongly fastened to the roof. Out of respect for the Prophet (P), Imam Ali bent down to take the Prophet on his shoulders, but could not bear his weight. Then the Prophet bent down, and Ali, standing on his shoulders, broke the idol into pieces and threw it down. Thus the foremost item on the Prophet's list of duties was executed with Ali's aid. This was a very clear indication of the fact that Imam Ali was intended to succeed the Prophet (P).

#### **6. Promulgation of the State Policy:**

In the month of DHU AL-QIDA', A.G.9, the first forty verses of SURAT BARA'A (AT-TAWBA) containing the future policy of the Islamic State towards the non-Muslims, were given to ABU BAKR to announce to the assemblage that was to gather at the time of the HAJJ, that is, the 10th of DHU AL-HIJJA in that year. But as soon as he had started out with the caravan he was to lead, the Prophet (P) was reminded through inspiration that it was a duty which should be discharged either by him personally or by the one of his own kith nearest to and like him. The Prophet (P) therefore entrusted this task to Imam Ali, and sent him on his special camel with orders to take the verses from ABU BAKR and promulgate them himself at the time of the HAJJ. He was thus made the AMIR of the Hajj.

Imam Ali overtook ABU BAKR on the way and communicated the prophet's orders to him. ABU BAKR complied and handed the verses to Imam Ali, but was naturally very dejected, did not proceed further, and came back to the prophet, asking if anything had been revealed to the prophet against him. The prophet (P) replied that nothing particular against him had been revealed on this occasion, but that God had commanded that it was a duty which should be carried out either by himself personally or by one of his own kith nearest to and like himself. The prophet (P) went on to say, "Ali is my own; he is my brother, my WASI and my successor and KHALIFA in my UMMA after me. He will discharge my obligations and fulfill my promises, and no-one other than Ali can discharge my obligations".

Another clear and direct indication to the same effect is that if ABU BAKR could not discharge the burden of only forty verses, how could he fulfill the obligations of the whole of the QUR'AN? How beautifully and effectively the prophet demonstrated to the whole Muslim nation, and for

the benefit of the generations to come, that the mission of Muhammad could be executed and completed only by the prophet or, in his absence, by Imam Ali and that therefore Imam Ali was his rightful KHALIFA. The displacement of ABU BAKR in this task added very significant pointedness to the event. ABU BAKR felt his dismissal very keenly, and no wonder. He could not control his feelings, returned at once to the prophet (p) and was told that the work was of such a nature that it could be done only by either the prophet or his KHALIFA. This is also yet another proof of the fact that age is not determining factor in the leadership of Islam. YUSUF Ali, the modern translator of the QUR'AN, refers to these verses as a notable declaration of state policy.

#### **7. The Spiritual Duel ("MUBAHALA") with the Christians of NAJIRAN:**

This is yet another instance of Imam Ali taking a very prominent part in the discharge of the duties connected with the prophet's mission. In the year of the deputations (A.H.10), a Christian emissary came from NAJIRAN, a flourishing Christian colony on the seventh stage of the road from MAKKA to Yemen. The Christians had a magnificent church in this place, which was known as the "KA'BA of the Christians" on account of its having been built in rivalry to the KA'BA of MAKKA. It was the biggest Christian church in the whole of Arabia, and very learned bishops and monks resided there. The highest leader was called a "SAYYID", and the next one down from him was known as an "AQIB". The deputation included one SAYYID and one AQIB, plus five other persons of lower rank.

The prophet (P) invited them to Islam. They put many questions to him, which were answered with the help of revelations. During their stay at Medina, no less than eighty verses of SURAT AL-IMRAN, which contained replies to their queries, were revealed. Their careful perusal is essential for a person who wants to appreciate the religious differences of the two parties. Owing to the unscientific collecting together of the verses of the QUR'AN, these verses are not all found together, nor has the chronological order of their revelation been observed. I cannot help quoting one of those verses, as it is so beautiful and logical in expression and so catholic and tolerant in spirit. Its English translation runs as follows:

"Say: Oh people of the book, come to those principles that are common to us both, that is that we should not worship anyone except the one true God, that we should not associate any partner with Him, and that we should not make anyone of us a lord beside God".

But the compromise could not be effected even on these terms. In theory the people of the Book could agree to all these three propositions, but in practice they failed to do so. Their inexplicable doctrine of "Three in one and one in three" came in the way. The members of the deputation asked what view the prophet held about Christ. The following verses were revealed in reply:

"The similitude of Jesus before God is as that of Adam: He created him from dust, then said to him "Be", and he was". But the Christians could not accept this description of the nature of Christ. Then came the final



challenge: to refer the matter to the arbitration of God. The memorable words are:

"And whoever shall dispute with thee concerning him (Christ), after the knowledge which has been given thee, say unto them, come, let us call together our sons and your sons, and our wives and your wives, and our selves and your selves; then let us utter imprecations, and invoke the curse of God on those who lie".

The prophet (P) asked them to get ready for this mutual imprecation and invoking of the curse of God on the one who was in the wrong (known as "MUBAHALA"). The Christians asked for one day's delay to consider the matter: this was agreed to. On the following day, the prophet (P) prepared himself for praying to God to punish the liars, and in the morning he came out of his house prepared for the "MUBAHALA". SHAH ABD AL-HAQQ of Delhi says that the scene was worth observing; the prophet (P) took Imam HUSSAIN, the son of Imam Ali on his lap; Imam HASSAN, another son of Imam Ali he took by the hand; his daughter FATIMA, the wife of Imam Ali, was behind him; and Imam Ali was behind her. The prophet (P) asked them to say "AMEN" to his invocation of God's curse on the liars. When the Christians saw these angelic faces, awe and terror filled their hearts, and they refused to enter into the MUBAHALA with them. Except for the payment of KHIRAJ, their liberty of thought and action was not touched.

The whole period of the prophet's mission is full of instances of Ali's direct involvement in its discharge. This was the best example, and was also an instance of the QUR'AN and the Children of the Prophet coming together and complementing one another's work.

#### **8. The Disclosing of State Secrets and Other Important Matters to Imam Ali, and his Presence with Muhammad (P) when he Breathed his Last:**

AT-TIRMIDHI has it from JABIR, and AT-TABARANI and AL-NISA'I have it from ANAS, that on the day when AT-TA'IF was besieged by the prophet (P), he sent for Imam Ali, and was closeted with him for a long time. This created jealousy in the hearts of many of the Companions, some of whom could not restrain their feelings and remarked to the Prophet that he had spent much time in telling secrets to his cousin. This criticism, based on jealousy of Imam Ali, led the prophet (P) to declare that he had held this secret talk with Imam Ali under orders from God, and that one who was jealous of Imam Ali was in fact jealous of the prophet (P), and moreover that jealousy of the prophet would lead to heathenism. SHAIKH ABD AL-HAQQ of Delhi, a great SUNNI divine, traditionalist and historian says:

"When the prophet was in the agony of death, he asked his daughter FATIMA to send for HASSAN and HUSSAIN, who came, and seeing the condition of their grandfather began to weep. Their cries caused everyone present there to weep. The prophet kissed them, and as a last wishes asked the Companions and the UMMA to love and respect them. After that, he sent for Ali, and took his head on his thighs. The prophet said, "I had taken a loan from a certain Jew for the preparation of the army of OSAMA, be careful to pay that debt and lighten the burden from my shoulders. Oh Ali,

you will be the first to arrive at the HAWD where I will be on the Day of Resurrection.

When I am dead, many calamities will befall you; you should bear them patiently; and when you find that the people have chosen this world, you should choose the next"... Ali says that while he was thus speaking, the water from his mouth was falling on him. Just then his condition became worse, and the women began to weep... Some persons say that AISHA used to boast that at the time of his death, the head of the prophet was her lap; but this is wrong. AL-HAKIM and IBN S'AD have definitely proved that the prophet died while talking to Ali and when his head was on Ali's thighs".

IBN SA'D says that when the prophet (P) died, his head was in the lap of Imam Ali. Similarly he has it from IBN ABBAS, who was asked by ABU-ATFAN as to whose lap the head of the Prophet was in at the time of his death. IBN ABBAS replied that the prophet (P) was reclining on bosom of Imam Ali when he died. ABI ATFAN then said that URWA had narrated through AISHA that the prophet (P) had died with his neck between her neck and breast. IBN ABBAS replied, "Don't be a fool. By God, the prophet died while reclining on the bosom of Ali, who also gave him the last ablutions".

#### **9. Knowledge: The "HADITH of MEDINAT-AL-ILM":**

Knowledge of the kind mentioned in the QUR'AN is absolutely essential, as much for his successor as for the prophet himself. The QUR'AN abounds in statements about the fact that God Himself imparts knowledge of things to His chosen ones. Among others, consider the following AYAT:

1. "God has imparted knowledge to him (TALUT) and has given him strength".

(SURA II, 247)

2. "And God taught Adam the nature of all things". (SURA II,31)

3. "And him we had taught knowledge from Our own presence". (SURA XVIII, 65)

4. About Christ it is said, "Thou didst speak to the people in infancy and maturity. Behold, I taught thee the Book and wisdom".

(SURA V, 113)

5. "We gave him (YAHYA) wisdom while he was still an infant".

(SURA XIX, 12)

6. "To each (of Our chosen ones) we gave wisdom and knowledge". (SURA XXI, 79)

Those not conversant with spiritual matters may scorn the idea of God-given knowledge as unworthy of serious consideration. But let them pause a moment and reflect. Consider for example a man of fifty who does not know how to swim: he requires instructors to teach him. But the young of fish are born with a knowledge of the rules of water, and can swim without being taught the art. It has taken many centuries to invent the airplane; yet the birds, from the commencement of winged life on earth, know all the rules of the air. Can man extract honey from flowers without the aid of instruments and with the residue make hexagons of geometrical accuracy? The bees can. Who has imparted all this knowledge to the birds and animals? It might be said that they have it by "instinct"; but what, then, is

this instinct? Is it gifted or acquired? It cannot be acquired, because it is obvious that these birds and fish have not learnt their art in stages by experience. It can only be gifted; but gifted by whom?

By heredity or nature? I have purposely used the word "nature" because modern man dislikes the word "God". Heredity is not an adequate explanation as this only pushes the question back in time; the first fish of the world did not have the benefit of heredity, yet it had to know the art of swimming from the very moment it saw the light of the world, or else die. This knowledge must therefore have been instilled by nature. But this does not take us any further, for what is this nature? Nature could be defined as the final outcome of working of certain rules on matter. But who then formed these rules and created this matter? This is the point at which the existence of a "first cause" has to be admitted. And that first cause must itself have life, intelligence and knowledge in order to be able to impart the life, intelligence and knowledge, which we find in the things, created in the universe. That first cause we call God, though you may call it by any name you like.

Now, if God, or the "First Cause", can impart knowledge to birds, fish and insects, then surely He can also give knowledge to men of His own selection. Just as it may be said that instinct is an inherent part of the beast, bird, animal or insect with which it is born, and is not imparted at any particular stage of its life, so the same can be said in the case of God's chosen ones. They are born with knowledge, purity and immunity from sin interwoven in their nature, kneaded with it so as to make one complete whole, with the result that these attributes become a second nature to them. Can knowledge be thus mixed with a man's nature? I see no reason why not. If knowledge can be interwoven in the nature of birds, beasts and insects and be called instinct, then it can also be interwoven in the nature of certain men and be called second nature.

The knowledge, which God imparts to His chosen ones, is different from the knowledge which man acquires through his efforts, or learns from his teachers. The Holy QUR'AN abounds in instances of knowledge of the former kind, for instance SURAT AL-KAHF and SURAT MARYAM. We learn that God teaches wisdom and grants knowledge to His chosen ones from their birth. This kind of knowledge is essential for both the prophet and his successor, because both have the same assignment, and, as we have learnt from SHIBLI and SHAIKH ABD AL-HAQQ, the natures of the two are similar; they are born alike. The prophet Muhammad (P) refers to this same kind of knowledge when he says, in what is known as the "HADITH of MEDINAT AL-ILM":

"I am the city of knowledge, and Ali is its gate; those who desire to get knowledge must come to the gate".

This means that Imam Ali is the only source from which a correct exposition of the QUR'AN and the right knowledge of Islam and its teaching can be obtained. Everywhere else you are liable to get a wrong interpretation of the QUR'AN and twisted teachings of Islam. To save Islam from dangerous divisions and sinful dissensions, and to prevent the Muslims from straying along diverse paths and dangerous offshoots, all leading to

jungles of confusion and whirlpools of destruction, the prophet (P) wanted to fix a center where all should converge and combine, and whence all should derive right knowledge of the QUR'AN and Islam. He strongly deprecated running hither and thither in search of a leader, favoring instead the appointment of one trusted and able leader capable of taking decisions on all the various problems arising, quickly, confidently and correctly.

The prophet (P) wanted to give such a leader to the UMMA, but they refused to accept him, with the consequences that are all too apparent. The UMMA went in a direction quite opposite to the one indicated by the prophet (P). In a well known speech at JABIA, UMAR exhorted the people thus: "Anyone who wants to learn the QUR'AN must go to UBAI IBN KA'B, he who wants to know the intricacies of the law relating to inheritance and other matters must go to ZAID IBN THABIT, and he who is desirous of learning FIQH should go to MA'ADH IBN JABAL". The name of Imam Ali is conspicuous by its absence, which makes this in direct opposition to the prophet (P), and in a much too direct and pointed way to be ignored.

UMAR also sent round a circular to all his officials that they were to decide cases and pass orders in accordance with their own free judgment if they could find nothing applicable to the case in hand in the QUR'AN, the HADITH, or in the decisions of the first Caliph. Now, it is a matter of common experience that the powers of deduction and inference of people differ. For example, one man might find solid stuff for human thought in Herbert Spencer's "First Principles", while another can see nothing but confusing ideas jumbled together in incomprehensible language, even though both may be graduates of the same university. And then there is the matter of personal predilection to be reckoned with.

What ensued as a consequence of these orders of UMAR could easily have been foretold. To permit everyone to use his own judgment in matters of religion and theology was tantamount to permitting the people to tear Islam to shreds, each one using his own judgment and then sticking to it, and thus creating as many sects and sub-sects as the persons who had leisure enough to indulge in the pastime. This in fact has been the result; and this is what the prophet wanted to avoid. MAWLAWI SHIBLI says that UMAR was the first to use his own discretion and judgment in religious matters, and that up till the death of ABU BAKR, the deciding factors were the QUR'AN, the HADITH of the prophet (P), and the IJMA.

#### 10. Purity:

There is an AYA of the QUR'AN, known as "AYAT AT-TATHIR", as follows: "Verily God has wished to remove all impurities and abominations from you, Oh ye members of the family, and to make you pure and immaculate". (SURA XXXIII, 34)

When this verse was revealed, the prophet (P) took Imam Ali, FATIMA, Imam HASSAN and Imam HUSSAIN with himself under a covering, and then recited this verse, adding that it applied to them alone and no one else.

To emphasize this fact and to demonstrate it to the whole UMMA clearly and unequivocally, the prophet (P), for full six months, used to go to the house of Imam Ali and FATIMA every morning and call out to them, and

addressing them, would recite this verse, showing that it was applicable to them and no-one else.

'AISHA says that one day, the prophet (P) came out of the house wearing a black cloak, AL-HASSAN came alone, and the prophet took him in under the cloak. Then AL-HUSSAIN came, and the prophet did likewise. Then FATIMA came and he took her under the cloak too. Then the same with Imam Ali when he came. Thus with them all under the cloak, he then said, "These are the members of my family", and then recited this verse. UMM SALAMA says, "This verse was revealed in my house; the prophet then sent for Ali, FATIMA, AL-HASSAN and AL-HUSSAIN, and then said they were the members of his family meant by this verse.

I have proved beyond all doubt in my other works that the wives of the prophet are not meant by this verse. But I need not go into that question here, as it is admitted by all that Imam Ali is included in this verse, and that those who superseded the prophet after his death are not; this is enough for our present purposes.

#### **11. The Position of Imam Ali in Relation to the prophet (P), and the Duties of the UMMA towards Both:**

The Prophet (P) said on many occasions:

"Ali is to me what Aaron was to Moses, except that there will be no Prophet after me". This saying, known as "HADITH AL-MANZILA", bears directly on the subject in hand, and leaves little doubt as to his intention regarding a successor. Of all the persons in the world the Prophet (P) loved Imam Ali the most.

The Prophet (P) described himself and Imam Ali as "Two fathers of the UMMA" in the following saying:

"Ali has the same rights on you as I have. God has enjoined upon you to obey me, and has warned you against setting my authority at naught. Similarly, he has enjoined upon you to obey Ali, and has warned you against setting his authority at naught. Ali is my WASI and heir. He is the master and ruler of all the Muslim men and women, as I am. Love of him is the faith; enmity of him is KUFR. He and I are the two fathers of the UMMA".

## Chapter Six: Final and Formal Announcement or The Successor

Knowing that he was approaching his end, the prophet (p) determined to make a farewell pilgrimage to MAKKA. On the 25th DHU AL-QI'DA, A.H.10 (corresponding to 23rd February, A.C.632), he left Medina with a large concourse of Muslims, estimated to number between 90,000 and 140,000 souls. On the return journey after the performance of the Hajj, at a place called KHUM, the following divine injunction was received:

'O Apostle, proclaim the message which hath been sent to thee from thy Lord. If thou didst not, thou wouldst not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission. And God will defend thee from men (who mean mischief). For God guideth not those who reject faith". (SURA V,70).

On receipt of this peremptory command, the prophet (p) ordered a halt; those who had proceeded ahead were called back. The place was cleared of its thorny bushes, and a pulpit was made out of camel seats. The prophet (p) ascended it accompanied by Imam Ali, and raising him aloft, he proclaimed Ali's succession. He had barely finished it when the verse announcing the completion of his mission was revealed. A special turban was placed on the head of Imam Ali, who was seated in a separate camp, and all the UMMA, including the wives of the Prophet (P), were ordered to go there and make the "BAI'AT" (acknowledgment of over-lordship) to him. This caused a great commotion in the camp of the opposition.

The whole of the proceedings fall into six well-defined topics, each of which requires careful consideration. They are:

1. The divine injunction.
2. The place and the formalities.
3. The Proclamation.
4. The BAI'A and the congratulations.
5. The completion of the execution of the entire mission.
6. The commotion in the opposition camp.

I proceed to discuss each of these topics in turn, though the sixth item will fall under a separate chapter.

### 1. The Divine Command:

The words of this divine mandate have been set out above. It is abundantly proved from the statements of eminent traditionalists that this verse was revealed on the return journey from the Farewell Pilgrimage near KHUM, and that as soon as it was revealed, the Prophet (P) called a half. AS-SYYUTI says:

"IBN ABI HATIM, IBN MARDAWEIH and IBN ASAKIR have quoted the "RIWAYA" traced from ABU SAI'D AL-KHUDARI that this verse was revealed to the prophet on the day of KHUM in respect of ALI IBN ABI TALEB. This is also traceable to ABDALLAH IBN MAS'UD. Three companions of the prophet (p), namely A'MASH, ABU SAI'D AL-KHUDARI and ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS, have been reported to have declared that this verse was revealed to the prophet (p) in respect of Imam Ali on the day of KHUM.



I quote the following from TAFSIR (commentary on the QUR'AN) called "KASHF AL-BAYAN" by ABU ISHAQ AHMAD ATH-THA'ALIBI, in the exposition of this verse he says:

"When this AYA "O Apostle proclaim the message...." Was revealed to the prophet, he caught hold of the arm of Ali, and said, "Ali is the master and ruler of whomsoever I have been the master and ruler... etc. I have been told by ABU AL-QASIM YA'QUB IBN AHMAD IBN ASSARI who was told by ABU BAKR MUHAMMAD IBN ABDALLAH IBN MUHAMMAD... and so on till ADIL IBN THABIT, who was told by AL-BARA" IBN AZIB, a companion of the prophet (p), that we were in the company of the prophet (p) during the Farewell Pilgrimage. When we arrived near KHUM, suddenly a call to prayer was made, and a pulpit was arranged for the prophet under two trees. The prophet (p) caught hold of the arm of Imam Ali and asked of the congregation, "Am I not the master of the souls of the Muslims"?

They replied, "Yes, you are". The prophet (p) then said, "This Ali is the master of the souls of all of whom I am the master. O God, be the friend of him who is Ali's friend, and be an enemy to his enemy". UMAR met Ali and congratulated him in these words: "O son of Abu TALIB, congratulations to you. You have become the MAWLA of all the Muslims, men and women". IBN-ABBAS says (I have omitted the names of the intervening RUWAT) that the verse "O Apostle proclaim the message..." was revealed to the prophet in respect of Ali; the prophet (p) accordingly caught Imam Ali by the arm and said, "This Ali is the MAWLA of all of whom I have been the MAWLA. O God, be a friend to Ali's friend, and be an enemy to his enemy".

Imam FAKHR-ED-DINE-RAZE, in his AT-TAFSIR AL-KABIR MAFATIH AL-GHAIB", while commenting on this verse says exactly the same thing as has been reproduced above, with the addition of the congratulations of UMAR.

The message spoken of in this verse was the one requiring the prophet (p) to announce that Imam Ali had been appointed to succeed him. Two relevant questions arise in this connection, viz. (1) Where is the proof of this assertion, and (2) Why was the name of Imam Ali not mentioned expressly? I proceed to answer these questions.

In connection with the first question, the first thing to remember is that this was the penultimate verse of QUR'AN. Only one more AYA-revealed just a few minutes afterwards- and the QUR'AN was closed. The inclusion in the verse of the words, "... God will defend thee..." reveals that, for the necessity to have arisen of assuring the prophet of divine protection, the message referred to must have been of such a nature as would give umbrage to a strong party. Now consider what that message could have been. This was only about two months before the death of the prophet (p), by which time almost the whole of Arabia had been cleared of the pagans; the Jews had been humbled, and the Christians had finally made peace with the prophet.

MAKKA had been conquered, and had accepted Islam. Thus it was not from these quarters that any danger was to be apprehended. Moreover, what

message could have been more offensive to these groups than what had already been publicly communicated to them; the forty verses of SURAT AT-TAWBA contained terrible threats to the pagans and unbelievers, and had been announced to them By Imam Ali at the Hajj preceding this Last Hajj. They had done their worst and failed; the danger from them had already come and gone, and no such assurances of divine protection were needed at that time in their case. All this shows, therefore, that this new message was of such a nature that it could be the cause of a new danger from a particular quarter, a danger of such a sinister and formidable nature as to require special assurances of divine protection.

I cannot lay too much emphasis on the fact that the conquest of Arabia by Muhammad was almost complete by the time that this verse was revealed, as it is a pointer to the outcome of the present enquiry, namely, what the nature of the message referred to in the verse was. There had been a time when the prophet had been alone, preaching his mission to a hostile world, driven from place to place, stoned, teased, harassed and injured, with no shelter, no helper, until at last obliged to leave his native town.

All those dangers encountered had been successfully overcome; yet no such divine assurances had been needed then. The danger at this final stage must therefore have been of a peculiar kind not experienced before, and be from a quarter so insidious and sinister as to be inconspicuous and not easily discerned. The danger arising from the suddenness of the impending attack was formidable, and the nature of the quarter from which it was to come was uncertain. It was for these reasons that divine assurances became necessary.

All these factors combine to indicate that the danger implied in the verse must be from the Muslims themselves, and must be in consequence of a matter which had come to the surface recently, brought on by the likelihood of the succession opening in the near future. God alone knew exactly what plans the people with an eye on the Caliphate had made, what their details were, and how they were to be executed. As I have stated above, there were many classes of men among the Muslims; but all of them, except the true Muslims who were few, were unanimous in their hatred of Imam Ali. This Proclamation was bound to unite them all in their efforts to harm the prophet (p).

Another important point in the verse is the threat that if the message was not proclaimed forthwith, it would be as if the entire mission had not been executed. This also has a very significant implication. Islam was to continue after the death of the prophet (p); in fact, it was the last message of God to man, and was meant to continue till the end of the world. This was the entire mission. The arrangement regarding the successor was the basis for the future continuation of that mission, and if that arrangement was not made, then the mission would not continue in its purity after the death of the prophet (p), and would come to an end.

For the complete discharge of the mission, it was necessary that the arrangement for its continuation after the death of the prophet should also be made. It was absolutely essential that the complete message should be delivered and proclaimed to the world; it would then be for the people to

accept it or reject it, as Islam has allowed freedom of will in the matter of religion. It says in the QUR'AN, "There is no compulsion in the matter of religion" if the people accept it, it is for their own good, if they reject it, it will be they alone who will have to bear the consequences. It was therefore said by God to the prophet that if he did not complete the mission by proclaiming this particular message, it would be tantamount to the non-execution of the entire mission.

The second question is the omission of any mention of the name of Imam Ali. There are other instances of a similar nature. For example, the details of the rules and calculations of the ZAKAT are not given in the QUR'AN, nor even the mode of the prayers, such as the number of RAK'AT for each prayer time; the RUKU' and SUJUD are not mentioned. Another instance with the greatest significance to the present case is that of the involvement of AISHA in a false accusation; when the matter reached an acute stage, an AYA was revealed to clear her of the accusation. But in none of the AYAT is her name actually mentioned. We know that they relate to her simply because of the traditions that have reached us regarding them. As she belonged to the fouling party, these traditions were assiduously promulgated without let or hindrance, with the result that no one now feels the necessity to prove that they relate to her. But the traditions showing that the AYAT under discussion relates to Imam Ali were against the interests of the ruling party, and therefore are now put to the proof.

There is also another point. They were bent upon disobeying this order. If the name of Imam Ali had been mentioned in any AYA, they would certainly have omitted such verses when compiling the QUR'AN, this compilation being in their hands. Soon after their accession to the throne, they undertook to prepare an official edition of the QUR'AN, and it is this edition which is in vogue now.

## **2. The Place and the Formalities:**

The prophet (p) started out on his Last Hajj with a great concourse of men, estimated to number up to one hundred and forty thousand, and it greatly increased on the way as people continued joining him from the villages en route to MAKKA. He started on the return journey from MAKKA at the end of the Hajj with the same large array of men. It may be noted that at the Arafat before the Hajj, the prophet gave a lengthy speech in which he reiterated all the principles of Islam and gave much advice regarding their conduct as Muslims. On the return journey near GHADIR KHUM, the verse mentioned above was revealed, in compliance with which the prophet ordered a halt.

It is to be remembered that the place where this verse was suddenly revealed and where therefore the halt was ordered, was not a regular "MANZIL" for caravans and travelers to stop at; it was a desert place, full of thorny bushes and kicker trees, which he ordered the place to be cleared of. The choice fell on this uninviting place because from it many paths branched out in different directions, and the whole array of men would split up there. The message had to be delivered to the undivided UMMA. Before the Proclamation, the prophet (p) placed on the head of Imam Ali a turban, the emblem of authority and succession in eastern countries. The prophet (p)

himself wound it around Imam Ali's head. I quote this from "KANZ AL-UMMAL":

"Ali says that on the day of the GHADIR, the prophet wound a turban round his head, and that both ends of the turban were left dangling on his shoulders, and the prophet added that on the day of BADR. God had sent for his succor the array of angels wearing turbans in this fashion, and that the turban was a screen between the Muslims and the unbelievers".

"ABD AL A'LA BIN ADI says that on the day of KHUM, the prophet sent for Ali<sup>9</sup> and wound a turban round his head, leaving both the ends of the turban lying on his shoulders". "On the day of KHUM, the prophet wound round the head of Ali a turban, and then said "Come forward", then said "Go back", and then said that the angels had come to his succor on the day of BADR in that way. Then he proclaimed, Ali is the master and ruler of everyone of whom I have been the master and ruler".

### **3. The Proclamation:**

AMIR Ali writes:

"It is generally supposed that the prophet did not expressly designate anyone as his successor in the spiritual and temporal government of Islam; but this notion is founded on a mistaken apprehension of facts, for there is abundant evidence that many a time the prophet indicated Ali for the vicegerency, notably on the occasion of the return journey from the performance of the "Farewell Pilgrimage" during a halt at a place called KHUM. He convoked an assembly of the people accompanying him, and used words which could leave little doubt as to his intention regarding a successor. "Ali", said he, "is to me what Aaron was to Moses, O Almighty God, be a friend to his friends and a foe to his foes; help those who help him, and frustrate the hopes of those who betray him"

For a description of the event, AMIR Ali relies on KHALLAKAN, whom he has mentioned as his authority. This extract, besides being an apt illustration of the reluctance with which the historians of Islam, when they see no way out of it, admit the facts which go against their accepted views, and even then half-heartedly, taking care to minimize their effect as much as they can, is a good instance of the difficulties which beset the impartial seeker after truth who wants to ascertain the true facts of the disputed event. AMIR Ali chooses not a historian or traditionalist, but a biographer, IBN KHALLAKAN, having inclinations like his own, in order to find an authority for his having suppressed the part of the Proclamation which was its very soul, viz.

Ali is henceforth the MAWLA of every one of whom I have been the MAWLA Not content with this, in order to minimize the effect of his own admission, the great historian of Islam says, "On the other hand, the nomination of ABU BAKR to lead the prayers during the prophet's illness might point to a different choice".

This is also an instance of the anxiety of these historians to shield the leaders of their fancy at the expense of the Prophet (P). If both the above quoted statements of AMIR Ali are read together, the result is absurd. On the hand he says that the general assumption that the Prophet did not designate anyone as his successor is entirely wrong, and that "many a time

the prophet (P) indicated Imam Ali for the vicegerency", yet on the other hand he says that the prophet (P) selected ABU BAKR for the vicegerency.

What does this amount to? Does it not reflect badly on the prophet's good sense and straightforwardness? Is this action credible for one who claims to receive his instructions directly from God? Anyone acting like this could well be accused of vacillation, or even of being unjust without good reason (if there can ever be a reason for doing injustice), as Imam Ali had deserved to succeed him on account of his manifold qualities, and what is more had also been proclaimed as his successor at KHUM. Where was the reason to set aside Imam Ali's nomination during his last illness, a nomination which had been made after due consideration and evaluation of the qualities and abilities of all the Companions, and make a "different choice"?

One hears of doting husbands doing many unreasonable things at the time of their death under the influence of their wives, but it is untenable to hear this implied of any prophet, let alone the prophet of Islam. The true, simple fact is that the prophet (p) did not contradict himself by appointing ABU BAKR to lead the prayers; it was, rather, a game played by AISHA in the interests of her father, as I shall presently show. But this is the truth, which these historians will not admit, even if the attitude they have adopted puts their prophet in a bad light. The great historian and traditionalist, AT-TABARI, relates this Proclamation from RUWAT through ABU SAI'D AL-KHUDARI, as ALI MUTTAQI does from RUWAT through ZAID IBN ARQAM. ALI MUTTAQI says:

"When the prophet returned from the Last Hajj and came to GHADIR KHUM, he ordered that the ground should be leveled, and then stood up and said, "I am shortly to leave this world. I am leaving behind me two precious things among you, the one greater than the other, the Book of God and my Children. You must treat them well. They shall ever remain linked together until they come to me at the HAWD on the Day of Resurrection".

He continued, "God is my MAWLA and I am the MAWLA of all the Muslims, and (holding Ali up by the arm) similarly this Ali is the MAWLA of all of whom I have been the MAWLA. O God, be a friend to his friends, and a foe to his foes, and frustrate the hopes of those who betray him". I asked ZAID whether he himself had heard this from the prophet. He replied that everyone who was there saw this with his own eyes and heard it with his own ears. Muhammad IBN JARIR AT-TABARI has related this very "RIWAYA" through ATIYYA AWFI from ABU SAI'D AL-KHUDARI".

This Proclamation has been related by both historians and (traditionists). They divide it into two parts, one mentioning the two precious things, the QUR'AN and the Children of the prophet, called "HADITH-ATHAQUALAIN", and the other containing the declaration called "HADITH-AL-GHADIR". ("THAQUALAIN" means "two precious things").

I repeat in other words the HADITH of THAQUALIN; "I am shortly to leave this world. I am leaving behind me two very precious things among you, the one greater than the other, the Book of God and my Children. They shall ever remain linked together until they come to me at my HAWD on the Day of Resurrection. You shall never go astray up to the Day of Judgment if you follow them both after me".

I also repeat in other words the HADITH of GHADIR:

"God is my MAWLA, and I am the MAWLA of the Muslims, having control over their lives; this Ali is the MAWLA of every one of whom I have been the MAWLA; O God Almighty, be a friend of his friends and a foe of his foes" ("MAWLA", remember, means "master and ruler"). SHAIKH ABD AL HAQ of Delhi, speaking of the HADITH of GHADIR, writes thus:

"This HADITH is undoubtedly correct and genuine; no less than sixteen, and according to Ahmad IBN HANBAL thirty companions of the prophet who had themselves heard it from the prophet Testified to its correctness and genuineness when called upon by Ali to mention it on oath. Many eminent traditionalists, for example AL-NISAI, AT-TIRMIDHI, and Ahmad have related it and testified to its genuineness; it has been related through many channels, and most of its "ASANID" (RUWAT, references are correct and unimpeachable. No attention should be paid to those who criticize it, nor to those who say that the sentence "O God, be a friend to his friends and a foe to his foes" is an interpolation, as that sentence is also reported through unimpeachable authorities, most of which have been scrutinized by ADH-DHAHABI and IBN HIJIR and found correct".

ADH-DHAHABI says in his "TADKHIRAT-AL-HUFFAZ", while narrating the events of the life of the great historian AT-TABARI, that AT-TABARI wrote a book spreading over many volumes dedicated exclusively to proving the correctness and genuineness of the HADITH of GHADIR, and its words "Ali is the MAWLA of every one of whom I have been the MAWLA", and ADH-DHAHABI says that he was wonderstruck when he saw the many unimpeachable authorities of this HADITH in that book of AT-TABARI. Similarly, while writing the life of AL-HAKIM, ADH-DHAHABI says that this HADITH is genuine beyond any doubt, and that he too had written a book solely on this HADITH of GHADIR in which he collected all the unimpeachable authorities on it. MIRZA MUHAMMAD IBN MO'TAMID KHAN says:

"The HADITH of GHADIR is genuine and very well known. No-one doubts its genuineness and authority except a bigoted person, and no reliance can be placed on the word of a bigoted person".

The famous Sunni writer, QAZI SANA'-ALLAH of PANIPAT writes thus about the HADITH of GHADIR:

"This HADITH is no doubt genuine; it has reached the degree of "TAWATUR" (being repeated very frequently by numerous unimpeachable authorities). Thirty of the companions of the prophet, e.g. Ali, ABU AYYUB, ZAID IBN ARQAM, AL-BARA IBN AZIB, AMR IBN MURRA, ABU HURAIRA, IBN ABBAS, "AMARA IBN BURAIID, SAID IBN WAQQAS, IBN UMAR, ANAS, JARIR IBN ABDALLAH-AL-BAJALI, MALIK IBN HUWAIIRITH, ABU SA'ID AL-KHUDARI, ABU TUFAIL, HUDHAIFA IBN ASYUD and others have mentioned this HADITH in their books, and have verified its genuineness".

IBN-UQDA, AT-TABARI, AL-HASAKANI, MAS'UD AL-SAJISTANII and ADH-DHAHABI, have each written book on this



HADITH alone, mentioning its various sources and narrating its different authorities, and have verified its genuineness.

#### **4. Homage and Congratulations:**

I quote below, in English translation, from "HABIB AS-SAYYAR":

"After the Proclamation, Ali, in accordance with the orders of the prophet, sat in a separate tent to receive homage and congratulations from all the people. One of those who came to congratulate him was UMAR, who said, "Congratulations to you. O son of Abu TALIB, you have become my MAWLA and the MAWLA of all the Muslims, men and women". After this, the Mothers of the Muslims, that is, the wives of the prophet, under orders from the prophet, went to him and congratulated him".

UMAR'S congratulating Ali on this occasion has been mentioned by many historians and traditionalists. The prophet (p) ordered his poet, HASSAN IBN THABIT, to compose poems to commemorate the event. He complied, and his poems have been copied in the "HABIB AS-SAYYAR" and other books. Other poets also wrote poems to celebrate the event. Imam Ali himself was a good poet, and he has written much on the subject, urging his own claims to the Caliphate on the basis of this event. One of his couplets runs as follows: "For this reason the prophet installed me as their Imam, And proclaimed this to them at GHADIR KHUM".

#### **5. The Complete Execution of the Entire Mission:**

After the prophet (p) had made the Proclamation, he was still on the pulpit when the following verse declaring the completion of the mission was revealed:

"Today I have perfected for you your religion and have completed my favors on you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion". (SURA V,4). The fact of this verse being revealed just after the Proclamation is mentioned by eminent historians and traditionalists. AS-SAYYUTI says: "ABU HURAIRA says that on the day of GHADIR KHUM, 18th DHU AL-HIJJAH, the prophet said that Ali was the MAWLA of all of whom he had been the MAWLA; just then the AYA "Today I have perfected for you your religion..." was revealed".

There are other authorities to the same effect. This shows that the mission was perfected and completed only when the Caliphate had been bestowed, and proclamation there of had been made.

## Chapter Seven: After The Announcement

The expected had happened; Imam Ali had been announced as the future ruler of the Islamic State. What next? The commonality in the camp could not control their feelings of anguish and despair, and openly accused the prophet of sinister motives. The leaders of the opposition party took the announcement as a phase of the struggle they had expected. But they were very worried about the prophet's next move, and realized the need for a closer watch over his movements. Would he follow up the announcement by any act, which might tend to undermine their strength or upset their plans? This was the fear, which was uppermost in their minds. They had no way of knowing what the next move of the prophet would be, and this uncertainty made them very nervous. However, they kept themselves in readiness for any emergency that might arise.

I would be doing an injustice to the faithful few if I did not in turn describe the state of their minds. They had complete faith in God and Muhammad (P). To them it was the highest kind of irreverence and impiety to entertain even a passing thought that the prophet (p) could be unjust or have any but the purest of motives. They knew that it was the same Muhammad who had spurned the riches and honor of the world, which the Arabs had been prepared to lay at his feet if only he would refrain from preaching the glory of God. Still ringing in their ears were his memorable words: "If you place the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left, I will not move one inch from the stand that I have taken". The memory of the hardships he had borne and the insults he had to put up with, all for the sake of Islam and for the preaching of his mission, was still fresh in their minds.

His picture was still vividly before them, that of a forlorn and weary wanderer from place to place, preaching his mission and derision and scorn. Would such a man destroy the edifice of his own making, and that too towards the close of his life when he had already become aware of his approaching end? Their faith was reinforced by the fact that there was no man abler or fitter than Imam Ali to take the place of the prophet (p). In the announcement of Imam Ali as the prophet's successor, they saw justice being done to a deserving man, and the Muslim nation being given the ablest and fittest leader.

The prophet (p), on his side, was not unmindful of their doings; he knew perfectly well that they did not relish the idea of Imam Ali succeeding him, and that they had their own designs against the State. After the announcement, these designs became doubly clear. As a feeler, he adopted certain measures to gauge the extent of their feelings. Their result convinced him that they were bent upon capturing power at any cost, and were prepared to go to any extremes in achieving their object.

He knew that they would go to the extent of openly opposing him, if it came to that. For his part he was not prepared to face that eventuality, as it was sure to destroy the labors of more than two decades. Islam could not survive an open struggle between him and his people on this question, and it would defeat the very object for which this selection of his successor had been made. He therefore resigned himself to the inevitable, and advised

Imam Ali to remain calm and quiet, and content himself with the good of the next world when he saw others running after this one. What follows is intended to illustrate the above observations.

It is thus related in AS-SIRA-AL-HALABIYYA:

"When the proclamation made by the prophet "Of whomsoever I have been the MAWLA, then Ali is his MAWLA" went round among the people and became known far and wide in the towns and provinces, it also reached AL-HARITH IBN AL-NU'MAN AL-FHRI who, on learning of this, came to Medina, and tethering his camel at the door of the mosque, entered it and came to the prophet where he was sitting among his companions AL-HARITH came right up to the prophet and sat in front of him, and then said, "O Muhammad, you ordered us to say that there is no god but God and that you are His Prophet. We accepted this from you. You ordered us to say prayers five times a day and keep the fast during the whole of the month of Ramadan, to pay the ZAKAT out of our property, and to perform the Hajj; we accepted all this from you.

But not being content with all this, you have now raised the son of your uncle and placed him over our heads, and have declared that "Or whomsoever I have been the MAWLA, then Ali is his MAWLA". Was this also from God, or is it the creation of your own desire"? The eyes of the prophet became red with rage, and he replied, "By God beside whom there is no god, this was also from God and not from me".

The prophet said this thrice. AL-HARITH got up and started towards his camel, saying, "O God, if what Muhammad says is true and this is from Thee, then let a stone fall on me from the heavens and send some other very bitter calamity...." The following AYA of the QUR'AN was revealed on this occasion: "An enquirer demanded and called for a penalty to fall on the unbelievers; there shall be none to avert the same from being inflicted by God, Lord of the Ways of Ascent". (SURA LXX, 2).

There are other authorities to the same effect in proof of this event.

Three possible questions may arise in this connection. Firstly, in many authorities it is stated that -AL-HARITH came to the prophet in the valley of "ABTAH" which is generally known to be near MAKKA, whereas after this Last Hajj the prophet did not go again to MAKKA. Secondly, SURAT AL-M'A'ARIJ, in which this AYA occurs, was revealed at MAKKA, while the event is said to have happened at Medina. Thirdly, the last AYA of the QUR'AN is "Today I have completed for you your religion", which at this time had already been revealed at KHUM, so the AYA under discussion must have come before it, not after it. I proceed to clarify the position.

Concerning the first question, "ABTAH" is not restricted in meaning to the valley of MEKKA alone. It is a generic term embracing all the valleys through which water passes and which are full of small pebbles, wherever they may be situated, as seen from Arabic dictionaries. As an example, let us see the use to which IBN KHALLAKAN puts this word. In his "WAFIYYAT-AL-A'YAN" on the life of IBN-SAIFI, he copies his couplets referring to the conduct of BANU OMAYYA in shedding blood when they came to power. One of the couplets, contrasting them with BANU HASHIM

who always protected the weak and refrained from shedding innocent blood, runs as follows:

"When we were in power, To forgive people was in our nature:

But when you came to wield power, Blood flowed in ABTAH".

He is referring here to the shedding of the blood of the children of the prophet at KARBALA in the valley of the Euphrates, and has applied the word "ABTAH" to this valley. Lastly, we may mention that even in Medina there is an "ABTAH", or "BAT-HA" which is the same things.

Concerning the second question, every student of the QUR'AN knows that many verses have been repeated, one AYA being revealed at MAKKA and then the same AYA being revealed again at Medina, the repetition of an event of the same nature necessitating the repetition of the verse. It is also to be admitted that there are many instances in the QUR'AN where AYA revealed at both MAKKA and Medina have been put together in one SURA, and the labeling of a whole SURA as "MAKKI" or "MADANI" is made according to where the majority of the AYAT in it were revealed. Many SURAS were revealed repeatedly, SURAT AL-FATIHA being one of them. This latter point is pertinent to the third question. As the AYA under discussion was only being repeated, it does not contradict the correctness of saying that the last AYAT of the QUR'AN with which the revelation was closed is "Today I have completed for you your religion".

### **Attempt on the Life of the Prophet (P):**

Certain persons planned to take the life of the prophet (p) when he was due to pass through the valley of UQBA on his return to Medina. The prophet (p) got an inkling of the plot, and had it announced that no-one should ascend the UQBA until he had passed on. HUDHAIFA was driving the prophet's camel from behind, while AMMAR was in front leading it by its reins, when HUDHAIFA espied a party of twelve or fourteen persons, all with masked faces, coming towards the prophet with sinister intent. He informed the prophet (p), the alarm was raised, and the would-be assailants fled, AMMAR pursuing them for some distance.

The prophet (p) informed HUDHAIFA of the names of these persons, and for this reason, HUDHAIFA was thereafter known as "the keeper of the secret of the prophet (p)". Some say that it was on his return journey from TABUK, others say that it was on his return journey from GHADIR KHUM; but this is immaterial from our point of view, as on the earlier occasion too the prophet had already clearly indicated his intention as to his successor (by announcing that Imam Ali was to him as Aaron was to Moses), and knowledge of the fact was in any case already well established.

It was for obvious reasons that the prophet (p) asked HUDHAIFA not to disclose their names to anyone; they were connected with, and included, many influential people, and the broadcasting of their names would have driven all of them to desperation- and a desperate party of men is always very dangerous. Moreover, the disclosure would have compelled the prophet (p) to take some action against them, and this would have produced many complications.

The Prophet's Arrangement on the Eve of his Death to Send the Opponents out of Medina with the Army of 'USAMA:

As a device to protect Imam Ali from the machinations of the opposition party, the prophet (p) ordered the preparation of an army under 'USAMA to go out towards MU'TA to avenge the death of his father ZAID and the defeat of the Muslims which had taken place there about two years earlier in A.H.8. The idea was that at the time of his death, these persons would be away from Medina and thus Imam Ali would be able to succeed without opposition. We read from AT-TABARI:

"One night, the prophet got up, and taking his servant RAFI, went to the Muslims graveyard, where for a long time he invoked blessings on those who were buried there. This he was commanded to do by God. He was also commanded to invoke blessings for the martyrs of 'UHUD. So he went to UHUD, and did the same there. In the morning, he felt a severe pain in his head; the last illness had begun". SHAIKH ABD AL-HAQ of Delhi says:

The last illness of the prophet began on Wednesday, the 28th of the month of SAFAR. On the following day, in spite of his illness, the prophet (p) prepared the flag with his own hands, and asked 'USAMA to depart at once. USAMA went out, gave the flag to BURAIMA, and stayed near the town of Medina where the army was to join him. The prophet (p) passed peremptory orders that all the leading MUHAJIRIN and ANSAR, like ABU BAKR, UMAR, UTHMAN, SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS, ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH and others, excepting Imam Ali, should join the army under USAMA at once. This order was disagreeable to certain persons, who criticized it, saying that senior MUHAJIRIN and ANSAR like ABU BAKR and UMAR had been placed under a boy.... Now people began to come, bade farewell to the prophet and joined the army of USAMA, who had encamped outside Medina.

On the 10th of RABI' AL-AWWAL, the illness of the prophet became very severe; the prophet kept repeating, "Let USAMA depart at once". On the 11th, USAMA came to the prophet from the army. The prophet was too ill to speak, but raised his hands towards the heavens and then placed them on the head of USAMA. USAMA went out. On the following day again USAMA came to the prophet, and on that day the severity of the illness had subsided. The prophet again urged USAMA to make haste and depart at once. USAMA went back to his army and ordered it to start out. As he was about to ride, a messenger came from his mother 'UM-AIMAN saying that the prophet was dying. He and the companions of the prophet returned, and came to the house of the prophet. ABU BAKR had already been in Medina.

IBN ABI AL-HADID AL-MO'TAZILI says:

(Having admonished the people for their objection to USAMA'S being placed at the head of the army, and having declared that he was much better than those over whom he had been placed, the prophet went into his house). The people began coming to the prophet to bid him farewell, and then went to the army of USAMA encamped at JURF outside the city. Then the illness of the prophet became severe, and some of his wives sent word to USAMA to come back. Some of the men who were with USAMA exaggerated this message. Leaving his army there, USAMA came to the prophet, who could not speak on account of the severity of his illness: The prophet kissed USAMA, raised his hands towards the heavens and then placed them on

USAMA as if to invoke blessings on him. The prophet then made a sign to him to depart on the journey at once. USAMA went back to the army.

Again the wives of the prophet sent orders to him to come back, as the prophet was better. USAMA came and found the prophet better. The prophet again ordered him to make haste and start. The prophet repeated his order many times, and kept on saying this. USAMA went out; ABU BAKR and UMAR were with him. When he arrived at JURF, a message from his mother UM-AIMAN came to him, telling him that the prophet was dying. USAMA returned to Medina, accompanied by ABU BAKR, UMAR and ABU UBAIDA. They found the prophet dead: Ali and BANU HASHIM were engaged on his last rites.

In another place, IBN ABI AL-HADID quotes ABU BAKR JOHRI thus:

During his last illness, the prophet placed USAMA at the head of an army consisting of leading MUHAJIRIN and ANSAR like ABU BAKR, UMAR, ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH, ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF, TALHA, and AZ-ZUBAIR, and ordered USAMA to go to MU'TA where his father had been killed and fight the infidels there. USAMA delayed, and his army also delayed. The illness of the prophet was rising and abating, and the prophet kept repeating his order that the army of USAMA must depart at once. Finally, USAMA said to him, "Permit me to stay until God restores you to health". But the prophet said: "you must start at once". USAMA said, "O prophet of God, if I depart leaving you in this condition I will go away with a wound in my heart". Again the prophet said, "No. Go, relying on God's help".

Again USAMA said, "O prophet of God, I do not wish to have to request you to supply me with messengers (to bring me information daily about your health)". The prophet said, "Go at once, as I have ordered you". (On account of this exertion and worry) the prophet lost consciousness, and USAMA got up to make preparations for departure. They informed him that the people were making preparations. The prophet kept repeating, "Let the army of USAMA Start at once; may God curse those who stay away from the army of USAMA, though ordered to join it". Now USAMA went out as far as JURF, and ABU BAKR, UMAR, BASHIR IBN SA'D and USAID IBN HUSAIR were with him. He got down at JURF, where the messenger of his mother UM-AIMAN arrived and informed him that the prophet was dying. He turned back, and came to Medina, and arrived at the door of the house of the prophet, who had just then died.

This event requires very thoughtful consideration. The following points are worth noting:

1. Once again the prophet (p) demonstrated the principle of his SHARIA and the constitution of his State, that age is not the deciding factor in giving preference to a man in the selection for leadership. USAMA was barely eighteen years of age, and yet he was declared by the prophet (p) to be superior to all those who had been placed under him. He was born a Muslim, while the elderly men under him had passed the major portion of their lives in idolatry.

2. The prophet did not place Imam Ali under USAMA.

3. None of BANU HASHIM were ordered to go out with the army.



4. The order of the prophet (p) was for immediate departure from Medina. USAMA, perhaps incited by others, raised all sorts of excuses for not leaving Medina, but none of them were accepted by the prophet, who remained unyieldingly adamant, and rejected every request for delay. No reason or argument could shake his determination to send these people away from Medina at once. The matter of avenging the defeat of MUTA had hung fire for over two years, and at that present moment no apparent emergency had suddenly arisen to call for this haste.

5. The opposition was also very determined to cause delay, and was most anxious that USAMA should not move out. At first they objected to USAMA'S leadership, hoping that he might be replaced by someone of their own party. Failing in that attempt, they took advantage of his inexperience, and prevailed upon him to delay the departure. He was caught in the net, and sent again and again to the prophet, ostensibly to request him to postpone the expedition, but in reality to gain time.

6. What is very significant, and must be noted for future reference, is that some of the wives of the prophet played a very prominent and important part in the matter, and helped the opposition from behind the scenes. They sent requests, they sent orders, they sent messenger after messenger to USAMA not to move on, but why this anxiety? The only point that USAMA had been canvassed to come up with was that their love for the prophet did not allow them to depart.

Yet when the prophet himself desired that they leave, the rationale of this consideration was gone. They could not be of any use to the prophet during his illness. At best their anxiety was only sentimental. But then, what became of their love when the prophet died? We hear of no wailing, no cries from them; that much talked-of love vanished into thin air. One and all, they left the bedside of the prophet, not caring even to perform his last rites, and instead were seen scrambling for power. The only conclusion that can sensibly be drawn is that they wanted to stay in Medina to bring to fruition their scheme of installing their own man as the Caliph in opposition to the prophet's nominee Imam Ali.

The Fiction of ABU BAKR'S "Appointment" by the prophet to Lead the Prayers during his illness:

This was one of those devices of the opposition party intended to bolster their own man's claim to the Caliphate. But they were not sure of their ground, and have finally been compelled to take their stand on the basis that the prophet (p) did not designate anyone as his successor. Some of the historians have been unwary enough to be inconsistent by urging contradictory pleas. They urge the Non-appointment Theory as a matter of religion; but their intelligence and common sense not being satisfied with that marvelously clumsy attempt at duping both themselves and the world, they seek some other support to lean on.

They find this matter of leading the prayers near at hand as if placed there for that purpose, and put it forward as an "indication". One wonders why the prophet (p) stopped at an indication, and did not announce it openly? He would have found a ready response in a very large section of his UMMMA. Anyhow, the use that is sometimes made of this event furnishes us

with good grounds to scan and scrutinize it in order to clear the ground for further enquiry.

We meet the first mention of this event in the earliest history of the prophet (p), "SIRAT-AN-NABI" by MUHAMMAD IBN ISHAQ, the original book is not extant, but its edition by ABD AL-MALIK IBN HISHAM is available. The following is the literal translation of the relevant passage occurring in that book:

IBN ISHAQ says: IBN SHAHAB told me that he had been told by ABD AL-MALIK, who had heard it from his father ABU BAKR, who had been told by ABDALLAH IBN ZAM'A IBN AL-ASWAD, that ABDALLAH IBN ZAM'A says that he, with other persons, had been at the side of the prophet when his illness had taken a serious turn. Just then, BILAL had come and announced that it was the time of the prayers. The prophet (p) told them to ask anyone to lead the prayers. ABDALLAH IBN ZAM'A says that on hearing this, he came out, and saw that UMAR was among those who were present. ABU BAKR was not present. "I asked UMAR to get up and lead the prayers. UMAR got up and proclaimed the "TAKBIR".

The prophet (p) heard his voice, as his voice was very loud. The prophet (p) said, "Where is ABU BAKR? God and the Muslims refuse that UMAR should lead the prayers". ABU BAKR was then sent for. But the time he came, UMAR had finished the prayers. UMAR said to me, "What hast thou done with me"? By God, when I complied with the order, I thought that it was from the prophet. If it had not been so, I would never had led the prayers". I replied, "the order was not from the prophet, but when I did not find ABU BAKR there, I thought you to be the most suitable to lead the prayers".

This is one version, which I would call IBN ZAM'A'S version. A fuller version is that of Imam AHMAD IBN HANBAL. He says:

It is narrated through ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS that during his last illness, in which he died, the prophet was in the house of AISHA. One day, he said "send Ali to me at once". AISHA said, "no, we are sending for ABU BAKR for you". The prophet (p) said, "very well". Then HAFSA (wife of the prophet and daughter of UMAR) said, "no, why should we not call UMAR for you"? The prophet (p) said, "very well". Then 'UMAL-FADL, wife of ABBAS said, "we will call ABBAS for you". The prophet (p) said "very well". When all these persons had congregated, the prophet raised his head, and not finding Ali there, kept silent. UMAR understood his object, and said, "Let us move away".

Just then BILAL came, and reminded the prophet of the prayers". AISHA said, "ABU BAKR is a man of emotion, and when the people do not see you, they will weep. It will be better if you order UMAR to lead the prayers". But ABU BAKR went to lead the prayers. Then the prophet, finding in himself a slight change for the better, had himself dragged to the mosque with the help of two persons, his legs being trailed on the ground. When the people saw him, they informed ABU BAKR of it.

ABU BAKR tried to step back; but the prophet asked him to remain where he was. The prophet was sitting and ABU BAKR was standing at his side. IBN ABBAS says that the prophet took up the prayers from the stage,

which ABU BAKR had reached. The prophet was leading the prayers, with ABU BAKR following him, and the people were in turn repeating what ABU BAKR took up from the prophet. "WAKKI" also says the same thing.

**HABIB AS-SAYYAR has this version:**

During the period of his illness, the prophet used to go out to the mosque to say prayers only once a day (instead of five times daily). But during the last three days of the illness, he could not come out. During those three days, according to the hint ("ISHARA") given by him, ABU BAKR used to lead the prayers.

This version shows that the prophet made only a hint; he did not name any person. The hint might have been interpreted differently by different persons. Quite a different picture is given by AL-BUKHARI and Muslim; it is traced to A'ISHA. They say:

AISHA says that when the illness of the prophet took a serious turn, BILAL came and asked permission to call out the ADHAN. The prophet said, "Go and order ABU BAKR to lead the prayers". AISHA said, "O prophet of God, ABU BAKR is a soft man, and when he stands in your place, he will not be able to control himself. It will be better if you order UMAR to lead the prayers". But the prophet insisted that ABU BAKR should be told to lead the prayers. AISHA says that she then asked HAFSA to tell the prophet that ABU BAKR was a man of a soft nature, and that UMAR should lead the prayers. HAFSA then told the prophet what she had been asked to tell him. Thereupon the prophet said, "you are (deceitful and cunning) like the women of YUSUF'S story. Order ABU BAKR to lead the prayers". AISHA says that just then the prophet, feeling some abatement in the severity of the disease, got up, and had himself dragged on the shoulders of two persons, his legs being dragged on the ground. She says that when he entered the mosque, ABU BAKR, sensing his presence, stepped back, but then the prophet made a sign to him that he should stay at his place. The prophet began leading the prayers sitting, ABU BAKR was following him, and the people were taking their cue from ABU BAKR.

HUSSAIN DIYAR BAKRI saw the defect in the version of IBN ZAM'A in that it did not mention the name of ABU BAKR as coming from the prophet's mouth. He thus amends that version:

During the prophet's illness, BILAL sought the prophet's orders regarding the prayers when he called out the ADHAN. The prophet asked ABDALLAH IBN ZAM'A to go and ask ABU BAKR to lead the prayers. He went out, but did not find ABU BAKR. IBN ZAM'A saw UMAR there at the gate among the people, and asked UMAR to lead the prayers. UMAR began the prayers, saying the "TAKBIR". When the prophet heard his voice, he said, "God and the Muslims refuse everyone except ABU BAKR". This he said three times. UMAR said to IBN ZAM'A, "what a bad thing you have done. I thought the prophet had asked you to tell me to lead the prayers". IBN ZAM'A said, "No, by God, the prophet did not specify anyone to whom I was to convey this order".

The chief point to note in this version is that here, despite his partial amendment, BAKRI still quotes IBN ZAM'A as expressly admitting that the prophet did not name any person to lead the prayers. This cuts the ground

from under the feet of the theory that ABU BAKR was appointed. AT-TABARI has yet another version. He says:

The prophet said, "It is perhaps the time for prayers". He was answered in the affirmative. The prophet then said, "Order ABU BAKR to lead the prayers". A'ISHA said, "ABU BAKR is a soft man". The prophet said, "tell UMAR to lead the prayers". UMAR said, "I am not going to lead the prayers when ABU BAKR is present". Therefore ABU BAKR led the prayers.

These are the various versions relating to the matter of the last prayers. If a mere recital of them has not convinced the reader of the contrived-for-the-occasion nature of the whole affair, I would invite his attention to the following points:

1. There is obvious conflict between these versions, and according to the rules prescribed for judging the authenticity of HADITH; this fact alone is sufficient for its rejection. (SEE TABLE)

2. Another point which strikes even the casual observer is that a gradual but definite improvement is discernible as one progresses through these versions, suggesting a deliberate intent to enhance the effect of the event and to mould it into a shape that would give immunity from adverse criticism to those making use of it. A glaring illustration of this appears in the version of AT-TABARI, who tries to shield UMAR against the obvious aspersion cast upon him by the version of IBN ZAM'A, which represents the prophet as exclaiming with force that "God and the Muslims" refuse the leadership of UMAR in the prayers.

AT-TABARI comes to UMAR'S rescue and invents a quite new story; he makes the prophet agree to the suggestion of A'ISHA that UMAR should lead the prayers. Whether the order is conveyed to him, or whether he himself was present on the spot when this order was given, is not made clear. Anyhow, it is now UMAR who refuses to lead the prayers, as ABU BAKR was present. The prophet's insistence that ABU BAKR should lead the prayers, IBN ZAM'A'S going to UMAR, UMAR'S "TAKBIR", their conversation after the prophet's rejection of UMAR, all are brushed aside.

This is how these historians; even those of established fame like AT-TABARI, have amended, molded and shaped the events to suit beliefs which they have inherited from their ancestors, who were forced to adopt them for political reasons. The conflict, or rather contradiction, is so obvious that according to the established canons of checking the authenticity of HADITH laid down by all learned men, the whole story of ABU BAKR 'S leading the prayers at the instance of the prophet must be rejected.

3. Before proceeding further in the examination of these versions, we must point out one fact. As we will show in its proper place, there were two parties among the wives of the prophet, and this division was over the question of the Caliphate. One party, headed by A'ISHA, was against Imam Ali's succession. SAWDA, a wife of the prophet, was in this party. She was the sister of this ABDALLAH IBN ZAM'A, and it was she and A'ISHA who originated this story. As is obvious from the version of AHMAD IBN HANBAL and other historical books, A'ISHA and other ladies of this party

had been diligently besieging the bed of the prophet, solely for the purpose of watching the interests of their relatives. The absence of any mention of FATIMA in the version of Imam Ahmad IBN HANBAL, who mentions the names of other ladies, is very significant. Examine that RIWAYA very carefully: the prophet (p) of his own free expressed a desire that Imam Ali should be sent for; these ladies recommended their own men; Imam Ali was not sent for; as Imam Ali was not there, the prophet (p) remained silent. Had FATIMA been there she would certainly have complied with the wishes of her father, and it was thus clearly in these other ladies interests that she should be absent.

4. Now let us examine story as told by IBN ZAM'A. There is no mention of ABU BAKR in the order of the prophet given to IBN ZAM'A, who expressly says that the prophet (p) did not specify any particular person to lead the prayers. Towards the close of his statement, IBN ZAM'A says that as he did not find ABU BAKR, he asked UMAR to lead the prayers. That was his own selection, in view of the general nature of the prophet's order; it was IBN ZAM'A'S own wish to convey the message to ABU BAKR in the first instance, and only on not finding him there did he deliver it to UMAR.

Then again, there is no mention in IBN ZAM'A'S story of A'ISHA pleading the softness of ABU BAKR, of her recommending UMAR in his place, and of the prophet rejecting that plea. Had that altercation taken place and resulted in the prophet rejecting that plea, IBN ZAM'A would never have made the mistake of conveying the order to UMAR. Anyhow, this controversy is set at rest by the express admission of IBN ZAM'A, as mentioned in "TAKBIRA-AL-KHAMIS", that the prophet (p) did not name any particular person to lead the prayers.

5. Now we refer to the RIWAYA as told by AHMAD IBN HANBAL. It goes to the root of the whole case, and lays bare the whole plan. When the prophet (p) asked that Imam Ali be sent for, it was the time of the prayer, as is evident from the fact of BILAL coming just then to announce it. The prophet (p) selected Imam Ali for the purpose. These ladies also guessed the prophet's intentions, so they did not send for Imam Ali, but began to urge their own men. Their men were sent for, and Imam Ali remained absent. The prophet (p), on raising his head and not finding Imam Ali there, kept silent. So far as the prophet was concerned, the matter ended there.

But these ladies did not lose heart, as they wanted to make capital out of the whole affair, and hence the incorporation of additional material. Let us consider that addition, that is, A'ISHA'S plea about ABU BAKR'S softness. According to some versions, ABU BAKR must have been present when the "order" to lead the prayers was made, as they state that he came out of the prophet's house and went to lead the prayers. Yet at the time the order was given, ABU BAKR remained silent; we do not hear of him pleading his softness. Thus doubt is cast on A'ISHA'S having raised that plea. One version has the prophet making no reply to A'ISHA'S plea; but other versions make him overrule her. One version represents UMAR as being present, though not asking to be excused from leading the prayers owing to the presence ABU BAKR; yet other versions show that he could not entertain this idea while ABU BAKR was present.

6. The most obvious pointer to the truth is the prophet's anxiety to go to the mosque just at that time. Why did he go out in this precarious state of health? He could not walk; he had to be carried there with great difficulty and pain. According to these versions, only a few second before this, he had asked ABU BAKR to go and lead the prayers, and in compliance ABU BAKR had gone out to do so. Where then was the necessity of taking all this trouble of going to the mosque in this condition? The irresistible conclusion is that the prophet (p) came to know of this conspiracy, and, not wanting ABU BAKR to lead the prayers, went out to lead them himself.

7. From HABIB-AS-SAYYAR we learn that during the period of his illness, with the exception of the last three days, the prophet (p) used to come to the mosque once a day to lead the prayers, but that on those last three days when he could not come out even once, ABU BAKR, in accordance with a hint from the prophet, led the prayers. This confirms that the prophet did not give any express or verbal order for ABU BAKR to lead the prayers; some hint of his had merely been construed into that meaning. It was to remove this misunderstanding about the hint that the prophet, in that painful condition, went to the mosque to lead the prayers himself. Thus these other arrangements for leading the prayers must have been contrived by someone else.

There is another point. It is apparent from these versions that the order to ABU BAKR was given when the disease had taken a serious turn, namely the last three days. From HABIB-AS-SAYYAR we learn that before that the prophet used to go out to lead the prayers, but only once a day. Who then was leading the other four prayers during those days? It was certainly not ABU BAKR, as he is said to have been appointed only three days before the prophet's death. It could not have been. UMAR, as "God and the Muslims" had refused his leadership in prayers. That unknown person, sacrificed for the sake of this new story, was Imam Ali. There had been no need for the prophet to make any fresh order when he found that he could not longer make it to the mosque even once a day; the old arrangement was to continue ipso facto. But as this new story was to be cast in the mould, that unknown person had to remain unmentioned.

It is also to be noted that fiction of the prayers was started only when the prophet (p) came to stay at the house of A'ISHA during the early stages of the disease he was going to his wives' houses according to their turns.

In the version given by Muslim and Al-BUKHARI, we find that the prophet (p), in addressing these ladies, likened them to the cunning and deceitful ZULAIKHA who, by her tricks and snares, had first tried to draw YUSUF to herself, and then after failing in the attempt, had got him imprisoned by her lies and deceit. The prophet (p) used this similitude for those ladies who, as we have seen, tried to persuade the prophet to send for their own men instead of Imam Ali, and thus to dissuade him from the right course.

It is also to be remembered that the prophet (p) had already ordered that Abu BAKR, UMAR, UTHMAN, ABD AL-RAHMAN and other, excepting Imam Ali, should join the army of USAMA, and go out of Medina. He could not, therefore, now order ABU BAKR to lead the prayers during his



illness. It is now clear that the fiction of the prophet asking Abu BAKR to lead the prayers was only a show made up by this party to achieve a political end.

(TABLE HIGHLIGHTING THE CONTRADICTIONS IN THE ACCOUNTS)???

| Source              | Name of prophet's prayers     | Name of prophet's mosque       | Whether Asked by               | Whether led initial plea | Whether person person                                                                                       |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prayers over Anyone | Ali is mentioned              | prayers Mentioned              | mentioned                      | IBN ISHAQ                | Anyone                                                                                                      |
| Umar No             | No                            | No                             | (through ibn Zam'a)            | Ahmad                    | Abu Bakr                                                                                                    |
| Yes                 | Yes                           | Yes                            | Ibn Hanbal (through ibn Abbas) | Haibb-as-                | Abu Bakr                                                                                                    |
| Bakr No             | No                            | No                             | Sayyar (hinted only)           | Al-Bukhari               | Abu Bakr                                                                                                    |
| Yes                 | Yes                           | Muslim (through Aisha H.DIYAR) | Abu Bakr                       | Umar                     | No                                                                                                          |
| BAKRI not anyone    | (through specified ibn Zam'a) | At-Tabari                      | Abu Bakr                       | Abu Bakr                 | No                                                                                                          |
| Bakr No             | Yes                           | No                             | Then                           | UMAR                     | The Frustration by the Opposition of the Prophet's Last Wish to Write out his Will Regarding his Successor: |

This was the final attempt by the prophet to prevent his flock from going astray and having to wander in the wilderness in search of a true leader. Both explicitly and implicitly, by word and by deed, by proclamations, exhortations and announcements, in fact by every means available to him, he had tried to make his UMMA see which quarter they should look to for true leadership. But ambition and avarice blinded them, and they failed to heed his advice. The punishment for this has come in the shape of thirteen centuries of bloodshed, massacres, misery, unrest, ruin, disgrace, disruption and disunity, with still no end in sight. They reply that is often given to this contention is that those who claim to have heeded this advice of the prophet cannot demonstrate to have evolved a better world for themselves. However, this reply fails to take note of the immutable law that the fate of nations is determined by their majorities; the minorities always go unheeded, and are eventually influenced by, and merged in with majorities as far as character, mental outlook and way of living go, even though in matters of belief and principles they may go on claiming a separate identity for themselves. Mere belief and principles, though, unaccompanied by action and un-translated into conduct, never affect the life of an individual, let alone the fate of a nation. Moreover, minorities are in no position to influence those decisions, which make or break a nation.

To continue the thread of our narration, the recent moves of the opposition in delaying the departure of USAMA'S army and setting up ABU BAKR to lead the prayers against the prophet's wishes, had thoroughly convinced him that they would not submit to the rule of Imam Ali. But the prophet rightly thought the installation of his successor to be a part of his mission, as on this successor's personality and powers, both mental and physical, depended the future shape and fate of Islam. He therefore considered it his duty, enjoined by God for the propagation of true and pure Islam, to make every possible effort in this direction, so that if they were to select the wrong person as their ruler and thereby defile the purity of Islam, it could not subsequently be said that it was his own failure to adopt a

certain method that was to blame for the right man not having taken his place.

According to the tenets of Islam, it is the bounden duty of a dying man to make a will, and to have it attested by witnesses. Similarly, it is the duty of those hearing it or having a knowledge of it to see that it is executed. Moreover, to respect the wishes of a dying man has been held, in every age and clime, by law, custom, and the dictates of reason and conscience, to be the sacred duty of those among whom he dies who are in a position to fulfill them. Also, the disregard of a dying man's wishes by his son or other beneficiary is considered to be the most abominable of features in a man's character.

As a last resort, the Prophet (P) resolved to take advantage of this practice, and so when his companions were gathered round him, he demanded writing materials for the writing down of his will. How the Companions behaved on this occasion is told in the following pages. In "AL-BUKHARI", this incident is repeated in seven places under different headings, one of these being "AL-WASIYYA". In "Muslim" it is also mentioned in several places under the heading "AL-WASIYYA". The incident is a well established fact, and I relate it here from AL-BUKHARI and Muslim"

IBN ABBAS mentioned Thursday and wept profusely, and said that it was on Thursday that the prophet asked them to bring an ink-pot and writing parchment, so that he might write the will which would save them till eternity from going astray. But they said that the prophet was talking nonsense (YAHJUR). IBN ABBAS says that during his last illness near his death, when many companions including UMAR were in the house around him, the prophet said, "Come, I will write for you a document which will protect you till eternity from going astray". But UMAR said, "The prophet is under the influence of the disease, and you have the QUR'AN.

The Book of God is all-Sufficient for us". Those present became divided into two factions; one party was for supplying the writing materials to the prophet, and the other supported UMAR and said what UMAR had said. When the unseemly disorder and uproar increased, the prophet said, "Get you gone". IBN ABBAS used to say that it was the greatest misfortune, which intervened between him and his writing the will, this being on account of their turbulent conduct.

ZIRANI has it from UMAR, who says:

When the prophet fell ill, he asked us to supply him with parchment so that he might write a document, which would save us till eternity from going astray. His wives said from behind the BURDAH, "Do you not hear what the Prophet says"? I said, "You are like the deceitful women of YUSUF; when the Prophet is ill, you weep, and when he is healthy you sit on his neck". The Prophet said, "Leave them, they are better than you". It is proved beyond all doubt that the word "YAHJUR" ("He is talking nonsense") was used by UMAR in respect of the Prophet. I proceed now to explore this incident more fully under the following five sub-headings.

### 1. Was it Delirium?

The order of the Prophet came so suddenly that the opposition party did not have enough time to prepare to meet it with a well-orchestrated plan or to express the refusal in silken words. They were taken aback, and all that they could come up with on the spur of the moment was this clumsy assertion of delirium. But delirium does not confine itself to one sentence. Had it been delirium, the Prophet (P) would have uttered some meaningless sentences before and after this order, but we find no such thing. The Prophet (P) was quite in his senses; he realized their intentions; he asked them to get out; when UMAR rebuked the Prophet's wives, he scolded him very suitably, thereby indicating at the same time that the wives in asking UMAR to supply the parchment were in the right, while he in refusing to obey the order was in the wrong. Are these the signs of delirium? Had it been delirium, and then logically the writing itself would have indicated this. It would have been incoherent, meaningless, or without any reasonable underlying purpose. Unless they expected something damaging to their plans, they ought to have remained silent, for the writing could always have been thrown away had delirium been suspected. Not only would their Prophet have been saved the bitterness of realizing on his deathbed in what scant regard some of his prominent companions held him, but they too would have escaped the odium of having embittered their Prophet's last moments. This was not the Prophet's first illness; he must have fallen ill many a time prior to that occasion. Were he liable to delirium like ordinary people, then it would be difficult to distinguish which parts of the QUR'AN might result from that delirium. Those who talk like this do not appear to have fully realized and comprehended the lofty and exalted position that Prophet-hood occupies in the affairs of men. Perhaps it is their misunderstanding of the oft-quoted verse of the QUR'AN "Tell them, I am a man like you, except that God sends His WAHI (revelation) to me".

This AYA refers to physical attributes only, such as having a body susceptible to the infirmities any human being experiences. Without giving the exception mentioned in the AYA its due importance, they argue in a way that implies that the Prophet (P) also had all the weaknesses of the flesh. If their argument is accepted, then a Prophet can also be a thief, an adulterer, a drunkard and so on, and may still be selected by God as the recipient of His revelation. But the fact of the matter is that not every man is fit for this. For this, God selects the highest specimen of humanity, someone in whom are embodied all the human virtues to their highest degree, and all that is best and noblest in human nature. In this particular case, however, we need not resort to the finer arguments about the nature, power and potentialities of NUBUWWA.

Even among ordinary men are found those who are of such strong nerve that their brain does not yield to delirium, however high the fever or other excitement may be, while there are people of a lower type who take leave of their senses at the slightest excitement. There are no grounds to suppose that the Prophet of Islam belonged to this latter category. If it is not to be ruled out as irrelevant, I might point out that ABU BAKR wrote his last will bequeathing the Caliphate to UMAR during his last illness. He had only just

begun to dictate the will when he fell unconscious. His condition was so critical that UTHMAN, who was writing the will, thought that he might not survive the swoon, and therefore, of his own will, added the name of UMAR as the successor. ABU BAKR only ratified it when consciousness returned to him. No charge of delirium was leveled against him, even though the circumstances of this case were far more conducive to such a charge. It would seem that such a remark was reserved only for the Prophet-but not with consistency; the Prophet (P) had supposedly passed another order during this very same illness, and at its critical stage too; the order to lead prayers. Yet no delirium was diagnosed on that occasion.

## **2. Book of God:**

The other reason put forward for disobeying the Prophet was that the Book of God was sufficient, and no further guidance was called for. This presupposes that what the Prophet intended to write would be in conflict with, or contrary to, the principles laid down in the QUR'AN. For that matter it could also have been imagined possible that he intended to clarify the obscure, explain the ambiguous, simplify the difficult, or illustrate the abstruse, in which case there could have been no objection to the writing.

One striding aspect of this sentence of UMAR'S is that it is in clear conflict with, even an open challenge to, the Prophet's declaration on the occasion of the GHADIR KHUM, and on other occasions, that the QUR'AN and his children were two precious legacies of his which would never leave each other up till the Day of Judgment. And that the Muslims would never go astray if they followed them both. The Prophet required his UMMA to follow both of them; but UMAR says no, we do not alone is enough for us. That the QUR'AN alone did not prove adequate, the coming events clearly demonstrated.

In fact, the Book of God is enough for all times and all climes, but only if rightly understood and properly expounded so as to supply the principles of action in every age and for every problem that might arise. For this reason, the QUR'AN itself says that many persons are guided to the straight path by this QUR'AN and that many persons are led astray by it. Again, it says, "But no one knows its hidden meanings except God and those who are firmly grounded in knowledge". This presupposes the existence of persons who know the hidden meanings of the QUR'AN correctly. People are asked to refer to them for a true knowledge of the QUR'AN. Those who do not know the correct meanings of the QUR'AN and do not refer to those who know them are led astray by it. For this reason, the Prophet (P) pointed to his children as the persons who knew this correct interpretation of the QUR'AN, and exhorted his UMMA to follow them.

In asserting that the Book of God was sufficient, let us see whether they really meant it when it came to following it on important occasions.

1. The QUR'AN enjoins obedience to the Prophet upon every Muslim; but they did not obey him, for they did not supply him with the writing materials.

2. The QUR'AN says that you should not raise your voice in the presence of the Prophet; but they created an uproar around his deathbed, and the nuisance was so great that he was compelled to turn them out.

3. The QUR'AN says that Muhammad will die; yet on his death, they said no, he has been raised up to heaven and will be coming back shortly to chastise those who say that he has died. This was in spite of the fact that the dead body was lying before them. This assertion was made according to a plan, for as soon as ABU BAKR came and they were thus ready to act, the revelation came to them that Muhammad had died.

4. At the SAQIFA, when the coup d'état was being enacted, they put aside the Book of God and did not refer to it. If they honestly believed that the Book of God was sufficient for all purposes, they ought to have looked in it to find out who was or could be the rightful successor of the Prophet (P). But the QUR'AN was not even mentioned there.

5. At the DARBAR, where the daughter of the Prophet advanced her claim to her father's inheritance, the Book of God was conveniently forgotten, as it would have given its verdict in favor of the claimant. On the contrary, authority from another quarter was sought, namely a "saying" of the Prophet that was coined to the effect that the Prophets neither inherit nor are inherited from- a strange disadvantage to attach to Prophet-hood. 6. As I have already remarked, the Book of God was forgotten when ABU BAKR wrote his will in favor of UMAR.

7. At the time of appointing the SHURA, UMAR gave all sorts of directions to the members, and eventually directed them to give their verdict in favor of the candidate on whose side they were to find ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF. Curiously enough he does not tell them to refer to the Book of God and take the side directed by the QUR'AN.

8. The whole edifice of their standpoint is based on a contradiction; by saying that there is nothing in the Book of God relating to the succession to Muhammad (P), they cut at the root of their own assertion that the Book of God was sufficient for them.

### **3. What the Prophet Intended to Write:**

I have already stated what the Prophet intended to write. In "FATH-AL-BARI" IBN HIJR AL-ASQALANI, under the commentary on the statement "I will write a document", says that, that writing was to designate the successor after him. At another place he writes. "The Prophet (P) intended to declare the names of the Caliphs after him, so that there might not be any dispute between them on this point". In his commentary on SAHIH MUSLIM, IMAM MAWAWI writes: "The ULAMA' have differed as to what the Prophet intended to write. It is said that he intended to declare and designate a particular person as his successor, so that dissention and disputes might not arise on this point after him".

All the circumstances of the case point in the same direction. What is more, all controversy is set at rest by UMAR'S clear statement on this point during his conversation with ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS (see chapter two) when he says that the Prophet intended to designate Imam Ali as his successor and write a will to that effect, and that he (UMAR) prevented him from doing so.

#### 4. Oral Declaration on his Deathbed:

It is said that after this incident, the Prophet made an oral will giving three directions, viz. (a) To expel the Jews from the Arabian peninsula. (b) To accord to the foreign deputations the same treatment which he used to. (c) This third direction the RAWI (narrator) forgets. There are many narrators of this tradition, but in the case of each of them it is recorded that he forgot the third direction. There is a method in this forgetfulness, and some writers have rightly guessed the reason.

They say that the writer did not think it politic to disclose the third direction UMAR obeyed the first direction to the very letter, and expelled the Jews from Arabia when he ascended the throne. One wonders why he did not trace that direction to the same source, delirium, which according to him had been responsible for the wish to write the will. The second direction was merely a continuation of the same policy. It is obvious that the third direction, which every narrator has thought it prudent to forget, was the declaration and exhortation regarding Imam Ali that he was to be the Prophet's successor and that his rule was to be submitted to. IBN HIJR AL-MAKKI says"

On his deathbed, the Prophet said; "O people, I will shortly accompany the Angel of Death to the heavens. I have already declared, and I declare again, that I am leaving among you the Book of God and my Children". Then he caught hold of the arm of Ali, and lifting it up, said, "This Ali is with the QUR'AN and the QUR'AN with Ali. They shall never separate until they both arrive at the HAWD. Therefore you are to keep enquiring from both of them Islam and my teaching are".

Puerile objections that are met with in certain books may be summarily dismissed. One such objection is that if there was anything more to be written, why did not Imam Ali, when present, supply the writing materials? Why did the Prophet not try again? Obviously these objections do not deserve serious consideration. The religion had in any case already been completed. Once they had shown their hostile determination to thwart the writing of his will, there was no use repeating the attempt.

There is no mention of Imam Ali being present there on that occasion, but even if he had been, no useful purpose would have been served by his supplying the writing materials, when those for whom the exercise was intended were not in a mood to obey him. They would not have allowed the scribe to write it out, or, if written, the parchment would doubtless have been snatched away and torn up. Even more serious disturbances and disorderly scenes would have ensued. The truth is that what the Prophet intended to write had been repeated by him on many a previous occasion. His task now was to reduce it to writing in the form of a will. A will carries a special sanctity, and its execution is safeguarded by the provision of serious sanctions in the event of its non-compliance. These sanctions are elaborately detailed in the QUR'AN. It should be noted that when ABU BAKR came to die, everybody knew that UMAR would succeed him, but still a will was written.



### 5. History Made Unintelligible:

This incident has not been given the weight and consideration it deserves. The time honored custom of accepting, without discrimination or examination, everything that comes from the majority, has led the later historians into strange errors. Through taking as absolutely correct the version of this incident given by the majority, they have had scope to give it a shape and meaning of their own liking. For instance, one writer when speaking of this incident says:

At another time, he called for pen and paper, saying that he would write a book that would preserve his followers from error. There seems to be an indication that the Prophet wished to revise the QUR'AN to make it fitting to be a guide for his people when their numbers would be increased in different portions of the world. In ingenuity and invention, this surpasses the delirium fable. MARGOLIOUTH says:

At one period, he is said to have asked for parchment or for a "blade bone" and ink that he might write a body of rules for the guidance of Muslims, a request which was attributed to delirium and therefore refused. This anecdote appears to be genuine, because it is difficult to conceive any motive, which can have led to its invention; but we know not why the request should have been refused.

Both these writers reject the delirium fable. Gilman, taking his cue from UMAR'S famous exclamation that the Book of God was sufficient, comes up with the amusing explanation that the QUR'AN was unfit for large communities and so the Prophet wanted to write out a new one which would suit his expanding community- an explanation which no one can for a moment take seriously. MARGOLIOUTH, like the wise man that he was, pleads his ignorance frankly and closes the matter. It seems that they are writing history in a hurry, and have neither the time nor inclination to stop and think out the sequence of events. Even by just paying attention to the ordinary rules of causation as applied to human conduct, one cannot but be aware of the following:

1. From the words and deeds of the Prophet it had become known to all that he intended Imam Ali to succeed him.

2. In particular at KHUM, he had announced Imam Ali's succession to all, and in so doing used the words "if you follow Ali you will never go astray".

3. On this occasion of the will too, he used similar words, viz. "to protect you from going astray".

4. All present there knew that he was going to write a will designating Imam Ali as his successor.

5. Even if the events that had preceded this incident are not clear enough for a foreigner to enable him to read the history of that period aright, the events which followed the death of the Prophet (see following chapters) should make it clear that (a) there was a strong party among the companions of the Prophet who were opposed to Ali's succession. (b) that party had been devising its plans to oust Ali, and (c) that party therefore did not want the Prophet's wish to designate Ali as his successor to be formulated in writing.

6. Now it is plain why that wish of the Prophet (P) was attributed to delirium, and why it was not complied with, or, to use the phraseology of MARGOLIOUTH, why "the request was rejected".

## Chapter Eight: The Coup d'etat

The most daring coup d'état in history was successfully carried out at SAQIFAT BANI SA'IDA, and it was fraught with momentous consequences for Islam. Its coming so soon after the death of the Prophet gives rise to the reasonable awaiting that event. The success of the coup was due to the consummate skill with which it was planned and carried out. It must also be admitted that the possession by its organizers of a keen insight into the Arab character, and their ability and readiness to utilize the materials at hand to the greatest possible advantage, contributed in no small measure to the fructification of their labors.

I propose to give the facts as told by the "conquering" party, and then to discuss them from a rational point of view. The subject matter is arranged as follows:

1. The presence of the agents and spies of this party among the ANSAR.
2. The denial by UMAR of the death of the Prophet, because the person assigned by his party to the Caliphate (ABU BAKR) was away at "SUKH".
3. The arrival of ABU BAKR, UMAR'S recognition of the death of the Prophet, and ABU BAKR'S condemning mourning for the Prophet as being akin to his worship (for fear that sympathy for the death man might extend to his relatives and children).
4. The awaiting of news from the ANSAR, its secret conveyance to UMAR who communicates it to no one else except his comrade ABU BAKR, with whom he starts out for the SAQIFA.
5. Their meeting with other agents on the way to the SAQIFA.
6. The deciding factors at the SAQIFA: the desertion from the ANSAR, the arrival of an armed band of helpers, and the cutting short of the arguments by a fait accompli.

### **1. The Presence of Agents and Spies of the Opposition Party Among the ANSAR:**

IBN SA'D relates thus: "A'ISHA says that UMAR made a man from among the ANSAR his brother. Everything which that man heard was communicated by him to UMAR, and everything which UMAR heard was told by UMAR to that man". The Prophet (P) had made brothers among his companions for a specific purpose; generally, friendships or brotherhoods are created for mutual help in one's livelihood or against enemies. But this "brotherhood" was for the particular object of exchanging news.

We shall presently see how a man came from the SAQIFA and called UMAR aside to give information specifically to him and not the other persons there, whereupon he got up immediately and started out for the SAQIFA. Then on the way to the SAQIFA, two men from among the ANSAR met with him and communicated information to him. This shows that this party had established a regular system of espionage. More will be said on this subject as we proceed.

## **2. The Death of the Prophet While ABU BAKR is at SUKH, and UMAR'S Refusal to Believe that the Prophet is Dead:**

When the Prophet died, ABU BAKR was at SUKH, three or four miles from Medina, with his new bride. Finding ABU BAKR absent, UMAR stood up and treated the people to a sermon thus; "Some MUNAFIQIN say that Muhammad is dead; but he is not dead. He had gone to meet his God as Moses had gone. He will return shortly and will cut off the hands and feet of these men". He was brandishing his sword and threatening to kill the people who had said that Muhammad had died.

## **3. The Arrival of ABU BAKR, his Admonishing of the Mourners, his Exhortation to the People to Select the Successor, and UMAR'S Recognition of the Prophet's Death:**

ABU BAKR arrived, went up to the dead body of the Prophet, kissed the face, came over to where UMAR was, and then harangued the people thus; "O people, he who used to worship Muhammad should know that He is alive and will never die. The appointment of a successor is absolutely essential, come and give your opinion in the matter". They replied that he had said the right thing and that they would consider the matter. He also referred to the QUR'ANIC AYA in which it is stated that Muhammad would die. UMAR said that on ABU BAKR'S reminding him of the AYA, he recollected that there was such a AYA in the QUR'AN, and then recognized that Muhammad had died.

## **4. UMAR'S Private Receipt of News and his Departure with ABU BAKR for the SAQIFA:**

Both UMAR and ABU BAKR went to the house where the Prophet was lying dead; many people had collected there. Just then a man came and called out to UMAR alone to come out, and then told him that the ANSAR were gathering in the SAQIFA OF BANI SA'IDA, and that he should do something before anything untoward happened. UMAR then advised ABU BAKR to go to the SAQIFA too; he agreed, and they both set off towards the SAQIFA together.

## **5. The Meeting of UMAR and ABU BAKR on the Way, as if by Appointment, with ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH, the Proceeding of these Three towards the SAQIFA, and their Further Meeting on the Way with Two ANSAR Friends:**

"ABU BAKR and UMAR were both hurrying towards the SAQIFA when they met ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH, and all three proceeded in that direction. On the way, they met with ASIM and UWAIM IBN SA'IDA. They (ASIM and UWAIM) asked them to go back, as what they wanted was impossible to achieve. But they refused, saying that they must go there, and went to the SAQIFA".

Later events show that these two, ASIM and UWAIM, had been won over from the ANSAR and had joined this faction. For this defection they were severely dealt with by the ANSAR, but more of this anon.

It is an established fact that out of the entire MUHAJIRIN community of Medina, these three persons alone, namely ABU BAKR, UMAR and ABU UBAIDA, were present at the SAQIFA for that fateful meeting AL-BUKHARI says: "ABU BAKR AS-SIDDIQ, UMAR IBN -AL-KHATTAB and ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH, went to the ANSAR". The same thing is said by AT-TABARI. If any doubt still remains, it is removed by the following sentence of MOHIB-AT-TABARI; "No one from among QURAIISH except UMAR and ABU UBAIDA were with ABU BAKR at the SAQIFA on that day".

## **6. The Arrival at the SAQIFA, the Arguments, and the Deciding Factors:**

When these three persons arrived at the SAQIFA, they found the ANSAR gathered there; they had selected SA'D IBN IBADA for the Caliphate. The following is an exact translation from AT-TABARI:

UMAR says, "We came to the ANSAR. On the way I had thought out the points, which I was to tell them. When we arrived there, I wanted to speak to them. But ABU BAKR stopped me, and asked me to let him speak first; after him I might say anything I liked, ABU BAKR spoke. I was wonder-struck to find that he said exactly the same thing which I had intended to say, and he said more than that".

ABDALLAH IBN ABD AL-RAHMAN says that ABU BAKR began the speech. ABU BAKR said, "...God singled out these MUHAJIRIN of his tribe to become the first Muslims to testify to Muhammad's being the Prophet, to love him, and to bear hardships and insults with him with patience. This was in spite of the fact that the whole nation was against them and taunted and tortured them. They were the first to worship God with the Prophet and believe in his mission. They are the relatives and heirs of the Prophet, and therefore are entitled to this caliphate in preference to others; he who disputes this caliphate with them is a usurper. As to you ANSAR, no one denies your share in the propagation and service of this Religion. God selected you for the protection of His Prophet and Religion. For this reason, the Prophet came to you. Without doubt, your place with us is next to the first Muslim MUHAJIRIN. Therefore it is proper that we should be the rulers, and you should be the viziers; we shall consult you on every matter, and nothing will be done without you agreeing to it. AL-HABBAB IBN AL-MUNDHIR rose up to reply.

He said, "O ANSAR, do not listen to anyone in this matter. Take the reins of government in your hands. All men are living under the shade of your roofs. No one will dare oppose you or disagree with you. You have honor, riches, experience, courage, power and prestige. All eyes are turned towards you. Have no differences among yourselves in this matter, otherwise your cause will be lost. As you have heard, they have rejected our proposal that one ruler should be taken from the MUHAJIRIN, and one from the ANSAR". UMAR said, "That is impossible, two swords cannot be

sheathed in one scabbard. By God, the Arabs will never agree to your ruling over them when their Prophet belonged to a tribe other than yours.

There is no doubt that the Arabs will not hesitate to accept the rule of that tribe to which the Prophet belonged. It is only fitting that the ruler should be one belonging to that tribe. And in that case, if anyone does not obey him, we will have right and justice on our side. After the Prophet, we, being his heirs and members of his family, are entitled to the government. Who is there who can dispute with us the empire of Muhammad? We are his heirs and members of his family. No one can dispute with us except those who love falsehood and injustice". Now AL-HABBAB IBN AL-MUNDHIR stood up and said, "O ANSAR, decide this matter among yourselves, and do not listen to this man and his comrades.

They want to usurp what is yours. If they do not accept our decision, turn them out of your city, and take the reins of government in your hands. By God, you are more entitled to this government than these people. Your swords have brought under the subjection of this Religion all those who would never obey anyone. I take upon myself the responsibility of deciding this matter. By God, if you want, I can decide the whole matter very quickly by means of my sword". UMAR said, "If you do this. God will ruin you". AL-HABBAB said, "No, you will be destroyed".

ABU UBAIDA said, "O ANSAR, you were the first to help and defend the Religion, do not be the first to alter and vary it". BASHIR IBN SA'D (an ANSAR) said, "O ANSAR, the honor and reward which we have gained by our early service to Islam in the shape of JIHAD against the heathens, was simply for the object of obeying the Prophet (P) and acquiring the pleasure of God. We did not seek worldly gain by it. This is God's blessing on us. Listen to me; Muhammad (P) (peace be upon him) was of QURAIISH, and therefore his tribe is better entitled to succeed him. I on my part shall never dispute this with them.

Fear God: do not oppose them, and do not dispute this matter with them". ABU BAKR said, "Here are UMAR and ABU UBAIDA: choose any one of them as your caliph". But both of them said, "In your presence, we cannot accept this office, as you are better than any other MUHAJIR: you were a companion of the Prophet in the Cave, and you have been the successor of the Prophet in the matter of the Prayers: and prayer is the greatest pillar of our religion. Therefore it is not proper for either of us to precede you in this matter. Extend your hand for the BAI'A (pledging of allegiance). ABU BAKR extended his hand, and UMAR and ABU UBAIDA advanced to make the BAI'A.

But BASHIR IBN SA'D forestalled them, and was the first to make the BAI'A. AL-HABBAB IBN AL-MUNDHIR exclaimed, "O BASHIR IBN SA'D, why have you gone in opposition to your own community? Were you jealous of SA'D IBN IBADA, and unwilling that he should have the headship?" BASHIR said, "No, by God. But I did not like to have to dispute this matter with those whom God has made deserving of it". (BASHIR belonged to the KHAZRAJ tribe of the ANSAR). When the AWS tribe saw that BASHIR had made the BAI'A to ABU BAKR, that he was helping QURAIISH in this matter, and that the KHAZRAJ wanted SA'D IBN



IBADA to be the AMIR, they then said to each other, one of them being USAID IBN AL-HUDAIR, one of their NUQABA' (captain).

"If the KHAZRAJ get the caliphate, they will, on that account, surpass you for ever in rank and honor, and will never give you a share in the HUKUMA. Therefore, it is better for us that we all make the BAI'A to ABU BAKR". Accordingly they stood up and made the BAI'A to ABU BAKR. By this step, all the hopes and ambitions of SA'D IBN IBADA and the KHAZRAJ regarding the caliphate were shattered to pieces. ABU MIKHNAF says that on this occasion BANU ASLAM came in great numbers to the SAQIFA and made the BAI'A to ABU BAKR. (Their help came at such an opportune moment that UMAR used to say that he became sure of success at the SAQIFA only when he saw BANU ALSAM coming).

ABU MIKHNAF says that people now came from all sides and began to make the BAI'A to ABU BAKR, so much so that SA'D IBN IBADA was about to be trampled under foot. A friend of SA'D said, "Do not trample on SA'D". Upon this UMAR said, "Let God kill SA'D; kill him". Saying this UMAR himself came to the head of SA'D and said, "I want to trample you to death". SA'D caught hold of UMAR'S beard... AL-HABBAB IBN AL-MUNDHIR stood up, drew out his sword, and said, "I am the lion and son of a lion, and live in the den of lions". UMAR attacked him, his sword fell, UMAR picked it up and ran towards SA'D IBN IBADA, his friends also attacked SA'D... It was truly a scene of "JAHILIYYA" and people began to abuse each other.

Professor C.H. BECKER, in describing the happenings at the SAQIFA writes:

In the meantime, the hall and adjoining rooms had become filled with people belonging not to either of the main groups, but to the fluctuating population of Muslim Arabs of the neighborhood.... Those people really turned the scales, and thus ABU BAKR was chosen by a minority and recognized on the following day by the community, though unwillingly, as even tradition was unable to veil, on the part of many.... That ALI, the husband of the Prophet's daughter FATIMA, and father of the Prophet's grandsons AL-HASSAN and AL-HUSSAIN, who had previously held the first claim to the supreme position, was suddenly ousted from the front rank... ALI was a good swordsman but not a man of incautious action and quick resolve. He and those nearest to him appear to have had no other object in view than to gather around the corpse of the Prophet while the fight for the succession was raging without this.

Then, was how this "Kingdom of God" was transferred from the Prophet (P) to his "Caliph", and this was the "election" on which the whole edifice of Islamic "Democracy" has been erected. Tribal jealousy, defection, personal rivalry and considerations of personal gain won the day of ABU BAKR. IBN KHALDUN also relates these events, saying: "Then a fight took place between UMAR and AL-HABBAB, and ABU UBAIDA tried to separate them".

He goes on to say that SA'D IBN IBADA never took part in the prayers with ABU BAKR, and that when UMAR ascended the throne, he migrated to Syria where two "JINNS" killed them. We may well imagine who those

JINNS might be in the country ruled by MU'AWIYA. During these discussions, ZAID IBN THABIT also broke away from his party, the ANSAR, and helped ABU BAKR in these altercations. Such wealth was showered upon him that when he died; the estate divided among his heirs included bricks of gold. He was placed at the head of the committee appointed to collate the QUR'AN. BASHIR IBN SA'D took part in the battle against those who had refused to acknowledge the validity of the caliphate of ABU BAKR, and in it was killed. IBN QUTAIBA writes about him: "When BASHIR saw that his tribe had agreed unanimously on the headship of SA'D IBN IBADA, he was fired by jealousy against SA'D, and opposed him. He was one of the SARDARS (leader) of the KHAZRAJ.

Before I tell you what kind of election this was, let us hear it described later by UMAR himself:

I have received intelligence that one of you says that when UMAR dies, we will make the BAI'A to a certain person. No one should dupe himself and remain in the dark as to the BAI'A of ABU BAKR. Verily the BAI'A of ABU BAKR was a great calamity ("FALTATAN") from the evil consequences of which God saved us. Be aware that his BAI'A was a sudden disaster, which passed off quietly. There is no one now among you to whom the people's eyes turn as they turned towards ABU BAKR.

In future, if anyone makes the BAI'A to any persons without consulting the Muslims, they both shall be killed. From this it is apparent that even in the view of UMAR, the so-called election was a calamity fraught with dangerous consequences for Islam, and so vicious that if it were ever to be imitated or followed in the future, its enactors would deserve to be killed, even if they were Muslims, as it would have been done without consulting the Muslims. Can it honestly be maintained that on the basis of these one-sided and vicious proceedings, ABU BAKR was duly elected by the Muslims as the Caliph?

### **Discussion**

It is obvious from even a cursory reading of the facts narrated above that this was a prearranged affair; everything turned out faithfully at the appropriate time and place as it was intended.

Propaganda in justification of the coup has it that the ANSAR were the first to act, thus compelling prompt action on the part of the coup's leaders. But this is entirely wrong. The first thing I would like to draw to the attention of my readers is that the ANSAR had not joined this opposition, and would never have put up their own candidate if this small but powerful party, headed by influential and daring persons, had not been engaged in activities against IMAM ALI. It is related on the authority of the great historian MUHAMMAD IBN ISHAQ, that the ANSAR and the majority of the MUHAJIRIN had no doubt about IMAM ALI'S succession to the Prophet (P), they all knew that IMAM ALI would succeed him as a matter of course.

IMAM ALI himself said that had it not been for the activities of UMAR, no one would have disputed the caliphate with him. After the coup, the ANSAR openly said that had IMAM ALI been at the SAQIFA to claim the Caliphate, no one would have opposed his claims. Even during the

altercations at the SAQIFA, there was a stage when the ANSAR said that they would not acknowledge anyone except IMAM ALI as the Caliph. In addition to this is the fact that the ANSAR had no man to put against IMAM ALI; no one from among them had acquired a position from which to be able to oppose him.

They had no ladies of the likes of A'ISHA or HAFSA among the wives of the Prophet to help them. None of them could say that he was the father-in-law of the Prophet (P); nor was any of them as pushing and self-assertive as the enactors of this coup. The age-long enmity and rivalry that had existed, and was still existing, between the two powerful tribes which the community of the ANSAR comprised, namely the AWS and the KHAZRAJ, ill-suited that harmony and unanimity which was indispensable for success in this matter. Only an awkward yielding to the necessities of the moment was able to bring about some show of agreement on the headship of SA'D IBN IBADA, but the ease with which this fragile compromise disintegrated affords incontestable evidence of the futility of that momentary and unnatural alliance.

The fact that they had neither the opportunity nor a suitable candidate to dispute the Caliphate with IMAM ALI is a very important factor in the determination of this question. They could not have been painted by propaganda as offensive attacks, and the whole edifice of their "heroic sacrifice" in accepting the Caliphate has been built on the basis of this propaganda. The fact of the matter is that the conduct of this opposition party, especially towards the close of the Prophet's life, had made it clear to them that they were not going to submit to IMAM ALI'S rule. The ANSAR could not have been ignorant of what had taken place at the deathbed of the Prophet (P), and could not have been blind to the determined and successful resistance, which this party had offered to the Prophet's order to join the army of USAMA and leave Medina at that crucial moment. They knew fully well that the order "from behind the BURADA" for ABU BAKR to lead the prayers, and the Prophet's immediate countermanding of it by virtue of his prompt action, had a meaning and significance. In short, they were perfectly aware that this party would pounce upon the throne as soon as the Prophet died, leaving no opportunity for IMAM ALI to act.

That the opposition party were the first to act is evident from the conduct of their leaders immediately on the death of the Prophet (P). At the time the Prophet died, ABU BAKR happened to be with his new bride at SUKH, about three or four miles from Medina. With one pillar missing, their plan could not be put into action. UMAR, judging IMAM ALI by his own standards, thought that he would come forward at once to take the BAI'A while the man whom UMAR wanted to set up for the Caliphate was away. If information of the Prophet's death reached the ANSAR, they might come and make the BAI'A to IMAM ALI. He therefore did what statesmen before and after him have done; he tried to conceal the Prophet's death until ABU BAKR came back. So he stood up, sword in hand, and declared that the Prophet (P) had not died, that like Moses he had gone to meet God on the mountain, that he would come back and cut off the hands and feet of those who were spreading the news of his death, and that he himself would kill

outright any man who said that the Prophet (P) had died. IBN KHALDUN and others say that UAMR said that the Prophet (P) would never die. Does it stand to reason that UMAR really and honestly believed what he was saying? Moses, with his body, had gone to the mountain to meet God; he had not left his body behind him. Here the body of the Prophet (P) was lying before them.

The Prophet (P) had never alleged that he would not die. The QUR'AN, which UMAR must have read hundreds of times, clearly stated that Muhammad (P) would die. It is inconceivable that he would forget this. Moreover, the question of the Prophet being immortal is one of fundamental doctrine. Only a day before this, UMAR had considered Muhammad to be a very ordinary man, so much so that the heat of the fever could overcome the strength of his brain and cause delirium; now he was considering him to be supernatural, and able to overcome death itself.

On the day of the battle of UHUD, when the Muslims fled, forsaking the Prophet who was being defended by IMAM ALI at the risk of his life, UMAR also fled and sought refuge in the mountains. The enemy spread the news of the Prophet's death. UMAR and TALHA IBN UBAIDALLAH, with other MUHAJIRIN and ANSAR were sitting on a rock, having given up all hope, when ANAS IBN AN-NADR came up to them, and enquired why they were sitting there like that. They replied, "Muhammad had been killed; what a good thing it would be if only there were someone who would go and ask ABDALLAH IBN UBAI (a MUNAFIQ) to intercede with ABU SUFIAN on our behalf and get an amnesty for us. O friends, Muhammad is dead, let us go home now before the enemy comes and kills us all". ANAS said, "O my friends, even if Muhammad is dead, his God is alive; get up and fight and die for the religion for which Muhammad had died. O God, I declare my abhorrence of what they have said".

They did not move, but ANAS IBN AN-NADR, drawing his sword, advanced towards the enemy and fell fighting. That was the proper occasion on which to have disbelieved the news of the Prophet's death. His body was not there, so UMAR ought to have made a search for it. If it had not been found in spite of the search, and if he had really believed that Muhammad could not die, then this would have been the occasion on which to have declared that Muhammad (P) could not die, that he was alive but had gone to meet his God. (The AYA stating that Muhammad (P) is like other Prophets and will also die as they have died was not revealed till after this battle was over and the Prophet had returned to Medina). It would also have been expedient, for the Muslims would have rallied and attacked the enemy. But he meekly accepted his death, and wanted to save his life by making peace with the enemy.

The excuse for this conduct put forward by their followers is that on account of the love that UMAR bore the Prophet, his brain gave way under the shock and he thought that the Prophet (P) was immortal. Let us examine this plea. Firstly, this love must have developed very late in the day; it was entirely absent in A.H.3 when the battle of UHUD was fought, as we have seen above.

Secondly, this love appears to have been generated very suddenly, because we find it absent at the beginning of the last days of the Prophet's life, or even up to just one day before his death, when he rudely opposed the Prophet's wish to write a will with the hardly love-inspired remark "The man is talking nonsense under the effect of delirium". From the Prophet's rejoinder, "Be gone with you", it would seem that no love had been felt either. It is clear that the love which is alleged to have upset the mental equilibrium of UMAR on the death of the Prophet was only a pretext thought up at the last minute to cover up UMAR'S gambit.

Thirdly, apart from being of such very recent growth, that love proved to be of very short duration. It vanishes as soon as ABU BAKR comes back; that exuberance of love that was bubbling forth in nonsensical sentences subsides at once and forever. Never afterwards do we find any trace of it, either in his treatment of the children of the object of his love, or in his behavior towards his memory. Not even attending to the last rites of his beloved Prophet, he engages heart and soul in the fight to win the throne, and not even after the victory, with the battle over, do we find that love returning to him. As a matter of fact, this theory of love must be rejected forthwith, in view of the speech of ABU BAKR laying down the extraordinary dogma that to mourn the death of the Prophet amounted to worshipping him, thus making the mourning of his death a sin. What did that emotion of love constitute for grief over the death of one's beloved not to be included; is a lover not to feel any grief for the death of the object of his love? Having established this principle, we are precluded from accepting that UMAR was overwhelmed with grief on account of love for the Prophet (P).

The learned Muslim historian of India, MAWLAWI SHIBLI, admits that this was mere acting for political purposes. He says, "In my opinion, as there were a good many of the MUNAFIQIN in Medina who were awaiting the death of the Prophet to create disturbances in the city, UMAR must have thought it prudent to prevent in this manner the news of the Prophet's death from spreading". This shows conclusively that it was mere acting, not love or affection. As to SHIBLI'S pleading the MUNAFIQIN as the reason, it does not hold water for a moment, for why was this attempt to conceal the death of the Prophet not continued after the arrival of ABU BAKR? Was that fear of the MUNAFIQIN over in a few minutes? And let us see what they did to meet this "danger"; they went straight to the SAQIFA. There can be only two possible explanations; either the danger referred to by SHIBLI was apprehended from the side of the ANSAR, and related to the occupation of the throne left vacant by the death of the Prophet (P); or else it was some other danger. In the former case, which is substantiated by their conduct in going at once to the SAQIFA, my point is proved. In the latter case, we are at a loss to know what that danger could have been. It never showed itself at any time, and the MUNAFIQIN of Medina never rose against the Government.

Expeditions were sent in various directions; into the interior of Arabia against those tribes who refused to acknowledge the headship of ABU BAKR, to Syria, and to Persia; but no expedition was sent against the

MUNAFIQIN of Medina. MAWLAWI SHIBLI admits that from their conduct it appears that UMAR and ABU BAKR had no grief whatsoever over the death of the Prophet (P). He says, "It is clear that UMAR and ABU BAKR...let the burial of the Prophet and went to the SAQIFA, and it is also a fact that at the SAQIFA they engaged in a struggle with the ANSAR from the caliphate, and busied themselves with such activities as clearly showed that nothing sorrowful had happened to them".

That the ANSAR were not the first to act is also evident from the fact that after the death of the Prophet, and even before this lecture of his, UMAR had gone to ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH, and asked him to accept the caliphate. IBN SA'D says, "Just after the death of the Prophet (P), UMAR came to ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH, and told him, "Stretch out your hand, so that I may make the BA'A to you, as according to a saying of the Prophet you are the AMIN (Trustee) of UMMA". ABU UBAIDA said, "I have never seen you joking since you became a Muslim. But are you joking with me today? Would you make the BA'A to me when AS-SIDDIQ, the One-of-the-two is among you"? It is evident that this must have happened before he stood up to deny the death of the Prophet (P). AT the moment when the Prophet (P) died, UMAR was at a loss what to do in the absence of ABU BAKR.

Time was of the essence for the whole scheme, so he went to ABU UBAIDA to urge him to accept the caliphate. There is reason to believe that these three men, ABU BAKR, UMAR and ABU UBAIDA, had decided among themselves to take the caliphate one after the other. But neither UMAR nor ABU UBAIDA wanted to be the first caliph, for that was a difficult proposition. To break the ground is always a difficult job; the reaction to be expected from the general public was unknown; the line of action that IMAM ALI and BANU HASHIM might take was not apparent; it was not known what form affairs would take on crystallizing into stability.

Just then the crown appeared to be a thorny one, and neither of them liked to wear it and take the risk inherent in the first attempt. ABU BAKR had agreed to be their feeler, so to speak. And right then he was not available. So when approached now by UMAR, ABU UBAIDA stuck to the original agreement, and therefore mentioned ABU BAKR in this connection. Nothing else could be done, so the simple device of delaying the news of the Prophet's death commended itself to UMAR, and he acted accordingly.

I might mention at this point that ABU BAKR always rued his having accepted the caliphate first. Even at the time of his death, this was his chief grievance; he said it would have been better if he had wound the chain of the caliphate round the neck of either ABU UBAIDA or UMAR. This repentance, as also the fact that these three persons alone from the MUHAJIRIN were present in the meeting at the SAQIFA at the time of the selection, clearly shows that their agreement was to confine the caliphate to themselves in the first instance.

It was for this reason that ABU BAKR did not even think of leaving the caliphate to the chance of an election, and thereby jeopardize the certainty



of UMAR'S succession. He nominated him at once, not caring that according to the Theory of Non-appointment as invented by them, he was contravening the SUNNA "established" by the Prophet (P) and thus changing the constitution itself.

Now we turn to the lecture given by ABU BAKR when he returned from SUKH and learnt that the Prophet (P) had died. There are two points in his harangue which need attention. In the first place, he prevents the people from grieving over the death of the Prophet, and tries to make this grief detestable in the eyes of the Muslims by saying that it is akin to worship. I need hardly add that this idea is as much discountenanced by the QUR'AN as the idea of the Prophet's immortality.

The QUR'AN very vividly describes the grief and sorrow of YA'QUB over his separation from his son YUSUF. It states that YA'QUB grieved so bitterly over this separation that his eyes became white with constant weeping. He could hardly worship his son and enjoy the rank of a Prophet at the same time. ABU BAKR appears on this occasion to have forgotten the QUR'AN. His object was to wean people away from the love of the Prophet's memory, as the love and sympathies for a dead man are generally transferred to his nearest of kin, and this they did not want as it was quite against their interests. The second notable feature of his harangue is his general invitation to the people to select a man from among themselves for the caliphate, an invitation which was very pleasing to many of them. News from the ANSAR had not yet been received at that time.

From all that has been said above, it is quite clear that these gentlemen, and not the ANSAR, were the first to commence the struggle for the caliphate, and had long been preparing the ground for this.

#### **ESPIONAGE:**

This opposition faction looked upon the ANSAR with suspicion, chiefly for two reasons: (a) on account of their pro-Ali tendencies, and (b) because as a class they kept themselves aloof from the MUHAJIRIN. For the success of the scheme, it was therefore necessary to watch their movements very closely. For this one of their own men would be useful, because a MUHAJIR would not be allowed into their secret meetings and would always be looked upon with suspicion. UMAR therefore befriended one of the ANSAR, and as we have learnt above, he gave all sorts of information to UMAR. But he was not the only agent kept among the ANSAR. We have seen that there was a special informer who brought the news of the ANSAR'S gathering at the SAQIFA; out of all the MUHAJIRIN that had been collected around the dead body of the Prophet, he called out from behind a wall specifically to UMAR alone. The information was very useful; he was told that the ANSAR were trying to elect their man, SA'D IBN IBADA as the caliph. This information was not altogether unwelcome; he must have heaved a sigh of relief to know that the ANSAR were not coming to the help of IMAM ALI (A.S.).

UMAR communicated this information only to ABU BAKR - another indication of the existence of a secret understanding. The information was of such a nature as ought, in the normal course of things, to have been communicated to all the MUHAJIRIN, including BANU HASHIM.

Curiously enough, UMAR took with them, seemingly by appointment. Only these three went to the SAQIFA. The wisdom of only three persons going to the SAQIFA will be explored presently.

Further on they met ASIM and UWAIM, who had been won over from the ANSAR. This defection became known to the ANSAR, and they took them to task. It is apparent that MU'IN IBN ADI, the brother of ASIM, was also guilty of treachery to the ANSAR, for it was he who brought UMAR the news of the ANSAR'S gathering at the SAQIFA. IBN ABI AL-HADID says, "When the people accepted the rule of ABU BAKR, the MUHAJIRIN (QURAISH) showed great favors to MU'IN IBN ADI and UWAIM IBN SA'IDA, though they had a position in Islam. On account of this (their treachery), the ANSAR held a meeting and summoned them both; when they appeared before them, the ANSAR greatly censured them for their treachery, and described their action as greatly shameful".

That their espionage system worked well and enabled the party to secure many defections from the ANSAR will become apparent when we discuss the proceedings of the debate. It will also be made clearer in the following chapter when we learn how the ANSAR regretted having been influenced by those defections.

#### **THE VICTORY:**

A calm and careful consideration of what happened at the SAQIFA makes it quite clear that to elect the fittest and most able person as the caliph was not their object; each party wanted their own man, and that is all. The Book of God, so piously and punctiliously referred to by UMAR at the deathbed of the Prophet as rendering unnecessary any further instruction from the Prophet on account of its all-sufficiency, was not mentioned. The stealthy manner in which the three MUHAJIRIN came to the meeting, and the arguments that were advanced there, clearly indicate that their chief object was to oust IMAM ALI (A.S.). The ANSAR, having been thoroughly convinced that the opposition party among the MUHAJIRIN was bent on ignoring IMAM ALI (A.S.) and imposing on them a MUHAJIR of their own choice, also selected their own man. This conviction of theirs was reinforced by the fact that only three of the MUHAJIRIN came to the meeting, from whom one was to be put up as the caliph, and so they fought for their own man with all the ferocity of Arabs. But they were defeated because of the defections in their own ranks.

The first thing that strikes even a casual observer is that the two parties, the ANSAR and the three MUHAJIRIN, made a division of the Islamic Nation into two parts, ANSAR and MUHAJIR, and then proceeded to determine from which of the parts the caliph should be taken. What they ought to have done is to treat the UMMA as one whole unit, and select the best and fittest man, from whatever tribe, clan or family, that could be found. That was the fair way of deciding the matter; it was to be by election. The procedure they adopted was in direct conflict with the life's teaching of the Prophet (P), who had striven hard to unite all the Muslims into one compact nation. His first step in this direction had been to remove all distinctions of tribe, clan or caste. His final step to this end had been to provide a center for the UMMA. The Procedure adopted by those at the

SAQIFA cut at the root of both these steps, and became the primary source of all the later divisions and schisms that rent the body politic of Islam asunder.

Another noticeable feature of the affair was that apart from the arguments themselves, ABU BAKR'S success was due mainly to the contribution of two factors, viz. (a) defections in the ranks of the ANSAR, and (b) rivalry between the AWS and the KHAZRAJ. The arguments would have continued and the outcome would have been extremely doubtful, had not BASHIR IBN SA'D, at that very critical stage of the drama, broken away from the ANSAR and joined the three MUHAJIRIN. His defection was due mainly to his feelings of jealousy towards SA'D IBN IBADA, whom the ANSAR had selected for the headship.

They were SARDARS (leaders) in the same tribe, the KHAZRAJ, and BASHIR IBN SA'D did not like to see his rival carry the day. It is obvious that this jealousy must have been reinforced by secret persuasions from the other side. Now the second of the above factors, the rivalry between the AWS and the KHAZRAJ, played its part.

At a crucial stage of the discussions, and waiting until this moment had arrived, BASHIR IBN SA'D made the BAI'A to ABU BAKR. This made the AWS argue among themselves hurriedly, reasoning thus: if the KHAZRAJ succeeded, they would be surpassed in rank and honor, and would never be given any share in the HUKUMA; and if they delayed making the BAI'A to ABU BAKR, as BASHIR, a KHAZRAJ, had already done, they would lose out on the favors of ABU BAKR. Deciding quickly, they vied with each other in making the BAI'A to ABU BAKR, and the battle was over.

But as quoted above, UMAR armed band of the BANU ASIAM arrived on the scene and made the BAI'A to ABU BAKR. Thus it is evident that in planning their scheme, this faction had not forgotten to introduce the element of force into it. It is not clearly stated at what stage this force arrived, whether before or after the making of the BAI'A by BASHIR. Anyhow, it is obvious that it came at a time when UMAR was still not sure of success, and was therefore very opportune. They came from outside Medina, and thus the streets were filled with them. The irresistible conclusion is that someone must have sent a message inviting them there at this critical moment. The question is, on whose behalf was this message sent. Obviously it was on behalf of the party in whose interest their arrival would be.

The victory can therefore be attributed to division, defection, treachery, jealousy, enmity and force. The elements of fair election were all absent. The MUHAJIRIN (excepting these three) had no information and were not represented, the candidates were not named, and their respective qualifications did not come under discussion. No votes were taken, and the matter was still undecided when jealousy, enmity and force made short work of proceedings and brought the drama to a close.

### **THE ARGUMENTS:**

Now we come to study the arguments. Let us see what the three MUHAJIRIN urged in support of their case. At the SAQIFA they put forward the following arguments:

1. The MUHAJIRIN had accepted Islam before the ANSAR, and had borne with patience and fortitude many hardships. They were earlier in their worship of God with the Prophet (P).

2. The Arabs would never accept that anyone not related to the Prophet should rule over them; it was indispensable that the ruler should be someone belonging to the tribe to which the Prophet belonged.

3. Justice demanded that the caliphate should go to one related to Muhammad (P), the MUHAJIRIN, being his heirs and members of his family, were thus entitled to the caliphate.

4. Anyone disputing the caliphate with the heir and family member of Muhammad was a lover of falsehood and injustice. Now, keeping in view the opposition party's own enounced principles of preference above, the only person with the right to the caliphate is the heir and relative of Muhammad, and anyone who tries to take the caliphate and deprive him of this legitimate right is unjust, an tyrant, and a lover of falsehood. Now decide the matter between IMAM ALI and ABU BAKR. IMAM ALI was the nearest of kin to Muhammad (P), being his full cousin; the relationship of ABU BAKR with Muhammad (P) was only legendary.

IMAM ALI was the nearest heir of Muhammad (P), while ABU BAKR was not an heir at all. Where relationship with Muhammad is the deciding factor, no one can approach IMAM ALI in this respect; he was his full cousin and also the husband of his only daughter. As to enduring hardships, no one can measure up to IMAM ALI in this matter. He fought in every battle of Islam, and fought successfully; he had never fled from any battle, while others, including ABU BAKR, had fled for their lives at UHUD and HUNAIN, leaving the Prophet on his own. IMAM ALI accepted Islam long before ABU BAKR. (For details and references of this, see Chapter Eleven). To be in a place of safety like the Cave is as nothing compared with sleeping on the Prophet's bed while his enemies, swords in hand and determined to take life, surrounded the place. As for the leading of the prayers, I have already exposed the fiction of this. Thus the very arguments advanced by the enactors of the coup in their favor vis-à-vis the ANSAR serve to act against them vis-à-vis IMAM ALI.

I may note in passing that the promise, which ABU BAKR made to the ANSAR that they would be consulted in every matter, and that nothing important would be undertaken without their prior consultation and consent, was never fulfilled. On the contrary, they were treated with disdain and contempt. UMAR always maintained a sullen and angry mood towards them, and his favors did not find their way to them, so much so that the ANSAR were reduced to great penury and want. Not one of the six candidates nominated by UMAT for the caliphate at the time of his death was an ANSAR, and he expressly stated that they had no right to the caliphate. This policy was continued by those with whom adherence to the policy of UMAR was an article of faith. On one occasion, extreme poverty

and want drove a number of the ANSAR, headed by NU'MAN, son of BASHIR, to the court of MU'AWIYA to beg for alms. Thus the prophecy of AL-HABBAB IBN AL-MUNDHIR that the sons of the ANSAR would be compelled by want to go a-begging at the doors of the MUHAJIRIN was fulfilled. When complaining of their poverty to MU'AWIYA, they added that the Prophet (P) had rightly prophesied that "the ANSAR would meet with misfortune after him". MU'AWIYA asked them what the Prophet (P) had asked them to do in that case. They innocently replied that he had advised them to bear their misfortunes patiently until they met him at the HAWD on the Day of Judgment. MU'AWIYA replied, "Then do as he has advised you; go on waiting till the Day of the Judgment", and gave them nothing. To ridicule the poverty of his supplicants ill-becomes a king, but he could not control his (paganistic) and anti-ANSAR feelings.

It must have become evident to the reader why the only MUHAJIRIN to go to the SAQIFA were those three persons among whom it had been agreed to pass the caliphate around. ABU BAKR had begun his speech in such a way as to exclude the possibility of any discussion on individuals and their respective qualifications by treating the struggle as one between two tribes. The ANSAR became very puzzled and confused on account of the deceptions and treachery in their own ranks, which was only discovered at the last moment. This confusion in their minds was greatly enhanced by the sight of force in front of them, and they were in no mood to reject the candidate put before them. As IMAM ALI was not to be one of the candidates, and when they had lost the battle for their own candidate, they did not care who became the caliph. If it had been ABU UBAIDA or UMAR who was being put forward, they would have observed the same helpless acquiescence as they did when ABU BAKR stretched forth his hand. To them, one was as good or bad as the other. MOHIB AT-TABARI has rightly put his finger on the point when he says:

Excepting UMAR and ABU UBAIDA, no one from among QURAIISH was ABU BAKR on the day of the SAQIFA. For this reason, ABU BAKR presented for BAI'A either of these two men. It was not possible for him to mention as suitable for the caliphate anyone who was not present there. It was feared that if they dispersed without making the BAI'A to anyone, the object of these might have gone back on their word. It was, therefore, a good policy to hurry up the matter, and take the BAI'A for one present there, and thus get their promise fulfilled on the spot.

This is an apology for ABU BAKR'S not mentioning IMAM ALI in spite of his being the best and most suitable candidate for the caliphate. It is not a convincing apology though, inasmuch as the ANSAR themselves, at an earlier stage of the discussions, had declared that they would not make the BAI'A to anyone except IMAM ALI. Alternatively, they could have taken the BAI'A for IMAM ALI by proxy, as was the usual practice during the lifetime of the Prophet and afterwards. But if they did not want IMAM ALI, and wanted to keep the caliphate confined among themselves, there could have been no better method of achieving that object than the one actually adopted. Now it is clear why only those three went to the SAQIFA.

**THE TIME AND PLACE:**

My discussion would be incomplete if I did not refer to the time and place chosen for the execution of their scheme. They chose to risk the odium of having left the dead body of the Prophet to go and fight for worldly advancement, yet they could not take the risk of postponing it to a time after his burial, when IMAM ALI and BANU HASHIM would be free to urge IMAM ALI'S claims and to establish that he had been designated as the Prophet's successor. They selected that time when IMAM ALI was preoccupied and tied to his place, for his noble nature did not allow him to even think of leaving the side of the dead Prophet, his benefactor, before burial.

As to the place, during the lifetime of the Prophet, as also after him, important meetings were held at the Prophet's mosque. However, as IMAM ALI'S house opened into it, as we have seen, they could not hold this most important meeting to select the caliph there. It was held at SAQIFA, a concealed place of ill repute where thieves and other persons of bad reputation used to collect and plan their nefarious activities.

If there were to have been an honest attempt to select the most suitable person as the caliph, and if the delicacy and urgency of the affair had required that it be done at once, then the most suitable place for the meeting would have been the Prophet's mosque, where it would have been possible for all to meet and deliberate. The ANSAR could also have been invited there. In that case, the burial arrangements and the election could have gone on simultaneously. That, however, was not the intention.



## Chapter Nine: After The Coup

The coup had succeeded; ABU BAKR had been selected as the caliph. But the legal and religious aspects of the affair stand unaffected by the events that took place afterwards. The position was that three MUHAJIRIN, one of whom was ABU BAKR himself, and a section of the ANSAR, were non-participants in the BAI'A of ABU BAKR. This legal position of the event remains unchanged, even though afterwards, by threats of punishment, promises of reward, use of actual force, and payment of bribes, all of which means were freely employed, the number making the BAI'A considerably increased.

From HABIB-AS-SAYYAR, we learn that on day following the SAQIFA, a general BAI'A- taking took place, but a portion of the Muslim community, holding that the only rightful caliph was IMAM ALI, did not agree to it, saying that they would make the BAI'A to no one except IMAM ALI IBN ABI TALIB. Of BANU HASHIM. AMMAR IBN YASIR, SALMAN AL-FARISI, AL-MIQDAD IBN AL-ASWAD, KHAZIMA IBN THABIT DHU AL-SHAHADATAIN, ABU DHAR AL-GHIFARI, ABU AYYUB AL-ANSARI, JABIR IBN ABDALLAH, ABU SA'ID AL-KHUDARI, BURAIDA IBN ASLAMA, were among those who thus refused to make the BAI'A to ABU BAKR. From ABU AL-FIDA we learn that IMAM ALI and all the BANU HASHIM, ABU SUFIAN and a majority of BANU OMAYYA, a majority of the ANSAR, AZ-ZUBAIR, UTBA IBN ABI LAHAB, KHALID IBN SA'ID IBN AL-AS, AL-MIQDAD, SALMAN AL-FARISI, ABU DHAR, AMMAR IBN YASIR, AL-BARA IBN AZIB and UBBAI IBN KA'B, all refused to make the BAI'A to ABU BAKR, and they all inclined towards IMAM ALI IBN ABI TALIB. It is an admitted fact that not a single person from BANU HASHIM made the BAI'A to ABU BAKR while FATIMA, daughter of the Prophet, lived.

How an attempt was made to extort the BAI'A from IMAM ALI and other persons, is graphically narrated by all the historians. I quote from IBN QUTAIBA:

ABU BAKR made a search for those who had refused to make the BAI'A to him; they were found with IMAM ALI. He sent UMAR to Ali. UMAR called out to those men in the house of Ali; they refused to come out. Upon this, UMAR collected firewood, and threatened to burn the house down on the people inside it. People said that FATIMA, daughter of the Prophet, was also in that house. UMAR replied, "I do not care about her, let her be there, I do not mind. Upon this, all those men who were inside it, except Ali, came out, and made the BAI'A.

Ali said that he had taken oath that he would not come out of his house until he had collated the QUR'AN. FATIMA came to the door of her house and stood there, and said, "I have nothing to do with the people who are guilty of committing such offences. You left the dead body of the Prophet, and decided this matter of the caliphate without any reference to us, and you usurped our right". UMAR came back to ABU BAKR, and asked him to extort the BAI'A from Ali by any means, however harsh. Upon this ABU BAKR sent his slave QUNFUDH returned and repeated the reply to ABU BAKR, who wept for some time. UMAR again asked him not to leave Ali.

ABU BAKR again sent QUNFUDH to tell him that AMIR AL-MU'MININ wanted him to come and make the BAI'A. He went and said the same thing to Ali. Ali raised his voice and said, "God is good. This man claims what is not his". QUNFUDH came back and repeated the reply of Ali to ABU BAKR, who began to weep. For a second time UMAR rose up, and taking a number of people with him went to the house of FATIMA and knocked on the door.

Hearing his voice. FATIMA raised her voice and made a complaint to the soul of her dead father thus: "O father, O Prophet of God, O what evils and afflictions we have met at the hands of UMAR and ABU BAKR after you". When this party heard the voice of the daughter of the Prophet and saw her weeping, most of them returned weeping.

But UMAR with a few men remained there, and forcibly took Ali out from the house, brought him to ABU BAKR, and asked him to make the BAI'A to him. But Ali refused to make the BAI'A. Upon this, those people said, "By God we will slay you". Ali replied, "Will you slay a man who worships God and is the cousin and brother of your Prophet"? UMAR then turned to ABU BAKR, and angrily said, "Why do you not order him to make the BAI'A to you"? ABU BAKR replied, "I will not say anything so long as FATIMA is by his side". Ali came back without making the BAI'A to ABU BAKR.

HABIB-AS-SAYYAR had narrated these conversations more fully thus:

When Ali was brought to ABU BAKE and asked to make his BAI'A, Ali said, "You obtained the submission of the ANSAR, and got them to accept the headship of ABU BAKR solely on account of your relationship with the Prophet. Now I claim my right on account of that very relationship. Tell me who is nearer to the Prophet, I or ABU BAKR. Fear God, and do not be unjust".

UMAR replied, "We will not leave you unless and until you make the BAI'A". Ali replied, "I am not afraid of these threats, and so long as the last breath of life remains in me I will go on urging my rights". In short, a good many altercations took place on that day between Ali and the companions of the Prophet. In the end, Ali came back without having made the BAI'A to ABU BAKR, in fact to none of the first three Caliphs. The Sunni differ on this point; some say that he made the BAI'A after forty days, and the majority of them say that he did not make the BAI'A to ABU BAKR so long as FATIMA lived.

The fact of UMAR'S collecting firewood the intention of setting fire to the house of FATIMA is mentioned by almost all historians, as also FATIMA'S plaintive cry, which brings to mind, by way of contrast, the joyful exclamation of gratitude of A'ISHA, daughter of ABU BAKR, when presented by UMAR with jewels and money over and above her share of the GHANIMA. On one such occasion she exclaimed, "How deeply I am under a debt of gratitude to UMAR, who has done so many kind things for me since the death of the Prophet (P).

The explanation for these extra favors given by UMAR was that they were due to her on account of the fact that the Prophet (P) loved her more than any other wife. But the Prophet's love proved of no avail to his

daughter FATIMA whom, according to A'ISHA herself, the Prophet (P) had loved more than anyone else. But logic and consistency is conspicuous by its absence in the conduct of actors of this coup.

UMAR tried to obtain the BAI'A from SA'D IBN IBADA, but he sternly refused. BASHIR IBN SA'D, who had contributed so much to the success of ABU BAKR on the day of the SAQIFA, advised UMAR and ABU BAKR not to insist on taking the BAI'A from SA'D IBN IBADA after his refusal, as his children and the whole tribe of KHAZRAJ would fight on his side, and much bloodshed would ensue. They therefore left him alone; but things were made hot for him, and he went to Syria.

The tribes of BANU OMAYYA, and BANU ZUHRA refused to pay homage and gathered with their leaders, UTHMAN and SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS, in the mosque. UMAR came with a party, demanding to know why they were sitting there, and asking them to make the BAI'A to ABU BAKR. Unable to resist force, they did as they were asked. But BANU HASHIM all went away without making the BAI'A.

It might be said by some on their behalf that the use of force was unfortunate but unavoidable, as no ruler or government can tolerate opposition and is therefore justified in using force to put it down. However, this argument confuses the issue, and in an enquiry as to the status of the person claiming to be the ruler, is quite irrelevant. If the opposition does not recognize the validity of the coup where-under the claim is put forward, the rule condoning the use of force cannot possibly apply, as the opposition exists before the status.

The rule can apply only to such opposition as arises after the status of a ruler has been duly and legitimately conferred and recognizes. In the present case, three MUHAJIRIN and a few deserters from the ANSAR cannot be taken to have conferred a valid title of "Successor of the Prophet"; even among such as were present, no election took place, the arguments were cut short by a deserter hurriedly making the BAI'A to ABU BAKR, and there was the intimidating presence of an armed gang. This defect in the title could not be made up for by threatening and throttling the opposition subsequently.

Having seen the method of force, we now come to rewards, allurements and gratifications. We learn from IBN SA'D:

When the people made BAI'A to ABU BAKR, he began to distribute money through ZAID IBN THABIT to a woman of the tribe of BANI ADI IBN AL-HAJJAR. That woman asked what it was for. ZAID IBN THABIT said that it was her share of the money, which ABU BAKR had distributed among the women. That old woman angrily said, "Are you going to wean me away from the straight path by means of bribes? By God, I shall not accept any part of it". This deserves very careful consideration. This is the method by which "consent" of the people was obtained. This is how the kingdom of God was being established. Here is another instance:

AL-MOGHIRA IBN SHU'BA came to ABU BAKR, and said to him, "O ABU BAKR, it is advisable that you win ABBAS over to your side, by promising to give him a share in the Caliphate. The result will be that you will both (ABU BAKR and UMAR) have a good case against Ali and

BANU HASHIM when ABBAS is with you". Upon this, ABU BAKR, UMAR and ABU UBAIDA (the same three that attended the SAQIFA) came up to ABBAS.

ABU BAKR said to him, "God appointed Muhammad a Prophet and ruler over men. God bestowed His blessings on him. Finally, He called him to the side of His grace, and the Prophet left the question of the Caliphate to the people, so that they might chose whom they considered suitable, and remain united and not differ among themselves. They selected me as their ruler. I have been receiving information that some people are criticizing this selection on which the rest of the people have agreed, and these critics make your people (BANU HASHIM) their shield. You should be afraid to interfere in this matter. Either you should submit to my rule as others have done, or else you should not let our critics come near you.

We have come to you with the object of giving you a share in the caliphate, which should be sufficient for you and your children after you, as you are the uncle of the Prophet (P). Even though people know your position and the position of your companions, still they did not give this caliphate to you, as the Prophet (P) was related to us just as he was related to you".

UAMR added, "By God, we have not come to you as if we have any need of your help. We have come because it looked bad that the people should taunt you for not joining in the matter on which all have agreed. You should see to your own good, and to the good of your people".

ABBAS replied, "If you have taken the caliphate because of your relationship with the Prophet (P), then you have usurped our right (as we are much nearer to him). But if you have obtained the caliphate because of the people, then it is we who are the foremost among the people. If you say that this caliphate has come to you through the consent of the people, then you are wrong, because we never gave our consent to it. As to your gift of a share in the caliphate, if it is your property, then we have no need for it; if it is the right of the people, then it not proper to be lavish with what is not yours; and if it is ours by right, then we do not want to be content with only a portion of it, for the whole of it belongs to us. As to your statement that the Prophet (P) is related to you just as he is to us, then the Prophet (P) is of that tree of which we are the branches and you are like the grass growing near that tree".

The grant of land and plots was made a special means of disarming opponents and rewarding the partisans. We have seen that AZ ZUBAIR was with Ali, and was a brave man. But he was won over by the grant of a very good piece of land selected by himself. After that we find him a staunch supporter of the Government, so much so that he could be trusted to be included in the SHURA constituted by UMAR at the time of his death (that SHURA which had the ostensible object of choosing a successor, but which in reality was designed to exclude IMAM ALI, in spite of his also being in it).

#### **THE ANSAR RELENT:**

The informer who had brought the news about the ANSAR to UMAR behind the wall was MU'IN IBN ADI, who belonged to the tribe of AWS.

The two persons who met them on the way to the SAQIFA were ASIM IBN ADI and UWAIM IBN SA'IDA. They both belonged to the tribe of AWS, and the former was the brother of this same MU'IN IBN ADI. IBN ABI AL-HADID says that both MU'IN and UWAIM were of great help to ABU BAKR in this matter. Their motives were that they had both been great friends of ABU BAKR, and their hearts had been filled with the greatest hatred and jealousy of SA'D IBN IBADA. When the ANSAR brought SA'D IBN IBADA to the SAQIFA with the object of making the BAI'A to him, UWAIM IBN SA'IDA stood up and addressed the ANSAR thus: "QURAISH individuals are entitled to the caliphate, and of them ABU BAKR is pre-eminent in his fitness for it, as he led the last prayers". On hearing this, the ANSAR turned him out, and he came running to ABU BAKR; this is when he met the party of three.

After the BAI'A, the people came to the Prophet's mosque, and in the evening the ANSAR and QURAISH members began to quarrel with each other, as the ANSAR had repudiated their making of the BAI'A to ABU BAKR. It was on this occasion that ZAID IBN ARQAM said that they acknowledged the superiority of IMAM ALI, and that had he been present at the SAQIFA, no one would have refused him the BAI'A. We learn from IBN ABI AL-HADID:

When the BAI'A to ABU BAKR was over, a majority of the ANSAR repudiated their action, and began to accuse each other of having brought about this state of things; they began to say openly that the caliphate belonged to Ali by right; they related his various qualifications, and wished that IMAM ALI had been there to claim the caliphate. The MUHAJIRIN did not like this. They became angry, and the dispute widened. Out of QURAISH, SUHAIL IBN AMR, AL-HARITH IBN HISHAM and AKRAMA IBN ABI JAHL were the most bitter towards the ANSAR. These were the persons who had fought against the Prophet and entered the fold of Islam only when no other course was left open to them. They also had personal grudges against the ANSAR.

At the battle of BADR, SUHAIL was made captive by MALIK IBN DAHSHAM: AL-HARITH IBN HISHAM was wounded at the same battle by URWA IBN AMR; the father of AKRAMA IBN ABI JAHEL was killed at that battle by the two sons of ARFA; and ZIYAD IBN LABID had taken off his coat of mail. Their hearts were full of enmity towards these persons on account of these things. When the ANSAR were gone, QURAISH collected together. SUHAIL IBN AMR stood up, and said, "O QURAISH, God has named them ANSAR, and the QUR'AN contains their praises; for this reason, they stand high above us. Taking advantage of this fact, they are canvassing the people to their side and to the aid of IMAM ALI. (During our quarrel) IMAM ALI remained sitting in his house; had he wished, he could have turned them down. Therefore, you should now invite them to renew their BAI'A to ABU BAKR. If they do so, well and good; if they refuse, fight them to the end.... AL-HARITH IBN HISHAM stood up and said, "The sword alone will decide between us and the ANSAR..." then AKRAMA IBN ABI JAHEL stood up and said, "Had the Prophet not made the statement that the caliphate belonged to QURAISH, we would not have

refused it to them (i.e. the ANSAR). Now this statement is good. No one has any option, therefore, but to fight the ANSAR".

Now read this very carefully. Their Islam was entirely superficial. They harbored grudges against those who had fought against them on behalf of the Prophet (P). How great must have been the intensity and extent of these people's enmity and grudge against IMAM ALI, who had won all the battles and killed so many of them. This political faction of UMAR and his comrades reaped full advantage of their feelings against IMAM ALI. It also shows that the ANSAR were on IMAM ALI'S side. Thus it is apparent that the ANSAR were not, and could not have been, the first to oppose Imam Ali. It was this faction that was the first to set the ball rolling, as the KHUTBA (address) of ABU BAKR shows.

The ANSAR held a meeting, and summoned MU'IN IBN ADI and UWAIM IBN SA'IDA, on whom ABU BAKR had showered his favors for helping him against the ANSAR. The ANSAR rebuked them and censured them for their treachery. (See note 288).

Now there was great tension between the two parties. The friends of ABU BAKR would give speeches to vilify the ANSAR; the ANSAR would reply to them. KHALID IBN AL-WALID, who was a great friend of ABU BAKR and enemy of Imam Ali, used to speak ill of the ANSAR on account of their love of Imam Ali. I again quote IBN ABI AL-HADID:

Some mischief-makers among QURAIISH came to AMIR IBN AL-AS and incited him to malign the ANSAR, saying that he was the tongue and feet of QURAIISH, just as in the times of JAHILIYYA so now in the times of Islam too, and exhorted him not to leave the ANSAR. They told him much more than that. AMR, therefore, stood up in the mosque one day, and gave a long harangue against the ANSAR... (Here his speech is set down)... then his eye fell on AL-FADI IBN ABBAS, and he was struck with remorse, as there had been great friendship between the ANSAR and the children of ABD AL-MUTTALIB, and the ANSAR greatly respected Imam Ali and were convinced of his superiority AL-FADI then told him, "O AMR, it is impossible for us to conceal what you have said, nor is proper for us to give a rejoinder, when Imam Ali is among us in Medina and does not order us to reply. AL-FADI came to Imam Ali and informed him of all this. Imam Ali was greatly enraged, and said that AMR had offended God and the Prophet (P). Then he came to the mosque, and gave a long speech praising the ANSAR.

IBN ABI AL-HADID says that Imam Ali asked AL-FADI IBN ABBAS to write eulogies in praise of the ANSAR, which he did. When the ANSAR came to know of this, they were greatly pleased, and asked HASSAN IBN THABIT in turn to write poetry in praise of Imam Ali. He did so, and sent it to Imam Ali, who liked it and made a long speech enumerating the virtues of the ANSAR. He also tried to make QURAIISH reconcile with the ANSAR.

Thus the old tribal jealousy were revived and brought into full play by the activities of this faction and the manner in which they secured the caliphate. It also explains why UMAR was so much against the ANSAR. He included no ANSAR among the candidates out of whom his own successor



was to be chosen, and openly declared by way of his will that the ANSAR had no title to the caliphate. ABU BAKR had promised at the SAQIFA that they would consult the ANSAR on every important occasion, and would do nothing against their interests; yet the promise was never honored. Nor did their gifts and favors find their way to the ANSAR; they were purposely kept in poverty and want, and among the rich nobles of those days there was not to be found a single ANSAR. What was the cause of this royal displeasure? It was the love of Imam Ali.

## **Chapter Ten: The Nomination Of Umar and Uthman**

The coup at the SAQIFA had to be justified to the Islamic Nation, and an attempt was made to do this by laying down certain dogmas known by their inventors from the very beginning to be mere contrivances, as later events show. The enactors of the coup prevailed upon themselves and others to believe that the Prophet (P) did not designate anyone as his successor, yet at the same time, that the appointment of a successor to the dying ruler was an absolute necessity; also, that this appointment could only be made through election by the people, and that therefore they had been perfectly justified in their unseemly haste in getting ABU BAKR "elected" at the SAQIFA.

For the time being, their object had been achieved. But the same dogmas now stood in the way of UMAR'S acquisition of the caliphate which, in accordance with a prior understanding between them, was to devolve upon him. These dogmas were therefore thrown overboard to make room for other expedients suited to the changed circumstances. UMAR could not face the uncertainties of an election, so the rule now stated was that nomination is better than election. ABU BAKR thus nominated UMAR as his successor.

Now, the means of appointing the ruler is the most fundamental aspect of the constitution of a state. But ABU BAKR changed the constitution by substituting nomination for election, without consulting the people. This he had no power to do-if indeed election really was the rule, as they had maintained. Let us see how he did it AT-TABARI says:

When ABU BAKR felt the hand of death approaching, he sent for UTHMAN in private when there was no one with him, and asked him to write to his dictation. ABU BAKR dictated, "In the name of merciful God, this is what ABU BAKR son of ABU QUHAFI wills to the Muslims: Now I..." At this ABU BAKR fell into a swoon and lost consciousness. Upon this, UTHMAN by himself added, "I have appointed UMAR as a ruler over you, and have done good to you". After this ABU BAKR regained consciousness, and asked UTHMAN to read out what he had written.

He complied. On hearing this, ABU BAKR was transported with joy, shouted "ALLAHU AKBAR", and said "Perhaps you feared that I might die in the swoon, and this might lead to differences among the Muslims, and therefore you added the name of UMAR". UTHMAN replied in the affirmative. ABU BAKR invoked blessings on him and carried on from that point.

When the document had been completed, ABU BAKR was carried by his wife to a window in his house, from where he said to the people, "Accept the man whom I have appointed ruler over you; by God, I have thoroughly considered the matter. I have appointed UMAR over you; yet he is not my relative. Heed him and obey him". The people said that they had understood, and would obey him. ABU BAKR gave this document to UMAR, and asked him to go to the people and tell them to obey it, as it was his order.

When UMAR came out with the document, a man asked him what it contained. UMAR replied, "I do not yet know, but in any case I accept it and will obey it". The man said, "Well, you should know it, for I know it. Last year you made him the ruler, so today he makes you the ruler". Eye-witnesses say that they saw UMAR sitting with people round him and a

whip in his hand. UMAR was saying to them, "O People, heed the word of the caliph and obey him. The caliph says that he has given you the best advice".

The narrator adds that at the time there was a whip in UMAR'S hand, and ABU BKAR'S slave was by his side. After this, TALHA, AZ-ZUBAIR and other people came to ABU BAKR and admonished him for appointing a rude and rough man like UMAR as the ruler, and asked what answer ABU BAKR would give when questioned by God as to why he had appointed him. ABU BAKR was lying down at the time, and asked to be helped to sit. When he had sat up and was reclining against pillows, he replied, "Would you terrify me by referring to God? When He puts the question to me, I shall reply that I have appointed the best of His creatures as the ruler over the UMMA of Muhammad".

It would be a slur on the intelligence of these companions of the Prophet to suppose that they were not aware of the inconsistencies and contradictions in their conduct, and of the slippery nature of the ground on which they had taken their stand. As for the people who chose to follow them, it is hard to credit them with such intelligence in view of their apparent blindness to the game that was being played by their leaders, and the inconsistencies in their conduct. I point out some of these as follows:

1. If it was true that the Prophet (P) did not nominate anyone as his successor, then there should have been no reason for ABU BAKR not to follow suit.

2. ABU BAKR had absolutely no right to change the constitution on this very important point.

3. In the similar circumstances of the Prophet (P) wanting to write his will, UMAR, in preventing it, had said that the Book of God was enough for them; yet on this occasion he forgot about the Book of God.

4. On that occasion, he had said the conduct of the Prophet (P) was due to delirium, although he was quite in his senses and did not faint; yet on this occasion he did not attribute the conduct of ABU BAKR to delirium, even though he had fainted during the writing of the will.

5. The people did not like UMAR'S nomination, but it was forced on them.

6. UMAR had said that the writing of the Prophet (P) would have been the result of delirium, and would therefore have been useless, even dangerous, and the Book of God was enough. But this writing of ABU BAKR, though written on the same subject and under worse circumstances, was considered so sound and sacred as to require the immediate attention of UMAR and evoke from him the extraordinary remark that it should be obeyed without even being read. Adherence to principles is rare in politics, but this blatant disregard is deplorable even by modern standards.

7. It is also to be noted that everybody concerned conceded the right of the ruler to nominate his successor; but this right was denied to the Prophet (P).

8. The Book of God, which was considered to be an obstacle to the Prophet's writing his will in favor of IMAM ALI, was altogether forgotten about when ABU BAKR dictated his will in favor of UMAR.

9. To what extremes the enactors of the coup were prepared to go, is evident from the fact that when forgery was committed during the writing of the will, their leader applauded it. They would go to any lengths to secure their object, and that was one of the reasons why IMAM ALI did not take up the sword to wrest from them what was his by right.

### **The Shura**

UMAR interpreted the feelings of his party correctly when he said that they were averse to the RISALA (Prophet-hood) and IMAMA (Caliphate) going to the same family. To this end he worked throughout his life, and by the close of his fairly long career had succeeded on setting the Caliphate on a course which was sure to lead -which in fact it did- to the intended goal, that is, BANU OMAYYA. The only family that could be a certain match for BANU HASHIM was that of ABU SUFYAN, who had fought tooth and nail against Muhammad and Islam and remained a heathen throughout his life, only reciting the KALIMA of Islam when he saw no way out of it. The ground had been prepared when YAZID, the son of ABU SUFYAN, was granted the province of Syria in the time of ABU BAKR. No governor was allowed to be succeeded by his relative, for the obvious reason that they might come to think of the province as theirs by heritage.

But this rule was not observed in the case of the sons of ABU SUFYAN, for YAZID was succeeded by his brother MU'AWIYA. Other governors were generally replaced at frequent intervals so that they would not become too strong for the central authority through too long a stay in one province; but not MU'AWIYA, who was intended to be a permanent thorn in IMAM ALI'S side should Imam Ali ever happen to gain the caliphate in spite of all the hindrances that had been placed in his way. Every governor was called upon to render accounts half-yearly, and was severely punished even on suspicion, if for instance he was proved to have become very rich. But not MU'AWIYA; not even once was he called upon to render accounts. It was necessary that he should make himself influential, powerful and rich, if he was to successfully oppose IMAM ALI.

This policy was carried to its logical conclusion when on his death-bed, UMAR appointed a committee of six candidates out of whom his successor was to be elected by those very members. The constitution and choice of members of the committee, as well as the directions laid down for it, clearly indicate that the sole object of this extraordinary elective body was to exclude IMAM ALI and to get UTHMAN elected. From UTHMAN to MU'AWIYA was then expected to be an easy step, and had not the egregious blunders of the former, coming in quick succession one after the other, spoiled this well-laid plan, the object of its designer would have been fulfilled without being interrupted as it was by IMAM ALI'S short rule. But even these events, eye-opening as they were, could not dispel that atmosphere thick with hatred against the children of the Prophet (P). The battles of JAMAL and SIFFIN clearly demonstrated how that policy was intended to work should Imam Ali become the caliph. I will now relate the events of this SHURA (consultative committee) in detail.

IBN KHALDUN says that when UMAR was fatally wounded, he sent for ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF alone, and told him that he wanted to

transfer the caliphate to him. ABD AL-RAHMAN positively declined to accept it. UMAR then took a promise from him not to disclose this talk which they had on the question of the caliphate until he had settled the whole matter. ABD AL-RAHMAN agreed. The people then came and requested him to nominate his successor. A'ISHA also sent word to him to designate his successor and not to leave the flock of Muhammad without a shepherd. She feared that serious consequences would follow and that great disturbances would take place if he failed to make the nomination. UMAR said, "Whom should I nominate? Had ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH been living, I would have appointed him my successor, and when questioned by God I would have said that I had appointed him whom the Prophet had said was the "Trustee of this UMMA". Had ASLAM, the slave of ABU HUDHAIFA been living, I would have nominated him as my successor, and when questioned by God I would have replied that I had nominated a man who the Prophet said loved God deeply. If MA'ADH IBN JABAL had been alive, I would have nominated him, and on being questioned by God I would have said that I nominated him because I heard the Prophet (P) saying that MA'ADH would be among the learned men on the Day of Judgment. Had KHALID been alive, I would have appointed him, and on being questioned by God I would have said that I appointed him because I heard the Messenger saying that KHALID was one of the swords of God, whom He drew to kill KAFIRIN. Now I will appoint those men with whom the Prophet (P) was pleased at the time of his death". He then sent for IMAM ALI, UTHMAN, TALHA, AZ-ZUBAIR, SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS, and ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF. They duly came, except for TALHA who was out of Medina at the time. UMAR gave them the following directions: "Continue your consultations for three days. If TALHA comes during this period, let him join the consultations, but if he does not, then do not wait for him. By the third day you must come to a decision. SUHAIB will lead the prayers during this time; as he is a freedman, he will not dispute this caliphate with you. Some influential persons from the ANSAR would also be sent for, but they have no right or title to the caliphate. You should also send for AL-HASSAN IBN ALI and ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS and my son ABDALLAH, but none of them has any title to the caliphate". They said, "Appoint your son as Caliph, as being your son he has a right". UMAR replied, "No, one man from the children of AL-KHATTAB is sufficient". Then he continued, "If five of you are agreed on one man, and the sixth does not agree, then chop off the head of that sixth man. If four are on one side, and two disagree, then those two men should be killed. If three are on one side and three on the other, then my son ABDALLAH will be the arbitrator, and the man in whose favor he makes the award will be the caliph. If you do not like the decision made by my son ABDALLAH, then take the side which includes ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF, and kill the rest". They asked him to give them some advice. He said, "O S'AD, I did not nominate you, though you are a man of war, because you are very rude and harsh. O ABD AL-RAHMAN, I did not appoint you, because you are a Pharaoh of this UMMA. O ZUBAIR, I did not designate

you as my successor, because you are a Muslim in your calm moments, but a KAFIR when enraged.

I did not appoint TALHA because of his pride and pomp; and if I had appointed him, he would have left the government to his wife. O UTHMAN, I did not nominate you, because you are much too bigoted in favor of your clan. O Ali, I did not appoint you, because you have a desire for the caliphate. But you are the greatest Muslim, and if I had appointed you, I am sure you would have led the UMMA on the right path to truth". Sometimes he said that he did not appoint IMAM ALI because he had a frank and jovial temperament.

But even then he said that had he appointed IMAM ALI as the caliph; he would have led them onto the path of righteousness and truth. On an earlier occasion, when he was wounded and people were urging him to nominate his successor, UMAR said, "I will think the matter over. No doubt, the man best entitled to it is the most righteous of you, he who would lead you to truth", and he pointed towards IMAM ALI. MAWLAWI SHIBLI says that UMAR found some fault in each of the six men whom he had appointed to the SHURA, but that he knew IMAM ALI to be the best man and most suited to the caliphate. He then adds in a footnote: "There is no doubt that the faults mentioned by UMAR existed in the candidates, excepting IMAM ALI whom he said had joviality. This was only an idea and was not sounded on fact. IMAM ALI was jovial, but only to the extent that is necessary in a good-tempered man of dignity".

Now let us see what happened at the SHURA and how UTHMAN came to be elected to the caliphate. The conduct of the members of the SHURA, especially that of ABD AL-RAHMAN, can best be understood when the reader realizes that this assembly was constituted with the sole object of excluding IMAM ALI and transferring the caliphate to UTHMAN—a fact which will be proved presently.

The members of the SHURA assembled in the house of A'TSAH, and afterwards in that of her nephew, MISWAR IBN MAKHRAMA, AMR IBN AL-AS and AL-MOGHIRA IBN SHU'BA came and sat at the door of the house, but they were removed from that place by SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS. They said that they had only come there to show the world that they should also be among those electing the caliph. Using the facts found in the sources listed under Note No. 325, I narrate the ensuing events as follows.

The SHURA deliberated for three days, but could not reach any decision. On the third day, ABD AL-RAHMAN told them that according to the instructions laid down by UMAR, they must finally decide the matter that day. Then ABD AL-RAHMAN said to them, "I have a proposal to make. I will give up my right to the caliphate, and you can make me your arbitrator to select the caliph from among you". All of them except IMAM ALI agreed to this. Imam Ali said that he must also make a promise that he would decide according to justice and equity, and would not be swayed by his desires or show partiality on account of relationships.

ABD AL-RAHMAN did not answer this suggestion directly, but left the room and went to see all the companions of the Prophet (P) who were in



Medina, the officers of the army, and the noblemen, and consulted them as to who should be appointed as the caliph. On the morning of the fourth day he came back to the SHURA, and taking SA'D and AZ-ZUBAIR aside, told them that the people whom he had consulted had voted for either Imam Ali or UTHMAN, and asked them to elect one of these two. They both agreed on Imam Ali. But this was not to his liking. He sent for Imam Ali and UTHMAN, and had a separate talk with each of them in order to make them agree, but they would not.

He then collected in the mosque all the companions of the Prophet (P), the officers of the army, and the rich and influential men of Medina, and put it to them to select either Imam Ali or UTHMAN. AMMAR pointed towards Imam Ali, and IBN ABI SARH, an OMAYYAD, pointed towards UTHMAN, and people began to quarrel with each other. S'AD shouted to him to decide at once or serious consequences would ensue. Upon this, ABD AL-RAHMAN pacified the people by saying, "Be calm, I have decided upon the caliph in my mind".

Then turning towards Imam Ali he said, "Promise that if I appoint you as caliph you will govern according to the Book of God, the SUNNA (conduct) of the Prophet (P), and the conduct of the first two caliphs". The word "SUNNA", properly speaking, means "habit as translated into action". Imam Ali promised to govern according to the Book of God and the SUNNA of the Prophet (P), but he refused to follow the doings of the first two caliphs. ABD AL-RAHMAN turned to UTHMAN and said the same thing to him. Readily and without hesitation, he agreed to follow the doings of the first two caliphs as well. Upon this, ABD AL-RAHMAN acknowledged UTHMAN as the caliph, and the people also made the BAI'A to him. Imam Ali said to them, "You have donated the caliphate to UTHMAN without any right or title.

This is not the first time that you have acted in bad faith towards us in the matter of the caliphate. I will bear this patiently. AL-MIQDAD said to ABD AL-RAHMAN, "You have passed over the man who would have spread justice and truth in the country. I wonder at QURAISH for passing over the man than whom there is none more fit, able and learned, or more capable of doing justice between men". Imam Ali said, "The people have given the right to QURAISH, but QURAISH look to their own interest (and not to the good of the UMMA).

They say to each other that if once the caliphate goes to the family of the Prophet (P), it will be impossible to take it from, but if it remains with some other man, they will be able to keep it going round among themselves". From the author of "SHAMS-AL-TAWARIKH" we learn what allegedly happened when ABD AL-RAHMAN left the SHURA. This book is more of a eulogy of UMAR than a history of the caliphate, and was claimed by the author to have been written under an express direction of UMAR conveyed to him in a dream, as he mentions with excusable pride in the preface. ABD AL-RAHMAN left the SHURA to consult, or rather canvass, the people of Medina. The author says that those he met were chiefly the followers of UTHMAN, who pressed him to make the award in his favor. He was at a loss to know how to do it, when AMR IBN AL AS came to his rescue with

the suggestion that he should make following the SUNNA of the first two caliphs an indispensable condition for the caliphate, knowing full well that Imam Ali would be certain to reject it with disdain, while UTHMAN would agree to the condition with avidity.

These are the facts of the SHURA. We must give very thoughtful consideration to them and try to understand their implication, if we want to appreciate the policy, which was at work during that period, and which in fact remained in force throughout the time the caliphate lasted. To understand the policy underlining the SHURA, we have to bear in mind two important factors, namely (1) The constitution of the SHURA, and (2) The directions that were given to its members. Both were intended to load the dice against Imam Ali and thus help UTHMAN to gain the caliphate.

### **1. THE CONSTITUTION:**

One of the many evil consequences of the speedy but unwieldy conquests of the early caliphate was the rapid flow of wealth into Median, bringing in its train all the ill effects of wealth and capitalism, such as luxury, loss of energy, aversion to exertion, dread of the battlefield, and overweening pride. It also gave rise to the unnatural and unhealthy division of society into rich and poor, with the most horrible spectacle of the two extremes existing side by side, with overflowing riches and grinding poverty each giving rise to its peculiar faults without any of the redeeming virtues that each has.

It was for this reason that the Prophet (P) had prohibited the hoarding of money and had said that he was not so much afraid of his UMMA reverting to heathenism after him, as of their hoarding wealth and becoming capitalists. The wealth had acquired so much power and influence with the Government that UMAR could not place the crown anywhere except within its orbit. That was also an effective way of excluding Imam Ali, for the rich form a class by themselves, and to capture the government is their first aim. UTHMAN was one of them, being one of the richest men in Medina. Imam Ali, however, was an alien to them. They knew full well that Imam Ali would not tolerate any special privileges for the rich, and that his favors would extend more to the poor than to them. All the members of the SHURA except Imam Ali were rich men. Another, and in fact the chief reason for their selection, was their obvious partiality towards UTHMAN. Let us see who is who.

### **TALHA IBN UBAID ALLAH:**

He was related to ABU BAKR. His mother S'ABASH was the daughter of ABU SUFYAN, the sister of MU'AWIYA and the aunt of YAZID, the future assassin of Imam AL-HUSSAIN. He was one of the richest men of Medina; the daily income from his property in Iraq was one thousand gold pieces, and his property in SARAT yielded even more. He built a lofty palace in KUFA and another in Medina. At the time of his death, he left property worth three KARRAT of DARAHIM, including two hundred thousand gold pieces and over two million silver pieces.

### **AZ-ZUBAIR IBN AL-AWAM:**

He was the son-in-law of ABU BAKR, and was under the influence of A'ISHA. His son was the greatest enemy of Imam Ali. He had palaces in

BASRA, KUFA and ALEXANDRIA. On his death, he left fifty thousand pieces of gold in cash, one thousand horses, and several hundred male and female slaves. He had one thousand MAMLUKES whose earnings, according to the law then in force, were received by him.

**ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF:**

He had accumulated much wealth and had engaged in trade on a gigantic scale. He built a splendid house in WADI AL-AQIA. In his stables he had one hundred horses, one thousand camels, and ten thousand goats. He had so much cash in hand that after his death, each of his four widows received one hundred thousand of DARAHIM as her share of the inheritance. He wept bitterly on his deathbed; when asked the reason, he said that MUS'AB IBN UMAIR and HAMZA, uncle of the Prophet (P), were both much better than him in every respect, and that neither of them had left sufficient even to purchase their coffin cloth with. He was a very close relative of UTHMAN, his wife UM KULTHUM, daughter of UQBA IBN ABI MU'IT, was the cousin of UTHMAN from her mother's side.

**SA'AD IBN ABI WAQQAS:**

He was a close relative of ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF; at one stage of the discussions, he said that he was willing to relinquish his right as a candidate in favor of his relative ("IBN-AM") ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF. His mother HAMNAT was the daughter of SUFYAN IBN OMAYYA, and thus a close relative of UTHMAN and MU'AWIYA. It was his son UMAR IBN SA'D who later so heartlessly butchered the whole family of the Prophet at KARBALA. He was also very rich; he had a magnificent palace at WADI AL-AQIQ close to that of ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF, and in that palace occurred his death.

**UTHMAN IBN AFFAN:**

He was closely related to ABU SUFYAN with whom he always remained on good terms as a dutiful younger member of the family. He had a magnificent palace in Medina, and very many gardens and fountains. On the day of his death, he had in his private treasury one hundred and fifty thousand pieces of gold and one million of silver. He had landed estates in WADI AL-AQIQ, HUNAIN and other places, worth about one hundred thousand gold pieces. Besides this, he had countless horses and camels in his stables.

There are other indications pointing to the objective being the exclusion of Imam Ali. Before announcing the SHURA, UMAR had an aside with ABD AL-RAHMAN, whom he intended to make the arbitrator. Now the directions that were given by UMAR, and the subsequent conduct of ABD AL-RAHMAN, allow us to surmise fairly correctly what the subject of that private talk must have been. His own son ABDALLAH IBN UMAR was announced as the arbitrator, and was directed to give his award in favor of the party on whose side he found ABD AL-RAHMAN.

Thus the resulting decision was bound to be in favor of UTHMAN, as there was the assurance of the back-up of two means of making the award-the private arbitrator and the public arbitrator. ABD AL-RAHMAN was

given a direction in private, which obviously related to this dispute, and obviously concerned which party ABD AL-RAHMAN was to favor.

There is a very significant fact here. As ABD AL-RAHMAN positively refused to accept the caliphate, there seems to have been no point in his inclusion by UMAR in a party of "candidates". There must therefore have been some other object to his seemingly irrelevant inclusion, and this object was to give him a status to interfere in the dispute. ABDALLAH'S case was different; he happened to be the son of the caliph. But ABD AL-RAHMAN had no locus standi, and so was given one by being made a candidate.

That the talk was made in private was not enough; ABD AL-RAHMAN was further asked not to disclose it to anybody. This order to observe silence and secrecy is too significant to be ignored in this discussion. Also, the conduct of ABD AL-RAHMAN in the meeting was too clearly partial towards UTHMAN to need comment. I shall refer to it presently, but would point out one fact here. When questioned by him, both SA'D and AZ-ZUBAIR gave their opinion in favor of Imam Ali. Here was a clear majority; SA'D, AZ-ZUBAIR and Imam Ali on one side form a decided majority, TALHA not having arrived by then. (See AT-TABARI in this connection). At least, it is not apparent that TALHA had arrived by then, though he appears to have come at a later stage. Anyhow, it can at best be dismissed as doubtful.

Now in fair deals we always find impartial arbitrators. Here, however, ABD AL-RAHMAN was obviously partial towards UTHMAN, as will become more apparent when we come to discuss his conduct in the meeting. As to ABDALLAH IBN UMAR, his partiality towards UTHMAN is also no less apparent. He very gladly made the BAI'A to UTHMAN, whereas Imam Ali, when his turn came, refused to acknowledge him as the caliph. When after the assassinations at KARBLA' feelings ran high against YAZID, and people got ready to revolt against him, ABDALLAH took it upon himself to give public lectures dissuading them from turning against YAZID, and collected all his children and relatives to exhort them to remain loyal to him, telling them that if any of them harbored bad intentions against YAZID, he would have nothing more to do with him. His brother, UBAIDALLAH IBN UMAR, joined the revolt against Imam Ali, and fell fighting him on field of SIFFIN. Such were the umpires of this board. This caricature of arbitration was to decide the fate of the Muslim world; Islam had indeed fallen on evil days. Simple folk go into raptures over UMAR'S selfless devotion to Islam when they recollect that he refused to designate his son ABDALLAH as his successor, though expressly asked to do so. But UMAR was not so simple; he was an astute politician.

He was fully aware that ABDALLAH would have no backing, and that Imam Ali was still in the field. Even if Imam Ali could have been ignored, the BANU Omayya would not have submitted to ABDALLAH, who had inherited everything from his father except his intelligence. UMAR himself hinted at this once when he said that ABDALLAH was too dull to be able to divorce his wife, meaning that of divorce one's wife was the easiest thing in the world, but ABDALLAH was too much of a simpleton to be able to do even this. ABU SUFYAN, who had extorted the whole province of Syria by

one threat of his, was still alive, and the appointment of ABDALLAH would have upset his whole plan, and would have defeated the object for which he had been working throughout his life.

Look at this seeming inconsistency. ABDALLAH was so unfit and ignorant as not even to be able to divorce his wife. But how then, all of a sudden, were volumes of knowledge, ability and efficiency infused into him, so that all at once he became fit to decide between the claims of different candidates to the caliphate? His only qualification was his aversion of Imam Ali, and if we look at the matter from this point of view, this seeming inconsistency is converted into a veritable consistency.

There was a stage in the consultations of the SHURA when the votes were evenly balanced and the people were becoming restive on account of the delay. SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS suggested that ABD AL-RAHMAN should himself assume the caliphate, and on his refusal, SA'D said "Then act according to your opinion; you know full well what the wishes of UMAR were in this matter". This lets the cat out of the bag. UMAR had definite wishes of his own in the matter, and they were known specifically only to ABD AL-RAHMAN, and the fact of this was known to many people.

When UMAR announced the constitution of the SHURA and the names of its members became known, Imam Ali, as soon as he came out of the house of UMAR, said to his friends, "These people will never let the caliphate come to me, so long as I continue submitting to them". To ABBAS he said, "This time also the caliphate has been diverted from us". ABBAS asked, "How do you know that"? Imam Ali replied, "UMAR has bracketed me with UTHMAN, and has directed "If two persons are on one side and two on the other, be with those among whom you find ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF". SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS will not differ with his relative ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF, and ABD AL-RAHMAN is related to UTHMAN by marriage. It is obvious that either ABD AL-RAHMAN will make UTHMAN the caliph, or else UTHMAN will make ABD AL-RAHMAN the caliph. Thus even if two are with me, it will not benefit me, though I think that only one may be with me". ABBAS replied that he had already told him not to join the SHURA, as it had been intended to exclude him.

It really is rather strange to find that no ANSAR was included in the SHURA, and stranger still is UMAR'S remark that the ANSAR had no share in the caliphate. This was their punishment for siding with Imam Ali; there seems to be no other reason for this unjust exclusion. How can it be said on the basis of such directions that Islam favors democracy? This was an intentional dividing of the Islamic nation, and a destroying of its unity. Could the ANSAR, after this remark, regard themselves as equal partners in the Islamic Theocracy?

## **2. THE DIRECTIONS:**

The directions, which UMAR gave to the members of the SHURA, were in keeping with its constitution, and had the same object in view. One thing that strikes us is the absence of any mention of the Book of God. It was as much excluded from the deliberations of the SHURA as it had been in the verbal wrangling of the SAQIFA. The statesman who so clamorously

appealed to the Book of God as being sufficient for any emergency that might arise when it was the Prophet (P) who wanted to give certain instructions in writing to his UMMA, became so forgetful of the Book of God when his own turn came for giving instructions that he did not even mention it in his directions.

The only instruction to be expected of him was "Consult the Book of God to find out what are the qualifications indispensable in a successor of the Prophet (P), and then examine the claims of each of the candidates with reference to those qualifications, and select the one who approaches the standard most closely". This would have proved his honest intentions, and prevented the grossest injustice being done in preferring UTHMAN over Imam Ali. UTHMAN, whose relationship with the Prophet (P) was not close, who had accepted Islam only after scores of people had already had that distinction, who had never fought against any combatant in the cause of Islam, always fleeing the field of battle when it became hot, who had no child whom the Prophet (P) could call his own, who always remained immersed in the luxury and ease provided by his immense riches, and who had worshipped false gods for the better portion of his life, was given preference over Imam Ali, who had never for one moment worshipped false gods, who was the first man to accept the message brought by Muhammad (P), whose wife FATIMA was the dearest child of the Prophet (P) (as A'ISHA very often said), whose sons the Prophet always called and treated as his own, who never shirked from war, who was always in the thickest of the battle, who in the many single combats always overpowered his rival -be he MARHAB or AMR IBN ABDWID- most often killing him, who joined every battle that the Prophet (P) fought against the enemies of Islam, whose prowess saved the honor of Islam in all the chief battles that were fought against heathenism and to whom was due the victory in those battles, whose knowledge of the QUR'AN and FIQH was superior to all except the Prophet (P), about whom the Prophet said, "I am the Citadel of Knowledge and Imam Ali is its Gate; he who seeks knowledge should come to the gate", and whose qualities and virtues are too many to be enumerated. This Imam Ali was set aside for the fault that he belonged to the Prophet's family and had helped him too much, while UTHMAN was preferred because he belonged to the bitterest foes of the Prophet (P). Other than this there was no comparison between the two, and no sane man would hesitate to decide between them for one single moment if the matter were left solely to personal qualifications and virtues.

One cannot help smiling when one hears of UMAR'S remorse for the passing away of MA'ADH IBN JABAL, KHALID, ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH, and SALAM, a freedman of HUDHAIFA, when he remarks that if any one of them had been alive, he would unhesitatingly have appointed him as the caliph on the solitary grounds that he had heard the Prophet (P) saying this thing or that thing in their favor. It is a pity that UMAR'S ears did not catch a single one of the many sayings of the Prophet in favor of Imam Ali, some of which I have mentioned in this book.

A point to note in these instructions is that UMAR ordered SUHAIB, a freedman, to lead the daily prayers for so long as the members of the



SHURA were in consultation, explaining that he had selected him because being a freedman he could not lay a claim to the caliphate. How then would UMAR have been able to appoint SALAM, a freedman of HUDHAIFA, as a caliph, had he been alive? But consistency, logic and justice are not the virtues we expect in politics.

The next important instruction was that they were to kill the dissenting minority, even if it consisted of one man. Clearly the hint was to Imam Ali, for he knew full well that he would never agree with a decision, which, he was certain, would come out in favor of UTHMAN. It must be realized that the simple reason why UMAR did not appoint Imam Ali to the caliphate, was that he wanted UTHMAN in that position. When urged to appoint a successor, he more than once said that if Imam Ali was appointed to the caliphate, he would lead the UMMA on the straight path to truth and righteousness.

The only faults that he could find to state as a bar to selecting him were that he was desirous of having the caliphate, and that he had a jovial temperament. Imam Ali was indeed desirous of gaining the caliphate, but only because he was anxious to see his Prophet's UMMA being led onto the straight path, which he alone was able to do. That this joviality of temperament was not a fault is admitted by MAWLAWI SHIBLI himself. It was an injustice of the highest order to ignore the best man.

#### **THE CONSULTATIONS AND AWARD:**

A number of anomalies arising in the actual course of the proceedings should be noted. UMAR had asked the members to come down on the side on which they found ABD AL-RAHMAN, but he did not announce that he should actively work as an arbitrator and that the caliphate should be as a gift in his hand to bestow on whom he pleased. Moreover, Imam Ali did not agree to ABD AL-RAHMAN'S acting as the arbitrator, but the latter assumed this role nonetheless.

Having assured himself that the constitution of the SHURA was sufficiently pro-UTHMAN, UMAR did not want its members to be affected by outside influences during their deliberations; he feared BANU HASHIM, who he thought might come to influence the members on the basis of the superior qualifications of Imam Ali. He therefore ordered that they be shut up in a room until they had decided on one man. Now it is generally one of the chief conditions of arbitration that the arbitrators should be kept aloof from outside influences. But ABD AL-RAHMAN went out, to go from door to door canvassing people to take the side of UTHMAN, so as to be able to say that opinion was divided.

But even after these efforts he found the people equally divided between Imam Ali and UTHMAN. Then he put the matter to SA'AD and AZ-ZUBAIR, who both voted in favor of Imam Ali. He ought to have given his decision there and then. But he went out to think up some other plan. It was on this occasion that AMR IBN AL-AS suggested to him the successful strategy, namely that of making the award of the caliphate conditional on following the SUNNA of the first two caliphs. This was a mere trick to ignore Imam Ali, for this condition had not been laid down by UMAR, and ABD AL-RAHMAN had no right to create any new conditions. Moreover,

this condition clearly shows that the SUNNA or policy of the first two caliphs was different from the SUNNA of the Prophet (P). What could that difference have been? Obviously it was to pamper the rich at the expense of the poor.

This was against the spirit of Islam and this Imam Ali could not agree to. This class of rich and influential people, who had once helped the present rulers to power, had naturally succeeded in gaining all sorts of favors and privileges from them, and now quite as naturally desired that this SUNNA should continue. Their insistence on the continuance of this custom was particularly opportune as it served the purpose of excluding Imam Ali and of bringing a member of their own class power. And to crown it all, it was quite in keeping with the policy, wishes and aims of UMAR. But at the same time it is clear that to make this a precondition for attainment of the caliphate was neither just nor reasonable, and it was quite outside the powers of the SHURA, as it exceeded their terms of reference. For this reason alone, the election, or selection, or nomination, whatever it was, was quite invalid. It was also invalid because ABD AL-RAHMAN made himself under the influence of BANU OMAYYA. It was also invalid because no enquiry was made concerning the claims and qualifications of the contenders. An award without an enquiry is no award; it is an arbitrary order based on personal predilections.

Was this process election, selection, nomination or arbitration? UMAR nominated only six persons to the candidature. What was the basis for his selection? The only reason for their inclusion given by UMAR, was that at the time of his death the Prophet was quite pleased with these six persons. Was he then displeased with everyone else, and was there not a single ANSAR who had pleased him? So many praises for the ANSAR from the mouth of the Prophet (P) are recorded by -AL-BUKHARI; are they all false? The reason given by UMAR was obviously a lame excuse; these persons real suitability lay in their propensity to side with UTHMAN to the exclusion of Imam Ali.

#### **UTHMAN WAS UMAR'S CHOICE LONG BEFORE THE SHURA:**

HUDHAIFA says that once at Medina, when asked as to who would succeed him as caliph, UMAR replied that it would be UTHMAN. MUTRIF says that once he performed Hajj in the time of UMAR, and there was no doubt in anybody's mind; all of them were certain that UTHMAN would succeed UMAR to the caliphate. SADDAD says that in the time of UMAR, he heard AWF IBN MALIK wishing for his death. When asked the reason why, AWF replied that he dreaded the caliphate of BANU OMAYYA, which would come after UMAR/

#### **UMAR'S ADVICE TO ABD AL-RAHMAN:**

Now we can safely and surely deduce what the advice given by UMAR to ABD AL-RAHMAN had been when he appointed him the umpire in the SHURA. He called him in private, talked to him about the caliphate, suggested that he accept it, and upon his refusal advised him something which he asked him to keep secret. Obviously his advice was that he should

see to it that UTHMAN got the caliphate. The whole conduct of ABD AL-RAHMAN in the deliberations of the SHURA points in this direction.

**ALI'S PROTEST AGAINST THE UNJUST PREFERENCE:**

When Imam Ali came out of the hall of the SHURA after the investiture of UTHMAN, his face showed signs of melancholy and gloom, and addressing ABD AL-RAHMAN he said, "This is not the first time that you have oppressed us and done injustice to us by depriving us of our right. We have become accustomed to bearing your injustices with patience, and you have become accustomed to treating us unjustly".

**WHY THE PLAN OF THE SHURA WAS ADOPTED:**

UMAR could have appointed UTHMAN directly, but that would not have been UMAR'S style, any more than it was when he was striving to prevent the fulfillment of the Prophet's nomination of Imam Ali before. The first principle of his policy was to conceal his real intentions and to have his own wishes satisfied through the agency of others.

The need for the establishment of the SHURA was to provide allies for UTHMAN from every powerful tribe. This was based on the same principle as the plan of QURAISH to assassinate the Prophet through the agency of a number of young men taken from every powerful tribe. In addition to this is the fact that SA'D and ABD AL-RAHMAN IBN AWF were the two richest and most influential persons in Medina. If they elected UTHMAN, they would certainly support him. When the wealthy class headed by these two persons joined up with BANU OMAYYA to support UTHMAN, BANU HASHIM would be helpless to dislodge him. Moreover, MU'AWIYA was already established in Syria to act as his guardian angel. Thus encircled and checkmated, the subjugation of BANU HASHIM was assured.

## Chapter Eleven: Nepotism or Sheer Justice

The view that the opposition party formulated and propagated for political purposes, was that Muhammad (P) was unjustly, and merely out of domestic love and affection, trying to install Imam Ali in his place, and was thus adopting the means to perpetuate the rule of his family, and to raise his own tribe to dominance over others. This may well also be the opinion of non-Muslim readers of this book.

This view was very readily accepted by those parties or sections of the people who, for one reason or another, were unfavorably disposed towards Imam Ali and the Prophet (P), for example the MUNAFIQIN of BANU OMAYYA, the families whose men Imam Ali had killed in the battles for Islam, and those numerous tribes who were jealous of the rise of BANU HASHIM. Thus the ranks of the opposition were swelled to a considerable extent. Even in foreign non-Muslim countries, which were naturally averse to the new religion and its founder, this view and all those views akin to it found a ready response and were greedily welcomed.

They gained easy currency among the non-Muslims, with the result that the only Islam that they know today is that which has resulted from the twisting and stretching of its principles by those with an interest in molding it into a shape suited to their ends. They have accepted a distorted view of Islam so readily because in it they find reflected their own opinions about Muhammad (P) and Islam, and have, therefore, patted this faction on the back. This situation, coupled with the active propaganda that has been carried on in foreign countries throughout these thirteen centuries, is responsible for the crass ignorance in Europe of the true principles of Islam. Every book on Islam published there bears testimony to this.

To continue the thread of our narration, we must revert to the criticism of the accusation, if true, exposes the Prophet (P) to many other charges which flow from it as a consequence, for example falsehood, injustice, want of love for Islam, selfishness, and so on. Nepotism implies that one prefers one's own unfit relatives to others who are more able, suitable and competent. But it, on the other hand, the particular relative is indeed more competent, more suited to the post, and more properly deserving in every respect than any of the men available for selection, then it would be sheer injustice to disqualify him for the simple reason that he is related to the person making the selection. Let us see to which side the scales of justice incline.

We have to judge between Imam Ali on the one hand, and those who contrived to secure the caliphate at the SAQIFA, namely ABU BAKR and UMAR, on the other. For an agent, successor or caliph, it is absolutely essential that he be as much like his principal as possible. The greater the similarity, the greater the fitness. The continuance of the work of Government, Caliphate, or any other institution for that matter, with the same efficiency, control and spirit as prevailed in the principal's own lifetime, cannot be assured without this likeness in the successor.

Succession to the Prophet (P) meant taking his place in both the Spiritual and Temporal Government of Islam.

For the spiritual branch of government, the caliph had to be on a level with the Prophet (P) in respect of the following criteria:

1. Freedom from the vice of idolatry.
2. Precedence over all others in accepting the truth of the Prophet's mission.
3. Purity and strength of faith.
4. (Unfailable) courage and unflinching faith, to enable him to stick to his post at the risk of his life, whether on the field of battle or whether in the humbler sphere of everyday life.
5. Invincibility, both into the teachings of the battle and in the field of learning.
6. Deep insight into the teachings of the QUR'AN and a perfect knowledge of its correct interpretation.
7. Superiority to all in every good quality and human virtue.
8. Selfless devotion to the cause of Islam.

For the temporal branch of government of the pattern set by Islam, the following qualities must be present in the successor, just as they were found in the Prophet (P).

1. The ability as well as the desire to do justice between men.
2. The sagacity to order state policy in strict conformity with the tenets of Islam.
3. The realization of his responsibility for the actions of his governors and subordinates.
4. Good management at home and the ability to command respect abroad.
5. The ability to conduct wars to the standard set by the Prophet (P), that is, with their initiation and promulgation only in strict accordance with the principles of justice, equity and good conscience, and in keeping with the behests of the QUR'AN, never being undertaken with the intention of extending the limits of the realm, obtaining booty, or keeping the armies occupied abroad in order to avoid their mischief at home.
6. The desire to extend the limits of Islam by means of peaceful persuasion.
7. Submission to the laws of Islam without any attempt to amend or cancel them.

It must also be noted that the Prophet's opinion about him is also an asset which must count. I now proceed to judge all these personages according to the standards set down above. It is a painful task, as comparisons are said to be odious. But in the case of leaders, comparison is unavoidable.

## **SPIRITUAL GOVERNMENT:**

### **Criterion No. 1: Freedom from Idolatry:**

It is a fact that Muhammad (P) never for a single moment worshipped any idol. Similarly, all historians are unanimous in saying that Imam Ali did not for a single minute worship any idol. ABU BAKR accepted Islam at the age of thirty-nine and UMAR at the age of thirty-five. Before that, they had both been worshipping the idols like other QURAIISH individuals.

When an infant of four or five years. Imam Ali was taken away from his parents by Muhammad (P), with whom he lived thereafter. His education and upbringing under Muhammad's very eyes was an asset for Imam Ali. Muhammad, even before the revelation, had never worshipped the idols. It was but natural for Imam Ali to follow him in not polluting himself with the filth of idolatry. He was ten years of age when he accepted Muhammad's mission, though in manner of speaking he had been Muslim before that.

In contrast, UMAR'S family was noted for its staunch support of paganism. When five persons from QURAISH, namely Zaid, Qais, Warqa, Abdallah Ibn Jahsh, and Uthman Ibn Huwairi (not Uthman, the caliph) became disgusted with idolatry and decided to abjure it, even before the advent of Muhammad (P), AL-KHATTAB came down very hard on Zaid for this. (Zaid was Umar's first cousin, his father Amr being the brother of Umar's father AL-KHATTAB).

Zaid had intended to go to different lands in search of the genuine religion of Ibrahim, but AL-KHATTAB had asked Safiyya, Zaid's wife, to let him know when Zaid planned to go off. Therefore, whenever Zaid tried to set off, his wife would convey the news to AL-KHATTAB, who would come and rebuke Zaid for leaving the religion of his fathers.

AL-KHATTAB used to severely ill-treat him, and finally expelled him to the outskirts of Makka, sending the rogues of Quraish after him to torment him and to prevent him from entering the town. Zaid could therefore only enter Makka in secret, and whenever discovered would be tortured by those ruffians at the request of AL-KHATTAB, and would be expelled again. AL-KHATTAB took great care thereafter to ensure that no one else abjured idolatry.

#### **Criterion No. 2: Precedence in Islam:**

Imam Ali was the first man to accept Islam and to offer prayers with the Prophet (P). When entrusted with the mission, the Prophet (P) came home and disclosed his experiences to his wife Khadija, who at once acknowledged the truth of what he said. The Prophet (P) then mentioned it to Imam Ali, who accepted it immediately. There is almost unanimity on this point: Khadija among women, and Imam Ali among men, were the first to accept Islam. Amir Ali says:

Khadija was the first to accept his mission.... In the beginning Muhammad opened his soul only to those who were attached to him, and tried to wean them from to gross practices of their forefathers. After Khadija, Imam Ali was the next disciple. Often did the Prophet (P) go into the depths of the solitary deserts around Makka with his wife and young cousin, that they might together offer up their heart-felt thanks to the God of all nations for His manifold blessings. Once they were surprised while in the attitude of prayer by Abu Talib, the father of Imam Ali, and he said to Muhammad (P) "O son of my brother, what is this religion that thou art following"? "It is the religion of God, His angels, His Prophets, and our ancestor Ibrahim", answered the Prophet (P). Then turning towards Imam Ali, his son, the venerable patrician enquired as to what his religion was. "O father", replied Imam Ali, "I believe in God and His Prophet, and I



go with him". "Well my son", said ABU TALIB, "he will not call thee to aught save what is good, wherefore thou art free to cleave unto him".

Soon after, ZAID IBN AL-HARITH, who notwithstanding his freedom had cast in his lot with Muhammad (P). became a convert to the new faith. He was followed by a leading member of QURAIISH community named ABDALLAH IBN ABI QUHAFI, who afterwards became famous in history as ABU BAKR.

AFIF AL-KINDI relates his testimony as an eye-witness thus: "Before Islam had entered on its general proselytizing mission, I came to MAKKA and stayed with ABBAS IBN ABD AL-MUTTALIB. When the sun had risen and become high, I turned towards the KA'BA; a young man came and looked up at the sky, and then stood in front of the KA'BA. Soon afterwards a boy came and stood to the right of the young man, and then performed the RUKU', and the boy and the woman followed suit. The young man then stood erect, and the boy and the woman did likewise. Then the young man fell prostrate in SAJDA, and the boy and the woman did the same.

I said to ABBAS, "O ABBAS, this is a great event". ABBAS said, "Yes, this is a great event; do you know who they are"? I said that I did not know. ABBAS then said, "This young man is Muhammad, the son of my brother; and the woman is KHADIJA, the wife of Muhammad, my nephew. This young man says that your God, who is also God of the heavens, has ordered them to worship Him in this manner; and by God, I do not know anyone else on the face of the earth in this religion besides these three persons". AFIF used to say that had he accepted Islam at that time, he would have been the third person in Islam.

This shows conclusively that for a long time there were only these three persons in the fold of Islam. This is corroborated by what Imam Ali himself said: "I am the brother of God's Prophet (P), and am God's worshipper. I am the "SIDDIQ-AL-AKBAR". Anyone who claims this title for himself is a liar. I offered prayers to God side by side with the Prophet (P) for seven years before anyone else did". He expressly asserted that he was a Muslim long before ABU BAKR became one.

AT-TABARI says that ABU BAKR embraced Islam after fifty persons had done so.

ABU AL-FIDA' writes: "All agree that the first person to accept Islam was KHADIJA. The question is who was the next Muslim. The Author of "SIRAT IBN HISHAM" and a great majority of the learned writers are of the opinion that after her, Imam Ali embraced Islam.... The author of the SIRA says that after him ZAID came into the fold of Islam; it was after ZAID that ABU BAKR became a Muslim.

AS-SAYYUTI says: "IBN ABBAS, ANAS, ZAID IBN ARQAM, SALMAN AL-FARISI, and a large number of companions say that Imam Ali was the first man to accept Islam. Most of the learned men say that there is agreement of the whole UMMA on the point that the first man to accept Islam was Imam Ali".

AL-MAS'UDI says: "A majority of the writers say that Imam Ali never associated anyone with the one true God, and that therefore there was no time when he was not a Muslim, and we cannot say that he accepted Islam

afterwards; he followed the Prophet (P) in all his deeds. He attained the age of discretion in this manner; God saved him from every sin on account of his following the Prophet (P) in all his actions. With no compulsion from outside, both of them chose to obey and worship God of their own free will, and abstained from all sins and prohibited things. Another class of writers think that the Prophet also offered Islam to Imam Ali formally and he accepted it at once, and that he was the first to accept Islam.... Then ABU BAKR entered into the fold of Islam".

There is no dispute in the case of UMAR. He was twenty-seven years of age when Muhammad was charged with his mission, and he accepted Islam at the age of thirty-three or thirty-five. During this period he had been the deadliest enemy of Muhammad and Islam. He embraced Islam after more than fifty persons had already done so.

### **Criterion No. 3: Purity and Strength of Faith:**

It is obvious that there is no comparison between the purity and strength of faith of a man who has been bred and brought up from his infancy under the supervision and education of the Teacher himself, and the faith acquired at a more advanced age. In the former case, the sheet is a clean one; the first impressions of a religion that it receives are those of Islam. In the latter case, the slate is already written upon; the impressions of idolatry acquired at an age when impressions go very deep are indelible, and it takes a long time to make the new impressions felt. Even when this happens, both sets of impressions live side by side, and react upon and compete with each other. Under these circumstances, the purity of the faith is impossible, and its strength is unreliable. It was for this reason that these aged pupils of the Prophet (P) were never able to shake off the last vestiges of idolatry and fully realize and comprehend the true principles of Islam and the full nature and real import of Prophet-hood. This will be readily apparent to anyone who tries to study how UMAR could sit down to amend, modify and set aside certain fundamental principles of Islam as taught by the Teacher himself. A revealed religion does not brook this treatment at the hands of a follower, no matter how high he may be placed in worldly position.

Religion must either be accepted as it is, or else be rejected entirely; there is no middle course. They failed to realize this, because in paganism, which they had known from their infancy, there is no such limitation; it is wholly a sport of imagination. They applied the principle of paganism, which they could never entirely shake off, in preference to the doctrines of the revealed religion, the true import and certain and permanent nature of which they never fully appreciated. Modern writers like SHIBLI, whose eyes are dazzled by the glare of the modern age, extol these amendments on the grounds that without them, modern people would blame Islam for being inelastic. Call it inelastic if you will, but absolute truth does not stoop to compromise.

The strength of the conviction of Imam Ali in the truth of his religion is evident from his entire conduct from the cradle to the grave. He never fled the field of battle, he risked his own life many times to save the Prophet (P) and Islam, and he placed the good of Islam before every other consideration. His most stupendous sacrifice for Islam was made when, on the death of the

Prophet (P), he was superseded, yet refused to take up the sword lest it endanger the interests of Islam.

The details of this will become known as we proceed. The student of history known how well or ill his rivals withstood the stress of striving for Islam. The only virtue of ABU BAKR that could be cited at the SAQIFA was that he had been the companion of the Prophet (P) in the Cave on the night of the flight. And on that occasion ABU BAKR had cried for fear of the enemies, with the result that the Prophet (P) had had to remind him that God is always with the righteous. This is far from being a sign of a firm conviction in the righteousness of the cause.

#### **Criteria Nos. 4 & 5: Conduct in Battle:**

For a man to flee for his life from the field of battle is conclusive evidence that he has no real faith in the promises of reward and the threats of punishment set forth in QUR'AN; furthermore, to abandon the Prophet (P) when in the midst of foes proves that he has little, if any, love for him. Thus, it is absolutely essential that the successor of the Prophet (P) should be a man who has the courage to stick to his post in the face of every danger, and who is ready to lay down his life for Islam and the Prophet (P). On no account must he run away from the field or battle to save his own life. Moreover, it is also necessary that he should not be defeated by anyone, either on the field of battle, or in the lecture-room. He should be second to none in any contest or in any walk of life. With him is bound up the dignity of Islam; if he is defeated, Islam is defeated. Let us review the battles of the Prophet (P) from this point of view.

#### **(a) The Battle of BADR; 19th Ramadan A.H. 2 (A.C. 624).**

This was the first battle of Islam; had it been lost, Islam would not have survived. The Prophet (P) fully realized its importance when he prayed to God in these words: "O God, it today this army is lost. Thou wilt not be worshipped on the face of the earth till eternity". MARGOLIOUTH says; "It certainly appears that the winning of this most important fight was in the main due to the prowess of Imam Ali (who fought without armor on his back) and HAMZA". Seventy warriors of QURAISH fell dead on the battlefield, half of this number having been slain by Imam Ali alone, with the remainder killed by the rest of the Muslim army.

Included among those killed by Imam Ali were members of almost all the important families of QURAISH. Some of their names are: AL-WALID IBN UTBA, brother of HIND, wife of ABU SUFYAN and the mother of MU'AWIYA; SHAIBA IBN RABI'A, uncle of the same HIND; AL-AS IBN SA'ID BIN AL-AS AL-AMAWI; NAWFAL IBN KHUWAILID IBN ASAD; MAS'UD IBN AL-MUGHIRA, who was the brother of AL-WALID, father of KHALID; ABU AL-QAIS IBN AL-FAKAH; ABDALLAH IBN AL-MUNDHIR; AL-AS IBN MUNYA IBN AL-HAJJAJ; HANZALA and ABU UMAR, sons of ABU SUFYAN; ABU UBAID IBN AL-HARITH; and AQIL IBN NAWFAL. This list included five close relatives of MU'AWIYA.

In this battle we do not hear the name of UMAR mentioned at all. UTHMAN was absent, and ABU BAKR was sitting safely in the ARSH, a

high place of refuge constructed for the Prophet (P), where ABU BAKR had gone uninvited.

**(b) The Battle of UHUD; 11th SHAWWAL A.H. 3(A.C. 625).**

MARGOLIOUTH writes; "It appears, too, that start events were proceeding as the Prophet had imagined. The champions of BADR, ALI and HAMZA, dealt out death as unsparingly as before; the heroism of QURAIISH compelled them to meet these companions in a series of single combats, in which their own champions were killed, and their overthrow spread discomfiture and panic".

When the battle began, Imam Ali, HAMZA and ABU DUJANA went straight towards the enemy, engaged the armies and fought at the risk of their lives. Imam Ali killed all the standard-bearers of QURAIISH, and panic took hold of the armies, who fled leaving behind their goods. The detachment of archers, whom the Prophet (P) had ordered to guard the pass in the mountains and remain there in all events, left their post and engaged themselves in looting the enemy's goods. KHALID IBN AL-WALID of QURAIISH, finding himself presented with the opportunity, descended upon the Muslims, and their victory was turned into defeat. Now the Muslims began fleeing in all directions, leaving the Prophet (P), who had been wounded, alone. I cannot do better than to quote a passage (in translation) from "MADARIJ-AN-NABUWWA" by SHAIKH ABD AL-HAQ, a great SUNNI divine and historian:

During the battle of UHUD, the enemy fought so desperately that the Muslims took to flight, leaving the Prophet (P) alone. He got so angry that the sweat dripped from his forehead. In that condition, he looked round and saw Imam Ali standing by his side. The Prophet (P) looked at him and asked why he did not take to flight and join his comrades.

Imam Ali replied, "Should I turn KAFIR after having once accepted IMAN (faith in God)? I will follow you everywhere. "Now a party of the enemy advanced towards the Prophet (P), who said to Imam Ali, "O Ali, protect me from this party; do this service to me, as this is the time for help". Ali therefore turned to that party and killed so many of them that the rest ran away. It is said that on that day Ali received eighteen wounds, four of them being so serious that on receiving each wound, he fell down from his horse.... The famous phrase "There is no courageous man like Ali, and no sword like his DHU AL-FIQAR was uttered on that day".

Those who hold that the Prophet (P) did not designate Imam Ali as his successor, or that he was wrong in selecting Imam Ali for the caliphate, think that the Prophet (P) forgot or ought to have forgotten, when in prosperity, the service which Imam Ali had rendered to Islam and its founder in adversity.

Now let us turn to the others. UMAR said that on the day of UHUD, the Muslims fled for their lives from the field of battle, and that he himself fled and climbed a hill, jumping from place to place like a mountain goat. It appears that after some time, he and his companions sat down to take rest. From AT-TABARI we learn that UMAR and TALHA together with some of the MUHAJIRIN and ANSAR, ran away from the field and were sitting on a rock, when someone called out that Muhammad had been killed.

ANAS IBN AL-NADR went up to these persons and asked them why they were sitting there. The men on the rock replied that Muhammad (P) had been killed, and expressed their wish that there had been someone who would go to ABDALLAH IBN UBBAI, a MUNAFIQ at Medina, and request him to intercede with ABU SUFYAN and get an amnesty for them.

Seeing Imam Ali and the Prophet (P) standing firm on the field of battle, Muslims began to rally round the Prophet (P). ABU BAKR says that the people began to return to the Prophet (P), that he was the first to come back to him, and that after him came ABU UBAIDA IBN AL-JARRAH. UTHMAN IBN AFFAN had fled with two others to a great distance, and returned on the third day. The Prophet (P) remarked to UTHMAN that the distance he had fled was great.

We learn the following from "HABIB-AS-SAYYAR":

One day, Zaid Ibn Wahab said to Abdallah Ibn Mas'ud, "I have heard that on the day of Uhud, no one except Ali, Abu Du'jana and Suhail Ibn Hanif remained in the field with the Prophet. Is this information correct?" Abdallah Ibn Mas'ud replied that in the first instance when the Muslims took flight, no one but Ali had remained with the Prophet. Again Zaid asked, "Abu Bakr and Umar, where were they?" Abdallah Ibn Mas'ud replied that they also had run away. When Zaid asked about Uthman, he replied that Uthman had fled to a great distance, and returned on the third day, whereupon the Prophet remarked to him that he had run to a great distance.

We do not hear of Abu Bakr, Umar or Uthman taking part in the battle; we hear only of them taking part in the flight. Discomfited by the firm and courageous attitude of the Prophet and the fierce fighting of Ali, the Makkans broke off and went back to Makka.

**(c) The Battle of AHZAB ("The Ditch"); Shawwal A.H.5 (A.C.627):**

This was the last concerted attempt by the Makkans to crush the new religion, and it was an enormous one too. All the Jews of Arabia made common cause with them, and even those who had made treaties of peace with the Prophet (P) joined the invading hordes. It was thus a huge army ten thousand strong that advanced on Medina. The majority of the Muslims were seized with terror and lost heart; their faith in God and the Prophet (P) was shaken. Their picture has been vividly drawn in the Qur'an.

It would have been an injustice if the Qur'an had ignored those who remained firm and unshaken in their belief in God and the Prophet (P) in this hour of severe trial; it therefore describes their feelings too, and applauds the firmness of their faith and the strength of their conviction. At the suggestion of Salman the Persian, a ditch was dug round Medina wherever it was not protected by the hills, and fronting where the invading armies had encamped.

At a time when terror, anxiety and doubts had unnerved the Muslim army, Amr Ibn Abd Wudd, with a detachment of one thousand men, crossed the ditch, and coming towards the Muslim army, began to challenge them to send their champion to fight him. He was considered to be on his own equal in prowess to one thousand soldiers. The Muslims were

dumbstruck with awe, and their fear was greatly heightened when UMAR related to them his own personal experience of how once this AMR, when surprised by brigands while traveling in a caravan, picked up a young camel, and using it as a shield attacked and dispersed the whole gang single-handedly. The Muslims were therefore in great awe of this man, who, emboldened by this attitude of theirs, repeated his challenge, adding biting taunts. When none in the army dared accept it, Imam Ali stood up and requested the Prophet (P) to permit him to go and meet him. The Prophet (P) asked him to wait, and turned to the older and more experienced men to accept the challenge of AMR. Not one of them responded to the Prophet (P). AMR again threw out his challenge, and Imam Ali again got up and repeated his request to the Prophet, who again asked him to wait. The Prophet (P) once again turned to his companions and asked them to save the honor of the Muslim army; again he was met with sullen silence. Now AMR repeated his challenge with the sarcastic remark, "You Muslims believe that anyone among you who falls fighting in the holy war goes straight to paradise. Is none among you prepared to enter the abode of everlasting bliss"? Imam Ali could restrain himself no longer, and asked the Prophet to permit him to fight the infidel, as he could bear that taunt no longer.

The Prophet (P) again asked him to wait, adding "You know that it is AMR IBN ABD WUDD." Imam Ali replied, "Yes, I know that, and with that knowledge I beg you to permit me". The Prophet (P) looked round, but non one else was courageous enough to defend the honor of Islam. At last the Prophet (P) gave the required permission, but not until he had shown the world who, out of Imam Ali and his rivals, was more passionately and sincerely devoted to Islam, and whose sword won this kingdom, which everyone strove to lead after the death of the Prophet (P). Was the Prophet (P) indulging in nepotism when he selected this Imam Ali to succeed him? Was not this an act of justice and of appreciation of services? I quote from "TARIKH-AL-KHAMIS":

AMR IBN ABD WUDD was one of the greatest warriors of Arabia. He had received a wound in the battle of BADR, and therefore did not join 'UHUD. People used to regard him as equal to one thousand soldiers. He came out for the Battle of the Ditch with great pomp and show and the intention to show the people his high degree of bravery. He crossed the ditch and began to challenge the Muslims to send a champion to fight him. The companions of the Prophet (P) were so terror-stricken that it looked as if a bird was sitting on their heads (meaning that they were motionless with terror), because they were aware of his bravery.

IBN ISHAQ, the historian, writes that when AMR IBN ABD WUDD threw out the challenge, Imam Ali, who was standing armed, requested the Prophet (P) to permit him to go out to fight AMR. (The writer here describes the repeated challenges of AMR, the stony silence of the companions, the repeated requests of Imam Ali to get permission, the delaying of the permission by the Prophet (P), the taunts of AMR, and the emphatic request of Imam Ali). At last the Prophet (P) gave the required permission, giving him his own sword, coat of iron and the turban, and dressed Imam Ali with his own hands.... Imam Ali came out reciting these



couplets... Imam Ali and AMR began to fight with each other, until finally Imam Ali killed AMR IBN ABD WUDD. His companions, who were on horseback, ran away and fell into the ditch. Imam Ali ran towards them and put them to flight.

The facts of this battle are similarly described by other writers. Contrary to the usual practice of the Arabs, Imam Ali did not take away the dress and armor of AMR IBN ABD WUDD. Seeing his dead body fully clad, his sister said that had the slayer of her brother been other than the noble Imam Ali, who did not stop to rob him of his armor, she would have wept for him for the whole of her life. UMAR was greatly surprised at the conduct of Imam Ali, and asked him why he did not take AMR'S armor, which was of very high value. Imam Ali replied that he did not like to render him naked. This one of those battles on the result of which hung the fate of Islam. The Prophet (P) fully recognized the importance of Imam Ali's victory when he rightly said that this one blow of Imam Ali on the day of the Ditch was of much greater value and virtue than the good deeds of the whole of the world up to the Day of Judgment.

It is not irrelevant to note that when on the day of HUDAIBIYYA the Prophet wanted to obtain some information about QURAIISH and asked UMAR to go to MAKKA, UMAR flatly refused, saying that he was afraid of QURAIISH, who did not like him, suggesting that UTHMAN, whom QURAIISH liked, would be a more suitable person for the purpose.

**(d) The Battle of KHAIBAR; MUHARRAM A.H.7 (A.C.628):**

Owing to the intrigues and overt acts of violence of the Jews, the Prophet (P) was compelled to lead an expedition to KHAIBAR, a cluster of forts some ninety miles from Medina in the direction of Syria, where the Jews from the whole of Arabia had collected together, awaiting an opportunity to fall on Medina. Some of the fortresses fell to the Muslims without much effort. But the greatest of them all, called AL-QAMUS, held out much longer. ABU BAKR led a detachment to conquer it, but was defeated. On the following day, UMAR went out to it with a great force, but was also repulsed and defeated. On their return to the Prophet (P), the army accused UMAR of cowardice, and UMAR similarly accused the army. The Prophet (P) was annoyed and spoke the following celebrated words:

"By God, tomorrow I will hand over the flag to a man who loves God and his Prophet, and whom God and the Prophet love; he is very brave, he never flees the field, and will take it forcibly".

Everyone was filled with the hope of being given the flag. UMAR said that he had a great longing to get the flag on that occasion. But early in the morning, the Prophet (P) sent for Imam Ali and handed over the flag to him with the orders that he should go and conquer the fortress. When he arrived there, MARHAB himself came out to fight Imam Ali, who had already killed two of his brothers before. The fight lasted for some time, and finally Imam Ali killed him. He then attacked the party accompanying MARHAB, and during this fight his shield fell to the ground. Undaunted by this accident, Imam Ali went up to the gate of the fortress, unhinged the iron door, and using it as a shield fought until the citadel was conquered. It is an

established fact that the ruler of the place, MARHAB, was killed by Imam Ali in a well-fought duel.

First his brother. AL-HARITH or ANTAR, who had defeated UMAR and ABU BAKR on previous occasions, had come out to meet Imam Ali, but was killed by him. Enraged by the death of his brother, MARHAB himself then came out, and fought and was killed by Imam Ali. The authorities on this point are unanimous. MARGOLIOUTH is laboring under a mistake when he says that MARHAB was not killed in open fight, but was taken captive after the submission of the citadel and handed over to MUHAMMAD IBN HASLAMAH, whose brother he had killed. This is entirely erroneous; MARHAB, a man of courage and pride and the ruler of the place, was not likely to stoop to submit himself to capture only to meet death after that humility in any case, for he could not have expected any better treatment after all that he had done, knowing that this was the usual practice in those days.

**(e) The Battle of HUNAIN; 6th SHAWWAL A.H.8 (A.C.630):**

After the fall of MAKKA, it was now the turn of the BEDWINS to make a bid for victory on behalf of paganism. They were the HAWAZIN and the THAQIF, who collected in large numbers in the desert of HUNAIN. The Prophet (P) came out to meet them with an army twelve thousand strong. The BEDWINS fought so furiously that the Muslims could not withstand their onslaught and took to flight. Only four men remained with the Prophet, one of whom was Imam Ali. The Prophet (P) asked ABBAS to call them back to duty, and it was only after great delay and hesitation that they returned.

Let us see who remained with the Prophet (P), and who ran for his life, abandoning him. We learn from "AS-SIRA AL-HALABIYYA" that "When on the day of HUNAIN the Muslims fled the field of battle, four men only remained with him: three from BANU HASHIM and one beside them, namely Imam Ali, ABBAS, ABU SUFYAN IBN AL-HARITH (not the OMAYYAD), and ABDALLAH IBN MAS'UD".

In "SAHIH AL-BUKHARI" we read, "ABU QUTADA says that on the day of HUNAIN, he and the Muslims fled, and UMAR was among those who had fled". ABU SUFYAN IBN HARB (the OMAYYAD) was jubilant over the defeat of the Muslims. This was after he had outwardly accepted Islam. It shows that he always remained a pagan at heart. He said sarcastically, "This day we have seen the last of the witchcraft of Muhammad. This headlong flight of the Muslims will be stopped only by the sea".

I cannot resist the temptation of quoting MARGOLIOUTH, who says:

The capture of MAKKA was followed almost immediately by a dangerous struggle with a host of nomadic Arabs, led by some of those pagan heroes with whom the old poetry and the works of the archaeologists are constantly preoccupied, but who have not hitherto figured much in the life of the Prophet, which had been spent mainly in debate with the civilized Jews or the partly civilized denizens of the towns. The growth and consolidation of the Muslim State had thoroughly alarmed these BEDWINS, to whom the liberty of the desert was dear, and they had

thought that the expedition against MAKKA, the purpose of which had at first been concealed, was directed against them.

But even after it was known that it has been aimed at MAKKA itself, and had terminated successfully, the leaders of the assembled forces determined to make a stand for the liberty of Arabia... and their chief at this time was MALIK IBN AWF, of the NASR clan, a branch of the HAWAZIN. In the early morning, the Muslim forces entered the valley of HUNAIN, and were speedily attacked on all sides by the enemy, who had been ordered to break their scabbards when the engagement commenced, as a sign that they were to be wholehearted in their enterprise. The plan of MALIK IBN AWF was, for the moment, completely successful.

The Muslims turned and fled in headlong confusion -and not, according to some, without the set purpose of some of the new converts, who thought the occasion a good one for dealing the conqueror a blow. Indeed, one of these unwilling followers is even said to have readied himself to attack the Prophet, only to find his nerves fail him.... Some of the fugitives are said to have carried the tidings to MAKKA, where they were received with acclamation. One of the MAKKANS declared (somewhat prematurely) that that day had seen the last of the witchcraft.

The Muslims had been discomfited by a shower of arrows, with which the HAWAZIN were skilled marksmen. The Prophet was completely clad in armor and had no occasion to fear this weapon. But as at UHUD, he exhibited presence of mind, for he was conscious of the fact that a defeat in the neighborhood of MAKKA, for so long obstinate and so recently overcome, would be a disaster of a very different magnitude to one near his devoted Medina....

Whether, however, the angels had a hand in the matter or not, a highly important success was gained, and the Prophet's fortune proved constant at a time when a reverse would have had serious consequences; for ABU SUFYAN might have been equal to taking advantage of a disaster, even though not sufficiently energetic to help to bring one about. A sarcastic comment of his is reported to the effect that the headlong flight of the Muslims would have to be stopped by the sea.

These, then, were the five decisive battles of Islam, the ones which decided its fate. Islam and paganism were in a life and death struggle with each other, in which defeat meant death. These were the real battles of Islam, and for Islam. The battles, which were fought after the death of the Prophet (P), were only of the Empire, and for the Empire. The former were for religion and for God; the latter were for this world and for worldly gain.

It is evident that these five battles were won chiefly by the prowess of Imam Ali and his selfless exertion. Was it nepotism to recognize the services of this man to whom Islam owed its existence? One has only to look at how the others acted. I need not dwell on their shortcomings and failures, but suffice it to say that they are such that people can say, whether openly or in their hearts, "Look at this Caliph; he claims to be the successor of the Prophet (P), yet he is the same man who used to flee from the field of battle and leave the Prophet (P) among his foes. And today he is not ashamed to occupy the throne acquired by the exertions of another man"!

**Criteria Nos. 6&7: Ali's Claim to Superiority:**

Imam Ali himself claimed superiority, and others also admitted it. He used to say in his public lectures, "Acquire knowledge by questioning me about everything that you do not know, before you lose me. By God, regarding nothing which you may question me will I be unable to enlighten you. Enquire of me the correct meaning and interpretation of the Book of God, because by God, there is no 'AYA in the QUR'AN about which I do not know whether it was revealed at night or during the day, whether on the mountain or in the plains". Among the Prophet's companions there was no one except Imam Ali who could make this claim to universal knowledge.

There are many lectures of Imam Ali in which he has tried to acquaint people with his worth, so that they might take the opportunity to avail themselves of it. I quote below a few sentences from a long lecture of his given in "YANABI'-AL-MAWADDA" of SHAIKH SULAIMAN (Chief MUFTI of Constantinople), "TAWDIH-AD-DALA'IL" of SHAIKH SHAHAB-ED-DINE and 'AD-DUR-AL-MANZUM" of SHAIKH MUHAMMAD IBN TALHA:

I am the light, I am the dispeller of darkness; I am the Straight Path, I am the depository of knowledge; I am the heir to the knowledge given to the Prophet; I am the "FARUQ-AL-A'ZAM", I am the "SIDDIQ-AL-AKBAR" I am "SAQI-AL-KAWTHAR"; I am the guardian of the knowledge of the QUR'AN; I am the conqueror of the brave; I am the bearer of the flag of the Prophet; I am the slayer of the heathens; I am the leader of the pious; I am the first man to accept Islam; I am the man who never stooped so low as to worship the idols; I am the conqueror of the battles of BADR and HUNAIN; I am the sword of God; I am the conqueror of the confederates at the battle of the Ditch; I am the expositor of the Realities; I have opened the treasures of knowledge; I am to Muhammad as HARUN to MUSA; I am the keeper of the secrets of NUBUWWA; I am the chosen one of God; within me the sea of knowledge is surging; etc.

In one of his lectures, Imam Ali addressed the people thus: "Through us you got the Light when you were in darkness, and reached the heights; and through us you obtained guidance towards light in the dark night.... On account of the sincerity and purity of my heart, I have been given eyes, which see the truth. And with those eyes I watch and guide you. I have taken you out of the desert of darkness and sinfulness, and brought you onto the straight path. You had gathered at a place where there was no guide for you. You were digging wells but could not get water.

This is the way in which the successor of the Prophet (P) chosen by God and appointed by the Prophet speaks to his people. Let us see how the caliph selected by the SAQIFA introduced himself to his people. On returning from the SAQIFA where he had been elected caliph, ABU BAKR spoke to his people thus: "O people, I have taken into my hand the rein of you affairs. But I am not better than you. Therefore, if I stray from the right path, you should set me straight. You should know that sometimes the Devil takes possession of me, so if you ever see me beside myself with anger, you should avoid me".

By comparing these two sets of speeches we get a true estimate of the personalities of the speakers, for they have themselves revealed their personalities to their subjects. The following points must be borne in mind:

1. They were not the presidents of a republic; they were the successors of a Prophet who based his right and source of knowledge on revelation from God.

2. Their first and foremost duty was to guide the people on the path of righteousness, and diffuse a correct knowledge of the QUR'AN and its interpretation.

3. It was absolutely necessary that the people should know the true Imam from the false one, as the Prophet (P) had said that he who died without knowing the true Imam died the death of a KAFIR.

4. The tenor and tone of the talk of ABU BAKR betrays his consciousness of the fact that he is entirely dependent on the people for his power and position; he dares not give any offence to them, and supplicates them to continue bestowing favors on him. His address bears the stamp of an after-election speech, which in reality it was. By contrast, the loftiness and dignified tone of Imam Ali's speech indicate that he is conscious of his own worth and position, and is also aware of the shortcomings of the people entrusted to his charge. The plane on which Imam Ali stands is also apparent. He knows that he does not depend upon the people for his position as the successor of the Prophet (P), being selected by God and appointed by His Prophet (P). He is anxious for their welfare and salvation, and does not care at all whether his speech is palatable to them or not. They cannot deprive him of his real care -his position as a successor of the Prophet (P) and a chosen one of God.

5. ABU BAKR never meant his speech to be taken seriously, nor was it ever acted upon, even though many occasions arose for the enforcement of the direction so piously laid down. Everyone knew that to set a ruler straight was totally impracticable; there never was and never can be a tribunal to judge the rights and wrongs of a dispute between a ruler and the ruled. Very often ABU BAKR differed with the entire body of his subjects, for example in the matter of the fight against the withholders of the ZAKAT who were Muslims, and the dispensing of punishment to KHALID IBN AL-WALID who was a firm friend of the caliph. But the people were unable to set him straight, and in the end they themselves had to be straightened.

6. The QUR'AN says that Devil cannot get power over the virtuous. But ABU BAKR said the Devil was able to control and overcome him. 7. If the successor of the Prophet (P) can stray from the right path, to what quarter should the Muslims look for guidance?

The recognition by the other caliphs of their own inabilities also serves as an admission of Imam Ali's superiority. During the caliphates of ABU BAKR and UMAR, it often happened that difficult problems of Islamic law and intricate questions about the interpretation of the QUR'AN came up for decision before the caliph, who found himself unable to solve or answer them. He would then either go himself to Imam Ali, or else send for him at the mosque, and put the problems or questions to him. Imam Ali would solve them directly. It was on occasions like this that UMAR used to say,

"Had there been no Imam Ali, UMAR would have been lost". (On account of passing wrong judgments).

UMAR and all the other companions of the Prophet (P) used to say that Imam Ali knew the Law better than any one of them, and that he was the best judge among them. It is the unanimous verdict of the historians that one of the chief causes of the people being against Imam Ali was that he used to deal out equal justice to all, and divide lands and booty equally without any regard to the wealth, position or influence of the parties. The rich and influential persons were inevitably offended by being treated on a par with the poor. The granting of "political" favors to the rich and influential of the days of the first three caliphs was unknown in the time of Imam Ali's caliphate.

**Criterion No. 8: Selfless Devotion to Islam:**

Little needs to be written under this heading. The entire history of Imam Ali is an unbroken record of devotion to Islam and to the Prophet of Islam. This can be verified from the facts already mentioned. But out of the long list of sacrifices made by Imam Ali in the cause of Islam, chief place must go to his conduct after the death of the Prophet (P). He made the greatest sacrifice of his life when he conquered his own self by not taking up the sword when he saw another man taking the Prophet's place, even though right, justice, law and custom were all on his side. It is most strange that though every philosopher urges, every leader of men admits, every religion lays down as a main principle of its code, and even the man in the street does not deny, that the conquest of the self is the greatest and hardest-won victory, when it comes to estimating the value of men and things, they unconsciously assign the first place in the list of esteemed values to the conquering of other people's lands and acquisition of their goods, knowing full well that what has been done is only a repetition on a magnified scale of the actions a thug or a fool in his last analysis. The world appears to have been dazzled by the rapidity and extent of the conquests made by the armies of the first two caliphs, and nobody seems to realize that those conquests were made possible only by this stupendous sacrifice on the part of Imam Ali. Had he been unmindful of the interests of Islam and the last wishes of the Prophet (P), who had advised him to take to piety when he saw other people running after the world, and taken up the sword at that time, it is certain that Imam Ali, in whom were combined might and right, would have taken back by means of the sword what was his by right. But it is also certain that Islam would have been torn to shreds in the struggle. One is reminded of the story of the two women who quarreled over who was the owner of a baby boy; the judge thought of a clever move to ascertain the truth, by ordering the boy to be cut into two equal parts, one for each of the two claimants.

The spurious mother was revealed by her silence, while the real mother cried out, "No, better that my boy should live and be given to this other woman". It was the same sentiment which compelled Imam Ali to forego his right. He bore the taunts of friend and foe as well as the spectacle of his rights being trampled upon, struggled against the promptings of his own



self, and suffered the mortification of the appropriation by his enemies of the fruits of his own labors. But he put up with all this for the sake of Islam.

Now contrast this attitude with that which he met with from others when he became the caliph. Even those persons who had not the semblance of a title to the caliphate made a bid for it and created all manner of troubles, culminating in the battles of JAMAL and SIFFIN. Could Imam Ali not have done the same thing when he found others usurping his rights? Had Imam Ali resorted to arms at that time, battles fiercer than those of JAMAL and SIFFIN would have been fought, and troubles greater than those that confronted Imam Ali would have faced the other rulers, and neither conquests nor kingdoms would have been possible.

### **Temporal Government**

Having dealt with the qualities needed for spiritual government, we now turn to temporal government. I have listed at the start of this chapter the seven qualities necessary in a successor to the Prophet (P). I do not think that it has ever been asserted or even hinted that Imam Ali was inferior to anyone in any of these qualities. In fact, he possessed them to their fullest extent, whereas his rivals were deficient in most of them. The political propaganda that has been disseminated against the children of the Prophet sums up the case against him in these words: "He was inferior to the first two caliphs in diplomacy and political acumen in as much as he failed to secure the caliphate, though well-knowing that the honor of the position was his by right, as the person indicated by Muhammad (P)".

Then the civil wars and his inability to extend the limits of the Empire are taken to point in the same direction. It is also said that he showed lack of tact and wisdom in dealing with TALHA, AZ-ZUBAIR, MU'AWIYA and the murderers of UTHMAN. A historian passes judgment in these words: "His wisdom in counsel and his reputed sagacity in framing sententious proverbs were great, though he was not wise enough to escape the doom, that was the certain result of a policy so little characterized by strength as was that which he followed". Gibbon accuses him of rashness and indiscretion as "He neglected to secure, either by gifts or fetters, the doubtful allegiance of TALHA and ZUBAIR, two of the most powerful of the Arabian chiefs". These kinds of accusation indicate that the critics have not studied the character of Imam Ali as closely and carefully as they ought to have done before passing judgment on him. To mete out punishment on mere suspicion was not Imam Ali's way, as it was quite opposed to the spirit of Islam. Nor would Imam Ali stoop to bribe his enemies into submission. Bribery and intrigue, two powerful weapons of his adversaries, were foreign to his nature and contrary to the tenets of Islam.

The criticism resolves itself into the following:

1. Inability to secure the caliphate.
2. TALHA, AZ-ZUBAIR, and the battle of JAMAL.
3. MU'AWIYA and the battle of SIFFIN.
4. The murderers of UTHMAN.
5. The foreign conquests.

### **1. Inability to Secure the Caliphate:**

To judge a man and to pass judgment on his life as a success or failure is one of the most difficult tasks of the historian. He has to study the man very closely and fine out what goal he set out on life's journey to attain, the opposition he encountered, the means he adopted to overcome it, and his ability to maintain the highest standard of character under the temptations and pressures of his long drawn out struggle with its many ups and downs. The historian will also have to judge whether the object, which the man set his sights on, was worthy of the sacrifices he made for it. Then, and only then, will he be in a position to pass judgment on his life and say whether it was a success or failure.

A close observation of conduct of Imam Ali throughout his life shows that his solitary object in life was to safeguard the interests of Islam, to defend it against the onslaughts of paganism, to see that its purity remained undefiled, and to ensure that it was running on the straight path that had been marked out for it by the Prophet (P). Imam Ali was ready to give up not only the caliphate, but even his life for the Islam.

The Victor of BADR and HUNAIN showed that for him, victory over his self was as easy as victory over formidable foes. Those who have had the experience of a struggle against the self know that it is much more difficult to gain victory over one's self than to gain victory over enemy armies. The victors of AUSTERLITZ and DUNKIRK could not gain victory over themselves; Napoleon yielded to the temptation of marrying into a royal family of Europe to create a line of emperors, thus having to commit the misdeed of divorcing the loving Josephine, and was punished with waterloo. And Hitler's ambition to conquer the world (if we are to believe what we are told by his vanquishers) got the better of him and led to his downfall.

That Imam Ali did not secure the caliphate in the first instance is correct. He could however have done so without difficulty, had he left the body of his dead Prophet (P) alone and gone to the SAQIFA to present himself with the other candidates. He would certainly have been chosen, because the only argument whereby ABU BAKR and UMAR managed to silence the ANSAR was that they were related to the Prophet (P) and were his heirs, while the ANSAR were total strangers, and that the Arabs would not agree to the rule of anyone who was not of the family of the Prophet (P). Imam Ali fulfilled these conditions to a much greater degree than ABU BAKR or UMAR, and in view of his services to Islam no one would have raised a single word against him.

But it would not have been an easy thing for Imam Ali to have left the dead body of the Prophet unattended, waiting for the last rights with not a single man there, all having gone off to fight for an empire which had been acquired by the man lying there dead - that man who was not only a Prophet, but also the benefactor of a nation, who had given them a religion, made a nation of them, acquired for them an empire, reformed their society, and taught them lessons of virtue. They were poor; he made them rich. They were as beasts; he made them men. They were at daggers drawn with each other; he made them live like brothers.

In fact all that they had, had been given to them by this man whose dead body was lying there in its forlorn condition. Besides the duties made incumbent upon them by Islam, this was a shameful demonstration of the most base vice in man- ingratitude. As if this was not enough, they added insult to injury by declaring as their excuse for this conduct, which must have appeared even to themselves as highly improper, that they were obliged to adopt this course because the appointment of a successor to the Prophet was of the highest import and called for their immediate attention, as the Prophet (P) had neglected to discharge this very important duty. This surely was the unkindest cut of all, as it implied that they were wiser and more solicitous about the good of Islam than the Prophet himself. Do those critical of Imam Ali's "political acumen" think that he should have joined them in this scramble for power? Had he done so, it would have been served to open the door to the following inferences and outcomes:

1. The Prophet (P) was careless enough to leave Islam (un-provided-for by not appointing his own successor or not making any arrangement for it.

2. This carelessness was so palpable and so grossly sinful that it leads to the obvious conclusion that the Prophet (P) had no love for Islam.

3. This, coupled with the attitude of his nearest relative in discarding all the maxims of virtue, morality, decency and humanity professed by Islam to indulge in the unseemly quarrel for power, would have confirmed the charge made by the heathens that Muhammad (P) was aiming at monarchy in the garb of Prophet-hood.

4. Imam Ali's conduct would have furnished a precedent to the ensuing generations of Muslims to put their selfish ends before any considerations of decency, morality and religion.

5. The enemies of Islam, the MUNAFIQIN and the pagans, would have been furnished with deadly effect.

It is therefore clear that by remaining at the Prophet's bedside at that moment Imam Ali saved Islam from dishonor and ignominy, and shut the door against all the criticisms that could otherwise have been raised by the MUNAFIQIN and the pagans. He saved Islam, and lost the caliphate. And later on, he avoided causing the ruination of Islam and the reversion to paganism, by desisting from taking up the sword to avenge his wrongs.

This was what ABU SUFYAN had wanted, and he incited Imam Ali to act. But Imam Ali foresaw this and refrained from bringing it about. When one looks at the provocations to which Imam Ali was subjected, one has to admire the patience with which he put up with them. Imagine the consequences had he not exercised a self-control which was almost superhuman. He was called to the DARBAR and prevailed upon under threat of death to make the BAI'A to ABU BAKR; his friends and partisans were dragged to the DARBAR and compelled to make the BAI'A; fire was actually brought to the house of the Prophet's daughter, who was threatened with arson if her husband did not come out. He put up with all these threats and insults, and did not raise a finger against those people. Why?

It was not the cudgel of UMAR that kept him back; "DHU AL-FIQAR" had tasted the blood of much greater warriors than him. But Imam Ali knew full well that if he ejected them from the caliphate, they would resort to

intrigue, collusion and mischief -making on a scale that would lead to the deprecating of Islam and the denouncing of the Prophet (P). They would have openly said that the only object of Muhammad (P) had been to acquire a kingdom for his family, and that Islam was simply a cover. Reversion to paganism would have been a certainty. Not willing to allow Imam Ali any credit for standing firm, they resorted to a stratagem: they let it be known that Ali had acquiesced in the selection of ABU BAKR, in the nomination of UMAR, and in the farcical election of UTHMAN. Nothing could have been further from the truth; the threats made against Imam Ali themselves furnish testimony to its being a lie.

It is an enormity, as well as a good demonstration of the power of propaganda, that the first two caliphs should have been given the credit for there having been no civil war in their time, and that Imam Ali should have been taken to task for its incidence during his caliphate. The fact of the matter is that the credit for there being no civil war on the death of the Prophet rightly belongs to Imam Ali; and its occurrence in Imam Ali's time was in fact due to the policy followed by his three predecessors.

## **2.TALHA, AZ-ZUBAIR and the Battle of JAMAL:**

Gibbon writes: "In the first days of his reign, he (Imam Ali) neglected to secure, either by gifts or fetters, the doubtful allegiance of TALHA and AZ-ZUBAIR, two of the most powerful of the Arabian chiefs. They escaped from Medina to MAKKA, and thence to BASRA; erected the standard of revolt; and usurped the government of AL-IRAQ, or Assyria, which they had vainly solicited as the reward of their services. The mask of Patriotism is allowed to cover the most glaring inconsistencies; and the enemies, perhaps the assassins, of UTHMAN now demanded the vengeance of his blood. They were accompanied in their flight by A'ISHA, the widow of the Prophet (P), who cherished, to the last hour of her life, an implacable hatred against the husband and the posterity of FATIMA".

This charge sheet framed by Gibbon against Imam Ali is in effect Imam Ali's reply to the charge. Let us analyze it. It comprised the following informative statements:

1. As soon as Imam Ali ascended to the caliphate, he ought to have purchased the submission of TALHA and AZ-ZUBAIR by gifts.
2. By "gifts" is meant the governorships of KUFA and BASRA.
3. Alternatively he ought to have coerced them into submission by sending them to jail.
4. In either case their allegiance would only have been doubtful.
5. TALHA and AZ-ZUBAIR were responsible for the murder of UTHMAN, for it not themselves the actual murderers, they certainly instigated it.
6. They made the murder of UTHMAN an excuse for revolting against Imam Ali.
7. A'ISHA was the inveterate foe of Imam Ali and his children, and remained steadfast in her enmity against them right up to her death.
8. She instigated the revolt against Imam Ali.

As I have already said, to punish people before having committed an offence was not in accordance with the tenets of Islam. As to the gifting of

KUFA and BASRA, only those persons could be appointed as governors whose fidelity and loyalty to the central authority was above suspicion. Moreover, according to the theology of Islam, the caliph is responsible for the misdeeds of the subordinates appointed by him; he is accountable to God for the actions done in their official capacity. Leaving aside these pious considerations, which are beyond the comprehension of the Modern Age, even ordinary statesmanship requires that the governors be selected from among those fidelity and loyalty to the ruler can be depended upon under all circumstances and against every enemy. TALHA and AZ-ZUBAIR did not fulfill this important condition. Gibbon himself says that even after the gifts of these two provinces, their allegiance would have at best been doubtful. To purchase doubtful allegiance at this huge price and involving so many risks would not have been a wise act.

The governorships of KUFA and BASRA were in any case not their ultimate objective. As they had both been members of the SHURA and had thus been candidates for the caliphate, they considered themselves to be as much entitled to it as Imam Ali, and were lamenting having allowed him to obtain it. They were aiming for the caliphate itself, and were desirous of getting BASRA and KUFA only as stepping-stones to the main goal. Gibbon is right in saying that these three persons, if not the actual assassins of UTHMAN, were certainly the instigators of his murder. TALHA himself boasted of having brought it about by his tactics. Now to make that murder an excuse for raising a revolt against Imam Ali, and to demand satisfaction for it, was as much derogatory to the position of the Prophet's companions as it was indicative of their real nature and enmity for Imam Ali.

Such unscrupulous men could not be entrusted with the government of Islamic provinces, as piety was one of the preconditions of appointment; nor could they be depended upon as true friends. Had Imam Ali complied with their request, KUFA and BASRA would have been made the centers of a huge revolt against Imam Ali, who would then have had to fight three MU'AWIYAS instead of one. For Imam Ali to have given them the governorships of KUFA and BASRA would have been to strengthen them and supply them with the means to carry on their struggle against him in their quest for the caliphate. On the other hand, to have sent them to jail on mere suspicion before having actually committed any act meriting imprisonment, would have been against the rules of Islam and unworthy of a successor of the Prophet (P), and would moreover have set a very dangerous example for his governors and the succeeding tyrannies in the ensuing generations.

### **3. MU'AWIYA and the Battle of SIFFIN:**

On this point Imam Ali has been criticized thus: "The first thing that Imam Ali did on his accession was to dismiss MU'AWIYA from the governorship of Syria, who had acquired great influence there. AL-MUGHIRA IBN SHU'BA and ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS advised him to postpone his dismissal after he had taken the BAI'A from him.... Imam Ali refused to follow this advice, and sent the order of dismissal not only to MU'AWIYA but to all the governors appointed by UTHMAN.... His first great mistake was not to accept the advice of AL-MUGHIRA and IBN

ABBAS; his second great mistake was to install in government posts such men as MUHAMMAD IBN ABI BAKR and AL-ASHTAR AL-NAKHI, who had been suspected of having a hand in the murder of UTHMAN".

This criticism is based on a defective survey of the events of that time. A mere BAI'A would have been of no avail, as a insincere BAI'A in the case of TALHA and AZ-ZUBAIR had proved to be of no use. Moreover, MU'AWIYA was not a man to be deceived by a postponement of his dismissal. He had studied the situation so closely that it was inconceivable that he would fail to see that Imam Ali was temporizing. It must also be borne in mind that MU'AWIYA would not have sat idle during this interval. He would have been able to utilize it too much greater advantage than Imam Ali. He had the crafty AMR IBN AL-AS with him. One trip of his to BASRA or KUFA would have been sufficient to win the people over to his side, with the help of the most effective weapon-money. And for those, and they were few, who were likely to resist the temptation, the other weapon, poison, was ready.

This is abundantly proved by the fact that before Imam Ali could even issue the order calling upon MU'AWIYA to make the BAI'A to him, the bloodstained shirt of UTHMAN and the fingers of his wife, NA'ILA, had already reached Damascus, and were being exhibited publicly in the mosque to incite the hatred of the people against Imam Ali. Had Imam Ali remained silent, MU'AWIYA would have taken the initiative and invaded "AL-IRAQ. More than twenty-five years" rule with kingly pomp and show had firmly established him in his position. He had freely used the money to attach the people to himself. He had purposely kept them in complete ignorance of political affairs, and most of them did not even know who Imam Ali was or what his connection with the Prophet was. For example, when interrogated as to who Imam Ali was, some of them replied that he was one of the highway robbers against whom it was their duty to fight. Some said he was the father of FATIMA. When asked who FATIMA was, they replied that she was the wife of the Prophet (P) and daughter of A'ISHA, who was the sister of MU'AWIYA. When asked about Imam Ali, a man who was the wisest of them all said that Imam Ali was killed at the battle of HUNAIN with the Prophet (P). They were deliberately taught that there were no heirs or relatives of the Prophet (P) besides BANU OMMAYA.

Such was the hold that MU'AWIYA exercised over the perceptions of the people he governed. The most important thing to bear in mind is that MU'AWIYA had his eye on the caliphate, and from the moment that UTHMAN ascended the throne, the fulfillment of his heart's desire had appeared certain to him. His culpable inaction during the long period when UTHMAN had been besieged, in spite of the fact that UTHMAN had nervously beseeched him to come to his aid, points in the same direction. His masterly inactivity when the battle of JAMAL was being fought betrays the same state of mind. The whole show of clamoring for vengeance for the blood of UTHMAN was a contrivance to weaken Imam Ali, not a sincere desire to avenge the murder. MU'AWIYA did not therefore really want to help the nobles of Medina.



His desire rather was to have them blotted out of the picture, so that in case of final victory there would be no one else to claim the caliphate. The suggested procrastination would have been of immense value to the governor of Syria, and decidedly detrimental to the interest of the caliph in Medina. It appears to me that AL-MOGHIRA IBN SHU'BA gave that advice to Imam Ali in the interests of MU'AWIYA. He had been Imam Ali's bitterest enemy since the day Imam Ali advised UMAR to stone him to death in accordance with QUR'ANIC Law when the offence of adultery was proved against him. AL-MOGHIRA'S advice was based on the supposition that by means of Imam Ali's apparent silence, MU'AWIYA would be hoodwinked into believing that he had become his friend overnight, and would therefore give up all thoughts of opposing Imam Ali. No one with a knowledge of MU'AWIYA'S nature and record can believe that he was a man to be fooled like that, especially in view of his long-cherished desire to become the caliph of the Muslims and the founder of a dynasty of kings. I for one cannot assign that degree of stupidity to him.

Ali's strongest motive for removing MU'AWIYA was one, which will be scarcely appreciated in this age of atheism. He firmly believed, with an ardor wholly unintelligible today, that the person having the right to appoint and dismiss the officers of State is responsible before God and man for all the misdeeds committed by those officers, and will also have to answer for any injustices, tyrannies, ungodly acts, and contraventions of the QUR'AN and the SUNNA of the Prophet (P), committed by those officers.

As to the second part of the historian's criticism -the employment in government service of men suspected of having a hand in the murder of UTHMAN- I will discuss it when I come to that subject.

#### **4. The Murderers of UTHMAN:**

It is said that Imam Ali ought to have punished the murderers of UTHMAN and ought not to have employed in government service the men who had been suspected of this offence. This criticism betrays the same carelessness and absence of historical insight that generally characterizes the accusations leveled at Imam Ali by his detractors. The simple facts are:

1. In spite of Imam Ali's requiring them to establish who the assassins of UTHMAN were, they were unable to name any.
2. Those who claimed, as heirs of UTHMAN, to be avenging his blood, had themselves instigated his murder.
3. This cry of vengeance was only a political slogan to rouse the people against Imam Ali.

The circumstances in which UTHMAN was killed indicate a woeful moral state in the OMAYYA community. In the midst of his own kinsmen and in his own house at Medina, this caliph remained besieged for full forty days, and no attempt to rescue him was made by his kinsmen, who were numerous and upon whom he had lavished gifts, favors and positions of honor. In fact, his undue partiality to his kinsmen had been the cause of all his misfortunes and troubles. His enemies, while on their way back from Medina where a sort of compromise had been effected between them and the caliph through the intercession of Imam Ali, had intercepted a letter from UTHMAN addressed to the Governor of Egypt ordering him to do

away with the leaders of this disaffected array of men. As soon as they returned to Medina to demand an explanation, UTHMAN sent information of this rising and a request for help to the places from where it would be possible for it to arrive in time, such as MAKKA, Syria, KUFA, BASRA and important places in Arabia.

It was the time of HAJJ, when people from all parts of the Muslim Empire had assembled at MAKKA. He therefore sent a long letter there containing an urgent summons for help; messengers were sent for this purpose, and the letter was read before the assemblage. UTHMAN also sent a special and very forceful communication to MU'AWIYA. The following is the translation of an extract from AT-TABARI:

When UTHMAN saw the calamity, which had befallen him, and how people had risen against him, he sent the following letter to MU'AWIYA in Syria: "In the name of the most merciful and compassionate God, the people of Medina have rebelled against me, and have broken the BAI'A. Therefore, please send to me an army from Syria immediately and without delay". When this letter reached MU'AWIYA, he did not obey the order, and thought it inadvisable to oppose the companions of the Prophet (P), even though he had known that they had banded together against UTHMAN. Before this, MU'AWIYA had been present at a meeting of the governors of the provinces, and had given UTHMAN some advice to dispel the clouds, which were gathering round the caliph.

As for AMR IBN AL-AS, he had become the bitterest enemy of UTHMAN, who had removed him from the governorship of Egypt and appointed his own kinsman in his place. This action earned him the undying hatred and enmity of AMR, who excited the Egyptians to rise against him. UTHMAN had called him, and addressing him as the son of NABIGHA (a prostitute), had demanded to know why he had joined his enemies, when in the days before Islam UTHMAN had been more respected than him. In reply, AMR cursed and abused UTHMAN'S father. When he had gone, MARWAN came to UTHMAN and taunted him that matters had come to such a pass that the sons of prostitutes should have the courage to abuse his father. When the news of the murder of UTHMAN reached AMR, he exclaimed proudly, "I am ABU ABDALLAH; when I scratch a wound, I remove the skin completely. I used to incite people to rise against UTHMAN to such an extent that I incited even a shepherd who was grazing his goats on the hills".

As for TALHA and AZ-ZUBAIR, I have already quoted Gibbon to show that they had at least instigated UTHMAN'S murder, even if they were not the actual assassins. And it was on TALHA that the blood of UTHMAN was avenged by MARWAN. As both of them were aiming at the caliphate, they turned against Imam Ali when he became the caliph. They were the chief conspirators in leading the people against Imam Ali on the field of JAMAL. MARWAN thought it the most convenient occasion for taking revenge on TALHA for the murder of UTHMAN. He therefore killed him by means of an arrow while he was walking in the lines of his own army. MARWAN then turned towards ABBAN son of UTHMAN, and said, "I

have taken revenge for the murder of UTHMAN at least against one of your father's murderers".

WELLHAUSEN writes: "In Egypt, instead of the conqueror AMR IBN AL-AS, UTHMAN appointed his cousin IBN ABI SARH, although the latter was outlawed by Muhammad (P). AMR, a very dangerous man, consequently became his foe, helped to arouse feelings against him in Medina, and probably did not refrain from doing the same in Egypt".

Describing the policy of MU'AWIYA concealed behind his demand of revenge for the blood of UTHMAN, OSBORN writes"

This dexterous policy, however, had not merely the effect of throwing a cloud over the fair name of Imam Ali, but of attaching to the cause of MU'AWIYA a man, without whose cunning and fertility of resources his machinations would not, in all probability, have terminated in success. This was AMR IBN AL-AS, the conqueror of Egypt. He had been deprived of the governorship of that province by UTHMAN, and had labored assiduously, but in secret, to embitter the conspirators against the caliph. In so doing he was actuated partly by desire for revenge, but more so by simple ambition....

He had hesitated for a while which side to espouse, but it did not require much time to convince him that the tortuous paths in which he delighted to treat were alien to the simple and candid mind of Ali. When intelligence reached him of the effect MU'AWIYA was producing in Damascus by his exhibition of the bloody shirt of UTHMAN, AMR broke out in an exclamation of delight, as of one who recognized a kindred spirit, and repaired to Syria without loss of time. Between these two arch-conspirators there was no attempt to conceal the real character of their cause under a veil of specious pretences. AMR said, candidly enough, that in espousing the cause of MU'AWIYA in preference to Ali, he had chosen the good of this world rather than the rewards of the next, and that he must be paid accordingly. He demanded the government of Egypt in perpetuity, with the revenues of that rich province entirely at his disposal. MU'AWIYA joyfully acceded to these terms.

Regarding the policy of MU'AWIYA, Gibbon writes: "The sacred duty of pursuing the assassins of UTHMAN was the engine and pretence of his ambition". These were the pampered favorites of UTHMAN who turned against him and contrived his death. Ingratitude of this kind can be neither forgiven nor forgotten in any religion or code of morality, but surely the lowest depths of degradation to which human nature could fall were reached when these very same persons turned round to demand vengeance for the blood of UTHMAN and excited people against Imam Ali in UTHMAN name. They asked Ali to deliver up to them certain persons whom they were pleased to name as UTHMAN'S murderers, while they were quite unable to bring the accusation to bear. Their demand was that the whole of the Egyptian army should be disgraced and sent home, and that the selected persons named by them for punishment as the murderers of UTHMAN. Could anyone in whom the slightest trace of judicial sense was left agree to this wholesale slaughter of his friends on the mere asking of his foes? They named those persons not because they honestly believed them to be the

murderers of UTHMAN, but because they were the staunch friends of Imam Ali and were stalwart warriors on his side. The only person present with UTHMAN at the time of his murder was his wife NA'ILA, and on enquiry being made of her, she said, "Only two persons murdered UTHMAN; I do not know their names, but if they come before me. I shall be able to identify them. MUHAMMAD IBN ABI BAKR is right; he did not kill UTHMAN". This clinches the whole matter.

Obviously the whole army could not have killed UTHMAN, nor was there any intention common to all of them to do so. They had come not with this intention, but simply to demand MARWAN, whom they considered to be at the bottom of all this mischief. The letter mentioned above was in his handwriting. When UTHMAN refused this, the demand developed into one for abdication. There is absolutely no evidence to show that all or any of them had any idea or intention of killing the aged caliph. It appears that when the siege was prolonged due to the obstinacy of the caliph, the mob was enraged. But even then there was no intention to kill him. All at once, from among the defenders of the house, someone threw a stone at a companion of the Prophet (P), killing him. The event is described by a European historian thus:

The decisive change for the worse, the first bloodshed was caused by the defenders of the DAR. One of them threw a stone at the head of an old Companion who was standing outside in the crowd, and killed him. UTHMAN refused to deliver up the culprit. The besiegers felt justified and duty bound to cast aside all considerations, and began the attack upon the DAR; the Egyptian IBN UDAIS of the BALI tribe commanded, leaning against the mosque. At the door, the friends of UTHMAN fought for him, and even after it was set on fire they tried to keep the assaulters at bay. But a few of the latter had meanwhile penetrated the DAR through a neighboring building, and now pressed into the very chamber of the caliph.

It must have been the friends or relatives of the Companion thus killed whom, on the refusal of UTHMAN to hand the culprit over, took it into their head to kill UTHMAN. MUHAMMAD IBN ABI BAKR was certainly in the army besieging UTHMAN. But the Egyptians arrived on the scene when the siege had already lasted for twenty-two days. They came only one week before his murder. MUHAMMAD IBN ABI BAKR went into the house where UTHMAN was, but came out without doing the caliph any harm. When he went in and caught hold of caliph's beard, and the caliph rebuked him and saying that his father would not have treated him like that, MUHAMMAD IBN ABI BAKR came out, saying that he did not intend to kill him. AT-TABARI says that the persons who actually killed UTHMAN were SAWDAN IBN HAMRAN and perhaps QATIRA. But both of them were then killed on the spot by the slaves of UTHMAN. Imam Ali sent his own sons to defend the caliph, and they actually fought the besiegers and kept them from the house. It was only through the adjoining house that the besiegers were able to get in.

It is thus established beyond all doubt that the persons who actually killed UTHMAN did not survive the tragedy. At least, they could not be spotted afterwards. It was therefore impossible for Imam Ali to punish the

murderers. He could not punish the whole army, because in all this consternation it was not evident that they were in the wrong. They were simply demanding redress for the wrong that had been done to them. In fact at one stage they left the siege of their own will after an understanding had been arrived at between them and the caliph through the mediation of Imam Ali. They went back only when, on their way home, they intercepted a message from the Government of Medina to the Governor of Egypt asking him to kill the leaders of the Egyptians when they arrived back.

The Egyptians were naturally and justly incensed at this flagrant breach of faith by the caliph, and returned to Medina and demanded an explanation. The caliph said that it had been written without his knowledge. As the letter was in the handwriting of MARWAN, the Egyptians demanded that he should be handed over to them, but UTHMAN refused. Who was in the wrong? Whom was Imam Ali to be expected to punish? The real fact of the matter is that the demand for vengeance for the blood of UTHMAN was only an excuse for creating trouble for Imam Ali. Had he punished the whole army of Egypt, who were quite innocent of the blood of UTHMAN, he would have lost the sympathy and support of a large army, and that was what MU'AWIYA wanted.

#### **5.The Foreign Conquests:**

I have already remarked that the conquests were made possible in the time of the first two caliphs because of the peaceful conduct of Imam Ali, who controlled himself and did not create any trouble; and that foreign conquests were made impossible in the time of Imam Ali because of the turbulent conduct of his enemies, who had become firmly entrenched during the reign of the first three caliphs. But the matter does not stop here. The historian has also to investigate the circumstances that produced TALHA, AZ-ZUBAIR and MU'AWIYA and created the atmosphere under which they could thrive and prosper. A perusal of this book from its beginning up to this point must have made it clear to the reader that it was the well-organized and successfully conducted conspiracy to take the caliphate out of the family of the Prophet (P) which gave rise to those circumstances which eventually culminated in this woeful state of affairs.

But apart from what has been stated above, a close and careful study of Islamic history reveals the following undeniable facts about the unnaturally rapid conquests of the days of the first two caliphs:

(a) They were undertaken not in the interests of Islam, nor according to its dictates, but for internal political reasons.

(b) They were hasty and premature.

(c) They were against the laws of JIHAD as laid down by the Holy QUR'AN and enforced by the Prophet (P).

(d) They were therefore more harmful than beneficial to Islam as a world movement for the spread of universal love, brotherhood of man, and the idea of the fatherly oneness of the God of all mankind.

Unjustifiable use of the sword, that began just after the death of the Prophet (P) and became a model for all future rulers of Islam, created that deep-seated hatred and undying disgust for Islam in the hearts of the people of the world, which the passage of time has been unable to erase. The scope

of this book does not allow a thorough discussion of the subject, which requires a volume to itself. But its importance does not permit me to pass it by. I therefore merely touch here on the salient features of each of the points noted above.

**(a) The Foreign Expeditions were due to Internal Exigencies:**

The following needs prompted these expeditions:

1. To engage the people elsewhere and escape their criticism, which had started on the very day following the SAQIFA coup. The rapidity with which the coup had been carried out confounded the people of Medina into silence for the time being. Imagine their state of mind: their Prophet is dead; his body is lying before their very eyes; they are expecting everybody to mourn, to be submerged in grief and sorrow, to go and offer condolences to the Prophet's only daughter, to sympathize with his close relatives, and to share the grief of his grandsons whom he loved so dearly; they look around to see how his death is being borne by his UMMA; but instead of what they imagine, they behold their new ruler returning from the SAQIFA; they can hardly believe their eyes, and for the present they are confounded. However, this state of bewilderment was not likely to last long; it was bound to give place to a more thoughtful survey and scrutiny of events. It soon wore off, and people began to ask each other why Imam Ali was ignored and how the caliphate could go to a comparatively unknown and unimportant tribe. The boded ill for the new government, but the man who had masterminded its coming into being was equal to the situation, and he adopted many methods to win the people over to his side. One of the most effective measures for avoiding the ill effects of the coup was to send the people out to foreign lands. If they won, well and good; The "GHANIMA" (war booty) that they brought would seal the lips of every man. If they perished in the attempt, then the government would be rid of a turbulent section of the people.

2. To prevent the people from aiding and sympathizing with Imam Ali.

3. To provide an occupation for the people who were likely to create trouble at home. "The young man surplus". Wells has well said, "if it is not consumed, is the main source of rebels, revolutionaries and disturbances of all kinds". In the case of the Arabs, fond as they were of war and booty, these expeditions were the surest means of relieving "the accumulated tensions of unsatisfied youth".

4. To extinguish the smoldering fire of disaffection and to acquire the sympathy and goodwill of the people by means of the wealth and booty obtained in the wars.

5. To have ready at hand a well-equipped army for any emergency that might arise in view of the uncertain attitude of BANU HASHIM. The value of war booty for motivating the expeditions to Iran and Syria in the time of the first two caliphs, and for winning popularity with the War Lords of Medina, cannot be overemphasized. The following is a translation of a passage occurring in SHIBLI'S "SIRAT-AN-NABI":

The greatest difficulty was that the people were unduly saturated with a passion for booty, so much so that it was the most potent cause of wars. The Prophet (P) took very gradual steps to correct this tendency. In the Days of Ignorance, war booty used to be the most alluring object for the people.



From ABU DAWUD we learn that a man asked the Prophet (P) whether a man would get any reward for the JIHAD if he also had some worldly gain in view. The Prophet (P) replied, "No". But the people regarded this as very strange. They sent man after man to put the same question to the Prophet (P). Each time, the Prophet (P) replied that he would get no reward in the next world for a JIHAD in which he had some worldly gain also in view. It was then that the people believed that the Prophet (P) really meant what he said.

Once the Prophet (P) sent certain companions of his to fight a tribe. One of the companions was walking a little ahead of the army. The tribesmen came out weeping, and met the man who was walking in front of the rest of the army. He told them that they could escape the fate that surely awaited them if they recited the KALIMA. They embraced Islam, and thus the fight was avoided. His comrades blamed him for converting them to Islam, as by their becoming Muslims, the army had been deprived of the booty. ABU DAWUD records this in that man's own words: "My comrades reproached me and said that I had deprived them of the GHANIMA". They took it so much to heart that they complained of his conduct to the Prophet (P). But the Prophet (P) applauded his deed, and said that for each man that embraced Islam, he would get a high reward in the life to come.

In spite of such strictness and the frequent admonitions, the battle of HUNAIN in A.H 8 was lost on account of the people occupying themselves with gathering the booty. In "SAHIS AL-BUKHARI" where this battle is described, it is said, "The Muslims proceeded towards the GHANIMA, and the enemy attacked them with their arrows".

In ABU DAWUD, the statement of an ANSAR is thus recorded: "Once we went out on an expedition; we met with great privations and hardships. By chance we espied a flock of goats belonging to the pagans. We all looted the goats. When the Prophet (P) came to know of it, he came up to the spot, and saw the flesh of the goats being cooked on the fire. There was a bow in his hand. With it he overturned all the vessels in which that meat was being cooked, and said that the looted property was like dead animals' flesh". Gilman writes:

Despots have always found it necessary to employ their subjects in foreign wars from time to time, in order to keep them away from feeling the galling chains by which they are bound, or to hear their clanking; and it came to pass that when the caliph had all the tribes of Arabia under control, he saw no better way to restrain them from new revolts than by tempting them to make inroads upon their neighbors. Nothing could have been better planned by a ruler acquainted with the volatile nature of his subjects.

I cannot help quoting from a very carefully written chapter in "The Cambridge Medieval History". The learned historian says"

Just as the ecclesiastical conception on the one hand broke the historical continuity, it perceived on the other hand in the expansion of the Arabs noting but a further extension of the religion of Islam and therefore totally misunderstood the real nature of the movement. It was not the religion of Islam, which was by that time disseminated by the sword, but merely the political sovereignty of the Arabs. The acceptance of Islam by other than

Arabians was not only not striven for, but was in fact regarded with disfavor. The subdued peoples might peacefully retain their old religions, provided only that they paid ample tribute.

As on conversion to Islam these payments ceased, at least in the early times, such changes of religion were disliked. The circumstances that a few pious men subsequently practiced such proselytism, or that the material advantages of apostasy gradually led the population of the conquered countries to Islam, must not blind our eyes to the fact that the movement originated from quite other motives. The sudden surging forward of the Arabs was only apparently sudden. For centuries previously, the Arab migration had been in preparation. It was the last great Semitic migration connected with the economic decline of Arabia.... In short, long before Muhammad, Arabia was in a state of unrest, and a slow, uncontrollable infiltration of Arabian tribes and tribal branches had permeated the adjoining civilized lands in Persian as also in Roman territory, where they had met with the descendants of earlier Semitic immigrants to those parts, the ARAMAEANS, who were already long acclimatized there.

Persia and Byzantium suffered severely from this constant unrest in their border provinces, and both empires had endeavored to organize the movement and to use it as a fighting medium, the one against the other. The Romans had organized the Syrian Arabs for this purpose under the leadership of princes of the house of GHASSAN, the most celebrated of whom even received the title of patrician, while the SASSANIDS founded a similar bulwark in HIRA, where the LAKHMITES, under Persian sovereignty, lived a princely life, greatly celebrated by Arabian poets. A short-sighted policy, and probably also internal weakness, permitted the ruin of both of these states, which would have offered an almost insuperable barrier to the Islamic expansion.... Thus the great empires had succeeded in destroying the smaller Arabian states, which had grown too powerful.... The expansion of the SARACENS is thus the final stage in a process of development extending over centuries. Islam was simply a change in the watchword for which they fought...

Under these circumstances it would be a mistake to regard the Arab migration merely as a religious movement incited by Muhammad. The question may in fact be put whether the whole movement is not conceivable without the intervention of Islam. There can be in any case no question of any zealous impulse towards proselytism. That strong religious tie, which at the present time binds together all Muslims, that events, not the primary cause of the Arab migration, but merely a consequence of Islam in this direction lies in its masked political character, which the modern world has even in our own time to take into consideration.

In the outset Islam meant the supremacy of Medina, but it soon identified itself with ARABIANISM, i.e. it preached the superiority of the Arabian people generally. This great idea gives an intellectual purport to the restless striving for expansion, and makes a political focus of the great Arabian State of Medina, founded on religion. Hunger and avarice, not religion, are the impelling forces, but religion supplies the essential unity and central power. The expansion of the SARACENS' religion, both in point of time and in

itself, can only be regarded as of minor import and rather as a political necessity. The movement itself had been afoot long before Islam gave it a party cry and an organization.

It is thus evident that these expeditions were not sent out for the sake of Islam, or in its interests. Avarice and political needs, not religion, were the driving forces, and as a matter of fact conversions to Islam were discouraged as tending to lessen the income of the State. With them, Islam was merely their cry.

**(b) The Conquests were Hasty and Premature:**

The majority of the Arabs accepted Islam when it was well-nigh on the road to success, and when its victories had assured them that it was the dominating force in Arabia, and that the interests of their worldly welfare required that they side with the Muslims as the winning party. They cared little to know what were its principles, and less to put them into practice. Their period of contact with the Prophet (P) was much too short to accustom them to the practice of those austere rules of Islam which, as we have seen, opposed to their nature and conflicted with their immediate good as they understood it to be. As attested to by the Holy QUR'AN, most of the conversions took place after the conquest of MEKKA, and the Prophet (P) lived for only two years after that event. The accumulated experiences and habits of centuries could not yield to a halfheartedly learnt lesson of but two years duration. Gibbon thus writes of these people:

The revolution of Arabia had not changed the character of the Arabs; the death of Muhammad was the signal of independence; and the hasty structure of his power and religion tottered to its foundations... the increasing myriads, who acknowledged Muhammad as their king and Prophet, had been compelled by his arms, or allured by his prosperity. The polytheists were confounded by the simple idea of a solitary and invisible God; the pride of the Christians and the Jews disdained the yoke of a mortal and contemporary legislator. Their habits of faith and obedience were not sufficiently confirmed, and many of the new converts regretted the venerable antiquity of the law of MUSA; or the rites and mysteries of the Catholic Church, or the idols, the sacrifices, the joyous festivals of their pagan ancestors.

The jarring interests and hereditary feuds of the Arabian tribes had not yet coalesced in a system of union and subordination; and the barbarians were impatient of the mildest and most salutary laws that curbed their passions or violated their customs. They submitted with reluctance to the religious precepts of the QUR'AN, abstinence from wine, the fast of Ramadan, and the daily repetition of five prayers; and the alms and tithes, which were collected for the treasury of Medina, could be distinguished only by a name from the payment of a perpetual and ignominious tribute.

Turning to ABU BAKR, the Prophet (P), who knew well his countrymen, once said, "Heathenism is still working imperceptibly within you like the movements of ants". AL-ALLAM AL-MASHRIQI has well said that though Islam and the QUR'AN did much for the Arabs, yet they could not change their nature and alter their habits in such a short time. The old habits and ideas, which had become ingrained in their nature over a span of

thousands of years, could not leave them all at once. Those old beliefs and ideas still lingered on in their mind. Speaking of the high moral tenets and lofty principles of Islam, NICHOLSON says:

Against such doctrines, the conservative and material instincts of the desert people rose in revolt; and although they became Muslims en masse, the majority of them neither believed in Islam nor knew what it meant. Often their motives were frankly utilitarian; they expected that Islam would bring them luck; and so long as they were sound in body, and their mares had fine foals, and their wives bore well-formed sons, and their wealth and herds multiplied, they said, we have been blessed ever since we adopted this religion; and were content; but if things went ill, they blamed Islam and turned their backs on it.

Apart from their natural inability to appreciate and assimilate the doctrines of Islam, political exigencies required that the doctrines and principles of Islam should be so molded and shaped, and the QUR'AN so interpreted and explained, as to be of use in the propaganda of the men who had seized power on the death of the Prophet (P). They had to justify their actions to the nation and prove that they had divine sanction for what they had done. With this end in view, they sat down to "amend", modify and abrogate the various provisions of Islamic Theology. (for a detailed account of this systematic attempt at molding Islam to suit their ends, I refer the reader to my book in Urdu entitled "KITAB-AL-TAFRIQ WA AL-TAHRIF FI AL-ISLAM"). Here I shall mention but one or two examples. The first doctrine to receive their attention was the concept of "JIHAD". They so molded it by precept and practice as to bring every manner of looting and exploitation under it.

I will discuss it at its proper place under the next heading. Another of the doctrines invented for their purposes and given wide publicity was this: "We must submit to what has actually taken place, because whatever happens does so with the will and pleasure of God". MAWLAWI SHIBLI says that this and like doctrines were invented and added to the Theology of Islam for political reasons by the OMAYYAD despots, who wanted to silence their critics and make them bear their tyrannies and oppression with patience. For obvious reasons the learned historian throws the blame on the OMAYYAD rules, but it is evident that this doctrine was invented by UMAR. It is proved by the conversation, which UMAR had with ABDALLAH IBN ABBAS in which UMAR is reported to have said Imam Ali could not succeed the Prophet because it was God's wish that he should not, just as his father ABU TALIB did not accept Islam because that was God's will.

The weakness of this logic is plain, and that it is foreign to Islamic Theology is plainer still. Were we to accept it, virtue would have no reward, and vice would incur no punishment; complete chaos would reign. If we succeeded in committing a robbery or murder, we would have to be rewarded, because we had aided the will of God; but if we failed in the attempt to commit those offences, we would have to be punished because we had attempted what was not willed by God. But due to this force of propaganda, Islam, on the basis of this doctrine, has been misunderstood by aliens as a religion teaching fatalism. It is a tragedy that a religion that

inculcates such clear doctrines as "Man can have nothing but what he strives for", should come to be described by others thus:

Fatalism is thus the central tenet of Islam.... History repeats itself in MUHAMMADAN countries with a truly doleful exactness. The great bulk of the people are passive; wars and revolutions rage round them; they accept them as the decrees of a fate, which it is useless to strive against. All power passes accordingly into the hands of a few ambitious and turbulent spirits unencumbered with scruples of any kind, animated by no desires except those of being rich and strong. There is never a sufficient space of rest to allow institutions to grow up. Each adventurer as he rises to the summit of his ambition can keep his unsteady footing only by smiting down those who are climbing after him. Sooner or later, of course, he sinks to give way to another; and so the scene shifts and changes, until utter exhaustion and swift corruption (the state of the MUHAMMADAN world at the present day) supervene on this insane and convulsive activity.

These observations are quite justified, in as much as, from the distorted view of Islam that has been presented to them, they can draw no other conclusions.

These were the people, still saturated with (paganistic) ideas, and immersed in the civilization of their pagan ancestors that were borne on the crest of the waves of conquests to foreign lands; and this was the Islam they carried with them, misinterpreted by ignorance and intentionally disfigured by ambition.

Now let us follow the Arabs on their career of conquest. We come first to Syria. It was given over to BANU OMAYYA as a measure of political necessity, to set up a sure and reliable center of opposition to BANU HASHIM headed by Imam Ali, whom they had deprived of the caliphate by their coup d'état at the SAQIFA; and though Imam Ali was not inclined to seek redress through an appeal to arms, yet those at the helm of affairs, who naturally judged others by their own standard, deemed the possibility to be there. And then again, no one could foresee the future turn of events. From the moment Syria was handed over to BANU OMAYYA, it must be considered to have been lost to Islam. Speaking of the times when this policy brought forth its anticipated fruit, Professor Browne writes about them thus:

the triumph of the OMAYYADS was in reality, as Dozy well says, the triumph of that party which, at heart, was hostile to Islam; and the sons of the Prophet's most inveterate foes now, unchanged at heart, posed as his legitimate successors and vicegerents, and silenced with the sword those who dared murmur against their innovations. Nor was cause for murmuring far to seek even in the reign of MU'AWIYA, who in the splendor of his court at Damascus, and in the barriers, which he set between himself and his humbler subjects, took as his model the Byzantine Emperors and Persian Kings, rather than the first vicars of the Prophet.

He then goes on to describe "the sacrilegious actions, the ungodly lives, the profanity and worldliness of these rulers". I cannot help quoting another European writer, Osborn says:

History records few stranger freaks of fortune than that which seated the son of ABU SUFYAN on the throne of the Caliph. ABU SUFYAN was the bitterest and ablest opponent of the Prophet. His wife, HIND, was one of the few specially excluded from the mercy of the Prophet when he made his triumphant entry into MAKKA as the greatest chieftain in Arabia -an exclusion richly merited by her conduct after the battle of UHUD. The conversion of ABU SUFYAN himself was merely a political man-oeuvre, the insincerity of which was apparent. The children of ABU SUFYAN made some clumsy endeavors to smooth over the awkwardness of these antecedents by putting certain sayings in the mouth of the Prophet attesting the zeal and devotedness of ABU SUFYAN.... But even to the almost unbounded credulity of the Arab, these traditions must have come under the heading "MUNKAR", i.e. traditions proceeding from a reporter of feeble authority.

MU'AWIYA, the son of ABU SUFYAN, seems to have been in almost every respect the duplicate of his father. Faith in Islam he had none; in his contest against Imam Ali he was spurred on simply by worldly ambition, as was also his friend and colleague, AMR, the conqueror of Egypt. Astute, unscrupulous and pitiless, the first caliph of the OMAYYA shrank from no crime necessary to secure his position. Murder was his accustomed mode of removing a formidable opponent. The grandson of the Prophet he caused to be poisoned; MALIK AL-ASHTAR, the heroic lieutenant of Imam Ali, was destroyed in a like way. To secure the succession of his son YAZID, MU'AWIYA hesitated not to break the word he had pledged to IMAM AL-HUSSAIN, the surviving son of Imam Ali. And yet this cool, calculating, thoroughly atheistic Arab ruled over the regions of Islam, and the scepter remained among his descendants for the space of nearly one hundred and twenty years. About another OMAYYAD king, the same writer says"

AL-WALID II was surnamed "The Reprobate". He was dissolute in his life, revolting in his language, and disgusting in his habits. In one of his orgies, a chamberlain said to him, "Prince of Believers, the approaches to the palace are filled with delegates from the Arabs and QURAIISH, and your condition is not becoming the dignity of the caliph". By way of reply, the prince ordered the chamberlain to seat himself among the drinkers, and on the latter refusing to do so, he had him seized and bound, a tube forced between his teeth, and wine poured through it till the wretched man fell dead drunk. On another occasion, happening to repeat the following verse of the QUR'AN, "Then sought they help from God, and every proud rebellious one perished; hell is before him, and of tainted water shall he be made to drink", he ordered a copy of the sacred book to be brought before him, and, setting it up as a mark, pierced it with arrows, while he recited the verses of pagan poetry to the following effect....

Were these conquests of any use to Islam, as distinct from the Arab nation? Islam should not be confused with the Arab Nation. The two are not the same thing.

It has thus been abundantly proved that genuine Islam had not been assimilated in the Arabs' nature before they embarked on their career of conquest. Referring to a fragment to YAZID'S verses preserved in the pages



of IBN KHALLAKAN'S Biographical Dictionary, Osborn writes: "It is important, as showing at what an early date the contact with Christian and Persian thought commenced to undermine the doctrines of the QUR'AN". I should rather say, "the doctrines of the QUR'AN as interpreted by those Muslims".

Speaking of the influence of the subject races on the religion of the Arabs, Browne says, "Amongst the most striking illustrations, which he (GOLDZIEHER) gives of the preponderating influence of those foreign MAWALI, is a dialogue between the OMAYYAD Caliph ABD AL-MALIK and the famous theologian AS-ZUHRI, whence it appears that alike in MAKKA, YEMEN, EGYPT, MESOPOTAMIA, KHURASAN, KUFA, and BASRA, foreign "clients" held the chief positions of authority in religion".

As to Persia and the ABBASSIDS, things were in no better condition. Every religion that existed in Persia exerted its influence on Islam and destroyed its purity. The ZOROASTRIAN religion was introduced into Islam through the natives, with the result that it came to have great attraction for these Muslims. Many ideas were borrowed by Islam from Zoroastrianism. The first two or three centuries immediately following the Muslim conquest of Persia were a period of immense and unique interest, of fusion between the old and the new, of transformation of forms and transmigration of ideas. In the intellectual domain, Persia soon began to assert the supremacy to which the ability and subtlety of her people entitled her. Even the forms of state organization were largely adapted from Persian models. Various departments of the State founded by UMAR were almost entirely based on Persian and Roman models.

The ABBASSIDS were no less perfidious and unscrupulous than the OMAYYADS. Speaking of the revolution brought about through the propaganda carried on by the ABBASSIDS, Browne says:

Many of those who had worked so strenuously for the revolution were most bitterly disappointed when it was an accomplished fact. More especially was this so in the case of the SHIA who, misled by the delusive belief that by the term "HASHEMITES", in whose name the propaganda was carried on, the House of Imam Ali was intended, discovered, when it was too late, that not even in the OMAYYADS had the true descendants of the Prophet enemies more implacable than in their "HASHEMITE" cousins of the House of ABBAS.

The greatest orient-list of our century quotes the historian AL-FAKHRI in these words:

Know that the ABBASID dynasty was a treacherous, wily, and faithless dynasty, wherein intrigue and guile played a greater part than strength and energy, particularly in its latter days. Indeed, the later rulers of this House lost all faculty of energy and courage, and relied solely on tricks and stratagems. Browne goes on to quote Dozy thus:

The ascendancy of the Persian over the Arabs, that is to say, of the conquered over the victors, had already for a long while been in course of preparation; it became complete when the ABBASSIDS, who owed their elevation to the Persians, ascended the throne. These princes made it a rule

to be on their guard against the Arabs, and to put their trust only in foreigners, Persians, especially those of KHORASAN, with whom, therefore, they had to make friends. The most distinguished personages at court were consequently Persians. The famous BARMECIDS were descended from a Persian noble who had been superintendent of the Fire-temple at BALKH.

Again, to draw upon that same inexhaustible storehouse of information: The BARMECIDES naturally used their great influence in favor of their compatriots, but they had to be careful lest a too evident partiality for the institutions of Persia should bring them under suspicion of being still at heart MAGIANS.... VON KREMER treats fully of the Persian influences, which were everywhere, active, and which so largely molded not only the organization of the Church and State, but in ABBASSID times, even the fashions of dress, food, music and the like.

This state of things, coupled with the fact that the Muslims, during the early caliphate, had been given the sanction to use their own judgment in religious matters if they thought there was nothing in the QUR'AN or HADITH applicable to the case under consideration, led to Islam being rent asunder into different sects, most of them taking their inspiration not from the QUR'AN, but from the atheistic philosophies of Greece and India. The example of the sect known as the "MO'TAZILA" is a case in point.

The stamp of Greek philosophy is boldly imprinted on their main beliefs. They refer to the QUR'AN also as their authority as a last argument, the QUR'AN as interpreted by them under the influence of Greek philosophy, and not as explained by the Prophet (P). The other source of their beliefs was Christian Theology. There arose in Persia, therefore, many "outwardly MUHAMMADAN heresies embodying and reviving in new forms per-Muslim and non-Muslim ideas". Under the direct influence of OMAYYAD rule, a sect called "MURJI'A" arose. Imam ABU HANIFA was one of them. It was on account of OMAYYAD influence that they entertained the obviously untenable belief that no Muslim, whatever sins he may have committed, will be doomed to everlasting perdition.

Clearly discernible in this license to a Muslim to commit any number of the most heinous crimes with impunity, is the OMAYYAD anxiety to save from present calumny and future damnation their rulers, among whom were included such profligates as AL-WALID and such tyrants as YAZID.

Sufism, which has had great influence on Muslim conduct, is another product of the same combination. There are two schools of thought regarding the source of Sufism. One school represented by Von Kremer holds that "Sufism took into itself two different elements, an older Christian-ascetic, which came strongly to the front even in the beginning of Islam, and then later a Buddhist-contemplative, which soon, in consequence of the increasing influence of the Persian on Islam, obtained the upper hand, and called into being the Mystic-proper of Islam". The other view is expressed by Browne in these words: "SUFISM presents far more striking analogies with neo-Platonism than with either VEDANTISM or BUDDHISM, while historically, it is much more likely that it borrowed from the first than from either of the two last". The following passage from

Professor Browne's excellent History throws considerable light on the subject under discussion"

And now, under the ABBASSID Caliphate, it was these pagans of HARRAN, who, more than anyone else, imparted to the Muslims all the learning and wisdom of the Greeks which they had so jealously guarded... and, thanks to their influence at a court singular in the world's history for its devotion to learning, their coreligionists were suffered to continue in their thinly disguised paganism.... Thus did the civilization of BAGHDAD become the inheritor of the ancient wisdom of Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, India and Greece; and for this it was chiefly indebted to heathens like... Christians like... MAGIANS, converted or unconverted, like... besides sundry Jews and NABATHAEANS. To this splendid synthesis the Arabs... lent little save their wonderful and admirable language....

That they were sensible of their own indebtedness to these Non-Muslims who bestowed upon them the wisdom of the ancients appears amongst other things, from the elegy composed in praise of THABIT IBN QURRA, the SABAEAN physician and mathematician.... Strange and heterogeneous were the elements, which made up the intellectual atmosphere of BAGHDAD during the first century of ABBASSID rule. The pious Muslims of MAKKA and MEDINA who came thither were scandalized to find unbelievers invested with the highest offices at court, and learned men of every religion holding friendly debate as to high questions of ontology and philosophy, in which, by common consent, all appeal to revealed scripture was forbidden.

To acquire knowledge from every possible source, heathen or Muslim, is commendable, and both the QUR'AN and the Prophet (P) urged the Muslims to set out in quest of knowledge. It is matter of pride for us that the Muslim kings patronized learning to such a great extent. All praise is due to them for their toleration, which permitted every religion to exist side by side with Islam in their dominions. But so far and no further. The passages quoted above show that the Muslims assumed the role of pupils, while the rod of teaching was put in the hand of the heathens and Christians. What did they teach? The ancient wisdom of Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, India and Greece.

That is a euphemistic way of saying that they taught their own philosophy as tinged by their religion. Philosophy was the most popular branch of learning in those days, and the Muslims were eager pupils who considered themselves indebted to their teacher for what they imparted. They felt that they had nothing suitable to give in return for the Greek Philosophy and HINDU VEDANTISM which was so graciously granted them by those heathens. The poverty of Islamic thought could not be described in more appropriate terms. Most significant of all is the fact that all appeal to revealed scripture was forbidden. Why this ban on revealed scripture? Greek Philosophy did not claim any revealed origin; there was no revealed scripture for VEDANTISM or Neo-Platonism; ZOROASTRIANISM had no divine background. As to the Bible, it is a holy scripture, but I do not think any claim is generally laid these days to its being a divinely revealed scripture. But it there should be any doubt in the

reader's mind; I would refer him to the excellent work of ERNEST RENAN on the "Life of Jesus". It is thus evident that this condition was intended to exclude the QUR'AN had no place. And this was conceded by the Muslim theologians when they consented to the condition of its exclusion from the discussions.

This discomfiture on the part of the Muslims was due to the fact that the early and premature conquests had brought them to the world stage before they had thoroughly imbibed the principles of Islam for it to be infused into their very existence. They had only outwardly left paganism, and old habits of thought that had been ingrained in their nature by centuries of continuous conduct and practice, were still lurking in their minds, and like old companions of childhood, held more attraction to them than the new tenets of Islam that were so different to what they had hitherto known and experienced.

Their minds were still saturated with (paganistic) ideology, traditions and customs, with the result that when they saw their old likeness reflected in the teachings of those heathens, they felt an uncontrollable propensity towards them, and eagerly and fondly embraced those teachings like old friends whom an inexorable fate had so long kept apart. They could not abjure Islam all at once; they rent it into sects, the leader of each sect trying to absorb into his teachings as much of the pagan philosophy as he could manage consistent with his position, which compelled him to refer to the QUR'AN as his authority in order to make his teaching acceptable to the man in the street.

To those people, the truth of a religion was in proportion to the compatibility of its doctrines with Greek Philosophy or HINDU VEDANTISM. This should not excite any feelings of surprise, as in our own day we see the tenets of Islam being tested daily on the touchstone of European thought and civilization. Referring to the verses of RABI'A, a female SUFI saint, NICHOLSON says:

These lines serve to mark the end of orthodox Sufism and the rise of a new theosophical system which, under the same name and still professing to be in full accord with the QUR'AN and the SUNNA, was really founded upon pantheistic ideas of extraneous origin-ideas irreconcilable with any revealed religion, and directly opposed to the severe and majestic simplicity of the MUHAMMADAN articles of faith.

Further on, the same writer says:

Under the OMAYYADS, the old pagan spirit asserted itself once more. Consequently the literature of this period consists almost exclusively of poetry, which bears few marks of Islamic influence.... The poets of the period with which we are now dealing follow slavishly in the footsteps of the ancients, as though Islam had never been.

Speaking of the evil influence of wealth that followed in the wake of these conquests, the same learned historian says:

The conquests made by successors of the Prophet brought enormous wealth into MAKKA and Medina, and when the OMAYYAD aristocracy gained the upper hand in UTHMAN'S caliphate, these towns developed a voluptuous and dissolute life which broke through every restriction that

Islam had imposed.... It is characteristic of the anti-Islamic spirit which appears so strongly in the OMAYYADS, that their chosen laureate and champion should have been Christian (AL-AKHTAL) who was in truth a lineal descendant of the pagan bards.

Of the influence and position of these poets he says: We must remember that the poets were the leaders of public opinion; their utterances took the place of political pamphlets or of party oratory for or against the government of the day.

It can well be imagined in what shape Islam emerged from this medley of ideas, in which the doctrines of genuine Islam had the weakest position. It was itself an immature, imperfect and defective Islam, which the armies carried to foreign lands and gave to the converts, who in turn mixed with it their old ideas and habits of thought. It was almost inevitable that their Islam should have more of a (paganistic) beliefs, for example those regarding the AUTARS, AVA GAVAN, Self-annihilation (NIRVAN), and KARMA etc, found their way into Islam under the Arabic-zed names of HULUL, TANASUKH, HAQIQA and FANA'. Their FANA' is nothing but the Self-annihilation, or NIRVAN, of BUDDHISM. MAWLAWI JALAL-ED-DINE AR-RUMI expresses his belief in TANASUKH in the following couplet:

I have, like vegetation, grown many a time; I have inhabited no less than seven hundred and seventy bodies". They have clothed the vagaries of their imagination under the name of "HAQIQA" as opposed to the SHARI'A. By this they mean that the laws and rituals prescribed by the Prophet (P) form only the kernel; Reality, that is, Truth, is not found there; it is found in their Sufism, and can be discerned only by those who seek it in the bottom of a cup of wine. They closely guarded secrets of Divinity, which are said by the SHARI'A to be beyond human understanding, and which even a man learned in the SHARI'A can never know, are intuitively known, it would seem, to the tavern boy. For them, "SANAM" (idol) alone is entitled to their love, and can guide them to Truth. Dancing and Music, proscribed by Islam, are the necessary rituals of their religion. Looking to their aversion to Islam, foreign critics have come to the conclusion that Sufism is the reaction of the Aryan mind to a Semitic religion imposed upon it by force.

Professor Browne writes:

AL-JUNAYD spoke much in the same fashion. "For thirty years", said he, "God spoke with mankind by the tongue of AL-JUNAYD, though AL-JUNAYD was no longer there, and men knew it not. The supreme degree of the Doctrine of the Divine Unity is the denial of the Divine Unity". In short, with these men, whom the SUFIS reckon amongst their teachers, a very thoroughgoing Pantheism is superadded to the quietism of the older mystics. Some of them like AL-JUNAYD and HUSSAIN IBN MANSUR AL-HALLAJ claimed that they were the Truth (i.e. God). The author of that monumental work on Persian literature, Professor Browne, says:

We have seen that the creation of a common national feeling amongst the Arabs, nay more, of a common religious feeling among all Muslims, in place of the narrow clannishness of the heathen Arabs, was one of the greatest and most notable results of the Prophet's mission. But such counsels

of perfection were from the first hard to follow, being too radically opposed to ancient and deeply-rooted national instincts.

The learned might well have referred to the manner in which the caliph was appointed at the SAQIFA after the death of the Prophet (P). The most reasonable way would have been to consider impartially the merits and qualifications of the respective candidates, and to select the best man from among the whole of the Muslim community. But instead of doing this, they cut the Muslim community in two, and the only question, which they brought into the controversy, was from which of the two divisions, ANSAR or MUHAJIRIN the caliph should be taken. This was the old tribal spirit brought into play. Speaking of the un-Islamic haughtiness of the OMAYYAD rulers, the same writer says:

The "Clients" (MAWALI) or non-Arab Muslims, who, far from being treated by the government as equal to their co-religionists of Arab birth, were regarded as subject races to be oppressed, exploited and despised by the rulers.... The clients were indeed regarded by the Arabs as an inferior race, little better than slaves.

Another European critic says:

Conquerors of Asia, of Northern Africa, of Spain, the Arabs never rose to the level of their position. Greatness had been thrust upon them, but in the midst of their grandeur they retained in all their previous force and intensity the passions, the rivalries, the petty jealousies of the desert. They merely fought again on a wider field the battles of the Arabia before Islam. The explanation is the same: they went out to meet the world prematurely, before Islam had had the change to penetrate deep down into every fiber of their frame and so bring about harmony between belief and conduct.

It has been admitted by Muslim historians that the greatest possible harm was done to Islam under the OMAYYAD and ABBASSID rules, and than in the midst of worldly grandeur and power, Islam stood deserted and forlorn.

### **(c) The Foreign Expeditions Were Against the Laws of JIHAD:**

The Holy QUR'AN deals with the subject of JIHAD very fully and forcibly. According to that book, war is exclusively a political affair, and its object is only to protect the nation from outside aggression and defend it from encroachment on its honor and prestige. Though absolutely essential as a defensive measure, it should on no account be made a weapon of offence or a means to acquire kingdoms. It cannot be used to extend the boundaries of the realm or to place one nation over the head of another.

Its interference in the domain of religion had been prohibited in the QUR'AN in these words: "There is no compulsion in religion". This principle of allowing the greatest possible freedom of opinion in religious matters was entirely unknown to, and sharply in contrast with the intolerant views of the rest of the world, from the beginning of history right up to the nineteenth century (C.E.), from the Laws of Plato and the Twelve Tables to the Inquisition and the Pillory, and is clearly demonstrative of the prophetic nature of Muhammad's mission. That this principle should have been entirely ignored by the non-Muslim world is most unfortunate, but can easily be explained. It can be attributed to the fighting started by the early



caliphate against its non-Muslim neighbors, for in reality they were not religious wars, and were not prompted by religious motives, as we have shown above.

But a religious coloring was given to them for the sake of infusing in their armies that zeal and disregard for life which is so essential for winning a war, and it was thus represented to the credulous Arabs that they were fighting in the way of God, and that if they won they would get GHANIMA, and if they fell fighting they would be admitted into Paradise. To complete the illusion, when the two armies were face to face and on the point of starting to fight, their generals would offer Islam to the enemy, adding that if they refused they must be prepared to fight. Prepared to fight they already were; this was neither the occasion nor the manner for inviting an outraged enemy to accept the teachings of Islam when those teachings were presented to them in such an un-Islamic way. They fought and won, and the vanquished were quite justified in proclaiming to the world that Islam was thrust on the people at the point of the sword. The cry was eagerly taken up by the Clergy of Europe and preserved in their books for the coming generations. This was a great injustice of Islam, which even in that age of bigotry and intolerance taught that there was no compulsion in religion. This mistaken view of the world about Islam was due to the unjustifiable wars carried on by the Early Caliphate against Persia and Syria, and imitated by the OMAYYAD and ABBASSID kings. The teachings of the QUR'AN, as enforced by the Prophet (P), were quite contrary to this. There was no element of force in the promulgation of Islam, as I will presently show. But I must first describe the laws of JIHAD as laid down in the QUR'AN.

As a safeguard against the indiscriminate resort to war, no Prophet, or his community of followers, have been permitted to make war on the infidels without divine permission to that effect. This rule is very clearly demonstrated in the story of Samuel and Saul as given in the QUR'AN. When hard pressed by the Philistines, the Israelites asked their Prophet Samuel to appoint a king, and to get God's permission to fight their enemy. Their Prophet asked whether, if God commanded them to fight. It was then that the permission was given. Similarly, the Muslims did not fight unless and until they were commanded to do so. As in the case of the Israelites, so with the Muslims; this command or permission to fight was given on certain conditions and with certain reservations, which constitute the rules of Holy War, or JIHAD. They are contained in the following verses:

1. "Fight in the cause of God those who fight against you, but transgress not the limits, for God loveth not the transgressors". (SURA II, 190).

2. "Slay them wherever you find them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out; for FITNA (oppression, tumult) is more grievous than slaughter; but fight them not in the Sacred Mosque, unless they attack you therein; but if they fight you, then slay them. Such is Oft-forgiving, Merciful. And fight them until FITNA is no more and the religion is for God; but if they desist, then let there be no hostility except to the oppressors. A sacred month -and prohibited things - as per the law of retaliation. Whoever transgresses against you, then transgress against him in

like manner; and fear God, and know that God is with the MUTTAQIN (heeders of their obligations)". (SURA II, 191-194)

3. "...and let not hatred of a people induce you to act with injustice; act justly, that is the nearest to TAQWA (piety, righteousness); and fear God..." (SURA V, 9)

These are the QUR'ANIC laws of Holy War, or JIHAD; and it is impossible to find rules on the subject more sane and reasonable, or more in keeping with justice, equity and good conscience -even in the modern code of international morality. Study them very closely; a general permission to fight every infidel or unbeliever is not given. The Muslims are to fight only those who have already declared war and have committed acts of hostility against them. Mark the very healthy rule that they should not be the first to attack. This rule alone, if scrupulously observed and faithfully put into effect, is sure to eliminate war. Exhortation to do justice even with one's enemies is another beautiful doctrine peculiar to Islam, which proves the divine source of these mandates. There is nothing in these rules of JIHAD to be afraid of for those who want to live peacefully as the neighbors of the Muslims, and who do not transgress the limits of co-existence by being the first to attack.

But if they do, then no quarter is to be given, except, of course, if they desist from their evil course. Osborn is certainly in error when he asserts that SURA IX (AT-TAWBA) "is that which contains the Prophet's proclamation of war against the votaries of all creeds other than that of Islam". In fact, it is limited to those pagans of Arabia who had treacherously broken their terms. It is they alone who are denounced, and who have their treaties annulled.

But even among them, those who have scrupulously kept the terms of the treaty are excluded from the purview of this SURA. Past experience had shown that they would never rest contented, and that they would go on intriguing against the Muslims and damaging and injuring their interests. It was therefore ruled that the Muslims must fight them wherever they were to be found. This is made perfectly clear in that SURA thus: "Will ye not fight against people who have violated their oaths, and conspired to expel the Messenger, and who were the ones to start hostilities against you". (SURA IX,13). And in another verse of the SURA: "How so (i.e. how can there be a league with the idolaters), since if they prevail against you, they do not have regard for you by way of either kinship or covenant". (SURA IX,8).

It is thus abundantly clear that this SURA refers to the infidels of Arabia only, who had been the deadly enemy of the Muslims and were at war with them. It was not a declaration of war against the unbelievers of the beautiful doctrine "There is no compulsion in religion" was the Prophet's motto only when he himself was persecuted, and that in success, he laid down a rule quite the reverse of it, namely "Kill them wherever you find them until they accept Islam". I have already shown that this is a mistaken view. Had the first rule been abrogated, the verse would not have found its way into the QUR'AN. The fact is that the former rule relates to the promulgation of a religion, while the latter rule governs the conditions of war. "Them" here

refers to the pagans who had already been at war with the Prophet (P). MAWLAWI SHIBLI says:

The only object of Islam is to spread its mission by persuasion. If a nation does not obstruct this peaceful mission, Islam has no dispute with it and must not fight against that nation: a pact of peace is enough. There are many instances of this. But if a nation, without any cause, stands up to oppose Islam and wants to annihilate it, then Islam is bound to take up the sword in defense and keep that nation under subjection. KHAIBAR was the first conquered place in accordance with this rule.

The Prophet (P) conducted his wars in accordance with the rules laid down in the QUR'AN, and observed all the limitations and restrictions prescribed by that authority. It was for this reason that the majority of the nations did not respond to his call to arms with any alacrity or zeal. The Holy QUR'AN bears testimony to this reluctance of theirs, and mentions various false excuses made by them for being allowed to stay at home and not join the army. On the other hand, when the expeditions of the early caliphate were sent to Persia and Syria, knowing that the rigidity of the rules was no more, they vied eagerly with each other to join the armies. During the time of Imam Ali the application of the rules was (reimposed), with the result that the same reluctance to join the armies was once again in evidence.

The following rules of JIHAD are deducible from the verses quoted above:

1. The Muslims must not be the first to attack a nation; they are to fight only those who begin to fight against them.
2. Even towards an enemy they must behave with justice and equity.
3. The Muslims are to observe the sanctity of the prohibited months and the mosque; but if the enemy fights them during that time or in that place, they are also to do the same.
4. In war, they should not be the transgressors.
5. It is thus apparent that the law of JIHAD is nothing more than the Law of Retaliation.

These rules are illustrated in the wars of the Prophet (P). It has been thoroughly proved that these were in self-defense. Controversial writers have tried to find fault with the battles of BADR and KHAIBAR, and the words "brigandage" and "loot" have been used in connection with the former. But all this is entirely wrong. There had been continuous warfare between QURAIISH and the Muslims since the time that the latter had been obliged to flee from MAKKA. They were expelled by QURAIISH from their native town, as alluded to in the above-mentioned verses. The Prophet (P) was therefore quite justified according to all canons of warfare, in utilizing his opportunity when it presented itself. On this occasion also QURAIISH were the first to begin the attack. They sent no less than three armed bands, one after the other, towards Medina. AMIR ALI says: "The MAKKANS and their allies commenced raiding up to Medina, destroying the fruit trees of the Muslims and carrying away their flocks. A force consisting of a thousand well-equipped men marched under the noted ABU JAHL, the

"Father of Ignorance", towards Medina to destroy the Muslims, and to protect one of the caravans bringing munitions of war".

This was the battle of BADR;; no one can now say that the Prophet (P) took the offensive or was the first to attack. As to the battle of KHAIBAR, all the Jews of Arabia had collected there. "The Jews of KHAIBAR, united by an ancient alliance with the BEDWIN hordes of BANU GHATAFAN and other cognate tribes, worked incessantly for the formation of another coalition against them. This was as much a defensive measure as the digging of the ditch round Medina when the Confederates invaded. He who cannot anticipate, and provide against the next move of the enemy is certainly a bad statesman. Writing about the battles and expeditions of the time of the Prophet (P), MAWLAWI SHIBLI says:

The SARAYA (expeditions under persons other than the Prophet) were of different kinds, according to the object with which they were undertaken, that is, (1) expeditions sent to ascertain the movements of the enemy, (2) on hearing the preparations of the enemy some detachments were sent, (3) expeditions sent to harass the enemy through his trade caravans in order to make him leave his habit of preventing the Muslims from performing the HAJJ, (4) punitive expeditions to keep to peace, (5) Muslim missionary parties accompanied by some soldiers who were expressly directed not to use the sword.

The GHAZAWAT (battles personally under the command of the Prophet (P)) were of two kinds, according to the object with which they were undertaken, viz. (1) to defend Medina when actually attacked by the enemy, and (2) to anticipate the hostile movements of the enemy and to defeat his designs, when the Prophet (P) received information of those designs.

All the wars that were fought, and all the expeditions that were sent out in the time of the Prophet (P) were for either of these objects. But the wars against Persia and Syria undertaken by the first two caliphs do not fulfill these conditions and were, therefore, against the teachings of the QUR'AN. The Persians and Syrians had given no offence, and were not preparing to attack the Muslims. It was quite unjust and un-neighborly to attack them unawares. Apart from doing Islam no good, these attacks definitely injured its cause by furnishing its enemies with an argument to justify their accusation that Islam owes its existence to the sword. These conquests led directly to the establishment of Imperialism, and the domination of the Arab nation over the weaker nations. This was the object neither of Islam nor the Prophet (P), and therefore Imam Ali could not indulge in the same pastime as these weaker souls, destroying others for the sake of their own glory.

If any doubt still remains, there are three facts, which prove conclusively that foreign conquests by means of the sword were not the object of Islam. Warlike expeditions are impossible without a well-furnished treasury and a well-equipped standing army. The fact that the Prophet (P) made no arrangements for these two things shows that his mission did not include territorial expansion through the sword. He had neither a state treasury nor a standing army.

These two institutions were brought into existence for the first time by UMAR. The Prophet's practice was to distribute among the people at one

sitting everything he received by way of war booty or KHIRAJ. Whenever he wanted to send out an expedition, he called upon the people to come and form an army. The need for these two institutions was felt in the time of ABU BAKR, who established BAIT-AL-MAL, or State Treasury, which UMAR made full use of.

It was the first two caliphs who needed and established a standing army. The third fact, which goes to show that Islam does not permit the conquest and annexation of other people's lands, is this. The QUR'AN prescribes very definite and rigid rules regarding the disposal of property of the enemy acquired in war. But it does not even mention conquered lands, let alone give any rules for their disposal. This conclusively shows that Islamic Theology does not contemplate the eventuality of other people's lands taken by the Muslims.

The fact is that Islam does not countenance large empires, just as it does not favor big business concerns dependent for their working on the labor of countless human beings, as the one leads to Imperialism and the other to Capitalism, and both tend to create a slavish mentality in people, eventually giving rise to riots, disturbances and bloodshed when an awakening finally comes to the sleeping masses. Some theologians of Islam have, therefore, held that the lands acquired in consequence of the conquests were MAGHSUBA (usurped) lands, and they avoided and prohibited their mortgage and sale. On the basis of analogy with the rules for movable properties acquired during the war as GHANIMA, the soldiers demanded that the conquered lands should also be divided among them. It was obviously inadvisable from both social and political considerations to annex conquered cities and vast tracts of land as private property. The caliph therefore rejected their demand, but with unconvincing arguments.

The SUNNI writers have also awakened to the reality that the grandeur of Granada and Baghdad was in fact the death of Islam. SAYYID. ABU AL-HASSAN AL-NADAWI says that during the ascendancy of the Muslim nation, Islam was neglected and forsaken in its own land, and that the Muslims were treated like DHIMMIS.

A word of warning is needed here. Islam should not be confused with the Muslim community current, or the Arab nation. Muhammad (P), peace be upon him, was not sent to extend the limits of Arabia, nor to acquire a kingdom for the Arab nation. The only object of his mission was to bring humanity round to the worship of the One God. He wanted, undoubtedly, to spread his teachings to every corner of the world; but his desire was to extend the limits of Islam, not the territorial boundaries of Arabia. He wished to rule the heart of Man in every part of the world, and not his lands. But the way taken by the first two caliphs and the succeeding kings was not the way to rule the heart. That was the way to alienate hearts, not to win them. Had the way shown by the Prophet (P) been followed by those caliphs, the Empire of Islam would be found today over the whole of the world, as strong and dazzling in its pristine glory as ever. But what we actually find is the Muslims beaten on every field, and the divine words of the QUR'AN brought into full significance: "You will gain mastery if you are true in faith". (SURA III,139).

But true in faith they were not, for they used the hand of force to gain an empire. And the same hand of force snatched it from them. Those who depend on force must be prepared to face any eventuality that force may bring about. They took the models of a state treasury and a standing army from Persia and the Roman Empire; but they failed to take note of how Christianity had captured the world. It slowly made its way from the commonalty to the Crown, and therefore its rule in the world endured; they hurried to the Crown, and missed their chance.

Let us describe the programmed set out by the Prophet (P) for securing the sovereignty of the world for Islam. The rules for inviting people to Islam and for conveying its message throughout the world are mentioned in the QUR'AN:

1. "There is no compulsion in religion". (SURA II,256).
2. "Invite people to the way of the Lord by wisdom and goodly exhortation; and argue with that are best" (SURA XVI,125).
3. "Let there be from among you a party who invite to goodness, and enjoin that what is right, and forbid what is wrong". (SURA III,104).

These are the three rules, which the Muslims must observe when they invite the people to their religion. The sword, or force, finds no place here; on the contrary, it is expressly prohibited. Not to mention the sword, even injury to the feelings of opponents in argument is forbidden. They must be persuaded by means of that which looks most pleasing. One of those means is that the Muslim must model his life, his way of living, his manners, and his behavior according to the tenets of Islam; he must himself observe its rules, and go among them with his actions, words, manners and conduct all bearing the stamp of Islam.

When they see from the picture of Islam in action that it is very pleasing and inviting, they will be attracted towards him and hence towards Islam. The Prophet (P) put these rules into practice; he sent missionary parties to the neighboring places, and also to the crowned heads of the world. To head these missions he chose those persons who were best able to translate the tenets of Islam into action. Imam Ali was at the head of a party that was sent to the important places of Yemen. We learn from AT-TABARI: "The Prophet (P) used to send missionary parties to places round MAKKA; they strictly enjoined not to fight. It is a pity that the first two caliphs did not follow this procedure.

SAYYID ABU AL-A'LA AL-MAWDUDI is one of the greatest thinkers of Islam of the present century. His writings are generally characterized by sound logic and convincing arguments; and what is more valuable; he has the courage of his convictions and publishes his conclusions fearlessly. It is only when he has the courage of his convictions and publishes his conclusions fearlessly. It is only when he has to discuss the topics that involve the taking stock of the beliefs of his childhood that his pen begins to stumble, and then this stumbling is so marked that even he cannot conceal it. His sound judgment and accurate reasoning have led him to the conclusion that Islam does not only not permit wars of conquest, but it also prescribes punishment for those who indulge in such wars. His definitive finding is that the Holy QUR'AN does not contain any direction to convert people to Islam



by means of the sword, and moreover that there is no AYA which can lend itself, even with twisting or stretching, to an interpretation favoring conversion by that means. Naturally enough, this led him to ponder the wars waged by the first two caliphs, which he tries to justify by the following argument:

I have, in this book, mentioned many a time, and will have occasion to repeat this absolute truth as I proceed, that in Islamic Theology, it is religiously prohibited to make war for the sake of conquering lands. Now the question arises that if the wars of conquests are religiously prohibited, what explanations will you give for the invasion of AL-Iraq, Syria, Iran, Armenia, Egypt and Northern Africa and other countries by the Companions and the KHULAFAT AR-RASHIDIN.

This objection has been very seriously made by the opponents of Islam, and the Muslim Historians and authors have tried to meet them. But none of those Muslim Historians and authors has taken into consideration the difference that exists between the viewpoints of Islam and the Non-Muslims in this matter. For this reason, those of the Muslim writers who have met this objection from the viewpoint of the Non-Muslims have misinterpreted Islamic Theology; and those of the Muslim writers who have entirely ignored that viewpoint, have succeeded only in raising other doubts.

The fact of the matter is that so far as the right and title to govern is concerned, Islam recognizes no difference between foreign and national governments. It regards Justice and Tyranny only as the discriminating factors. If the rulers of a national government are tyrannical, unjust, ungodly, lovers of oppression and selfish, Islam discards them as much as it would shun foreign rulers having the same defects....

The idea that an Arab tyrant has a better right to rule over Arab than Non-Arab, though he has all the good qualities of a ruler, and that a Turk though just, virtuous and Godly cannot be accepted by the Iraqis solely because he is a Turk, is not tolerated in Islam. This is an idea, which Islam detests as wholly wrong and entirely untenable. Islam regards the matter of government, not from the point of view of a nation or a country, but from the broader outlook of Humanity as a whole. Its irrevocable decision is that a just and virtuous man is in every case preferable to a vicious tyrant, and that in this selection to differentiate between Indian and Iraqi, national and stranger, black and white is a sinful prejudice.

According to this view in Islam, the criterion of a good government is not its being national or self-chosen, but its being just and upright. The only question is whether a government is just, equitable and fair in its dealings with its subjects, or whether it is the reverse of it. In the former case, Islam does not, cannot, even think of replacing it, but if otherwise is the case, Islam considers it its first duty to subdue and replace a tyrannical rule by a just and upright government...

From all this it should not be inferred that Islam is an enemy of a national government. It admits the right of every nation to reform its rule and set right its affairs; but if it is unable to do so, and falls so low as to obey its vicious and wicked persons, then according to the tenets of Islam, that

nation loses its right of self-determination, and another nation which is more virtuous and upright acquires a right to rule over that nation.

The writer quotes three QUR'ANIC verses (see below) as his authority for the views enunciated above, which I shall discuss presently. He then goes on to say that as the governments of Iran, Syria, Egypt etc. had fallen to the lowest depths of degradation, the Islamic Caliphate, which had a better government, had every right to conquer and annihilate them.

Consider this quotation very carefully, and say whether it is not the same thing as has so often been said from time immemorial, and is even now being said by all conquering, imperialistic nations. We have heard the imperialistic nation of Europe repeating and nauseam their pious resolve to subdue weaker nations only in order to improve their mental, moral and material condition, and to replace a tyrannical and oppressive rule with their own benign government. In so many conflicts each of the parties tries to convince the world that they are the angels and their opponents are the devils, and that they are fighting only to rid the world of those SATANS. AL-MAWDUDI anticipates this criticism, but meets it by asserting that Islamic rule was in truth a blessing. But every class of people honestly entertains the same conviction about its own system as AL-MAWDUDI has about Islam. You can silence the Muslims in this way, but you cannot convince strangers to Islam with this argument.

If such a way of arguing, and the principle on which it is based were accepted, there would be perpetual warfare in the world. Are the Muslim countries, as we find them today, now prepared to be annihilated in accordance with the principle by the stronger nations of the world who are decidedly better governed and in a better social and moral condition? The reply that the QUR'AN of the Muslims is much better than the code of laws of those nations would not hold water for a single moment; the principle must be acceptable to Non-Muslims, for it is they whose conquest is sought to be vindicated, and for them the question is not of what is written in the books, but of how the people are governed and what their moral, material and social condition actually is. As the Muslims of the present age currently stand very low in comparison with the progressive nations of the world, then were we to accept the formula laid down by AL-MAWDUDI, we would deserve to be turned out of our possessions bag and baggage.

AL-MAWDUDI uses the word "ZULM" for that which, if indulged in by a nation, incapacitates it from governing its own affairs. "ZULM" means injustice or usurpation. Now in the QUR'AN, SHIRK (association of false gods with the true God) is described as the greatest ZULM. If the formula of AL-MAWDUDI is carried to its logical conclusion, no Non-Muslim nation had the right to rule over its own country, and they should all retire in favor of the Muslims. This is exactly what Islam's detractors mean when they say that the Muslims in their heyday wanted to convert the whole world to Islam by means of the sword. An argument, which leads to such absurd conclusions, must surely be rejected.

The learned writer himself is conscious of the weakness of his arguments. Realizing that they cannot carry conviction to an impartial reader, he winds them up by saying, "You are at liberty to attribute these

expeditions to dictatorial arrogance and imperialism; but you cannot deny this historical fact that the Muslim rule pulled these nations out of that abyss of degradation into which they had fallen, and raised them to a high level of moral, material and spiritual progress".

AL-MAWDUDI bases his arguments on the following three verses of the QUR'AN.

1. And if you turn back, He will substitute another people in your stead, who shall not be like unto you". (SURA XLVII,39).

2. "Unless you go forth (when you are summoned to war). God will punish you with a grievous punishment; and he will place another people in your stead, and you shall not hurt Him at all, for God hath power over all things". (SURA IX,39).

3. "If He pleased He could remove you, O people, and bring others..." (SURA IV,133).

It is obvious that these verses are quite wide of the mark as far as the point under discussion is concerned. The first two verses are addressed to the Muslims, and this fact is sufficient to show that the Iranians and Syrians are not threatened, and are not meant to be substituted by others. The third verse is general, and refers to the human race as a whole, and means substitution by some other race. By no stretch of the imagination can these verses be said to authorize the Muslims to undertake wholesale extirpation of any nation, which, in their opinion, is on a lower plane of civilization or morality. These verses are in fact intended to impress upon the minds of Muslims and other people the omnipotence of God, who does not stand in need of their obedience of faith. If they do not mend their ways in spite of all this teaching, they cannot hurt God; He is able to replace them with others. This power is God's; He has not delegated it to the Muslims.

The weakness of the argument of those who support these expeditions is plain. Their untenable insistence on its validity makes people think that these expeditions and wars were motivated by the teachings of the QUR'AN, and thus Islam gets a bad name. It would have been much better to concede the fact that these were the actions of individual kings, and were not in accordance with the teachings of the QUR'AN and the Prophet; Islam is not responsible for them, just as it is not responsible for the un-Islamic actions of any other individual Muslim.

But here a word of warning is needed. The only object of my arguments, which are intended to show the religious point of view, has so far been to prove that these expeditions that were led into foreign countries under orders from the caliphate were neither based on a desire to spread Islam, nor were authorized by that religion. The primary object of these wars was entirely secular. They must, therefore, be taken out of the category of religious JIHAD altogether. Moreover, the controversial writers have no right to criticize Islam as a religion on the basis of those wars.

But so far as the Muslim nation and its secular interests are concerned, they were of immense value. These conquests opened up great possibilities for Islam, and provided means for its expansion. To have conquered two of the greatest empires of the ancient world within such an incredibly short period, and to have acquired and built up an empire "which in less than a

century spread itself over a greater part of the world than the Romans were ever masters of", is a feat of arms, nay a miracle, unparalleled in the history of the world.

European writers, whose fears, hopes and expectations do not, and from the nature of their civilization cannot, go beyond the scope of the present life of man on this earth, are filled with admiration for the first two caliphs, and allot them a very high place among the great men of history, like CAESER, HANNIBAL, HITLER, NAPOLEON, and others of the same caliber. Yes, it was an imperialism - but imperialism of the best kind; it was despotic - but despotism of the most liberal sort, having the interests of a majority of its subjects at heart. It was despotism of a type, which even democracies of the modern age might well envy.

Descriptions of the courts of HARUN and AL-MA'MUN, whence flowed streams of charity and munificence, still excite the wonder of the world. Their patronage of art and learning has elicited admiration even from their enemies. Not to speak of the kings, the nobles of their court also vied with each other in emulating the liberality and munificence of their sires. There is no doubt though, that side by side with this, there existed in individual cases instances of utmost brutality and injustice on the part of these rules; there were executions on the slightest suspicion, torture, life imprisonment, and killing by poison, just to eliminate the possibility of any threat to their position by those who had a much superior claim to rule. We accept these accusations, which are true and which we have condemned in the preceding pages of this book. At the same time however, we should also keep in view some of the deeds of the "civilized world" of the twentieth century, which blotted out of existence millions of innocent men, women and children under the pretext of the exigencies of war; we should also remember the cold-blooded murders by the so-called "Tribunals of Justice" of NUREMBURG, which sullied the fair name of justice by passing sentence which were determined solely by enmity and revenge.

Thus, despite the weakness from which the Muslim rule suffered due to the original wrong perpetrated by the usurpers of Imam Ali's claims, the European historians should not adopt a holier-than-thou attitude and paint Islam as a barbaric religion. We do not blame Christianity for what these Christians have done, and are doing; and similarly we urge that Islam should not be called to account for the evil deeds of the Muslim kings.

(d) The Damage Done to Islam through these Early Conquests:

That these early conquests proved more destructive than beneficial to Islam must be evident from the preceding discussions. Here is a list summarizing some of the evil consequences that ensued:

1. A wrong impression was created that Islam owed its existence to the sword.
2. The violations of the QUR'ANIC injunctions on the subject gave rise to the idea that Islam was a bloodthirsty religion, which advocated the use of force.
3. In the clash with other religions systems and philosophies in foreign lands, this mutilated Islam of the still-raw Muslims was at a disadvantage, with the result that it became adulterated and lost its purity forever.

4. The sense of injustice that was created in the minds of the conquered peoples on account of the invasion of their countries without reasonable cause, proved very harmful to Islam.

5. Islam claimed to be the teacher of the world, with a mission to raise humanity to a higher level; but the Muslims betrayed this claim by showing scanty regard for reasonableness, justice, and good neighborly relations in their dealings with other nations.

6. The accumulation of immense riches, which they did not know how to utilize properly and beneficially, led to numerous vices.

7. Imperialism and Capitalism were the direct result of these conquests.

## Chapter Twelve: To Conclude

Thus have all the dimensions of this question over the succession been discussed. If the reader has managed to consider the matter from the aspect of a seeder after truth who has no personal involvement in one side or the other, and does not therefore have any cause to care for the consequences for himself of favoring a view different from that with which he was brought up and by which those who are near and dear to his life, it should be very clear from the foregoing that the Prophet (P) did indeed nominate Imam Ali as his KHALIFA.

It is in the first instance primarily a matter of history. Whatever the effects on the ensuing history of Islam have been, the historical truth of the matter stands in its own right. However, to accept not that the majority view has been in error is not without its implications for that history of Islam, and this very observation is reason enough for most people to conveniently close their eyes to the truth as the only alternative to accepting the unthinkable.

To date that has not been too difficult, as the majority of Muslims have been able to assume with an untroubled conscience that they can rely on their learned men, who cannot possibly all be wrong. Many a good, sincere and true Muslim, who cannot himself be expected to be an expert historian, has understandably clung to the security of the prevalent view, especially when, under attack from the non-Muslim world, he feels it to be his first duty to rush to defend Islam, along with the deeds of its history. In this way the Muslim is reassured, but the non-Muslim remains unconvinced, armed as he sees it with the weapon of historical fact, which his adversary seems to have buried in the sand.

However, the Muslim should not fear truth provided that he is able to face up to the consequences for his previously held position. When challenged by the orient-lists that Islam was spread by the sword, he no longer needs to pretend apologetically that the conquered peoples were for the most part willing takers of refuge in Islam from a hitherto oppressed condition. But at the same time, knowing now the historical truth of the matter, he no longer needs to feel that he is betraying Islam by acknowledging it as a religion that was spread by the sword. Yes, a spreading process did take place, and yes, the sword was instrumental in that process.

But was it Islam, the true Islam of the Prophet (P), that was being spread, and that motivated that spreading? As we have seen earlier in the book, definitely not. So the Muslim has no need to fear that he is doing any disservice to his religion; rather, he is putting its own house in order, which is an essential prerequisite for the future spreading of Islam throughout the world among people who will need to be convinced in a thorough way in which the mere appeal to established majority views can play no part.

But there is one price to be paid for this reconciliation between Islam's historical credibility and its claim to be the True Religion of God. That is, the actions of those responsible for these historical events cannot at the same time be defended. It is a simple and real choice that the Muslim must make. He can accept that the majority has been wrong, and that the actions of those in power were not those that the world's historians would have been



recording had the Prophet's nomination of Imam Ali as his successor been allowed to take effect.

Or he can continue to maintain the pretence by closing his eyes to any closer enquiry into the matter. This brings us to the present book, which should greatly facilitate the recognition of the truth of the question of the succession, and enable all Muslims to be united- not merely on the basis of a majority perception, but united in truth.

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