

HISTORY OF ISLAM SERIES

Caliphate of Hadhrat Abu Bakr

رضي الله عنه



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CALIPHATE OF HADHRAT ABU BAKR (رضی اللہ تعالیٰ عنہ)

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PREFACE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين ، والصلاة والسلام على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

The misunderstanding about the issue of Caliphate resulted in the first division in Muslims ranks.

The issue of Caliphate is very important in Islam because a slight misunderstanding will have profound effect on your Sahih Iman. It is important that Ahle Sunnah safeguard their Iman from extreme opinions of Muslim sects.

We have described facts in this book as contained in authentic History books/Islamic literature and have refrained from expressing our personal opinions.

This book is aimed at clearing the misunderstanding on historical issues. We hope our readers will greatly benefit from this effort.

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CALIPHATE OF HADHRAT ABU BAKR (رضى الله تعالى عنه)

There is a long Hadith in Bukhari, narrated by Ibn Abbas (رضى الله تعالى عنه) in which Hadhrat Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) described the sequence of events in which Hadhrat Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) took over as Khalifa-e-Islam.

It is in Hadith - Narrated Ibn 'Abbas (رضى الله تعالى عنه) : I used to teach (the Qur'an to) some people of the Muhajir (emigrants), among whom there was 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf (رضى الله تعالى عنه). While I was in his house at Mina, and he was with 'Umar bin Al-Khattab (رضى الله تعالى عنه) during 'Umar's (رضى الله تعالى عنه) last Hajj, Abdur-Rahman (رضى الله تعالى عنه) came to me and said, "Would that you had seen the man who came today to the Chief of the Believers (Umar - رضى الله تعالى عنه), saying, 'O Chief of the Believers! What do you think about so-and-so who says, 'If 'Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) should die, I will give the pledge of allegiance to such-and-such person, as by Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ), the pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) was nothing but a prompt sudden action which got established afterwards.' (On this) Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) became angry and then said, 'Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) willing, I will stand before the people tonight and warn them against those people who want to deprive the others of their rights.'

Abdur Rahman (رضى الله تعالى عنه) said, "I said, 'O Chief of the believers! Do not do that, for the season of Hajj gathers the riffraff and the rubble, and it will be they who will gather around you when you stand to address the people. And I am afraid that you will get up and say something, and some people will spread your statement and may not say what you have actually said and may not understand its meaning, and may interpret it incorrectly, so you should wait till you reach Medina, as it is the place of emigration and the place of Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) traditions, and there you can come in touch with the learned and noble people, and tell them your ideas with confidence; and the learned people will understand your statement and put it in its proper place.' On that, 'Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) said, 'By Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ)! Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) willing, I will do this in the first speech I will deliver before the people in Medina.'

Ibn **Abbas** (رضى الله تعالى عنه) added : We reached Medina by the end of the month of Dhul-Hijja, and when it was Friday, we went quickly (to the mosque) as soon as the sun had declined (from midday), and I saw Sa'id bin Zaid bin 'Amr bin Nufail (رضى الله تعالى عنه) sitting at the corner of the pulpit, and I too sat close to him so that my knee was touching his knee,

and after a short while 'Umar bin Al-Khattab (رضى الله تعالى عنه) came out, and when I saw him coming towards us, I said to Sa'id bin Zaid bin 'Amr bin Nufail (رضى الله تعالى عنه) "Today 'Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) will say such a thing as he has never said since he was chosen as Caliph." Sa'id bin Zaid (رضى الله تعالى عنه) denied my statement with astonishment and said, "What thing do you expect 'Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) to say the like of which he has never said before?"

In the meantime, 'Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) sat on the pulpit and when the call makers for the prayer had finished their call, 'Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) stood up, and having glorified and praised Allah as He deserved, he said, "Now then, I am going to tell you something which Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) has written for me to say. I do not know; perhaps it portends my death, so whoever understands and remembers it, must narrate it to the others wherever his mount takes him, but if somebody is afraid that he does not understand it, then it is unlawful for him to tell lies about me.

Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) sent Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) with the Truth and revealed the Holy Book to him, and among what Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) revealed, was the Verse of the Rajam (the stoning of married person (male & female) who commits illegal sexual intercourse, and we did recite this Verse and understood and memorized it. Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) did carry out the punishment of stoning and so did we after him. I am afraid that after a long time has passed, somebody will say, 'By Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ), we do not find the Verse of the Rajam in Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) Book,' and thus they will go astray by leaving an obligation which Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) has revealed. And the punishment of the Rajam is to be inflicted to any married person (male & female), who commits illegal sexual intercourse, if the required evidence is available or there is conception or confession. And then we used to recite among the Verses in Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) Book : 'O people! Do not claim to be the offspring of other than your fathers, as it is disbelief (un-thankfulness) on your part that you claim to be the offspring of other than your real father.' Then Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said, 'Do not praise me excessively as Jesus (عليه السلام), son of Marry was praised, but call me Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) Servant and His Apostle.'

(O people!) I have been informed that a speaker among you says, 'By Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ), if 'Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) should die, I will give the pledge of allegiance to such-and-such person.' One should not deceive oneself by saying that the pledge of allegiance given to Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) was given suddenly and it was successful. No doubt, it was like that, but Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) saved (the people) from its evil, and there is none among

you who has the qualities of Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه). Remember that whoever gives the pledge of allegiance to anybody among you without consulting other Muslims, neither that person, nor the person to whom the pledge of allegiance was given, are to be supported, lest they both should be killed.

And no doubt after the death of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) we were informed that the Ansar disagreed with us and gathered in the shed of Bani Sa'da. 'Ali (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and Zubair (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and whoever was with them, opposed us, while the emigrants gathered with Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه). I said to Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه), 'Let's go to these Ansari brothers of ours.' So we set out seeking them, and when we approached them, two pious men of theirs met us and informed us of the final decision of the Ansar, and said, 'O group of Muhajirin (emigrants)! Where are you going?' We replied, 'We are going to these Ansari brothers of ours.' They said to us, 'You shouldn't go near them. Carry out whatever we have already decided.' I said, 'By Allah, we will go to them.' And so we proceeded until we reached them at the shed of Bani Sa'da. Behold! There was a man sitting among them and wrapped in something. I asked, 'Who is that man?' They said, 'He is Sa'd bin 'Ubada.' I asked, 'What is wrong with him?' They said, 'He is sick.' After we sat for a while, the Ansar's speaker said, 'There is no god but Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ),' and praising Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) as He deserved, he added, 'To proceed, we are Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) Ansar (helpers) and the majority of the Muslim army, while you, the emigrants, are a small group and some people among you came with the intention of preventing us from practicing this matter (of caliphate) and depriving us of it.'

When the speaker had finished, I intended to speak as I had prepared a speech which I liked and which I wanted to deliver in the presence of Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه), and I used to avoid provoking him. So, when I wanted to speak, Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) said, 'Wait a while.' I disliked to make him angry. So Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) himself gave a speech, and he was wiser and more patient than I. By Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ), he never missed a sentence that I liked in my own prepared speech, but he said the like of it or better than it spontaneously. After a pause he said, 'O Ansar! You deserve all (the qualities that you have attributed to yourselves), but this question (of Caliphate) is only for the Quraish as they are the best of the Arabs as regards descent and home, and I am pleased to suggest that you choose either of these two men, so take the oath of allegiance to either of them as you wish. And then Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) held my hand and Abu Ubada bin Abdullah's (رضى الله تعالى عنه) hand who was sitting among us. I hated nothing of what he had said except that proposal, for by

Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ), I would rather have my neck chopped off as expiation for a sin than become the ruler of a nation, one of whose members is Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه), unless at the time of my death my own-self suggests something I don't feel at present.'

And then one of the Ansar said, 'I am the pillar on which the camel with a skin disease (eczema) rubs itself to satisfy the itching (ie., I am a noble), and I am as a high class palm tree! O Quraish. There should be one ruler from us and one from you.'

Then there was a hue and cry among the gathering and their voices rose so that I was afraid there might be great disagreement, so I said, 'O Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه)! Hold your hand out.' He held his hand out and I pledged allegiance to him, and then all the emigrants gave the Pledge of allegiance and so did the Ansar afterwards. And so we became victorious over Sa'd bin Ubada (whom Al-Ansar wanted to make a ruler).

One of the Ansar said, 'You have killed Sa'd bin Ubada.' I replied, 'Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) has killed Sa'd bin Ubada.' Umar (رضي الله تعالى عنه) added, 'By Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ), apart from the great tragedy that had happened to us (ie. the death of the Prophet - صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم), there was no greater problem than the allegiance pledged to Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه) because we were afraid that if we left the people, they might give the Pledge of allegiance after us to one of their men, in which case we would have given them our consent for something against our real wish, or would have opposed them and caused great trouble. So if any person gives the Pledge of allegiance to somebody (to become a Caliph) without consulting the other Muslims, then the one he has selected should not be granted allegiance, lest both of them should be killed. (Bukhari, Volume 8, Book 82, # 817)

The important points of the above Hadith

(i) Sa'ad bin Ubada, a relatively unknown person from Ansar organized a separate meeting of Ansaar which was kept secret as no one from the Ahle Bait, close associates of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) and Muhajirin (رضي الله تعالى عنهم اجمعين) were invited. He organized the secret gathering when everyone was struck from the grief of Prophet's (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) separation. He did not allow Sahabah to come out of the shock and organize a broad based gathering to plan for a smooth transition. His actions created confusion. Hadhrat Umar (رضي الله تعالى عنه) was a great visionary and it was because of his timely intervention and wisdom in leading the process of allegiance on

the hands of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه), that the Islamic nation was saved from an unpleasant situation at a most inopportune time. Realizing the wisdom of Hadhrat Umar's (رضي الله تعالى عنه) action, other Sahabah, both from Muhajirs and Ansaars, followed suit.

(ii) Hadhrat Ali (رضي الله تعالى عنه) and Hadhrat Zubair (رضي الله تعالى عنه) were not supporting Sa'ad bin Ubada or his Secret meeting. We cannot interpret or even visualize that Hadhrat Ali (رضي الله تعالى عنه) was supporting Sa'ad bin Ubaada, an unknown sick person from Ansar, to be the Caliph of Islamic nation. The fact of the matter is, both Hadhrat Ali (رضي الله تعالى عنه) and Hadhrat Zubair (رضي الله تعالى عنه) were in favor of a broad based consensus among Sahabah. They neither supported Ansar nor opposed Muhajirin. They did not want Muhajirs or Ansaar to hold separate meetings for selection of a Caliph. This was the reason they opposed any separate moves by Muhajirs or Ansaars. Shia misinterpret this action and claim that (nauzubillahi) Hadhrat Ali (رضي الله تعالى عنه) was against Hadhrat Abu Bakr's (رضي الله تعالى عنه) Caliphate. Shias have cooked up misleading stories on this issue and have gone astray.

(iii) It is established beyond doubt that Hadhrat Umar (رضي الله تعالى عنه), other Khulafa-e-Rashideen, Ahle Bait and Sahabah (رضي الله تعالى عنهم اجمعين) all believed in a democratic process in electing a consensus candidate to rule the Islamic nation. This is the reason, Hadhrat Umar (رضي الله تعالى عنه) emphasized in his address (in the above Hadith Bukhari) that no one should attempt to give allegiance to anyone for the Caliphate unless he consults with the rest of Sahabah. If someone attempts, it should be treated as null and void. Sa'ad bin Ubada did not allow a broad based consensus to emerge among Sahabah. However, Hadhrat Umar's (رضي الله تعالى عنه) timely action saved the Ummah from division in their ranks. If Sa'ad bin Ubada had not convened a secret meeting, the Sahabah would have got an opportunity to select the Caliph by a unanimous decision. In such a scenario also, the end result would have been the same as Sahabah would have selected Hadhrat Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه) without any hesitation since he was the best choice among them for the august responsibility. There cannot be a two opinions in this context.

(iv) Hadhrat Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه) was regarded as the best among Sahabah for Caliphate after Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم). This was manifested when Prophet Mohammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) asked Hadhrat Abu Bakr (رضي الله تعالى عنه) to lead the congregation prayers in his absence.

It is in Hadith - The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said "Tell Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) from my side to offer Salat to people (in my absence). (**Bukhari, Muslim, Tirimzi, Ibn Majah**)

It is in Hadith - Narrated Ummul Momineen Aisha (رضى الله تعالى عنها) : The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said "It does not behoove a people (not expected of my Sahabah) who have Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) among them to have anybody other than him as their Imam (Caliph) (**Tirmidhi**)

It is in Hadith - Narrated Ummul Momineen Aisha (رضى الله تعالى عنها) : The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) asked her : "Call your father (Abu Bakr - رضى الله تعالى عنه) and brother (Abd al-Rahman - رضى الله تعالى عنه) here so I will put something down in writing, for truly I fear lest someone forward a claim or form some ambition, and Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) and the believers refuse anyone other than Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه)." (**Muslim**)

HADHRAT UMAR (رضى الله تعالى عنه)

The best person to rule the Islamic nation after Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) was Hadhrat Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه). The Islamic history is a witness to this fact.

(1) It is in Hadith - Narrated by Hudhaifa and Ibn Mas'ud (رضى الله تعالى عنهما) : The Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said : "I don't know up till when I remain with you, so follow the ones (who will become Caliphs) after me. [Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) pointed towards Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه)]. (**Tirmidhi, Ahmad, Ibn Maja**)

(2) It is in Hadith - Hadhrat Ali (رضى الله تعالى عنه) spoke from the pulpit in Kufa : "The best of this Community after its Prophet are Hadhrat Abu

Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and Hadhrat Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه). (Narrated by Muhammad Ibn al-Hanafiyya - **Bukhari, Abu Dawud**; Narrated by Abd Khayr - **Ahmad**; Narrated by Abdullah Ibn Salama - **Ibn Majah**; Narrated by Shurayh - **Ibn Shadhan, al-Khatib, Ibn Abi Shayba, al-Lalika'i, Ibn Mandha, Ibn Asakir and others**). Ad-Dhahabi said it is a mass narrated Hadith.

(3) It is in Hadith - Narrated Ibn Abbas (رضى الله تعالى عنه): When Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) was placed on his deathbed, the people gathered around him, invoked Allah, and prayed for him before the body was taken away, and I was among them. Suddenly I felt somebody taking hold of my shoulder and saw that it was Ali ibn Abi Talib (رضى الله تعالى عنه). Ali (رضى الله تعالى عنه) invoked Allah's Mercy for Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and said : "O Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه)! You have not left behind you a person whose deeds I like to imitate more than yours, nor would I more prefer to meet Allah with other than your deeds. By Allah! I always thought that Allah would keep you with your two companions, for very often I used to hear the Prophet (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) saying : I, Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) went somewhere; I, Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه) entered someplace; and I, Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and Umar went out (رضى الله تعالى عنه)." **(Bukhari)**

(4) It is in Hadith - Narrated Anas (رضى الله تعالى عنه) : Allah's Apostle (صلى الله تعالى) ascended the mountain of Uhud with Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه), Umar (رضى الله تعالى عنه), and Uthman (رضى الله تعالى عنه), and the mountain shook. Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) said : "Be calm, O Uhud!" I think he stroked it with his foot and added : "There is none on you but a Prophet, a siddique, and two shahid." **(Bukhari)**

HADHRAT ALI (رضى الله تعالى عنه)

It is wrong to say that Hadhrat Ali's (رضى الله تعالى عنه) right of Caliphate was usurped.

It is in Hadith - Narrated by Sa'id Ibn Amr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) - On the day of the battle of the Camel, Hadhrat Ali (رضى الله تعالى عنه) said : "In truth, Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) did not give us a covenant concerning leadership (after him), but we did see something on our own (concerning his preference). Then Hadhrat Abu Bakr (رضى الله تعالى عنه) was made to follow him, and he kept to a righteous path, then Hadhrat Umar, (رضى الله تعالى عنه) and he kept to a righteous path, then the Religion was stabbed in the throat (with the killing of Hadhrat Uthman - رضى الله تعالى عنه)." **(Ahmed)**

Authentic accounts from Islamic History have recorded that Hadhrat Ali (رضى الله تعالى عنه) was never an eager contestant for the Caliphate. As a matter of fact, no one from among the Khulafa-e-Rashideen was an eager contestant for the Caliphate. The Caliphate was entrusted to them by the people as they were best suited to shoulder this important responsibility. Several accounts of Islamic history and literature have documented that Hadhrat Ali (رضى الله تعالى عنه) resisted to take up the responsibility of Caliphate for a long time. He eventually accepted it after Hadhrat Uthman's (رضى الله تعالى عنه) martyrdom when he was forced by the people under compulsive circumstances.