



Islamiyat

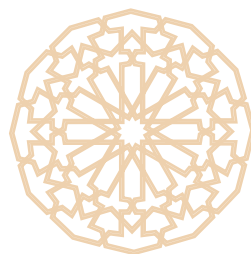
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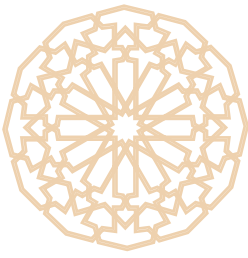
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Chapter One

Selected Verses from Quran

1. The Oneness of Allah

When a person accepts *tauheed*, or the Oneness of Allah, he acknowledges His greatness and majesty. They bear witness that all power and authority lie with Him alone; that He is eternal and ever living, having no beginning or end. By accepting *tauheed*, a person also confirms his belief that Allah is unique in His nature, names, and attributes.

The Arabic word *shirk* means to 'share'. In religious terms, it means to associate partners with Allah. *Shirk* can be seen as the opposite of *tauheed* which is the first principle of Islam. It is for this reason that *shirk* is regarded as the most unforgivable sin.

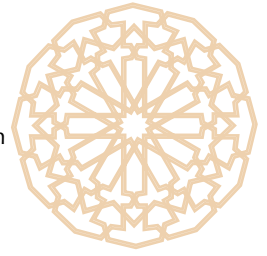
قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ ۙ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝
لَمْ يَلِدْ ۙ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ ۙ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝

Al-Ikhlās, Surah 112: 1-4

Translation

- 1: Say: He is Allah, the one and only;
- 2: Allah, the eternal, absolute;
- 3: He does not beget, nor is He begotten;
- 4: And there is none like Him.

This is an early Makkahn surah that describes in a few words—just four ayaat—the unique attributes of Allah. The emphasis is on *tauheed* (it is also known as Surah *tauheed*) and as opposed to other beliefs of the time, that Allah is unique in His oneness; that He always was, and will be—He is eternal and absolute in his authority; that He is above the need for another source for His presence nor does He need an offspring, and nor is there any equal to Him.



This surah was revealed at a time when detailed verses of the Qur'an dealing with the attributes of Allah had not yet been revealed. The people, hearing the Prophet's invitation to Allah, wanted to know what his God, to whose worship and service he was calling them, was like. This surah is complete in its message of *tauheed* and clearly forbids inclusion of anyone or anything with the worship of Allah (*shirk*).

2. Allah in Himself

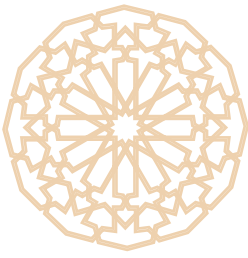
Allah is beyond any physical need or sustenance, unlike His creation. He does not need worshippers: it is human beings who need to be conscious of Him. No one can intercede unless Allah Himself permits, thus clarifying the true concept of *Tauheed* which is the integral Muslim belief in the Oneness of Allah and that there is no god or power other than Him.

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ
لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ
عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ
وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ
السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٢٥٥﴾

Al-Baqarah, Surah 2: 255

255: Allah. There is no god but He, the living, the self-subsisting, eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permits? He knows what is before or after or behind them. Nor shall they compass any of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for He is the Most High, the Supreme.

Translation



This ayat is from Surah Al-Baqarah which is a Madinan surah. It is known as the Verse of the Throne. The opening words of this ayat highlight *Tauheed*, the oneness of Allah; He is the source of all life (*Hayy*) and is eternal; He is above all needs. He alone by His will grants place and position to His beings. His knowledge is all-encompassing and not limited by time and space, and His power extends over all His creation.

The main theme of this ayat is Allah's majesty, His indescribable eternal glory, and His sovereignty.

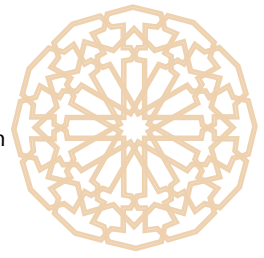
3. Nature of Belief in Allah

We cannot get to know and understand Allah the same way as we get to know someone we meet because we cannot see Allah, nor can we speak to Him. One way of getting to know Allah and to understand His nature is by His names.

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٢﴾
هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ
الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَنَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ
الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٤﴾

Surah-Al-Hashr 59: 22-24

- Translation
- 22: He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, Knower of the unseen and the witnessed. He is the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.
- 23: He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Perfection, the Grantor of Security, the Overseer, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Superior. Exalted is Allah above whatever they associate with Him.
- 24: He is Allah, the Creator, the Producer, the Fashioner; to Him



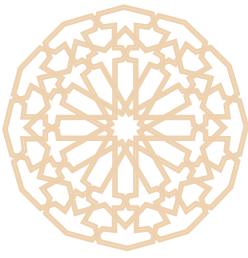
belong the best names. Whatever is in the heavens and earth is exalting Him. And He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise.

In these verses Allah informs us that nothing has the right to be worshipped except Him and then justifies that through giving us knowledge of Himself. Nothing in existence is hidden from Him in the heavens or the earth, no matter how small. Allah affirms Himself as al-Rahman and al-Raheem which includes two types of mercy. The first is for all of mankind as He provides them with sustenance in this world. The second type of mercy is exclusive for righteous believers on the Day of Judgement.

4. Major Beliefs

Faith or *Iman* represents a firm belief in the heart. Islamic teachings revolve around six beliefs of the Muslim faith. They are referred to as the Articles of Faith or *Iman e Mufassil*. These six core beliefs of all Muslims are:

- 1) *Tauheed*, belief in the Oneness of Allah
- 2) Belief in Angels, their nature and duties
- 3) Belief in the divinely revealed books, their content, and purpose
- 4) Belief in all the prophets of Allah, and their significance
- 5) Belief in Allah's predestination and decree
- 6) Belief in resurrection, and the Day of Judgement and its significance



اَمَّنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَّبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ اَمَّنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ
وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نَفَرِقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَاَطَعْنَا
غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَاِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨٥﴾

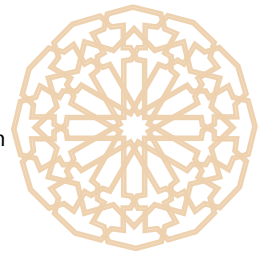
Surah Al-Baqarah, 2: 285

Translation 285: The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers, [saying], 'We make no distinction between any of His messengers.' And they say, 'We hear, and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination.'

These verses are a means of protection for the Muslim and are from the greatest of what was revealed by Allah. They begin with an affirmation of Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ in his belief that what was sent to him from Allah, including verses, commands, and prohibitions, was truthful. The believers and Prophets affirm this without making a distinction in their belief among any of His messengers. It is part of the faith of a Muslim that they must not reject any prophet that was sent by Allah. The believers are described as those who understand the commandments and prohibitions and do their best to apply them in their lives. They do this in hope of earning Allah's forgiveness and with the certainty of their return to Him. Allah will never burden a person more than what they are able to handle. This is specifically in relation to not being accountable for our thoughts as we are unable to control them entirely. The verse ends with a supplication from the believers, asking Allah to overlook their forgetfulness in performing actions He has commanded, mistakes in falling into any prohibitions, and seeking forgiveness and mercy, all which Allah has granted to the Muslim Ummah.

5. Allah's Relationship with His Creations

The seven verses of this compact Surah can be divided into three groups. The first four verses affirm Allah as the Lord of the Worlds,



His grace and mercy, and His authority over the Day of Judgement. The believer then confirms that he worships Allah alone and exclusively seeks His help. You do we worship, and Your aid we seek

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ۝ مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝
 إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝
 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۝ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝

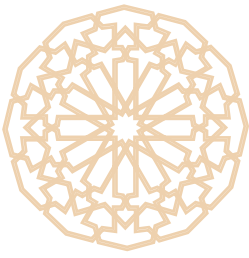
Al-Fatiha, Surah 1: 1-7

- 1: In the name of Allah, most gracious, most merciful.
- 2: Praise be to Allah, the cherisher and sustainer of the worlds;
- 3: Most gracious, most merciful;
- 4: Master of the day of judgment.
- 5: You we worship, and Your aid we seek.
- 6: Show us the straight way,
- 7: The way of those to whom You have given Your grace, not those who earn Your anger, nor those who go astray.

Translation

It is one of the early revelations and the first complete surah revealed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Al-Fatihah means the opening and indeed, in its complete and succinct detail of Allah's attributes and His relationship with His creation, the text of this surah is the lead to the message of the entire Qur'an. This surah is known as *Umm al-Kitab* (Mother of The Book) as in its seven ayaat, it is the foundation and essence of the Qur'an.

The first four ayaat, including the *tasmiyah*, focus on Allah's attributes — grace, compassion, mercy, the lord and sustainer of



the universe, and the master of the day of reckoning (judgement). All praise is for Allah alone. The next three ayaat are about man's relationship with his Creator, who is all-powerful, all-knowing, and yet most merciful. He alone is worthy of worship; it is only He whose help we seek. We pray to Him for guidance to show us the path of righteousness, which is blessed by Him, and to keep us from going astray towards that path on which His wrath falls. The surah also shows us the category of people who accept and abide by Allah's will and those who lose their way and go astray in the world.

The recitation of Surah al-Fatiha is referred to in the Qur'an as the seven oft-repeated verses because it is compulsory in each prayer and hence is recited seventeen times daily in the five obligatory prayers.

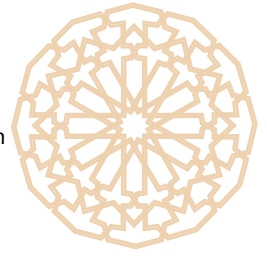
قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ۝ مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ۝ إِلَهِ النَّاسِ ۝
مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ۝ الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي
صُدُورِ النَّاسِ ۝ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ۝

Al-Nas, Surah 114: 1-6

Translation

- 1: Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind,
- 2: The King of mankind,
- 3: The God of Mankind,
- 4: From the mischief of the whisperer who withdraws,
- 5: Who whispers into the hearts of mankind,
- 6: Among jinns and among mankind.

Surah Al-Nas is an early Makkahn surah and was revealed when the opposition to the Prophet ﷺ had grown very intense. This is also the concluding surah of the Qur'an. Appropriately, the message here is to have complete faith and trust in Allah as our protector against all forms of evil rather than to fear



one who intends to harm us. The surah describes very well how evil finds its place in our hearts by whispering temptations, suspicion, and distrust. The Qur'an says: 'When you read the Qur'an, seek Allah's protection against the evil ones.' (16: 98). The surah also refers to the occasion when magic and charms were being worked on the Prophet ﷺ so as to cause his death. Shaitans, the misguided and evil ones from among humans and Jinns whispered into the hearts of the people against him. The Prophet used to recite these two surahs (Al-Nas and Al-Falaq) every night.

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ^١ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ^٢
اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ^٣ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ^٤ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا
لَمْ يَعْلَمْ^٥

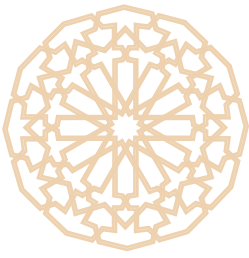
Al Alaq, Surah 96: 1–5

- 1: Read! in the name of your Lord, who created,
- 2: Created man out of a clot of congealed blood:
- 3: Proclaim! And your Lord is most bountiful,
- 4: He who taught by the pen,
- 5: Taught man what he did not know.

Translation

These five ayaat are the very first revelation brought to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ by the angel Hazrat Jibra'il عليه السلام while he was meditating in the cave of Hira, outside Makkah. This revelation was the beginning of the Qur'an to be continued for the next twenty-three years. The Prophet ﷺ is commanded to proclaim the truth in Allah's name and convey His message to the people.

The role of the Prophet ﷺ as a messenger of Allah is also confirmed. These ayaat draw attention to how man was created—from a drop of congealed blood—and how Allah has raised man from his humble beginning by giving him knowledge.



The word *iqra* also means to read and the importance of knowledge is thus emphasized, particularly also by the use of the word *qalam* (pen). The importance of Hazrat Jibra'il عليه السلام as the angel of revelation is also confirmed in this surah.

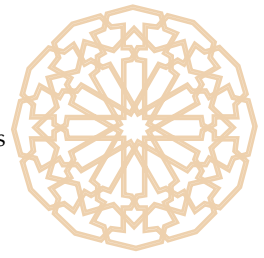
إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ۖ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانْحَرْ ۚ إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَقْتَرُ ۝

Al-Kawthar, Surah 108: 11-3

Translation

- 1: To you have We granted abundance.
- 2: So, pray to your Lord and sacrifice.
- 3: For he who hates you, he will be cut off.

Al-Kawthar means abundance. This surah was revealed at Makkah during the early stages, when the Prophet ﷺ was enduring extremely difficult conditions. The disbelieving Quraysh used to taunt him for not having any male progeny as his sons had died in infancy: 'now he is *abtar* (cut off from the root)'. Further, he was cut off from his community by the powerful Quraysh disbelievers. The revelation of Surah Al-Kawthar at this point confirmed Allah's support for His messenger and promised eternal reward. As we see, those who opposed and tormented the Prophet ﷺ were the ones who lost in this life and the hereafter, whereas the Prophet's ﷺ name lives on through his message and his followers all over the world and over the centuries, and his lineage continued through his daughter, Fatima, and her children. The first verse gives the Prophet ﷺ good tidings of abundance from Allah; in the next verse, he is called upon to thank Allah and sacrifice in gratitude, and in the last verse, Allah says that those who oppose and torment the Prophet ﷺ will be cut off from all hope of salvation.



Chapter Two

The Rightly Guided Caliphs

1. The Leading Companions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ attracted followers from the very beginning of his preaching in Makkah. Among these were his wife Hazrat Khadija رضي الله تعالى عنها, his cousin Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه, and his good friend Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه. As he continued to proclaim the Oneness of Allah, others in Makkah came to join him, despite the difficulties they encountered at the hands of their fellow townsfolk. By the time of the Hijra, there were about seventy Muslims who were prepared to leave their homes and move to Madina. In the following years, the number of Muslims expanded dramatically, and by the time of his death, the Holy Prophet ﷺ had thousands of followers. Many of these would have conversed personally with him and remembered the words he had said.

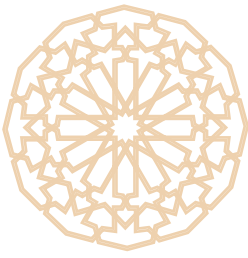
The Prophet ﷺ spoke very highly of his Companions. On one occasion he said:

My Companions are like the stars: whichever of them you follow, you will be guided.

He also said:

The best of my people are my generation; then they come after them; then they that come after them.

These sayings help us see the importance of the Companions as examples of how Muslims should live. These men and women witnessed the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in his daily life, as well as in the great events of his career, so their lives were the first imitations of his.



2. Khulafa al-Rashidun (The Four Prominent Caliphs)

The Khulafa al-Rashidun are the four Rightly Guided Caliphs who succeeded the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ; they played a significant role in consolidating and strengthening the religion and spreading it beyond Arabia.

The word *khalifa* means representative, deputy, or vicegerent.

The word is used in the Qur'an with reference to the first prophet

ﷺ, Hazrat Adam عليه السلام, when Allah tells the angels that He has created him to be His khalifa, i.e. vicegerent on earth.

The Khulafa-al-Rashidun were the first four Rightly Guided Caliphs

who succeeded the Messenger of Allah ﷺ after his demise in CE 632. The four caliphs were: Hazrat Abu Bakr

رضي الله تعالى عنه, Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه, Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه, and Hazrat 'Ali

رضي الله تعالى عنه. Their thirty-year rule in Madina has been accepted as being in accord with the teachings of the Qur'an and the Prophet's

ﷺ sunnah, and their caliphates are seen as the model for Muslim society.

3. Hazrat Abu Bakr al-Siddiq رضي الله تعالى عنه

He was known as *al-Siddiq* (he was also called 'Atiq, i.e.

handsome), and was as close as any Companion to the Holy

Prophet ﷺ. In fact, the Prophet Muhammad

ﷺ said as he was dying: 'If I were able to

choose a friend on earth, I would choose Abu Bakr.' They knew

each other from childhood, and when the Prophet Muhammad

ﷺ made his first proclamation about the

Oneness of Allah, Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه was among the first to

accept Islam. He became a Muslim readily, without hesitation, and

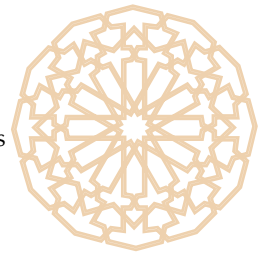
he immediately began to make his new faith known and called

others to accept it.

After the death of his mother, Hazrat Muhammad

ﷺ was looked after by his grandfather 'Abd

al-Muttalib, and after he died in CE 578, when Hazrat Muhammad



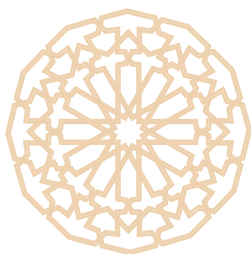
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ was eight years old, his uncle Abu Talib, who was a leader of the Quraysh, became his guardian. Abu Talib was a merchant, and Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ travelled with him on his business journeys.

4. The Caliphate of Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه

The Prophet's close companion, Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه, was thus accepted by the majority as the first Caliph of the Ummah. He took the title 'Khalifa-tul-Rasul-Allah', 'Successor of the Messenger of Allah'. After assuming this office, he gave another memorable speech which reflected his humility. 'I have been given authority over you and I am not the best of you. If I do well, help me; and if I do wrong, set me right. ...Obey me as long as I obey Allah and His messenger. But if I disobey Allah and His messenger, you owe me no obedience.' He then called the Muslims to prayer. Hazrat Abu Bakr's رضي الله تعالى عنه short caliphate of a little over two years was marked by two main concerns: the first was to ensure the unity of the Ummah by putting down the uprisings that began after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and the second was to continue with the expedition to Syria planned by the Prophet ﷺ.

The False Prophets

There had been some unrest among the tribes even during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but after his death some of them were in open revolt. They reneged on their pledge of loyalty to the Prophet ﷺ, refused to pay Zakat, and did not accept the authority of the caliphate, besides taking oaths of allegiance to figures who came forward claiming to be prophets. This revolt against Islam is known as the *rida* or apostasy movement and was a major threat to Madina itself, and to the survival of the faith and unity of Muslims. Dealing with this was a major challenge for Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه. He called a meeting of his *Shura* (advisory council) to seek their advice. Many of them dissuaded the Caliph from confrontation as it would further weaken the community, but Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه was determined and



firm in his decision to take prompt action against the rebels, lest the movement should gain strength. Troops were gathered in Madina and sent to the opposing tribes under selected commanders, with clear instructions.

Social Conditions

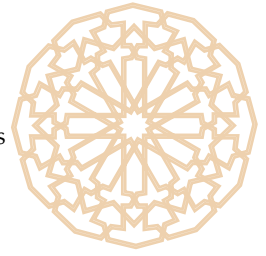
The fundamental principle of the Arab society was based on 'might is right' and the Arabs raided trading caravans and robbed highway travellers. Society was morally corrupt and the evils of gambling, drinking alcohol, stealing, usury and other unfair practices were common. Slavery was also common, and the slave owners enjoyed the right of life or death over their slaves.

The Battle of Yamama

This battle, fought in December 632, was the significant event that decided Musailimah's fate. He was in command of an army of 40,000 Bedouin, some of whom did not believe in his claims but had joined the force only to support their tribe. Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه had first sent Ikrimah and Shurabil ibn Hasanah and then sent a larger force under the command of Hazrat Khalid ibn al-Walid رضي الله تعالى عنه to Yamama. The Muslims, numbering 13,000, fought a long drawn-out battle with many casualties as Musailimah's forces put up a strong resistance. Eventually, Musailimah was killed by Wahshi al-Harb—who had killed Hazrat Hamza رضي الله تعالى عنه in the battle of Uhud before his conversion to Islam.

The Compilation Quran

Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه was also instrumental in preserving the Qur'an in written form. After the hard-won victory in the Battle of Yamama in which many of those who had memorized the Qu'ran lost their lives, Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه requested Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه to have the Qu'ran compiled, lest it may be lost, forgotten, or corrupted. Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه put Zayd ibn Thabit, one of the scribes of the Holy Book, in charge of this task along with a group, to collect the texts of all the verses from the surviving *huffaz* and companions of the Prophet. These were then compared, authenticated, and compiled into a single volume and presented

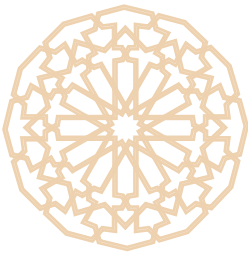


to Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه. This authorized copy was given by Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه to Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه, who on his deathbed gave it to his daughter, Hazrat Hafsa رضي الله تعالى عنها, the Holy Prophet's widow, for safekeeping.

The Byzantine Expedition

The Byzantine governor in Syria had the Muslim messengers killed. The Prophet, in 630, sent a volunteer force, under the command of Zayd ibn Haritha, but these men were no match for the well-equipped and trained Byzantine forces and suffered defeat at the battle of Mu'ta. Zayd ibn Haritha was also killed in this battle along with Jafar Tayyar and 'Abdullah ibn Rawaha.

Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ, in 632, had organized another force under the command of Usama ibn Zayd ibn Haritha, but the expedition was postponed on account of the Prophet's ill health. Subsequently, Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه took it upon himself to respond to the events at Mu'ta. He sent to Syria four groups led by Hazrat Abu 'Ubayda ibn al-Jarrah رضي الله تعالى عنه, Amr ibn al-A's, Yazid ibn Abu Sufyan, and Shurahbil ibn al-Hasanah, respectively. These armies fought successfully, but when the emperor Heraclius came to know, he dispatched a large army led by his brother Theodorus. When Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه learnt of this, he sent Hazrat Khalid ibn al-Walid رضي الله تعالى عنه, a fierce warrior, as commander-in-chief of the Syrian forces. Khalid, who was leading a campaign in Iraq, took 9000 of his best men and reached Syria in 18 days—a swift march in those times. The confrontation, the Battle of Ajnadayn, was a decisive one where the organization and war tactics of the Muslims helped them to rout the much larger and better equipped Byzantine army, and to conquer Palestine and then Syria by laying siege to Damascus. The role of Hazrat Khalid ibn al-Walid رضي الله تعالى عنه and his military strategies were significant in achieving these victories which opened the way to the establishment of Islam in Iraq and Syria.



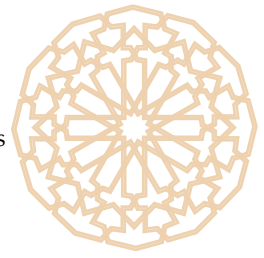
The Persian Expedition

After the victory over the Byzantines, Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه focused on the Persian Empire, which was vast, strong, and wealthy. The emperor Chosroes II had rejected the Muslim representatives sent by Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ by ridiculing them and going as far as suggesting that the invitation to Islam was insubordination by its 'colony' which merited punishment. Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه started with the invasion of Iraq which was part of the Persian Empire. The problem was that Arabs had an underlying fear of the Persians' military might. To overcome this and to assure victory, Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه raised a volunteer force and placed the indomitable Hazrat Khalid ibn al-Walid رضي الله تعالى عنه in command; he was supported by reinforcements led by other powerful tribal chiefs from northern Arabia. Hazrat Abu Bakr's رضي الله تعالى عنه judicious selection of commanders for the Muslim forces ensured success. In 633 Khalid entered the Persian Empire at the head of 18,000 men and won four decisive victories from March to May 633, and finally besieged and captured the provincial capital, Hira. After a brief respite, Khalid's troops laid siege to al-Anbar in June 633 and conquered it in July 633.

After further success in Byzantines, almost all of Iraq—the Euphrates region—was under Muslim control. Returning from a successful battle at Daumatul-Jandal, Khalid learnt of the Persian armies gathering against the Muslims. Here again, his military strategy paid off as he crushed them in three coordinated attacks and finally, in the Battle of Firaz, a border city, in December 633, the Muslims defeated the combined forces of the Persians, Byzantines and Christian Arabs to conclusively end Persian authority in Iraq.

5. The Death Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه

Hazrat Abu Bakr's رضي الله تعالى عنه death in 13 AH/CE 634 brought his brief but turbulent caliphate to an end. He is remembered for his devotion to Allah and his faith, as well as for his loyalty to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his emulation of the Prophet's example in the simplicity of his life, shorn of the trappings of a ruler.



Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه died in the last week of August 634; his funeral prayer was led by Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه. He was buried the same night beside the Holy Prophet's رَسُولُ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ grave in Hazrat 'Ai'sha's رضي الله تعالى عنها house, near Masjid al-Nabavi.

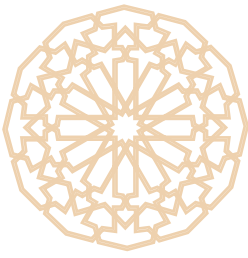
6. Nomination of Successor

In early August 634, Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه fell ill and never recovered. His illness was prolonged, and when his condition worsened, he realized that his end was near and that he should nominate his successor so that the Muslim community did not fall into confusion and controversy. After discussion with his close companions, he appointed Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه as his successor and dictated his decision to Hazrat 'Uthman ibn Affan رضي الله تعالى عنه.

7. Hazrat Umar Ibn al-Khitab رضي الله تعالى عنه

He had the reputation of being one of the fiercest men in Makkah, and his conversion to Islam boosted the Muslims' morale, and gave them some protection against the Quraysh. One Muslim said: 'We could not pray at the Ka'ba until he became a Muslim, and when he did so, he fought the Quraysh until he could pray there and we joined him.'

Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه became a Muslim at the time when the early Muslims had fled to Abyssinia. Angry at what he had heard about Hazrat Muhammad's رَسُولُ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ teachings, he set out to kill him. But when he was told that his own sister Fatima and brother-in-law Sa'id ibn Zayd, had become Muslims, he made for their house. As he approached, he overheard Khabbab ibn Aratt reading them part of Surah Ta Ha (20), and bursting in, he demanded to see the sheet on which the revelation was written. Fatima and Zayd resisted, but in his anger, he pushed them roughly out of the way. He did, however, agree to wash before handling the sheets, and when he finally read the words of the surah, he was changed. He immediately went to the Prophet Muhammad رَسُولُ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to accept Islam.



8. The Caliphate of Hazrat Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه

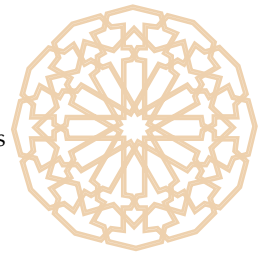
Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه assumed office as the second caliph on the same day that his predecessor died. Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه continued the expansion of Islam begun by the Prophet Muhammad رَسُولُ اللَّهِ خَاتَمُ النَّبِيِّينَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه and, under his rule, Muslim armies gained territory in Syria, Iraq, Persia, and Egypt. The caliphate of Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه is considered remarkable for the fact that he not only extended the boundaries of the Islamic Empire, but also established an infrastructure that would hold these dominions together. He undertook many administrative reforms to govern the newly added territories, set up ministries and departments, created administrative posts, established garrison towns, marked provinces for effective governance, and ordered a census of all the Muslim territories.

The Battle of Marwa

It took place in late 634 and was led by Abu 'Ubaydah Thaqifi, a tribal leader, who was accompanied by Muthanna Shaybani. The Persian forces, 4000 strong, were under the command of Rustam and they gathered on the eastern bank of River Euphrates. The Muslims built a bridge of boats across the river; hence this event came to be known as the Battle of the Bridge. However, they were overrun when they crossed to the other side to fight the Persians who charged with their elephant cavalry. The Muslims were trapped when the bridge collapsed. Abu 'Ubaydah was killed along with his kinsmen and many others, but Muthanna saved the day and the remaining Muslim forces by holding the bridge.

The Battle of Buwayab

The memory of defeat at Marwa was fresh in Muslim minds, but Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه consoled and motivated them into mobilizing a new force comprising Christian Arabs as well. Muthanna Shaybani, though seriously wounded, was placed in command, and he effectively encouraged and inspired his men. The battle took place at Buwayab on the western bank of the Euphrates. The Persian



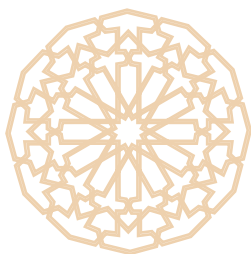
army of 12,000 was led by Mehran Hamadani who was killed in the battle by a young man of the Taghlib tribe. His death left his troops demoralized and scattered, and the Arabs, blocking access to the bridge, eliminated the retreating army. Southern Iraq was now under Muslim control. Their victory over the Persians ended the fear and awe the Arabs had felt towards them.

The Battle of Al-Qadssiya

The Battle of Al-Qadissiya in 636 was the turning point in the Iraq campaign. The Persians, planning to avenge their defeat at Buwayab, began to put together a huge army against the Arabs. The well-known commanders Hazrat Khalid ibn al-Walid رضي الله تعالى عنه and Abu 'Ubaydah were occupied on the Syrian front, so Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه gave the command to Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas, a veteran from Badr. The Muslim army of 30,000, on Hazrat 'Umar's رضي الله تعالى عنه orders, camped at al-Qadissiya, a small town near Kufa. The Persian army of 60,000 men also included an elephant corps and a large cavalry battalion. Rustam, the Persian commander had the channel blocked overnight and his troops crossed over to attack the Muslim army. A contingent of 6000 from Syria had reinforced the Muslim forces. Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas employed successful strategies, making best use of the archers to overcome the elephant corps and using his forces tactically to break the Persians. On the third and final day of this battle, Rustam was caught and killed while trying to swim to safety, and the Persians were routed. Sa'ad chased them to Babal where they had sought refuge, and then after a two-month campaign to cross the River Tigris, the Muslims captured Yazdgird's capital, Mada'in.

The fall of Damascus

As mentioned above, Hazrat Abu 'Ubayda رضي الله تعالى عنه and Hazrat Khalid ibn al-Walid رضي الله تعالى عنه were occupied on the Syrian front during the Iraq campaign. Khalid organized the siege and capture of Damascus, a city known for its wealth and culture. The Syrians were hoping for reinforcements from the Byzantine emperor, Heraclius, or else that the severity of the Syrian winter would break the Muslim resolve.



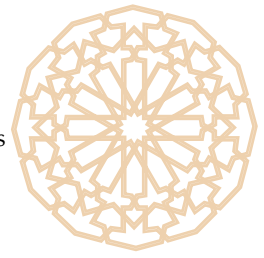
However, that did not happen; instead, the Muslims led by Khalid swam across the moat and, using rope ladders, scaled the walls. When the Syrians panicked and threw open the gates to escape, the remaining Muslim forces rushed in and occupied the city.

The Battle of Fihl

The Battle of Fihl resulted in the addition of the province of Jordan to the Islamic Empire. The site was on the western side of Lake Tiberias where the water channels separated the Muslims from the Christians, who were waiting for reinforcements and offered negotiations, hoping the Muslims would back down. The Romans attacked the Muslims in small groups. Khalid saw through this tactic and gradually retreated, drawing the enemy forces further in; he then surrounded them and launched a furious attack. The Romans suffered heavy casualties and those who survived scattered and fled. Thus Jordan was secured and Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه sent specific instructions on how to deal with the conquered people and their land.

The Battle of Yarmuk

Heraclius was determined to recover Palestine—the Holy Land—for Christian rule. Hazrat Khalid ibn al-Walid رضي الله تعالى عنه began to group his forces along the River Yarmuk, a tributary of River Jordan, south of the Sea of Galilee. The war strategies of the Muslim commanders paid off successfully and the Romans suffered heavy losses and defeat. The Muslims also had to bear the loss of 3000 lives besides those who were grievously wounded. The Battle of Yarmuk, however, proved to have lasting consequences and permanently altered the history of the southern Mediterranean region. Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه fell into a prayer of gratitude before Allah, when he received news of success at Yarmuk. Though the Muslims had been successful in securing almost all of Syria, the city of Jerusalem, besieged by 'Amr ibn al-A's since the Yarmuk conflict, had withstood surrender. They agreed to surrender but only to the Caliph himself, in person. Hence Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه decided to go to Jerusalem where he not only visited Masjid-al-Aqsa but also the Christian churches and other historical sites.



The Battle of Nihawand

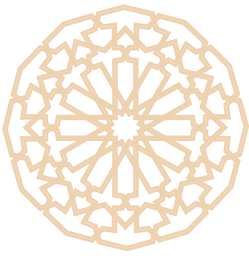
The Persian emperor prepared for the battle by mobilizing troops from all over the Persian provinces. When the Muslim forces reached Nihawand, they were outnumbered three to one by the Persians who had also blocked the way to their camp by strewing thorn wood and spikes. The Persians advanced, killing and wounding many in the front ranks, but when they were deeper in the melee, the Muslims closed in on them and attacked ferociously. The retreating Persians were blocked by the same obstacles they had strewn in the path of the Muslims, and by the end of the day, 30,000 Persians had been killed.

The Fall of Alexandria

'Amr ibn al-A's approached the massive and well-defended fort at the base of the Nile delta but could make no headway. Reinforcements requested for arrived from Madina, led by four brilliant commanders, Zubayr ibn al-Awwam, 'Ubada ibn al-Samit, Miqdad ibn 'Umar, Maslama ibn Mukhallad. 'Amr handed over the operations to Zubayr who captured the fort after a seven-month long siege, by scaling the walls and opening the gates for the Muslim army to enter. This fort later became the garrison town of Fustat. The governor of Fustat who had surrendered to 'Amr made his way to Alexandria as the Roman governor of Egypt. Despite attacks and a long siege, the Muslims had little success. Hazrat 'Umar wrote a strongly worded letter to 'Amr ibn al-A's, expressing his displeasure at the pace of events. The latter then read out the Caliph's letter to his troops and exhorted them into action. Led by 'Ubada ibn al-Samit, Zubayr ibn Awwam, and Maslama ibn Mukhallad, the troops stormed and captured Alexandria.

9. Hazrat Umar's رضي الله تعالى عنه Reforms

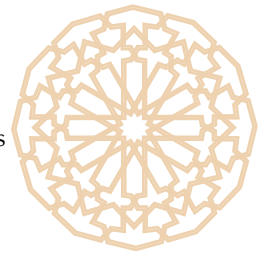
- Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه is remembered for the administrative measures he put into place. Among these was the register, the *diwan*, he arranged to have drawn up, of all those who were entitled to state pensions for their part in the expansion of Islam.



- Other measures associated with Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه are the foundation of the office of *qadi* (judge), the Muslim calendar, regulations concerning observance of prayer, fasting and pilgrimage, and many others.
- His stable and systematic government established peace and prosperity in the new state.
- Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه adopted and introduced a democratic system of government, setting up two councils. One of these was the General Assembly which was convened by making a general announcement and whereby only matters of special national importance were discussed. The other was the Special Council, meant for the conduct of daily business.
- Hazrat 'Umar's رضي الله تعالى عنه reforms included creation of provinces for more effective government of the growing Islamic territories and the appointment of capable officials.
- During his caliphate, hundreds of mosques were built, and *muezzins* and *imams* were employed by the state to lead the prayers.
- To spread the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه appointed qualified teachers who were paid out of the State Treasury.
- Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه established a society which was based on the verse of the Holy Qur'an:
'The most honorable among you is the one who is most God-fearing.'

10. The Death of Hazrat Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه

When Hazrat Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه met Muslim commanders in Palestine and saw they were dressed in silk, he expressed great annoyance. This characteristic may also have caused his death, because he was



assassinated by Abu Lu'lu'a, a slave, when he rejected all his appeals to be relieved from paying a tax.

As he had willed, Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه was also buried in Madina, next to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه.

11. Hazrat 'Uthman Ibn 'Affan رضي الله تعالى عنه

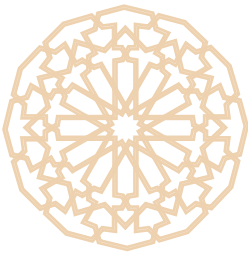
He was among the early Muslims who accepted Islam at the hands of Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه. He was married to the Prophet's third daughter Ruqayya. With her, he was among the emigrants to Abyssinia. When he migrated to Madina, Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه was able to take enough wealth to make himself and his wife comfortable. He increased his financial security by continuing the caravan trade he had practised in Makkah. At the time of the Battle of Badr, he was requested by the Holy Prophet ﷺ to remain in Madina to look after Ruqayya, but she died before the battle was won. In the same year, Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ offered Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه the hand of his second daughter Umm Kulthum.

12. The Caliphate of Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه

As Hazrat 'Umar's رضي الله تعالى عنه final moments drew near, he appointed a panel of six elders as the *shura* and asked them to reach a consensus on the nomination of any one of them as the next caliph. The consensus then was on Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه to hold this august office. Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه continued many of Hazrat 'Umar's رضي الله تعالى عنه policies, including the expansion of Islamic rule. Persia, Armenia, North Africa and parts of the eastern Mediterranean were all brought under the growing empire during his twelve years in the caliphate.

Appointment of Governors

Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه placed close relatives as governors over many of the new provinces. His nephew, Hazrat Mu'awiya ibn Abu Sufyan رضي الله تعالى عنه, had already been appointed governor of Syria by Hazrat



‘Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه, but now he was granted control over more territory. Other relatives of the Caliph were appointed governors of Basra and Kufa in southern Iraq, and of Egypt, and he also made his relatives his close advisers. His reason for doing this may well have been to ensure loyalty towards himself and to secure the unity of the empire.

Growth of Strong Criticism

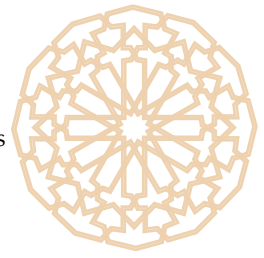
The granting of a fifth of the war booty to an individual, his cousin Marwan ibn Hakam, and favouring him above others brought Hazrat ‘Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه under open censure. Marwan continued to be a controversial and negative influence throughout Hazrat ‘Uthman’s رضي الله تعالى عنه caliphate. The Caliph came under criticism when, on circulating the official correct version of the Qur’an prepared by Zayd ibn Thabit, he destroyed various older copies of the Qur’an collected from the different parts of the empire, although his intention was to ensure that only the correct version should be read. He was also thought, by some Muslims, to be surrounded by people who gave bad advice and took advantage of his age and weakness.

Unrest against Hazrat ‘Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه

Disquiet about Hazrat ‘Uthman’s policies led to an uprising, first in Iraq, then in Kufa, and then in Egypt. Finally, troops from all three provinces advanced on Madina to take their complaints directly to the Caliph. The force from Egypt arrived first and angrily besieged Hazrat ‘Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه in his house, but when he agreed to their demands, they were pacified. They began their journey home, but hearing he had tricked them, they turned back and began a second siege.

13. The Death of Hazrat ‘Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه

During the second siege, some of the Egyptian force, led by Hazrat Abu Bakr’s رضي الله تعالى عنه son Muhammad, entered the house and murdered the Caliph. It is said that they came upon him while he was reading the Qur’an, and that his blood was shed on its pages, and also that



his wife Na'ila was injured in the affray, while trying to protect him. The Caliph's body was buried by his family in secrecy.

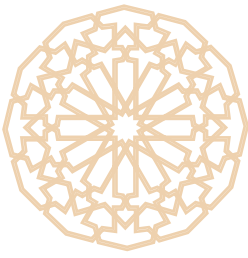
Hazrat 'Uthman's رضي الله تعالى عنه nephew Hazrat Mu'awiya رضي الله تعالى عنه had sent troops from Syria to support him, though they arrived too late to save his life. But the governor did not rest until he hunted down all the assassins of his uncle that he could find, and he demanded that all those responsible for this atrocity should be dealt with as they deserved.

Hazrat 'Uthman's رضي الله تعالى عنه murder was to have terrible consequences throughout the community of Islam.

14. Hazrat 'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضي الله تعالى عنه

He was the son of the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه وسلم uncle and foster father Abu Talib. After marrying Hazrat Khadija رضي الله تعالى عنها, Hazrat Muhammad صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه وسلم took Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه into his house to relieve Abu Talib of some of his burdens. Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه became one of the first to accept Islam, following Hazrat Khadija رضي الله تعالى عنها and Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه. At this time, he was only ten or eleven years old.

Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه is remembered as the one whom the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه وسلم had asked to sleep in his bed on the night of the Hijra, thus allowing him and Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه to get away. And, as the Prophet صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه وسلم had requested, he was also able to return all the items which the Prophet صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه وسلم had been holding in trust for their owners. Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه joined his cousin and Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه at Quba outside Madina. In the second year of the Hijra, he married the Holy Prophet's صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه وسلم youngest daughter Hazrat Fatima رضي الله تعالى عنها. In the third and the fourth years of the Hijra, his sons Hassan and Husayn were born, respectively. In the battles fought by the Muslims, Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه distinguished himself as a fierce warrior. Before the battle of Badr, he was one of three Muslims who engaged in single combat, and he was chosen to carry the Muslim banner into the fighting, where he killed many Quraysh. At Uhud, the Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه وسلم again gave



him the Muslim banner, after the original bearer had been killed, and he was one of the Muslims who defended the Holy Prophet ﷺ after he was wounded. At the Battle of al-Khandaq, he defeated his foe in single combat, and he was among the leaders in the siege of the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayza. He courageously used a door as a shield at Khaybar. He defended the Holy Prophet ﷺ at Hunayn. At the Muslim entry into Makkah, he once again carried the Muslim banner. He was also sent as the commander of the Muslim forces in the expeditions to Fadak and Yemen. Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه distinguished himself in other ways, too. He was the scribe who wrote the treaty of al-Hudaybiya and was one of the witnesses to it. When the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ died, Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه washed his body and buried it in Hazrat 'Aisha's رضي الله تعالى عنها apartment.

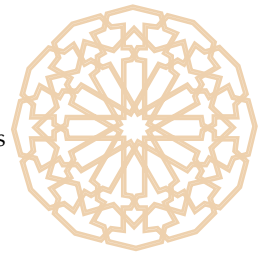
15. The Caliphate of Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه

Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه and his supporters had always claimed that he was the just successor to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. However, during the caliphates of Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه, Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه and Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه, he had not pushed this claim hard, and now in the turmoil following Hazrat 'Uthman's رضي الله تعالى عنه murder, he was accepted as the leader of the community. But there were several opponents to his right to rule, among them Hazrat Mu'awiya رضي الله تعالى عنه, kinsman of the slain caliph.

The Consequences of Hazrat 'Uthman's رضي الله تعالى عنه Murder

Hazrat 'Ali's رضي الله تعالى عنه controversial election as the last of the Khulafa-al-Rashidun, supported by rebels from the provinces and the Ansar, divided the Ummah into three groups:

- the supporters of Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه, who upheld the right of the Banu Hashim;
- the Umayyads and their partisans, who claimed leadership of the Arabs, as opposed to the Banu Hashim, and
- the Quraysh who hoped to return to the caliphates of Hazrat Abu Bakr رضي الله تعالى عنه and Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه.



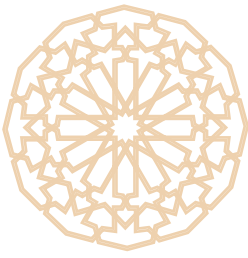
Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه very quickly took some of the measures demanded by Hazrat 'Uthman's رضي الله تعالى عنه adversaries. He replaced the governors who had been appointed by his predecessor with men who supported him, and he distributed the wealth that Hazrat 'Umar رضي الله تعالى عنه and Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه had ordered to be kept aside. But his lack of action or slow response against Hazrat 'Uthman's رضي الله تعالى عنه murderers provoked strong reactions, especially from Hazrat Mu'awiya رضي الله تعالى عنه, who accused him of siding with them.

The Battle of the Camel

Before the differences with Hazrat Mu'awiya رضي الله تعالى عنه could further develop, Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه was forced to confront other critics. Hazrat 'A'isha رضي الله تعالى عنها, the Prophet's widow, who was in Makkah, openly denounced him, and was joined by the two companions, Hazrat Talha رضي الله تعالى عنه and Hazrat Zubayr رضي الله تعالى عنه. They demanded that Hazrat 'Uthman's رضي الله تعالى عنه murderers should be brought to justice, and that there should be reforms in the community. Makkah was in open revolt against Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه. When he appointed a governor for the city, the Makkahns refused to swear allegiance to a supporter of Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه. Instead, the Umayyads held the latter responsible for Hazrat 'Uthman's رضي الله تعالى عنه death. With a few hundred fighting men, they set out for Iraq in the hope of finding more supporters, and Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه was forced to pursue them. The Battle of the Camel took place near Basra: Hazrat Talha رضي الله تعالى عنه and Hazrat Zubayr رضي الله تعالى عنه were killed after a defeat, Hazrat 'A'isha رضي الله تعالى عنها was conducted back to Madina. Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه appointed a new governor for Basra and moved his headquarters to Kufa, where his support was strongest.

The Battle of Siffin

Hazrat 'Ali's رضي الله تعالى عنه differences with Hazrat Mu'awiya رضي الله تعالى عنه came to a climax when Hazrat Mu'awiya رضي الله تعالى عنه insisted that Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه had been killed unjustly and that his murderers should be punished. He moved against the Caliph, and the two forces met at Siffin. The fighting proved indecisive for many days; it was decided that the outcome should be decided not by warfare, but by consulting Allah's Word. Hazrat Abu Musa al-Ash'ari رضي الله تعالى عنه



represented Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه and Hazrat 'Amr ibn al-A's رضي الله تعالى عنه represented Hazrat Mu'awiya رضي الله تعالى عنه. It was decided that if they agreed that Hazrat 'Uthman رضي الله تعالى عنه had acted against the teachings of the divine law, then his killing would be just and his assassins would go unpunished; but if he had acted in accordance with the law, then his killers would be seen as criminals and Hazrat Mu'awiya رضي الله تعالى عنه would be right to demand their punishment.

When the two arbitrators of Siffin first declared their decision, Hazrat 'Amr ibn al-A's declared that, while Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه should step down, Hazrat Mu'awiya رضي الله تعالى عنه should be confirmed as a caliph; however, many Muslims condemned this as a trick.

16. The Death of Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه

In the increasing difficulties, he was suddenly attacked by 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam, a Kharijite who wanted revenge for the killings at al-Nahrawan, and he died two days later. Hazrat 'Ali رضي الله تعالى عنه was buried in secret, but in later years his tomb was identified some miles from Kufa, in present-day southern Iraq, and a memorial was erected over it. The town of Najaf grew up around this spot.