

Taḥqīq Mawāqif al-Şaḥābah fīl-Fitnah

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Transliteration key

أ-'	ض - ḍ
آ - ā	ط - ṭ
ب - b	ظ - ḏ
ت - t	ع - ʿ
ث - th	غ - gh
ج - j	ف - f
ح - ḥ	ق - q
خ - kh	ك - k
د - d	ل - l
ذ - dh	م - m
ر - r	ن - n
ز - z	و - w, ū
س - s	ه - h
ش - sh	ي - y, ī
ص - ṣ	

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Foreword

Dr. Fārūq Ḥamādah

All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. Peace and salutations be upon our master, Muḥammad, his family, his companions, and those that follow in their way till the Day of Judgment.

The subject matter of this dissertation, *Establishing the stance of the Ṣaḥābah in the face of the fitnah (turmoil) according to the narration of Imām al-Ṭabarī and the scholars of ḥadīth*, is of grave importance as it addresses the ever evolving condition of the Muslim ummah. It will continue to determine the success in the evolution of the Muslims as long as it remains in vogue amongst the masses and its lessons expounded by the historians.

The above rings especially true as the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ revolutionized the human condition and lived an era of unprecedented progress of the spiritual self. They form part of the miracles of prophethood and proofs of the true Islamic creed.

The character that governed their lives was unlike any other nation that had come before them, nor surpassed by those who came after them. Consider the following traits of the nations of the past.

The Banū Isrā'īl said to Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, their greatest Prophet:

قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَنَنُذِخُهَا حَتَّىٰ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دَاخِلُونَ قَالَ رَجُلَيْنِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمَا ادْخُلُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَانكَبْ غَابِرُونَ وَعَلَىٰ اللَّهُ فَتْوَكُلُوا إِن كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى إِنَّا لَنَنُذِخُهَا أَبَدًا مَا دَامُوا فِيهَا فَادْهَبْ أَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلَا إِنَّا هَاهُنَا قَاعِدُونَ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَأَخِي فَافْرِقْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُتَحَرِّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً يَتِيهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ

They said, "O Mūsā, indeed within it is a people of tyrannical strength, and indeed, we will never enter it until they leave it; but if they leave it, then we will enter."

Said two men from those who feared [to disobey] upon whom Allah had bestowed favour, “Enter upon them through the gate, for when you have entered it, you will be predominant. And upon Allah rely, if you should be believers.” They said, “O Mūsā, indeed we will not enter it, ever, as long as they are within it; so go, you and your Lord, and fight. Indeed, we are remaining right here.” [Mūsā] said, “My Lord, indeed I do not possess except myself and my brother, so part us from the defiantly disobedient people.” [Allah] said, “Then indeed, it is forbidden to them for forty years [in which] they will wander throughout the land. So do not grieve over the defiantly disobedient people.”¹

Only two men who understood the weight the command of Allah ﷻ brought; two men who were perhaps Mūsā and his brother Hārūn عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَام!

As for the disciples of ʿĪsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, they sincerely assisted him, however, they were ignorant of the recognition of their Lord. They had doubts in the prophethood of their Messenger which led to reluctance in sacrificing for their faith and sharīʿah. Allah ﷻ recounts them thus:

إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ لِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ نَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
 إِنَّ كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَنَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبَنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَّقْتَنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ
 الشُّهَدَاءِ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا
 وَآيَةً مِنْكَ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ

[And remember] when the disciples said, “O ʿĪsā, Son of Maryam, can your Lord send down to us a table [spread with food] from the heaven? [ʿĪsā] said, “Fear Allah, if you should be believers.” They said, “We wish to eat from it and let our hearts be reassured and know that you have been truthful to us and be among its witnesses.” Said ʿĪsā, the son of Maryam, “O Allah, our Lord, send down to us a table [spread with food] from the heaven to be for us a festival for the first of us and the last of us and a sign from You. And provide for us, and You are the best of providers.”²

1 Sūrah al-Māʿidah: 22-26.

2 Sūrah al-Māʿidah: 112-114.

Now, ponder over the traits of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ in stark comparison to the above mentioned nations as established by Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي
الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سَوَاقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ
وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer], seeking bounty from Allah and [His] pleasure. Their mark is on their faces from the trace of prostration. That is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is as a plant which produces its offshoots and strengthens them so they grow firm and stand upon their stalks, delighting the sowers - so that Allah may enrage by them the disbelievers. Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among them forgiveness and a great reward.¹

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ
اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْتُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ
يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

For the poor Emigrants who were expelled from their homes and their properties, seeking bounty from Allah and [His] approval and supporting Allah and His Messenger, [there is also a share]. Those are the truthful. And [also for] those who were settled in al-Madinah and [adopted] the faith before them. They love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their breasts of what the emigrants were given but give [them] preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.²

1 Sūrah al-Faṭḥ: 29.

2 Sūrah al-Ḥaṣḥr: 8-9.

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَأْتَابَهُمْ فَتَحًا قَرِيبًا

Certainly was Allah pleased with the believers when they pledged allegiance to you, [O Muḥammad], under the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquility upon them and rewarded them with an imminent conquest.¹

These pure souls attracted the mercy of Allah ﷻ that engulfed the worlds and through them Allah ﷻ gave honor to this faith. They are a shining page amongst the dull libraries of history. Days will pass and eras will lapse, yet their achievements will never fail to be recognized by the true seekers of guidance. On the other hand, those whose hearts are diseased and whose minds have been overtaken by the cancerous influences of Shayṭān will show an aversion to them; resulting in their own disgrace. Allah ﷻ says regarding such people:

رَضُوا بِأَنْ يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ وَطُبِعَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ لَكِنِ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ
جَاهِدُوا بَأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَأَوْلِيَتِكَ لَهُمُ الْخَيْرَاتُ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

They were satisfied to be with those who stay behind, and their hearts were sealed over, so they do not understand. But the Messenger and those who believed with him fought with their wealth and their lives. Those will have [all that is] good, and it is those who are the successful.²

These were men with human qualities, not angels nor a creation of infallible actions and speech. They were moulded by the Qur'ān and through the instruction of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, in a gentle and loving manner. They erred, like men err though they were, unlike men, authorities in Islamic law. Their conclusions in Islamic law were thus both correct and otherwise, which was then sifted through and adopted by the great scholars. Looking at the history of Islamic law one will no doubt realise this, a factuality.

1 Sūrah al-Fatḥ: 18.

2 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 87-88.

At times the opinion of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه in a particular matter was not taken and at times the opinion of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was overlooked and so on and so forth. Consider the incidents of killing the renegades, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه being corrected by a woman, and the statement of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, “If it wasn’t for ‘Alī, ‘Uthmān would have been destroyed.”

As lands were conquered and droves of people from different demographics came into the fold of Islam there were two phenomena that would naturally occur. Firstly, differences of opinion in matters of sharī‘ah would multiply due to the portal of Islamic law-making widening; and secondly, there would be a sharp increase in plans to bury the Islamic faith. The latter would be fronted by mainly two groups, the Jews and the Persians.

The Jews were motivated by their jealousy as established by the Qur’ān time and again. Their envy, hatred, and sinister plots, all common knowledge, led them to leave no stone unturned in attempting to harm the Muslims whilst living in close proximity to them.

The Persians on the other hand were motivated by their sense of egotism. Ibn al-Ḥazam writes:

ان الفرس كانوا من سعة الملك وعلو اليد على جميع الامم وجمالة الخطير في انفسهم حتى انهم كانوا يسمون انفسهم الاحرار والابناء وكانوا يعدون سائر الناس عبيداً لهم فلما امتحنوا بزوال الدولة عنهم على ايدي العرب تعاضمهم الامر وتضاعفت لديهم المصيبة وراموا كيد الاسلام بالمحاربة في اوقات شتى وكان من قائمتهم المقنع وبابك وابو سلم السراج وغيرهم فراوا ان كيده على الحيلة انجع فاطهر قوم منهم الاسلام واستمالوا اهل التشيع باظهار محبة اهل بيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم واستشناع ظلم علي رضي الله عنه ثم سلخوا بهم مسالك حتى اخرجوه عن الاسلام وكفروا اصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم واحدثوا الحلول واسقاط الشرائع وغيرها حتى ان علي بن ابي طالب رضي الله عنه منهم واحرق طوائف منهم

The Persians were a superpower having the upper hand over other nations, holding themselves as sublime and royal. They would call themselves ‘the liberated’ and ‘the sons’ considering all others their slaves. When

their kingdom was taken away by the Arabs, they were astounded and bewildered at this great loss. They attempted to wage war against the Muslims on various occasions, without much luck. They then infiltrated the Muslims with a group outwardly accepting the Islamic faith whilst joining the ranks of the Shī'ah. They made a show of love for the Ahl al-Bayt and raised a hue and cry about the oppression of 'Alī عليه السلام. They then walked the treacherous path of regarding the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم as renegade. They ascribed to the belief of incarnation, considered themselves above the law of sharī'ah and held many other erroneous views. This led to some of them regarding 'Alī عليه السلام as a deity which he punished by burning them.¹

The differences amongst the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم had become, for these hypocrites, an establishment of hostility which they imbued within themselves to inflate and exaggerate resulting in carnage for the ummah. The greatest of these was the unjust killing of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه; a door which opened many other tragedies such as the stand-off between Mu'āwiyah and 'Alī عليه السلام due to the different approach taken in avenging the blood of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه.

This difference led to many other differences with a concerted effort to realize the truth by the Muslims on either side, both forming the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah. Another group though was strengthened by this; a group whose hearts were diseased, seeking only misguidance and anarchy. This group has persisted throughout history with the same goals reiterated in every century.

In this era, with the rise of the twentieth century, there has perhaps been no part of the sharī'ah that hasn't been a target of opposition, interpolation, and repudiation. This began with opposing the Qur'ān, going onto rejecting the sciences of ḥadīth and fiqh, and culminating with attempting to weave lies into history and civilisations of the past. Distorting history was perhaps the easiest of the lot as it does not adopt as stringent measures in verification as the other sciences do. This attack of falsities was primarily on the history of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم with one object in mind; establish their disinterest in the laws of sharī'ah.

1 *Al-Faṣl fi al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥal*, vol. 2 pg. 115-116.

The conclusion they hoped to come to was, if the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were not attached to the injunctions of Islam then we shouldn't be either. A deconstruction of the practical applications of shar'ī injunctions.

This was deemed achievable by attributing statements to them and views related from them, not considering the veracity of either. Literary authors would go on to drift along this wave of distortion, furthering it through the currents of their works. The literary authors though were lax in their writings, with no governing principles to guide them which resulted in the implausibilities we deal with today. These forgeries and senseless fairy tales need to be opposed and corrected by every thinker, Muslim, and, especially, historian. The author, Sayyid Muḥammad Amaḥzūn, has taken up this very task in the book before you.

The author has tackled many a thorny question and grave view herein with bravery, strength, and unwavering conviction. He has approached each discussion in a clear manner without any ambiguity or disparity. He has adopted the way of the true historians deciding on a matter after searching for and pondering over all the recorded accounts whilst weighing the strengths and weaknesses of either side. He then draws a conclusion citing his proofs as a scholar of the sunnī mālikī persuasion, not merely assuming conclusions based on pretences, nor for recognition of uncommon views, and certainly not to brag and boast.

A brief outline of this book is as follows:

Sayyid Muḥammad Amaḥzūn has broken down the book into three chapters comprising of various modules, citing with proficiency, knowing well the books, particularly those of ḥadīth, sīrah, and Tārīkh. He has referenced wisely, keeping to the authentic sources of Islamic history such as the books of al-Bukhārī (d. 256), Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī (d. 327), al-Balādhurī (d. 279), al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, Ibn 'Asākir, Ibn al-Athīr, al-Dhahabī, Ibn Kathīr, Ibn Khallikān, and Ibn Ḥajar. This methodology is in line with that of the erudite scholars in sourcing historical facts as opposed to sourcing history from story books and ode's as done by inattentive liberals these days.

The author has conformed to using the jargon of the historians, not the useless jargon of late, as well as quoting directly from them extensively. Furthermore, the books relied upon hold a high status amongst researchers and tutors alike.

An in depth review of this book is as follows:

Chapter One

Module one of chapter one covers the subject of Islamic history through the following angles:

1. Issue of Methodology.
2. Reasons for distortion.
3. The History of the Şahābah رضي الله عنهم through Islamic Jurisprudence.

He has also written at length on the issue of contemporary thought.

Modules two and three of this chapter cover the life and works of Imām al-Ṭabarī. The author has expounded on this with insight, discussing:

1. The sources of al-Ṭabarī.
2. His chain of narrations, and the narrators he has relied upon in his book.
3. He has dismissed the doubts that some seek to cast upon the life of Imām al-Ṭabarī and has dealt with the lies attributed to him, a prelude to discussing the methodology of his book. The author has deliberated on this point extensively as al-Ṭabarī and his book have been, and remain a breeding ground for those that wish to select certain weak and fabricated narrations to appease their desire in criticizing the faith and its leaders.

Chapter Two

This chapter has been dedicated to discussing the following:

1. Explaining the meaning and applications of the word *fitnah*.
2. The Saba'iyyah rebellion (in attribution to 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba', the Jew).

He has vehemently rejected the view that the Saba'iyyah rebellion did not occur citing the successive record of it through the centuries. Some contemporaries hold this view negating what no one has ever sought to deny. The following couplet fits them perfectly as the author says:

وليس يصح في الأذهان شيء إذا احتاج النهار إلى دليل

*Nothing will make sense to one,
who needs proof for day being day.*

He has presented statements and authentic narrations of the early Muslims and those after them in favour of the presence of this group, headed by 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba', the Jew. The proofs cited by him are sufficient for one seeking the truth.

3. The reasons behind the fitnah during the khilāfah of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه.
4. The life of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه and refuting— just as the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and Tābi'īn had done—those who seek to tarnish his legacy with an impartial approach.
5. The stance of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in the face of fitnah in general and in this fitnah specifically.

He establishes their aloofness from falling into such fitnah deliberately and their regret if having done so otherwise. He also discusses the stance of

the Tābīʿīn on the involvement of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ in such; thinking only good of them and finding a praiseworthy explanation for their actions.

Chapter Three

This chapter deals with the complexities rising from the spread of the Islamic Empire and the inauguration of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as the khalīfah. The author has gathered the texts, sifted through the statements, and summarized the views adopted into three:

1. Those that sought the blood ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ be avenged.
2. Those that sought to delay capital punishment until conditions were calm again.
3. Those that adopted the stance to not be party to this difference and voice no opinion on the matter. This was the view of the majority of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ.

Imām Aḥmad narrates:

هاجت الفتنة وأصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عشرات آلاف ، فلم يحضرها منهم مائة ، بل لم يبلغوا ثلاثين

The fitnah arose whilst there were tens of thousands of Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. Not even a hundred of them came. Those that came didn’t number even thirty.¹

Imām Aḥmad narrates that Umayyah ibn Khālīd said to Shu‘bah ibn Ḥajjāj, “Abū Shaybah narrates from Ḥakam from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylah; who says:

شهد صفين من أهل بدر سبعون رجلا،

Seventy men of Badr took part at Ṣiffīn.

1 See *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* vol. 7 pg. 52.

But Shu'bah replied:

فقال كذب أبو شيبه، والله لقد ذاكرنا الحكم في ذلك فما وجدناه شهد صفين من أهل بدر غير خزيمه
بن ثابت

Abū Shaybah has lied! By Allah, we discussed this with Ḥakam and we only found Khuzaymah ibn Thābit of the men of Badr to have taken part at Ṣiffīn.¹

This discussion was important to remove the cobwebs of falsities that surround this incident. The image of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم marching with their swords seeking the gains of this world has perhaps entered the mind of many. This is an extremely incorrect portrayal of these pure souls, which the author has thoroughly refuted.

This chapter further discusses the theological and applied outcomes of this fitnah, out of which many factions and schools of thought were born. A spectacle that the ummah continues to reel from. This last module explains the principles, event, and strain that were a result of it. The reader will be able to place his finger on many of the pivotal points where factions were born resulting in theological and other differences. The reader will also realise that which unifies the ummah and that which causes its disunity. The conclusion, a worthy one.

The respected teacher, Muḥammad Amaḥzūn has relied upon the books of Tārīkh, in this significant book of his, more than the books of ḥadīth. This is not only his right; it is a wonderful choice that has far reaching effects. It is known that the books of ḥadīth have been served throughout the ages and its traditions successively and diligently narrated from one generation to the next. This rings especially true to the six authentic books of ḥadīth and *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*. On the other hand, the books of Tārīkh don't come close to such exclusivity with regards to examining its traditions and establishing the reports therein. He has used his expertise do delve into the field of Tārīkh and sift through the authentic

1 See *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* vol. 7 pg. 281.

and fabrications. This has led to his proficiency in the sciences of both; ḥadīth and Tārīkh.

In conclusion, I would like to acknowledge the unabated efforts of Ustādh Muḥammad Amaḥẓūn from the very first time he revealed this study of his to me up till presenting it to the esteemed committee. His attention to detail in procuring manuscripts for this book and sacrifice in the field of knowledge is an example of his sincerity. He has travelled far and wide in obtaining material for the book whilst referencing no less than four hundred sources.

I would also like to acknowledge his good character and sublime conduct when I would interject between his writings. I did not influence his findings in any way, leaving the explicit texts to express the correct conclusions. I hope that he will continue to write as a Muslim historian searching only for the truth and that he and other researches benefit from his works.

I also ask of Allah ﷻ to guide us all to the best of knowledge and understanding. May He guide us to the straight path.

Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Indeed, it is You who is the Knowing, the Wise.

Servant of the noble knowledge

Dr. Fārūq Ḥamādah

Tenured professor of Sunnah and its sciences

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يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ

O you who have believed, fear Allah as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims [in submission to Him]. (Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 102)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever, over you, an Observer. (Sūrah al-Nisā': 1)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

O you who have believed, fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice. (Sūrah al-Aḥzāb 70)

Acknowledgments

All praise for Allah ﷻ who has created the hearts of men to love that which is good and beautiful. Peace and salutations upon our master, Muḥammad, who called to returning goodness with good.

I wish to extend my gratitude to the respected teacher, Dr Fārūq Ḥamādah who has written the foreword to this book. He has bestowed upon me with his deep knowledge and superb character whilst guiding me along with his precious gems of advice. May Allah ﷻ reward him tremendously.

I would similarly like to show my appreciation to the respected teacher, Dr Sāmī al-Ṣaqqār a faculty member at Jāmi'ah al-Malik al-Sa'ūd. I have benefited from his invaluable suggestions throughout this project.

My sincere gratitude and appreciation goes out to all who have assisted in the publication of this book.

I ask of Allah ﷻ to accept the efforts of all and grant them the ability to continuously do acts of goodness and piety. Allah ﷻ is sufficient for us and the best helper.

Dr Muḥammad Amaḥzūn

Preface

All praises are for Allah ﷻ, we praise Him, seek His assistance, and ask for His forgiveness. We seek His protection from the evil of ourselves and the evil of our actions. Whomsoever He guides none can lead astray and whomsoever He leads astray none can guide. I bear testimony that there is no deity besides Allah ﷻ, a testimony that will save the one who recites it and acts according to its purport on the Day of Judgment. I testify that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger who conveyed the Message, discharged the trust, and sincerely advised the ummah. May the choicest peace and salutations be upon him, his family, and his Companions.

There remains a pressing need to review Islamic history, as establishing and authenticating historical incidents and reports are just as important as establishing and authenticating the subject matter of other sciences such as tafsīr, ḥadīth, and fiqh. This is crucial due to the many innovations that continue to exist amongst the ummah which are based upon fraudulent historical accounts and ambiguous versions of events that reflect upon the very early days of the faith. Raising awareness surrounding historical accounts is vital to have a complete vision of the sharīah and a true understanding of it. Knowing well that the historical reports garnered from the era of the rightly guided Khulafā' are applied accounts of Islamic doctrine and practice.

The Muslim researcher or historian will find himself, at times, dismayed and disappointed when studying the details of the rightly guided era. A golden time period in Islamic history, the narrations of which have been compiled in our early sources with the *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk* of Imām al-Ṭabarī being a principle compilation. One will find a great divide between the Islamic values, the character of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, their pure beliefs, their giving preference to what is by Allah ﷻ and between the portrayal of some accounts that have been narrated to depict a 'so-called' true picture of history.

There is no doubt that this strange phenomenon requires deep thought. Over and above this it calls to accepting the historical accounts of our early historians only after having established its veracity.

Contemporary times and scholars have seen a surge in calls towards conducting an in-depth study into reevaluating Islamic history. This matter came under the consideration of the official scientific and research authorities with the first official call to reevaluating Islamic history made by the Shaykh Muḥib al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb in his book followed by the struggle stalwart Sayyid Quṭub in his book *Fi al-Tārīkh...Fikrah wa Minhāj*.

It was then seen under the consideration of Majlis Ittiḥād al-Jāmi'ah al-Arabiyyah in the year 1973/1394. A preparatory committee was formed to conduct a study in rewriting Islamic history, establish an Institute of Islamic history, and initiating an Encyclopaedia of Islamic history in the Arabic language.

A project workshop was then conducted to rewrite Islamic history at Jāmi'ah al-Kuwait followed by an undertaking by the Constituent Council of the Muslim World League in their twenty third session in the year 1981/1401. A resolution was passed to form a committee by the general secretariat counsel comprising of five members to draw up a plan in rewriting Islamic history. This was then presented to the scholars as a research competition similar to the research competition held in Qatar on the subject of Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah.

The interest of the scholars and organisations alike make a clear indication to the pressing need on this matter. It should be noted that the objective behind rewriting Islamic history is to sift out the mistakes, ambiguities, and fabrications that have peppered it thus redrafting it to conform to Islamic principles. This will have the added benefit of detecting the realities of history on one hand and benefiting from this field of education on the other hand.

Why the interest in this topic?

My interest in the history of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, especially the era of the Rightly Guided Khulafā' was piqued whilst I was pursuing my master's degree due to the following reasons:

1. The era of the Rightly Guided Khulafā' plays an important role in expounding the motives and attitude of the Muslims on one hand whilst relaying the significance the early Muslims held for the need for a complete practical Islam on the other hand. Islam has practical applications in our day to day life which governs every moment of it.
2. The Muslims of today are in a severe need to know and understand the virtue of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, the effects that followed the education given to them by Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and their high aspirations by virtue of which they became the best of people and the best example humanity has seen. This would serve as a reminder for the Muslims to follow their example in saving humanity from the depths of despair to the heights of success both in this world and the next.
3. My conviction that the history of other nations has been written by its own sons, though others have contributed to it. The burden of penning down Islamic history lies squarely on our shoulders with inferring the principles and values of our civilization as we—the Muslims—see it. If not, our history will reflect the views and ideologies of others. I would not be exaggerating if I say, the current repression of our civilization as is a reflection of our estranged relationship with our history, as not all that have worked on our history are champions of the Islamic cause. Some are impressed by secular ideologies, recoiling from Islamic dogmas and harbouring ill towards its history. These secularists believe that the Islamic faith has been a cause for suppression of growth in Islamic civilizations. This has led them to the belief that creating a gap between the past and future is a necessity; a way to isolate the rising generation from Islam, its injunctions, and scholarly

heritage. They have therefore taken up copying Islamic history as a profession from the works of the orientalists, not concerned with original authorship nor research. Spreading poisonous falsities in Islamic societies through such does not bother them in the least.

4. My belief that those who have pure faith and an academic background will no doubt find interpolations and mistakes riddled throughout the early and recent books of history. Historians of the past and self-proclaimed contemporary researchers have made countless mistakes in writing history from a biased perspective. Looking into history one will realize the extent which negative elements were introduced, even criticizing the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم with such! Fabrications and lies led to demeaning the most respectable of people, the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. This created an image in the minds of people that did not reflect the great status of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم one bit.

The process of the codification of Islamic history was infiltrated by a group of narrators and tale bearers who were weak, unjust, and followers of misguided sects such as the Saba'iyyah, Rawāfiḍ, and Shī'ah. The Shī'ah had an especially vital role in providing numerous liars and fabricators to help their illicit cause.

Methods used to introduce fabrications

The following methods were adopted by the innovators to introduce fabrications into Islamic history and attempt to darken the wholesome era of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم:

1. Fabricating lies.
2. Introducing elements or removing such from true incidents, thus placing it a light that shines negatively on Islam.
3. Reporting incidents out of context to give a totally different meaning,
4. Mentioning erroneous explanations of incidents.

5. Blowing shortcomings out of proportion and concealing truths and virtues.
6. Presenting incidents, after having corrupted them or not existing at all, in the form of poetry so they may remain forever as such. Arabic poetry was regarded as a strong chain in connecting the dots of history.
7. Writing books and attributing it falsely as the books of scholars and/or men of repute. Examples of this is *Nahj al-Balāghah* and *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*. The former attributed to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام and the latter to Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muslim ibn Qutaybah al-Dīnwarī respectively due to their famed status amongst the Ahl al-Sunnah.

And thus we find our books of history riddled with misinformation. Either, due to the historian gathering everything he could find with the burden of sifting out the true from the false on the reader by scrutinising the chain of narration as done by Imām al-Ṭabarī, or due to their wanting to muddy the waters of historical accounts as done by Ibn Muzāḥim al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Mas‘ūdī, and others.

The early Muslims would rely on historical accounts found in authentic books not giving the time of day to books made up of inaccuracies. If they were to use such books they would do so by scrutinising each narrator in the chain to ascertain the reliability of each report. They were aware of the narrators and their conditions together with the conditions of acceptability thus able to differentiate the weak from the strong. This methodology was adopted by many of the scholars such as Khalīfah ibn Khayyāṭ, Abū Zur‘ah al-Dimashqī, Ya‘qūb ibn Sufyān al-Fasawī, Ibn Abī Shaybah, Ibn ‘Asākir and others.

Then the era came where most people could not differentiate between true and false narrations and the number of those who would refer to the books of the scholars of ḥadīth and researchers fell drastically. Imām ibn al-‘Arabī—the Mālikī scholar—deemed this condition to be amongst the greatest tragedies that afflicted the Muslims.

The respectable and highly acclaimed past of a nation being tarnished by the words of liars is a catastrophe of immense proportions.

The present day situation is much more critical. The orientalists and those influenced by them have jumped onto the bandwagon of these fabrications. These reports have become the wealth of their existence, as long as it serves their purpose to criticize Islam and tarnish the lives of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. They have taken hold of the weak and fabricated narrations found in literary novels, story books, and unverified written accounts to construct an image of Islamic history that is far-flung from the truth. These are some of the books championed by them for the dubious material found within: *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, *al-Bayān wa al-Tabyīn*, *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*, *al-Kamil fī al-Adab*, *Nahj al-Balāghah*, and other such works. They complement these books with fabricated narrations found in books such as, *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, *Mas'ūdī*, *Ya'qūbī*, *Ibn Muzāḥim* and others. They only indicate to the reference without mentioning the authenticity of such reports so that they can write lengthy commentaries on it which comprises of lies and unfounded ideas.

Furthermore, they do not research according to Islamic principles taking into consideration the chain of narrators. They are hasty in referencing without authenticating. This leads to them believing everything they read making truth and false equal in their eyes. The clear unadulterated, and pristine history of Islam thus becomes a conglomerate of unverified incidents and fabricated reports. They write Islamic History with the yardstick of explanation the Dark Ages of Europe has to offer!

The orientalists are guilty of cultural misappropriation in their works on Islamic history. As mentioned above they are quick to judge on principles foreign to Islam. Their greatest misappropriation is based on this; explaining events that occurred in Islamic history based on the cultural climate they currently live in. They do not reference incidents to the cultural sensitivities of its time together with the attitudes of people and beliefs of that era. Add to this their hate and intolerance of Islam and we find ourselves with books that do not reflect true Islamic history, rather a skewed perspective of bigots.

If we, for a moment, disregard their hate and intolerance, we find their methodology to be lacking due to their illogical reasoning. They opine that the Islamic khilāfah had no scope for difference of opinion in its government and the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were men like other men who conspired in political machination. This has led them to understand the differences amongst the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم a crisis meant to solicit power, as the orientalist had witnessed amongst the royals of Europe.

Taking a look at the incident of Saqīfah Banū Sā'idah, which is a perfect example of the Islamic consultation system wherein the minority can decide against the majority, we find the orientalist Henri Lammens pontificating about it. His explanation though is in stark comparison to what we find in traditional Islamic sources. He had in his mind the image of the conspiracies in the French courts circa 15th and 16th century when commentating on the incident which skewed his perception. He has described this incident as a fight for power between the Muhājirīn and Anṣār which began immediately after the passing of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم and culminated with Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما snatching the khilāfah from 'Alī رضي الله عنه.¹

Based on the above, a number of unverified narrations found in the books of history show a distorted picture of Islam due to the reliance of the likes of Imām al-Ṭabarī upon narrators that had ulterior, political and ideological, motives attached to the era of the Rightly Guided Khulafā' and beyond. As established, the distortions in written Islamic history are rooted in either:

- » The willingness to intentionally distort and muddy the waters of Islamic history or
- » The unwillingness to adopt Islamic principles in authenticating incidents and Islamic methodology of thought.

1 H. Lammens: *L'islam: croyances et institutions* pg. 47.

Negotiating past this predicament and unfortunate situation that has plagued the writing of Islamic history in the past and present can be done by implementing the following two measures:

1. *Scrutinising the authenticity of historical narrations according to the principles set by the ḥadīth scholars.*

This is because the pristine truths of our history need to be relieved of the dirt that covers them stemming from fabrications, obliviousness, and political motives. Furthermore, the liars and fabricators are many which has led the scholars to author voluminous books discussing the weak, rejected, and critical narrators. The integrity of Islamic history will return when we base the science of Islamic history upon the stringent measures adopted in the science of ḥadīth with the application of *Jarḥ wa Ta'dīl*¹ throughout. The specialist of ḥadīth expended their energies in recollecting the lives of the narrators thus creating an encyclopaedia of their lives, beliefs, and character. The scholars who attended to this science, did so by traveling far and wide gathering information and life stories before making an informed decision, not influenced by nationalism, school of thought, or ulterior motives. They were solely interested in preserving the integrity of ḥadīth.

There remains no doubt that using these principles to determine the authenticity of historical records will ultimately result in strengthening the chain of narrations found in historical records and scrutinising the narrators therein. The works of the early historians will benefit the most from this as they have accounted for their statements by citing chains of narrations.

1 The act of classifying a narrator as unreliable or weak is called: '*Al-Jarḥ*' (Criticism), while classifying him as reliable is known as '*Al-Ta'dīl*' (Justification). This aspect in the science of Hadith is called '*ilm al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*'. This science is of a very intricate nature and is the right of a specialist only.

Adopting the principles of scrutinising ḥadīth in historical accounts, however, will remain relative to the nature of the narrations, as it will prove difficult to adopt this methodology through and through as is done in the science of ḥadīth. Even though the scholars have laid down the same four conditions in permitting the narration of historical accounts: 1. 'Aql (sanity), 2. *Ḍabṭ* (accuracy), 3. *Islam* 4. 'Adālah (integrity), the accuracy of the narrators as well as the chain itself weren't held to the same stringent levels in historical accounts compared to the aḥādīth. This of course excludes some of the historical accounts that relate to the sīrah and Khulafā' which are corroborated by the aḥādīth.

The scholars have differentiated between historical accounts that need to meet rigorous authentication and those that do not. If the recollection has to do with Rasūlullāh ﷺ or the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ then making an effort to establish its veracity will be imperative. On the other hand, though, if it has no standing in beliefs or laws of sharī'ah then the conditions will be lax just as is in the aḥādīth that deal with virtues rather than laws. In the latter, weak narrations will be accepted whilst in the former, only authentic narrations will be considered. These weak narrations will be accepted to elucidate incidents further, that have already been established through authentic narrations.

This is the methodology accepted by the erudite scholars.

This is why we find, for example Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar saying regarding Muḥammad ibn Ishāq:

امام في المغازي ، صدوق يدلّس

An authority in prophetic biography, truthful, though not always precise in naming his authorities.

Similarly, he says regarding Sayf ibn 'Umar al-Tamīmī:

Weak in ḥadīth, leader in Tārīkh.¹

This however, does not mean that we should abandon the methodology of the ḥadīth scholars in scrutinising narrations as it is through their approach we can reconcile between opposing narrations wherever possible. Additionally, it is the way to remove irregularities from the general framework of our history.

Prioritising authentic followed by sound narrations is a must when recounting history to build an accurate picture of Islamic civilization from its early days, with preference to the stronger narration where reconciliation cannot be made. The weak narrations that cannot be corroborated will be of benefit in filling the gaps in historical accounts as long as it is in conformity to Islamic values and does not demerit Islamic beliefs or laws as these two aspects require established verified narrations.

It is widely understood that the era of khilāfah was an era of exceptional growth in elucidating Islamic Law, with the Khulafā' themselves making leaps in setting down precedents for governing according to Islamic teachings. They are thus leaders in the laws interpreted and systems adopted by them in the early Islamic period. Their injunctions and regulations are therefore accepted and implemented. Rasūlullāh ﷺ is reported to have said:

عليكم بسنتي وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين من بعدي عضوا عليها بالنواجذ

Hold on to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Khulafā' after me, grasp onto it with your molars.²

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mudallisīn* pg. 51; *al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pg. 344.

2 Al-Tirmidhī in his *Sunan*, Kitāb al-Manāqib, vol. 4 pg. 105, he has deemed it sound and authentic; Abū Dāwūd in his *Sunan*, Kitāb al-Sunnah, Ḥadīth: 4607; Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol. 4 pgs. 126-127; Albānī has deemed it authentic, *Ṣaḥīḥ Abū Dāwūd*, Ḥadīth: 3851.

From amongst the benefits of studying Islamic history is referencing the books of ḥadīth as primary sources in understanding the early Islamic period. Authentic historical accounts can be found in the books of ḥadīth; a field that has been worked upon extensively. So, for example, we find the books of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* to have been authenticated to the highest degree as every narration has undergone scrutiny by the great scholars of the past and contemporary researchers.

The books of *Sunan*, *Masānīd*, *Ma'ājim*, *Ṭabaqāt*, and *Tārīkh*¹ written by the masters of ḥadīth all carry great numbers of such authentic narrations. Similarly, one will find authentic narrations in the commentaries of ḥadīth as well. This is due to them achieving excellence in the field of ḥadīth and taking from the, now long lost, books of history written by the earliest scholars. A perfect example of this authorship and scholarship is Ibn Ḥajar and his magnum opus; *Fath al-Bārī*.

2. Formulating Islamic history in line with a vision that truly reflects Islamic values and that conforms to the principles of sharī'ah.

This is because Islamic history is a history of faith and belief before being the history of states, battles, and political systems. Islamic belief is what created the entities of states, political systems, economic structures, administrative branches, and thriving Muslim civilizations. The fact that our Islamic history is unique, it needs to be studied through a perspective that reflects true understanding, an Islamic perspective, and correct beliefs regarding Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, humanity, and life.

It is of high importance that we understand the true motivations of actions in the early years of Islam and the effect these motivations had on events that occurred. Similarly, the framework of initiatives, understanding of the masses, and Islamic values need to be understood in the context of the

1 Genres of ḥadīth.

relationships between individuals and communities with the governance systems, enactment of laws, and economic policies.

The motives that permeated Islamic society in the early years of Islam was dominated by their belief and aspirations of rewards from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى in hereafter. Thus, the general trend amongst the Muslims was to have no ulterior motives as sincerity is a necessity in all the doings of a Muslim, be it sacrificing one's life or involving oneself in activities that impact the economy, society, or political system. All spheres of a Muslims' life revolve around pleasing Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى knowing well that doing actions for anyone else will result in the destruction of such acts no matter how great. The ḥadīth speaks clearly on this issue:

إن الله لا يقبل من العمل إلا ما كان له خالصا ، وابتغي به وجهه

Verily Allah does not accept any actions except those that are done solely for him and to earn His pleasure.¹

This type of thinking forms part of the lives of many Muslims today who are so far from the golden era of Islam, what then might have been the magnitude of the sincerity amongst the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and the Tābi'īn who lived in the best of times?

Knowing the profound effect Islamic values had on the early Islamic years with the purity of its people, high intellect, sincere belief, and devotion to worshipping Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, one will have to admit plainly that their motives were just as pure as they were. Their actions were not motivated by the paltry gains of this world. Their eyes were fixated on the hereafter causing them to do acts of good, call towards piety, and forbid from evil.

It is therefore vital to develop a critical approach when dealing with our sources of history without accepting on face value every statement

1 Sunan al-Nasa'i, Kitāb al-Jihād, vol. 6 pg. 25. Albānī has deemed it authentic in *al-Silsilah al-Sahīḥah* Ḥadīth: 52.

recorded therein. The historical records need to be measured against the character of society in that era to see if it holds any truth. In this manner one will take the general orientation and nature of the then prevalent character of Islamic society into account.

Thereafter scrutinising the narrators is of utmost importance as well. Any narration that is in conformity with a narrator's prejudice in disparaging the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم or in tarnishing the pristine sharī'ah will be disregarded. Similarly, if a narrator reports something which goes against the established and recognised norms of society due to his known prejudice, his narrations will not be accepted. Prejudice will always seek to veil the truth.

A yardstick to consider when studying the early years of Islam

*Not imposing a decree upon a belief or stance of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم based on their actions without proof to support such, as the principle when considering the actions of people is to see it in a positive light unless otherwise **proven**.*

Going beyond that which is established and branding people by citing mere views and assumptions is unacceptable. Islam has protected the honour of every Muslim from such and no historian worth his salt would engage in such. Furthermore, staying quiet in the face of fabrications does not form part of good character. Good character is rather refuting lies and purifying the early Islamic years from it, just as good character entails refraining from assumptions and speculation.

The sharī'ah has instructed that our evidence be factual and not circumstantial. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

But only those who testify to the truth [can benefit], and they know.¹

1 Sūrah al-Zukhruf: 86.

What would the condition of one be then who comes to conclusions based on his desires and assumptions?

Islam has a very specific methodology in placing rulings on men and actions. Unprejudiced testimony is the cornerstone in such rulings with no place for assumptions that stem from hatred or love. Factual evidence is placed before circumstantial evidence so that no person is subject to oppression due to ignorant conjecture. When we agree that every person has the right to fair testimony, what of the pure souls of the golden era? Can we not afford the same to them?

Another point of note here is that we do not consider anyone to be infallible except the Prophets of Allah ﷺ. Therefore, those that have made efforts in the field of Islamic history are men who could have made mistakes, be it the greats amongst the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. That being said, their mistakes should be considered as mistakes by authorities in Islamic law upon which they will be rewarded by Allah ﷻ. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is reported to have said:

إذا حكم الحاكم فاجتهد ثم أصاب فله أجران وإذا حكم فاجتهد ثم أخطأ فله أجر

When an authority passes a judgment and is correct therein, he will receive two rewards and if he errs he will receive one reward.¹

The Three Phases to Establish the Appropriate Ruling

When studying history, it is imperative to know the conditions of that era. The socio-economic status of the time wherein the incident under review must be understood. Over and above this the causes of such mistakes should be in the fore before passing any judgments so that the judgment passed is accurate and appropriate.

Hereunder is one example of following the correct procedure in passing a judgment on an incident that has presented itself. Before passing any judgments, one would need to clear through three phases to establish the appropriate ruling.

1 Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Ḥadīth: 1716.

The stance adopted by Rasūlullāh ﷺ in dealing with Ḥāṭib ibn Abī Balta‘ah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ when he sent a letter with a polytheist woman to inform the disbelievers of the imminent journey of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to Makkah is a perfect example of this.

Phase one:

Establishing the occurrence of the mistake, if the incident had indeed taken place. In this instance the most truthful source was utilized to pass this phase; revelation.

Phase two:

Establishing the cause that led to such a mistake. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said to Ḥāṭib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

ما حملك على ما صنعت

What led you to doing this?¹

This phase is important as it could serve to end to any further action if a shar‘ī justification is presented. If no such justification is given, this will be taken to the next phase.

Phase three:

Having an oversight onto all the good and pious acts of the one having erred. Mixing the mistake into the good acts can, at times, drown out the mistake in the ocean of pious acts. This is what Rasūlullāh ﷺ responded with when ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ sought to execute Ḥāṭib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

أليس من أهل بدر فقال لعل الله اطلع إلى أهل بدر فقال اعملوا ما شئتم فقد وجبت لكم الجنة أو فقد
غفرت لكم

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ḥadīth: 3462.

Is he not from amongst the participants? Perhaps Allah ﷻ has looked upon the Badr warriors and said, “Do whatever you like, for I have ordained that you will be in Paradise or that I have forgiven you.”¹

Such incidents that occurred in the early Islamic years should not be used to justify the same in our, or another time, period. It should be considered in the context and environment prevalent in that era. If such a ruling is passed, it would not be objectively justified and therefore result in a ruling that does not correspond to reality.

My methodology in this book does not serve to refute every doubt that that has clouded Islamic history, nor does it seek to scrutinise every narration that does not conform to the nuances of that era. My methodology is rather to establish historical actualities strengthened by authentic proofs, together with presenting narrations that conform to the realities of that era within the framework of Islamic principles and values on the basis of the behaviour of the individuals and leaders of that time period prompted by their beliefs.

Therefore, I have selected such narrations from the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī that conform to the soul of society in the early Islamic years and truly reflects that civilization. On the other hand, I have scrutinised such narrations that go against the grain of that society by the aforementioned yardsticks and standards.

I have, at times referenced other works of history to either, fill in gaps left by the narrations of Imām al-Ṭabarī, deduce from certain historical matters, or to raise an objection against a narration he has recorded. I have, by and large, relied upon the narrations of the muḥaddithīn which has been instrumental in giving preference to one account over another and in clearing the cobwebs from many historical accuracies. These narrations have also proven useful as alternatives to some famous narrations compiled in *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* and other books of history.

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Ḥadīth: 3462.

To conclude, it only behoves me to call upon Muslim historians and researchers to study Islamic history with a critical eye in order to open up the true realities of our past. They should expend their efforts in formulating methodologies of analysis and contributing to correcting the sequencing of thoughts and understandings thus reverting to producing from the pristine texts of the Qur'ān and Aḥādīth. The gravity of this can be appreciated when we realise that it is our history that represents its honour; a channel that brings us the in-depth recordings of our faith. The greater the contamination of the source, the greater the contaminants in the product.

It is apparent that emphasising an Islamic methodology in writing history, compiling its principles, and explaining its pillars and premises is most important in rectifying this science. This emphasis is an academic one just as it is an obligation of sharī'ah and human need. Disrupting this disrupts the true gauges of knowledge and laws of sharī'ah. It similarly causes a great shortfall in the ability to study and confusion regarding the accuracies of historical facts. It furthermore creates a runway for departing from the correct understanding of incidents.

It is therefore incumbent upon every person who is able to, to rectify the history of the early Islamic years. This should be considered amongst the best forms of worship in which one should make as much effort as possible. The result will be a presentation of history, accurate and true, to the Muslim youth which will be brimming with eminent role models whom they will follow and whose teachings they shall revive.

A concerted effort needs to be made to write Islamic history by men who believe in and love Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. Such people who understand the role Islam plays in one's life together with appreciating the importance of the golden era; that of the Khulafā'. They understand the importance this era plays in shaping our history, our present, and our future. An era of unprecedented advancement in personal and social dealings in which they had protected and furthered the pure teachings of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The Khulafā' held firmly onto the principles of da'wah, jihad, championing the cause

of justice, calling towards good, and forbidding evil. This contributed to their era being considered one with the era of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. An era that will always be the yardstick for the future generations who wish to accomplish what they had accomplished. Rasūlullāh ﷺ has given glad tidings to the Muslims on the resurgence of such an era after it being lost. Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said:

تكون النبوة فيكم ما شاء الله أن تكون، ثم يرفعها الله إذا شاء أن يرفعها، ثم تكون خلافة على منهاج النبوة فتكون ما شاء الله أن تكون، ثم يرفعها الله إذا شاء أن يرفعها، ثم تكون ملكاً عاصياً فيكون ما شاء الله أن يكون، ثم يرفعها إذا شاء الله أن يرفعها، ثم تكون ملكاً جبرية فتكون ما شاء الله أن تكون، ثم يرفعها الله إذا شاء أن يرفعها، ثم تكون خلافة على منهاج النبوة

Prophethood will remain among you as long as Allah wills. Then khilāfah in the manner of Prophethood shall commence, and remain as long as Allah wills. Then erosive monarchy would take place, and it will remain as long as Allah wills. After that, despotic kingship would emerge, and it will remain as long as Allah wills. Then, the khilāfah shall come once again based on the precept of Prophethood.¹

Division of the Book

This book is divided into a preface and three chapters. Each chapter has three modules and each module has three sections.

Chapter One

I have prepared this chapter as an introduction to the subject. It is a crucial chapter as it places before the reader the correct methodology in scrutinising and accepting narrations together with sifting the authentic from the weak. This is done in the framework of sharī principles and precise parameters so that the

1 *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* vol. 4 pg. 273; *Musnad Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī*, Ḥadīth: 438. Al-Haythamī has deemed its narrators strong in *Majma' al-Zawā'id* vol. 5 pg. 189. Albānī has deemed it authentic in *Al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*:5.

study of Islamic history does not deviate from the correct path. This deviation leads to contradictory explanations and opinions regarding the lives of the early Muslims. This chapter has three modules.

First Module

This module has three sections.

Section one: The causes of interpolation in Islamic history, the causes and reasons that led to fabricating narrations especially in the early years of Islam, and the influence of the Shī'ah in fabricating narrations.

Section two: The methodology in studying Islamic history which is of two types:

- I. That which pertains to authentication and ways of establishing the truth. Also the conditions of accepted narrations.
- II. That which pertains to sources and principles of explaining and judging incidents.

Section three: The fiqh of the history of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and the binding methodology when studying their history. Their status in the Qur'ān and ḥadīth and their integrity. The stance a Muslim should adopt in reports that cast a negative shadow upon them. The definition of cursing the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and its shar'ī implications. The ruling of those who delve into it citing academic discourse and freedom of speech.

Second Module

The life of Imām al-Ṭabarī, whom I have specifically chosen to discuss as his book of history continues to remain a vital source for the historians.

This is in addition to the fact that I have depended largely on him as his book is the principle source for this study, which I have referenced about three hundred times.

This module has three sections.

Section one: Lineage, traveling for knowledge, character, and standpoints of Imām al-Ṭabarī.

Section two: His knowledge, integrity, intelligence, and the praise of scholars for him.

Section three: The smear campaign of rafḍ against him. Establishing the facts, exposing the groups who aligned him to it, and the most important cause that led to it. Comparing his views with that of the Shī'ah. I have brought this section to a close discussing his beliefs which is without a doubt in line with that of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah.

Third Module

Section one: The nature of the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī and its academic significance.

Section two: The principle sources of Imām al-Ṭabarī in discussing the fitnah.

Section three: Explaining the methodology of Imām al-Ṭabarī in his *Tārīkh*. He does not subscribe to the stringent measures of the scholars of ḥadīth in sifting out the weak narrations. He has therefore included many weak narrations in his work. This is because he subscribed to another accepted methodology; mentioning all that that has reached him with the chain of narrators. Their stance was that including the chain of narrators frees them from any liability. The weight of authentication would now lie on the one

who is utilizing the work. The authentic would be accepted, the weak identified and refuted according to the principles of ḥadīth.

Chapter Two

This chapter discusses the first fitnah that arose during the khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. This chapter has three modules.

First Module

This module has three sections.

Section one: The definition of fitnah linguistically, through the Qur’ān, and through the aḥādīth.

Section two: The Saba’iyyah, reality or fiction? This is to refute those that disregard the existence of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’. This position is held by a group of orientalists, some Arab researchers, and most contemporary Shī‘ah. His existence is established without doubt through extrapolating sources of the past and present, of the Ahl al-Sunnah and the Shī‘ah.

Section three: The cause of fitnah during the khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, the root cause being the efforts of the Saba’iyyah. The effect of the Bedouins–scholars and others–on the Saba’iyyah. The social shift during the reign of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and its effect on the fitnah. The economic change during his era and the effects it had on the Islamic civilization. The successorship of ‘Uthmān after ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and the difference in their temperament. Tribalism which caused some of the tribes to find the leadership of the Quraysh burdensome.

Second Module

This module has three sections.

Section one: The personality of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, his character, his virtues, political thought, and leadership.

Section two: The false claims made against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه by his enemies, and its refutation.

Section three: The circumstances surrounding his murder and the efforts made by the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم to oppose them. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, however, insisted on not spilling a drop of Muslim blood, effectively ransoming himself for the ummah.

Third Module

This module has three sections.

Section one: Discussing the aḥādīth that foreshadow the first fitnah. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم mentioned this fitnah and that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه would be unjustly killed.

Section two: The stance of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in the first fitnah. They adopted the stance of praising ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, cursing his killers, and distancing themselves from the killers.

Section three: The standpoint of the Tābī‘īn and those after them which is the same as the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.

Chapter Three

This chapter discusses the second fitnah and comprises of three modules.

First Module

This module has three sections.

Section one: The bay‘ah and inauguration of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه which is accepted as legitimate by the consensus of the decision makers. There was no force nor any coercion. Yes, the opposition he faced

was due to the political climate which is well known. It did not seek to completely oppose his khilāfah.

Section two: The political thought of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. This section plainly refutes those who seek to play down his political acumen.

Section three: The schemes of the Saba’iyyah and their principle role in igniting the flames of conflict in Jamal after ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, and Zubayr رضي الله عنه had already adopted measures of reconciliation.

Second Module

This module has three sections.

Section one: The stance of those that sought to avenge the blood of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه which consisted of the likes of Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Ā’ishah, Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, and others that held the same view.

Section two: Those that sought to delay capital punishment until conditions were calm again. This group had the likes of ‘Alī, ‘Ammār, Qa‘qā’ ibn ‘Amr رضي الله عنه, and others that held the same view.

Section three: Lifting the veil of those that did not take any stance in this fitnah which was the majority of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.

Third Module

This module has three sections.

Section one: The Qurrā’ that took part in the fitnah; the elders of the Khawārij sect.

Section two: The Qurrā’ and the arbitration between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه. Scrutinising the incident of arbitration and the reality of the arbitrators; ‘Amr ibn al- ‘Āṣ and Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه.

Section three: The resulting effects of the fitnah.

- I. The political effects. This discusses the different standpoints that came about due to the fitnah; the Khawārij, Murji'ah, and Shī'ah. This sub-section also discusses the political effects that was borne out of the different political thoughts.
- II. The theological effects. This discusses the innovations of the Khawārij, Murji'ah, and Shī'ah together with its effects on scholastic theological discourse.
- III. The jurisprudic effects. The conflict had brought to the fore the legal ramifications of those who rebel against the state.
- IV. The stance of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah after the occurrence of the fitnah. They stand by the same today which is a viewpoint that exemplifies impartiality in speech and action. It also demonstrates the ability to understand matters from an Islamic perspective without deviating and adopting extremism.

Epilogue

The subject of fitnah has to be considered from two angles, that of the murderers and that of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.

- I. The murderers of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه will carry the full blame and sin of the fitnah that followed as they opened the door to this and were instrumental in carrying it out.
- II. The actions of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم that followed in this fitnah will be considered in the light of good intentions and differences of opinion as authorities in Islamic law. Each group had its merits and none were after the paltry gains of this world. This difference was merely in the application of the sharī'ah.

I have taken the following approach in the book:

- » Profiling the personalities whose names appear in the book.
- » Identifying the places mentioned in the book.
- » Citing the Qur'ānic verses.
- » Citing the aḥādīth together with mentioning its grade as far as possible.
- » Citing the traditions of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.
- » When the pronunciation of a name or place is difficult, I have endeavoured to explain the pronunciation in the first instance.
- » I have not mentioned the page numbers of dictionaries when referencing them as they are compiled in alphabetical order.
- » I have explained difficult words in the footnotes.
- » If the reader notices that I haven't profiled a person or narrator, it is because I have already done so before.
- » I have mentioned the sources in the footnotes beginning with the earliest author.
- » In the event of not coming across the date of death of an author I have indicated to it with an ellipsis (...).
- » I have endeavoured to place the corresponding Gregorian date when discussing historical events.

Chapter One



Module One: Issues of Methodology

Section One: The Causes of Interpolation in Islamic History

Section Two: Methodology of Studying Islamic History

Section Three: The Fiqh of the History of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم



Module Two: The Life of Imām al-Ṭabarī

Section One: Lineage, Travel for Knowledge, Character, and Views.

Section Two: Knowledge, Integrity, Scholarship, and Praise of Scholars for Him.

Section Three: The Smear Campaign of Rafḍ Against Him. Establishing His True Creed.



Module Three: *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*¹ of Imām al-Ṭabarī.

Section One: The nature of the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī and its academic significance.

Section Two: The principle sources of Imām al-Ṭabarī in discussing the fitnah.

Section Three: His methodology in writing his *Tārīkh*.



1 The book title could be translated as Annals of the Apostles and Kings or History of the Prophets and Kings.

Module One: Issues of Methodology

Section One: The causes of interpolation in Islamic History

I. Reasons that led to fabrications in narrations

Various early attempts to cloud the Islamic horizon resulted in the rejection of yielding to accept all historical narrations on face value. This further resulted in the non-acceptance of some narrations of our early historians which were contaminated by falsities.

Ibn al-‘Arabī¹, motivated by this, opted for a methodology of scrutiny in his book *al-‘Awāšim min al-Qawāšim* in studying an important era of Islamic history; the era of the Rightly Guided Khulafā’ and early stages of the Umayyad dynasty. He uncovered some of the untrue perceptions that had become synonymous with that time period and exposed many of the lies that were directed against the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, specifically against ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه.²

1 He is, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh, Abū Bakr ibn al-‘Arabī al-Andalusī al-Ishbīlī al-Mālikī, al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ. He was a prolific author who wrote on the subjects of ḥadīth, fiqh, uṣūl, study of Qur’ān, literature, grammar, and history. Ibn Bashkwāl says, “He was the seal of the Spanish scholars and the last of its great leaders and memorizers of ḥadīth.” Al-Dhahabī says, “He was intelligent, well spoken, of sublime character, and admired. He was appointed as the judge of Ishbilyah (Islamic Seville) and his political acumen was praiseworthy. He was stern and strict due to which he was later dismissed. He then began spreading and compiling knowledge. From amongst his books authored are: *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, *Kawkab al-Ḥadīth wa al-Musalsalāt*, *Kitāb al-Aṣnāf* in fiqh, *al-Maḥṣūl* in uṣūl, *Ḥasm al-Dā’ ‘alā ḥadīth al-Sawdā’* in language, *Al-‘Awāšim min al-Qawāšim* in history. He passed away in the year 543 A.H corresponding to 1148 A.D. Ibn Bashkwāl has written on his life in the book *Al-Ṣilah fī Tārīkh a’immah al-Andalus wa ‘ulamā’ihim wa muḥaddithihim wa fuqahā’ihim wa udabā’ihim*, vol. 2 pg. 590, Ibn Sa’īd al-Andalusī in *Al-Mughrib fī ḥulā al-Maghrib*, vol. 1 pg. 254, Al-Nubāhī in *Tārīkh Quḍāt al-Andalus*, pg. 105, Al-Dhahabī in *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā* vol. 20 pg. 197, Muḥammad ibn Ja’far al-Kattānī in *Silwat al-Anfās wa muḥādathāt al-Akyās fī man aqbara min al-‘ulamā’ wa al-ṣulḥā’ bi Fās*, vol. 3 pg. 198.

2 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāšim min al-Qawāšim* pgs. 61-108

Ibn al-Taymiyyah has mentioned the following causes for these lies and fabrications in narrations:

1. Hereticism and apostasy in the faith of Allah شبهه حلاله وتعالى; Islam.
2. Justification of desires and factions.
3. Advices and admonitions.
4. Worldly objectives and materialistic ambitions.
5. Love for positions by narrating obscure aḥādīth.¹

Ibn Khaldūn² has authored his *Muqaddimah* primarily to develop a criterion upon which the historian can rely on in addressing the certainties of history. A criterion to assist in realising what holds probabilities of truth and possibilities of acceptance, and what doesn't; thereby rejecting lies and fabrications.

Ibn Khaldūn has mentioned the following reasons that led to fabrications and lies in narrations:

1. *Confirmation bias*¹, i.e. the tendency to favour information in a way that confirms one's pre-existing beliefs; a type of cognitive bias and a systematic error of inductive reasoning. If one is neutral and impartial in accepting narrations, he will give each narration its due right of scrutiny and study to conclude its acceptance or dismissal. On the other hand, if one is biased to accept a particular narration or is overtaken by prejudice due to his

1 Ibn al-Taymiyyah: *Majmū' al-Fatāwā* vol. 18 pg. 46.

2 He is, 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Khaldūn, al-Ishbīlī al-Tanūsī, scholar and historian. He travelled to Fes, Granada, Tlemcen, Spain, and Cairo where he assumed an occupation. The Sultan Al-Zāhir Barqūq of the Mumlūk Sultanate honoured him and appointed him as the mālikī judge. From amongst his books are: His famous *Muqaddimah*, *Al-'Ibar* in history, *Al-Ḥisāb*, *Al-Mantiq*, and *Shifā al-Sā'il li tadhīb al-Masā'il*. He passed away in 808 A.H corresponding to 1407 A.D. Al-Sakhāwī has written on his life in the book *Al-Ḍaw al-Lāmi' li ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi'* vol. 4 pg. 145, Maqrī in *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb fī Ghuṣn al-Andalus al-Raṭīb*, vol. 4 pg. 414, and Ibn al-Qāḍī in *Jadhwa al-Iqtibās fī man ḥalla min al-A'lām bi Fās*, vol. 2 pg. 410.

1 Ibn Khaldūn: *Muqaddimah*, pg. 35.

pre-existing notions, he will lean towards such narrations that conform to his view. This becomes a breeding ground for accepting and narrating lies.

2. *Relying on narrators.*¹ This is caused by not carrying out due diligence in investigating the character of the narrator and blindly accepting what he narrates.
3. *Being oblivious of intent*². This is due to the narrator not being aware of the objective behind what he has heard or narrated whilst under the impression of the veracity of what he narrates.
4. *Ignorance in applying conditions to occurrences due to the deceit and exaggerations introduced. The narrator thus recalls and incident using hyperbole.*³ Some of the story tellers would take advantage of the ignorance of people with regards to the laws natural phenomena are subject to. They would then distort facts and create delusions to achieve their purposes. The historian that would come across such exaggerated or made up incidents would fall for it and narrate it without meaning to spread lies.
5. *Hoping to gain proximity to people of influence and status.*⁴ A sycophant would attempt to get close to the people of power, influence, and wealth by spreading fabricated narrations in order to appease them.

People of scant piety have done this to further their own agendas or fulfil their purposes. Ghayyāth ibn Ibrāhīm⁵ is an example of such sycophancy.

1 Ibid pg. 35.

2 Ibid pg. 35.

3 Ibid pg. 35.

4 Ibid pg. 35.

5 He is, Ghayyāth ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaī al-Kūfī. Imām Aḥmad says, “The people have left his narrations.” ‘Abbās ibn Yahyā says. “He is not credible.” Al-Jūzajānī says, “More than one person has said that he would fabricate ḥadīth.” Imām al-Bukhārī says, “They have left him.” Al-Nasaī says, “His narrations have been left out. He lived in the early era of the khilāfah of al-Mahdī al-Abbāsī who ruled from 158 A.H/773 A.D to 169 A.H/785A.D. Refer to al-Jūzajānī: *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl* pg. 201; Nasaī: *Kitāb al-Du‘afā’ wa al-Matrūkīn*, pg. 195; Al-Dhahabī: *Mizān al-‘Itidāl fī naqd al-Rijāl*, vol. 3 pg. 337.

He came to al-Mahdī¹ who had a pigeon. In order to garner a reward, he narrated the following ḥadīth:

لا سبق إلا في نصل أو خف أو حافر

Prize money is allowed only for racing camels, shooting arrows or racing horses.²

He added on the words *Aw Janāḥ*, i.e. ‘or birds’. Upon hearing this al-Mahdī fixed a sum of reward for him. When he left, al-Mahdī stated his lie and ordered the pigeon be slaughtered.³

Another example of this is when Hārūn al-Rashīd came to Madīnah Munawwarah. He found it disrespectful to ascend the pulpit of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم whilst wearing a coat and a waist tie. Qāḍī Abū al-Bakhtarī⁴ stated a ḥadīth at this juncture wherein there is mention of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم

1 Muḥammad al-Mahdī ibn Abī ibn Abī Ja‘far al-Manṣūr the ‘Abbāsī khalīfah. Al-Dhahabī says regarding him, “He was generous, munificent, and loved by the masses. He investigated and destroyed the heretics. He was, like the other kings, drowning in the ocean of desires, entertainment and hunting. However, he was fearful of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and opposed to misguided folk with whom he would be furious. Ibn Abī al-Dunyā has mentioned that al-Mahdī wrote to the cities warning them not to let the people of desires hold podiums of speech. He passed away in the year 169 A.H/ 785 A.D. The following have recorded his biography, Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pgs. 436-445; Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 391; Al-Dhahabī in *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 7 pg. 400.

2 *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*: Ḥadīth: 1700.

3 Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Majrūhīn min al-Muḥaddithīn wa al-Du‘afā’ wa al-Matrūkīn*, vol.1 pg. 33; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍu‘ah*. vol. 1 pg. 42.

4 He is Wahb ibn Wahb ibn Kathīr. He lived in Baghdād and was appointed as the judge of ‘Askar by al-Mahdī then of Madinah in the era of his son Rashīd. He was extremely generous; however, he is accused of lying in ḥadīth. Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn says, “He used to lie, the enemy of Allah. He is the one who was disgraced in front of the people in the Maṣjid of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم when he pacified Rashīd to climb the pulpit with a coat and waist tie citing that Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم would where it.” Aḥmad says, “As we see it, he would fabricate narrations.” Al-Bukhārī says, “They have kept silent regarding him.” He passed away the year 200 A.H/835 A.D. His life has been recorded by al-Dārquṭnī: *Al-Du‘afā’ wa al-Matrūkīn*, pg. 384; Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 13 pg. 541; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 4 pg. 353.

wearing the same. Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn¹, who was present, belied him in front of everyone.²

6. *The ignorance of the historians regarding the nature of civilizations.* Ibn Khaldūn was of the opinion that every phenomenon that occurred be it in relation to individuals or society, were ruled by certain laws.³ Individual phenomena were governed by the laws of astrology and more specifically by its relevance to the human, animal, and plant condition. Ibn Khaldūn has criticized the historians who had no knowledge of these sciences. The result would be relating incidents that were scientifically impossible. An example of this is what Masʿūdī⁴ has recorded of the building of the city of *Nuḥās* (copper) with material from the dessert of Sijilmassa.⁵

1 He is, Yaḥyā ibn Maʿīn. The great Imām and scholar was well versed and had deep knowledge regarding the conditions and lineage of narrators. Aḥmad says, “He is the most knowledgeable amongst us in *‘ilm al-Rijāl* (the field of biographical evaluation).” Al-Dhahabī has called him the chief of *ḥuffāz* (one who memorizes a tremendous amount of aḥādīth).” Ibn Ḥajar has said regarding him, “The Imām of *al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʿdīl*.” From amongst his books are: *Al-Tārīkh* and *Maʿrifat al-Rijāl*. His father had left a huge endowment for him after passing away. He was though, abstinent and altruistic preferring to spend in seeking ḥadīth and gathering it due to his extreme desire for knowledge. He passed away in the year 233 A.H/848 A.D. His life has been recounted by Ibn Saʿd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 354; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, vol. 4 pg. 307; Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 322; Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 14 pg. 177; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 429; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 177.

2 Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Majrūḥīn*, vol. 1 pg. 23; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍūʿah*, pg. 5.

3 The result of the ability granted by Allah ﷻ, The Most Wise, All Knowing. He guides whomsoever He wills.

4 He is ʿAlī ibn Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Masʿūdī al-Baghdādī. The historian who travelled far and wide. He is the author of *Murāj al-Dhahab*. Al-Dhahabī says regarding him, “He was a story teller who would narrate obscurities and marvels. He was a Muʿtazilī. From his books authored are, *Dhakāʾir al-ʿUlūm wa ma kāna fī sāʾir al-Duhūr*, *Al-Istidhkār lima marra fī sālif al-Aʿšār*, *Al-Tārīkh fī Akhbār al-Umam min al-ʿArab wa al-ʿAjām*, and *Al-Tanbīh wa al-Ishrāf*. He died in the year 346 A.H./957 A.D.” His life has been recounted by Ibn al-Nadīm in *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 219; Al-Subkī in *Ṭabaqāt al-Shaḥīʿiyyah*, vol. 2 pg. 307; Al-Dhahabī in *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalā* vol. 15 pg. 569; and Ibn Ḥajar in *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 4 pg. 224.

5 Ibn Khaldūn: *Muqaddimah*, pg. 37.

As for societal phenomena, he refers to the norms, customs, wealth, poverty, knowledge, ignorance, population growth, and state values.

Ibn Khaldūn critiques those historians who erred in happenings connected to numerical values such as the amount of military troops or taxed wealth. Some people have a penchant for inflating numbers, enumerating accounts that simply does not make any sense and goes against the laws of population growth, as done by al-Masʿūdī in putting the army of the Banū Isrāʾīl at sixty thousand when Mūsa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام counted them in the Tih valley. This was done knowing well that there were only four generations between Mūsa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and Isrāʾīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, i.e. it would not have been possible for the Banū Isrāʾīl to grow from a few individuals to such a large number in just four generations. Ibn Khaldūn has proposed to consider the nature of civilization in attesting to historical records as a primary measure with scrutinising narrators a secondary measure. He writes:

هو أحسن الوجوه وأوثقها في تمحيص الاخبار وتمييز صدقها من كذبها وهو سابق على التمهيص بتعديل الرواة ولا يرجع إلى تعديل الرواة حتى يعلم أن ذلك الخبر في نفسه ممكن أو ممتنع وأما إذا كان مستحيلا فلا فائدة للنظر في التعديل والتنجريح

This is the best and most authentic manner in which traditions can be scrutinised and the true differentiated from the false. Screening the narrators will not be done until the possibility of the account is established. If the occurrence of such is not possible it will be futile to then look at the strengths or ills of the narrators.¹

Though this approach is broadly acceptable, some exceptions ought to be made as there are many traditions that have been narrated by authentic and reliable narrators that go against the norm. With the accepted conditions, such occurrences will be regarded as *karāmāt* (supernatural wonders performed by the pious). The safest, would be to accept such

1 Ibn Khaldūn: *Muqaddimah*, pg. 37.

narrations and not place them beyond the realm of possibility. An example of this is the incident of conquering a fort of by al-'Alā al-Ḥaḍramī رضي الله عنه in the era of 'Umar رضي الله عنه.¹

The importance of the approach of Ibn Khaldūn cannot be overstated; however, it should be emphasised that the methodology adopted by the muḥaddithīn in narrating incidents is better and far more accurate.

Bringing together these methodologies and making them work concurrently by creating a unique gauge that inculcates the logical and societal approach of Ibn Khaldūn, the methodology of the muḥaddithīn, and that of the historians which conform to Islamic principles will result in a monumental service to the field of Islamic history. It will eliminate the mistakes found in historical narrations and expose the reasons of fabrications therein. It will further assist the historian in adopting regulations that will limit falling into errors that are caused by blindly accepting all historical accounts.

1 He entered the Gulf towards Darin, Bahrain with the Muslims, their horses, and wealth as though they were walking on land. The poet 'Afif ibn al-Mundhir has recounted this incident in the following couplets:

وأنزل بالكفار إحدى الجلائل
بأعجب من فلق البحار الأوائل

*Have you not see, verily Allah subjugated his sea,
And inflicted upon the disbelievers of his greatness.*

*We call out to the one by whom the sea was traversed and,
Brought about even more astounding than splitting the sea.*

ألم تر أن الله ذلل بحره
دعونا الذي شق البحار فجاءنا

See, Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, pg. 3 pg. 310; Ibn Kathīr: *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 6 pg. 329. Ibn Ḥajar has mentioned when recounting the life of Al-'Alā al-Ḥaḍramī رضي الله عنه in *Al-Isābah*, vol. 2 pg. 498 "He traversed the sea by a supplication as famous in the books of conquests"

II. Cause of fabrications in the early Islamic years

It is imperative for one studying Islamic history—especially the early era—to understand the need to remove the debris of delusions, innovations, and prejudice—that stems from internal bias and aligning to a school of thought—from the pristine history of Islam. All the above and other factors led the liars and fabricators attempting to spoil the untainted accounts of history. Looking at fabrications in the aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, one will understand the need to sift and scrutinise. There were so many liars implicated, that the erudite scholars were forced to write voluminous books on the weak and rejected narrators.¹

Furthermore, historical accounts and narrations were codified only after the emergence of different schools of thought and after the rise of innovators and heretics. This had an undeniable effect on historical records as one of the causes of fabrications is the fervent desire of innovators and heretics to call others to their cause. Many of those with political aspirations were part and parcel of this as well to further their goals.

The Islamic Empire spread to cover vast amounts of land during the era of the Rightly Guided Khulafā' with the Muslims conquering territory after territory. This outraged the disbelievers who planned and plotted against the Muslims. In the beginning they confronted the Muslims on the battlefield seeking to destroy their power and number. This proved fruitless with suffering defeats in major campaigns such as Qādisiyyah, Nahāwand, Tustar, and others. They then infiltrated the Muslims, outwardly accepting the Islamic faith with the sole purpose of causing divisions amongst the Muslims and destroying the Muslims from inside out. Ibn Ḥazam says:

ان الفرس كانوا من سعة الملك وعلو اليد على جميع الامم وجلالة الخطير في انفسهم حتى انهم كانوا يسمون انفسهم الاحرار والابناء وكانوا يعدون سائر الناس عبيداً لهم فلما امتحنوا بزوال الدولة عنهم على ايدي العرب تعاضتهم الامر وتضاعفت لديهم المصيبة وراموا كيد الاسلام بالمحاربة في اوقات

1 Books such as *Al-Ḍu'afā' wa al-Matrūkīn* of Nasa'ī, *Al-Ḍu'afā'* of 'Uqaylī, *Al-Majrūhīn* of Ibn Ḥibbān, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Ḍu'afā'* of Ibn 'Adī, and *Al-Mīzān* of Al-Dhahabī.

شتى...فراوا ان كيده على الحيلة انجع فاطهر قوم منهم الاسلام واستمالوا اهل التشيع باظهار محبة اهل بيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم واستشناع ظلم علي رضي الله عنه ثم سلكوا بهم مسالك حتى اخرجوهم عن الاسلام

The Persians were a superpower having the upper hand over other nations, holding themselves as sublime and royal. They would call themselves ‘the liberated’ and ‘the sons’ considering all others their slaves. When their kingdom was taken away by the Arabs, they were astounded and bewildered at this great loss. They attempted to wage war against the Muslims on various occasions, without much luck. They then infiltrated the Muslims with a group outwardly accepting the Islamic faith whilst joining the ranks of the Shīah. They made a show of love for the Ahl al-Bayt and raised a hue and cry about the oppression of ‘Alī عليه السلام. They then walked the treacherous path misguiding others, taking them out of the fold of Islam.¹

Amongst their schemes aimed to attack Islam was introducing false narrations and spreading false rumours that was designed to distort and tarnish the lives of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. Questioning their integrity and reliability would lead to questioning the legitimacy of the Islamic faith. Furthermore, tarnishing the life and character of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم was in turn an avenue to tarnish Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم. Imām Mālik says:

هؤلاء طعنوا - يعني الرافضة ومن على شاكلتهم من الزنادقة- في أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إنما طعنوا في أصحابه ليقول القائل : رجل سوء كان له أصحاب سوء، ولو كان رجلا صالحا لكان أصحابه صالحين

These people—the Rawāfiḍ and the heretics of their persuasion—disparage the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم so that one might say, ‘An evil man with evil Companions. If he was pious his Companions would have been pious.’²

1 Ibn Ḥazam: *Al-Faṣl fi al-Milal wa al-Ahwā’ wa al-Niḥal*, vol. 2 pg. 115.

2 Ibn al-Taymiyyah: *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā*, vol. 4 pg. 429.

It is important to note that hands of the deviants in the past had attempted to make Islamic history a play thing for themselves. The Jews, Christians, Shī'ah, and Majūs who had characterized Islam whilst remaining on disbelief made efforts to skew Islamic history. Some of the Persians joined the ranks of the Shī'ah, assumed their school of thought, and made a show of love for the Ahl al-Bayt with the goal of spreading falsehood and views that clashed with Islam. Their pretence of standing by the Ahl al-Bayt was a guise to continue their efforts in undermining the Islamic cause.

Their ideologies and slogans leave no doubt that this group merely posed as Muslims in order to cause damage to the faith and spread mischief within it. At their inception proclaiming their ideologies was problematic due to which they enclosed it within the pretence of love for the Ahl al-Bayt. They attributed false statements to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the Ahl al-Bayt to this end. Such acts were carried out by the likes of Mughīrah ibn Sa'īd¹ and Abū al-Khaṭṭāb Muḥammad ibn Abī Zaynab.²

Another group of Persians—heretics—joined the Muslim ranks going along with others who had done so. They pretended to enter the faith of Allah ﷻ

1 He is Mughīrah ibn Sa'īd al-Bajalī. Resident of Kūfaf and of the Shī'ah persuasion. Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī says, "Be careful regarding Mughīrah ibn Sa'īd and Abū 'Abd al-Raḥīm as both are liars". A'mash says, "The first instance of rebuking Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما I heard was from Mughīrah ibn Sa'īd." Ibn 'Adī says, "There was no one who cursed in Kūfaf more than Mughīrah ibn Sa'īd in his false narrations from 'Alī رضي الله عنه. He continuously attributed false statements to the Ahl al-Bayt. I do not know of any Musnad narrations from him." He was killed the year 129 A.H./737 A.D. by crucifixion on the hands of Khālid ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Qasrī. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ḥabīb in *Al-Muḥabbar*, pg. 483; Al-Jūzajānī in *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, pg. 50; Al-Ṭabarī in *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 7 pg. 129; and Ibn Ḥajar in *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 6 pg. 75.

2 He is Muḥammad ibn Abī Zaynab Miqlās, Abū al-Khaṭṭāb al-Ajda' al-Asadī. His teknonym is Abū Ismā'īl and Abū al-Zaybān. Ja'far al-Ṣādiq had mentioned him unfavourably. Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī says, "Muḥammad ibn Abī Zaynab Abū al-Khaṭṭāb al-Ajda' mawlā of the Banū Asad. May Allah's curses be upon him. His condition is well known. See *Al-Rijāl* of Al-Kashshī, pg. 145 and *Manhaj al-Maqāl fī Taḥqīq Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, pg. 323.

whilst their hearts were bereft of faith. One reason for this is that they were well respected individuals before the Muslim conquests of their lands. With the fall of their lands and the abolishment of the master-slave society they became a forgotten bunch. This led to hate against Islam being deeply ingrained into them which fuelled the fire of malice and attempts to widen the gap of differences amongst the Muslims whenever the chance arose. They pushed their false beliefs and fabricated narrations which they presumed was sufficient to tarnish the lives of the foregone pious individuals. Amongst this group was the likes of ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn Abī al- ‘Awjā’¹ who admitted to fabricating four thousand aḥādīth² before being put to death by Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān ibn ‘Alī.³

Another cause of fabrications was the immense discord and difference of opinion that followed the fitnah—after the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه—which triggered a break in Islamic civilization, the effects of which we feel to this day. Out of this fitnah hatred and hostility grew. Lies and fabrications spread. These happenings were exacerbated by the political climate that was a result of the conflicts between the Muslims at Jamal, Ṣiffīn, and Naharwān as these were the starting point of the emergence of many political parties such as the Shī‘ah and the Khawārij. The texts of the Qur’ān and Aḥādīth did not provide any assistance for their cause which led them to lying. Thus, some of the Shī‘ah fabricated aḥādīth on the virtue

1 He is ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn Abī al- ‘Awjā’. Al-Dhahabī says regarding him, “A heretic imbecile.” Abū Aḥmad ibn ‘Adī says, “When he was taken to be executed he said, “I have fabricated four thousand narrations in which I have made the permissible impermissible and the impermissible permissible.” See, Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍū‘ah*, vol. 1 pg. 37 and Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 2 pg. 644.

2 See, Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍū‘ah*, vol. 1 pg. 37; Al- ‘Irāqī: *Al-Faḥ al-Muḡīth fi sharḥ alfiyah al-Ḥadīth*, pg. 127.

3 He is, Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān ibn ‘Alī al- ‘Abbāsī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh. The governor of Basra during the era of Al-Mahdi. Ibn al-Athīr writes regarding the incidents of the year 160 A.H./776 A.D. “Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān was the governor over Basra, Bahrain, Amman, and the districts of Ahwaz and the river Tigris. He would track the heretics upon the command of al-Mahdī.” He passed away the year 173 A.H./ 789 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ḥabīb in *Al-Muḥabbar*, pg. 61; Al-Khaṭīb in *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 4 pg. 291; and Ibn al-Athīr in *Al-Kāmil fi al-Tārīkh*, vol. 6 pg. 49.

of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and criticism of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه.¹ Similarly, those opposed to them fabricated aḥādīth on the virtue of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه; an effort to refute those who criticized them.² These fabrications—citing the virtue of some or a number of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم—resorted to when vilifying the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم had become wide spread.³

It should be borne in mind that most of the false narrations were fabricated in the 2nd and 3rd century A.H. However, these fabricated narrations largely dealt with matters that occurred in the first half of the 1st century of Islam. It ought to be noted that Iraq, especially Kūfah, was a hub for creating and narrating fabricated aḥādīth as it was the city that bore the brunt of war with the Syrians, a result of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه taking it as his capital. It further remained a centre of opposition for the Umayyad dynasty.

It is common that fabrications of ḥadīth and reports are a reflection of the ideological and political struggles between different groups. The focal point of the debate (at that time) between the opposing groups was the matter of khilāfah. This was the reason that some of these groups resorted to fabricating narrations in an atmosphere fraught with political hatred.

The multitude of fabricated narrations stemming from Kūfah, the centre of the Shī‘ah, gave way to a bad portrayal of Iraq which was a hub of knowledge and ḥadīth at the time. This resulted in the waning of their academic reputation in the Islamic world. Ponder over the following proclamation of Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها:

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Muntaqā fī Minhāj al-I’tidāl*, pg. 313; Al-Ṣuyūṭī: *Al-La’ālī al-Maṣnū‘ah fī al-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍu‘ah*, vol. 1 pg. 343.

2 Al-Ṣuyūṭī: *Al-La’ālī al-Maṣnū‘ah*, vol. 1 pg. 286/315; Ibn ‘Irāq: *Tanzīh al-Sharī‘ah al-Marfū‘ah ‘an al-Akḥbār al-Shanī‘ah al-Mawḍu‘ah*, vol. 1 pg. 371.

3 Al-Ṣuyūṭī: *Al-La’ālī al-Maṣnū‘ah*, vol. 1 pg. 428; Al-Karmī: *Al-Fawā’id al-Mawḍu‘ah fī al-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍu‘ah*, pg. 92.

يا أهل العراق أهل الشام خير منكم . خرج إليهم نفر من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كثير ، فحدثونا ما نعرف ، وخرج إليكم نفر من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قليل ، فحدثتمونا بما نعرف وما لا نعرف

O people of Iraq! The people of Shām are better than you. Many of the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ went to them and they narrated to us what we are aware of. And very few of the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ came to you, yet you narrate to us what we are aware of and what we are unaware of.¹

A group of Iraqis came to ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ ﷺ in Makkah asking him to narrate to them. He said to them:

إن من أهل العراق قوما يكذبون ويكذبون ويسخرون

There are people in Iraq who lie and lie, and mock.²

A written judgement of ‘Alī ﷺ was brought to Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ from Kūfah. Leaving the amount of an arm’s length, he wiped out the rest.³

A‘mash⁴ once mentioned that he saw an old man from Kūfah interpolating the judgment of ‘Alī ﷺ with regards to the law of a women divorced thrice citing people had incited him to do so.⁵

1 Al-Fasawī: *Al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 756.

2 Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 4 pg. 267.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (with the commentary of Al-Nawawī), vol. 1 pg. 83.

4 He is, Sulaymān ibn Mihrān al-Asadī, Abū Muḥammad al-A‘mash. He is from amongst the Tābi‘īn. The scholars share a consensus on his reliability and authenticity only opposed to his *tadlīs*. He was a scholar of the Qur’ān, Aḥādīth, and laws of inheritance. He has transmitted about 1300 aḥādīth. Al-Dhahabī says regarding him, “He was a fountainhead of beneficial knowledge and pious deeds.” He passes away the year 148 A.H/765 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 342; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 9 pg. 3; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 1 pg. 154.

5 Ibn ‘Adī: *Al-Kāmil fī Ḍu‘afā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 1 pg. 148.

Al-Zuhrī¹ says:

إذا سمعت بالحديث العراقي فاردد به ثم اردد به

When you hear of an Iraqi ḥadīth reject it, then reject it (again).²

Imām Mālik too, warns just as the other scholars warned of the narrations originating from Iraq. He has classified their status the same as the narrations from the Ahl al-Kitāb; their narrations are neither ratified nor rejected.³ ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mahdī⁴ once commented to him that he hears more ḥadīth in Iraq in a single day than what he hears in Madīnah Munawwarah in forty. The Imām replied:

من أين لنا دار الضرب – السكة – التي عندكم – تضربون بالليل وتتفنون بالنهار

We do not have a mint—as you people have—minting by night and spending by day.⁵

Ibn Taymiyyah says with regards to this:

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Muslim ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Shihāb al-Qurashī al-Zuhrī al-Madanī. The Imām and Ḥāfiẓ of his era. It is said that he was the first to codify ḥadīth. Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī says, “I haven’t seen anyone more knowledgeable than Al-Zuhrī.” He passed away the year 124 A.H/724 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 1 pg. 320; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 8 pg. 71; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A’yān*, vol. 4 pg. 177; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 1 pg. 108 and *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 5 pg. 327.

2 Al-Fasawī: *Al-Ma’rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 757.

3 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Muntaqā fī Minhāj al-’itidāl*, pg. 88.

4 He is ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī ibn Ḥassān al-Baṣrī, Abū Sa’īd. He is counted amongst the great ḥuffāz. Ibn al-Madīnī says, “If I were to take an oath between the rukn and the maqām, I would do so that I haven’t seen anyone like ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. He passed away the year, 198 A.H/813A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 297; Al-Lālkāṭī: *Sharḥ uṣūl i’tiqād al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah min al-Kitāb wa al-Sunnah wa ijma’ al-Ṣaḥābah wa al-Tābī’īn min ba’dihim*, vol. 1 pg. 44; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 10 pg. 240; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6 pg. 2790.

5 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Muntaqā*, pg. 88.

كان جمهور الرأي من الكوفة ، إذ هو الغالب على أهلها ، مع ما كان فيهم من التشيع الفاحش ، وكثرة الكذب في الرواية فلم يكن الكذب في أهل بلد أكثر منه فيهم . ففي زمن التابعين كان بها خلق كثير من معروفون بالكذب ، لا سيما الشيعة فإنهم أكثر الطوائف كذبا باتفاق أهل العلم . ولأجل هذا ورد عن مالك وغيره من أهل المدينة أنهم لم يكونوا يحتجون بعامة أحاديث أهل العراق ،

Most of the partisans of personal opinion were from Kūfah together with them subscribing, deeply, to the Shī'ah movement and fabricating, numerous, narrations.¹ No other city had the amount of liars they had. There were many therein who were famed as liars during the era of the Tābi'īn. This rings especially true to the Shī'ah who hold the title for the most amount of liars by the consensus of the men of knowledge. It is for this reason that Imām Mālik and others of Madinah would not cite proofs from the general aḥādīth originating from Iraq.²

Based on what has previously been mentioned, it could be said that the popularity of fabricating narrations gained traction owing to the popularity of the political climate present in Iraq at the time. The rift between the different groups ran much deeper after the incident of Ṣiffīn. The separation of the Shī'ah and the Khawārij from the general populous had become distinct from then on. The Shī'ah played the greatest role in undertaking the effort to spread fabrications as lying had become entrenched in them; more so than any other group of the faith. Furthermore, Iraq had become home to bloody events and rebellions that continued to breakout throughout the Umayyad reign. Thus, emerged their predilection for fabricated narrations to further political goals.

Another reason for fabricating narrations was the adoption of the Shī'ah faith by Arabs who lied, championing the—false and unsolicited—cause of the Imām's of the Ahl al-Bayt with the purpose of gaining seats of leadership. Keeping this goal in front of them, they justified fabricating narrations and incidents to support the opposing view to undermine and damage the Umayyad khilāfah.

1 Ibn al-Taymiyyah: *Majmū' Fatāwā*, vol. 10 pg. 358.

2 Ibid. vol. 20 pg. 316.

This can be understood from the following proposition of al-Mukhtār al-Thaqafī¹ to a man of ḥadīth:

ضع لي حديثا عن النبي الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أني كائن بعده خليفة وطالب ثار ولده - يقصد الحسين - وهذه عشرة آلاف درهم وخلعة ومركوب وخادم . فقال الرجل أما عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فلا ولكن اختر من شئت من الصحابة وأحطك من الثمن ما شئت قال عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أوكد قال والعذاب أشد

Mukhtār said, “Fabricate for me a ḥadīth from Rasūlullāh ﷺ that states I will emerge after him as a khalīfah seeking to avenge his son—meaning Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه—in lieu of ten thousand dirhams, a robe, a conveyance, and a servant.”

The man said, “As for fabricating it from the Nabī ﷺ then this I cannot do. However, choose whoever you want from the Ṣaḥābah, and lessen from the fee whatever you wish .”

Mukhtār replied, “A narration from the Nabī ﷺ holds more weight.”

The man responded, “The punishment is far worse.”²

Whereas the following narration is authentically established from Rasūlullāh

صلى الله عليه وسلم:

يكون في تقيف كذاب ومُبيِّرٌ

In Thaqīf there will be a great liar and destroyer.³

And the liar was Mukhtār.⁴

1 He is al-Mukhtār ibn Abī ‘Ubayd ibn Mas‘ūd al-Thaqafī. He is from amongst the leaders of those that rebelled against the Banū Umayyah. He tracked the killers of Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه and killed many of them including ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād. He was a great liar who claimed prophethood and revelation. He was killed the year 67A.H/ 687 A.D by Muṣ‘ab ibn Zubayr. Refer to, Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnwarī: *Al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl*, pg. 82 and Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 6 pg. 7.

2 Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍū‘ah*, vo. 1 pg. 39.

3 Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim (with the commentary of Al-Nawawī), vol. 16 pg. 100.

4 Al-Nawawī: *Sharḥ Muslim*, vol. 16 pg. 100

Another reason for fabricating narrations was the spread of lies with the purpose of discrediting the third khalīfah of Islam and the third of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنه in status, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه.¹ This plan was hatched by ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’, the Jew, and his co-conspirators.

Ibn Saba’ was instrumental in conjuring lies against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and inciting people against him. The Shī‘ah narrators gobbled up his lies with historians relating them to this day. He was the one who established the principles of the Shī‘ah; al-Raj‘ah, Al-Waṣiyyah, al-Ghaybah, and Swearing the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنه.² He used these concepts to reach his goal, exploiting the love of the Ahl al-Bayt that every believer has and their position which every believer attests to. He created the—untrue—impressions of loving, assisting, and gaining closeness to them. He thus claimed such false things in their favour which the Ahl al-Bayt were the first to reject.

He claimed amongst other ideas, that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه had nine times the knowledge of the Qur’ān and that only a ninth of the Qur’ān was present while the knowledge of the rest was with ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه emphatically prohibited him from such nonsensical ideas.³

Abū al-Jallās⁴ says:

سمعت علياً يقول لعبد الله بن سبأ: والله ما أفضى إلي بشيء كتمته أحدًا من الناس. ولقد سمعته يقول:
إن بين يدي الساعة ثلاثين كذاباً وإنك أحدهم - يقصد ابن سبأ

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 4 pg. 340.

2 See, Al-Qummī: *Al-Maqālāt wa al-Firaq*, pg. 20; Al-Ash‘arī: *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, vol. 1 pg. 85; Al-Sharastanī: *Al-Mīlāl wa al-Niḥāl*, vol. 1 pg. 15; Al-Kirmānī: *Al-Firaq al-Islāmiyyah*, pg. 34.

3 Al-Jūzajānī: *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, pg. 38; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 2 pg. 426.

4 Abū al-Jallās al-Kūfī. Ibn al-Ḥajar has mentioned him in *Al-Tahdhīb* saying, “He has narrated from ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. Abū Hind al-Ḥārith ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Hamdānī has narrated from him, vol. 12 pg. 63.

I heard ‘Alī saying to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’, “By Allah! Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not give me anything that he hid from the people. I heard him saying, ‘Verily before the Day of Judgment there will be thirty great liars.’ And you are one of them.” Meaning Ibn Saba’.¹

He also claimed that ‘Alī ﷺ held ill feelings towards Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ﷺ. Zayd ibn Wahab² says that Suwayd ibn Ghafalah³ came to ‘Alī ﷺ in the days of his khilāfah and said:

إني مررت بنفر يذكرون أبا بكر وعمر بسوء يرون أنك تضمم لهما مثل ذلك منهم عبد الله بن سبأ وكان عبد الله أول من أظهر ذلك فقال علي: ما لي ولهذا الخبيث الأسود ثم قال معاذ الله أن أضمر لهما إلا الحسن الجميل ثم أرسل إلى عبد الله بن سبأ فسيره إلى المدائن وقال لا تسكني في بلدة أبدا ثم نهض إلى المنبر حتى اجتمع الناس فذكر القصة في ثنائه عليهما بطولها... الاثر وفي آخره ألا ولا يبلغني عن أحد يفضلني عليهما إلا جلدته حد المفتري

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq ‘Al-Makhtūf*, vol. 9 pg. 332; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Lisān*, vol. 3 pg. 289.

2 He is, Zayd ibn Wahab al-Juhanī, Abū Sulayman al-Kūfī. He travelled to Rasūlullāh ﷺ but did not meet him as the Prophet ﷺ passed away whilst he was on the way. He has narrated from ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Abū Dharr, and other Ṣaḥābah ﷺ. Zuhayr narrates from Al-A’mash who said, “When Zayd ibn Wahab narrates to you from someone, then it is as though you heard it directly from the person he narrated from.” Ibn Sa’d says, “He was reliable and narrated many ḥadīth.” Al-‘Ijlī says, “He is reliable.” Al-Dhahabī says, “Zayd ibn Wahab is from the eminent Tābi’īn. There is consensus on seeking rulings by his narrations except that which comes through Ya’qūb al-Fasawī as he has said in his *Tārīkh*, ‘His narrations have many mistakes.’” He passed away before or after the year 90 A.H./709 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 171; Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 6 pg. 102; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vo. 2 pg. 10; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3 pg. 427.

3 He is Suwayd ibn Ghafalah, Abū Umayyah al-Ju’fī. Embraced Islam during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ but did not meet him, and of the eminent Tābi’īn. He arrived in Madinah the day Rasūlullāh ﷺ was buried. He was a powerful man. On the day of Qādisiyyah he heard people screaming Lion! Lion! He went forward and struck the lion on its head slitting through with his sword coming out at the tail. He was with ‘Alī ﷺ at the Battle of Ṣiffīn. He lived in Kūfah and passed away in the era of Ḥajjāj the year 81 A.H./ 700 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 212, Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif fi Ma’rifah man lahū riwāyah fi al-Kutub al-Sittah*, vol. 1 pg. 329; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah fi Ma’rifah al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 2 pg. 118.

I have come across a group who are talking evil of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar and opine that you bear the same feeling towards them. Amongst these people are ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’. And ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ was the first to arouse such sentiment. ‘Alī said, “What do I have with this evil man?” He then said, “I seek protection from Allah that I have anything besides good and noble thoughts for them.” He then called for ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ and sent him to the outlying areas saying, “You should not be in the same city as me.” He then ascended the pulpit until the people had gathered. He then praised both of them – Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما – at length. He concluded by saying, “If it reaches me that anyone prefers me over them, I will flog him; the punishment of a slander.”¹

Another reason that led to fabrications was the delay of codification of history. Not much thought was given to it by the Muslims until the ‘Abbāsīd khilāfah. The distant time-line between the occurrence of incidents its codification had a profound effect in skewing historical incidents which narrators were charged with bearing. This was especially problematic as the time period before codification was one of dark trials that led to many factions within the Muslims. There were the Bakriyyah, ‘Umariyyah, ‘Uthmāniyyah, ‘Alawiyyah, ‘Abbāsiyyah, and others. Each convinced of their own truth and the falsehood, oppression, and illegitimacy of all others.²

This problem was compounded due to the fact the ‘Abbāsīd dynasty did not look favourably to those that narrated the good of the Banū Umayyah. Thus, codifying Islamic history was taken up by three groups. Firstly, there were those who sought luxury and riches by gaining closeness to those who resented the Banū Umayyah through their writings. Secondly, there were those who considered the codification of history as incomplete and of no reward without distorting the image of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, and the Banū ‘Abd al-Shams. Thirdly and lastly, there were historians who were unbiased and men of true faith

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pg. 290.

2 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāṣim min al-Qawāṣim*, pg. 246.

such as al-Ṭabarī, Ibn ‘Asākir¹, and Ibn Kathīr². They were of the opinion that impartiality would dictate gathering the narrations of all schools of thought even the narrations of narrators such as Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā—the Shī‘ah bigot—and Sayf ibn

1 He is ‘Alī ibn Ḥasan ibn Hibat Allāh, Abū al-Qāsim ibn ‘Asākir al-Dimashqī al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ. A Historian and prolific author. He has authored *Al-Taṣānīf* and *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*. He was the muḥaddith of Shām during his era and the companion of al-Sam‘ānī in his travels. Al-Sam‘ānī says regarding him, “Abū al-Qāsim was a Ḥāfiẓ, reliable, trustworthy, pious, of exemplary character, knowing of both the subject matter and chain of transmission of the aḥādīth, and was extremely knowledgeable.” He was of superior merit with correct and reliable recitation. He travelled and expanded his efforts in seeking knowledge. He surpassed his contemporaries. He has written, *Tārīkh Dimashq al-Kabīr* which is his magnum opus of eighty volumes! I have referred to it much in this book. He has recounted in this book the lives of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, Tābī‘īn, Tab’ al-Tābī‘īn, eminent personalities, narrators, and leaders on the layout of *Tārīkh Baghdad* of Al-Khaṭīb. Ibn Khallikān says, “Al-Ḥāfiẓ Zakīyy al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Aẓīm said whilst discussing this book of history, ‘This man had probably decided writing this book as soon as he reached the age of understanding and began gathering the material from that time. Otherwise life is too short for a man to write such a book.’” This book of history has addendums as well. Some of these are: The addendum of Al-Qāsimī, son of Ibn ‘Asākir, The addendum of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Bakrī, and The addendum of ‘Umar ibn al-Ḥājib. It has abridgments as well. Some of these are, the abridgment of Imām Abū Shāmah al-Dimashqī, that of Al-Qādī Jamāl al-Dīn ibn Manẓūr (author of *Lisān al-Arab*), that of Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aynī, and that of ‘Abd al-Qādir Badrān who has omitted the chain of transmission and repetitions. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ṣuyūtī has selected from it and compiled the book, *Tuḥfah al-Mudhākīr al-Muntaqā min Tārīkh ibn ‘Asākir*. Amongst his other books are, *Kashf al-Mughṭṭā fī faḍl al-Muwaṭṭa*, *Arba‘ūn ḥadīth min araba‘īn Shaykh min araba‘īn madinah*, *Mu‘jam al-Ṣaḥābah*, *Tahdhīb al-Multamīn min ‘awālī Mālik ibn Anas*, *Tārīkh al-Mizzah*, *Mu‘jam Asmā’ al-Qurā wa al-Amṣār*, *Mu‘jam al-Shuyūkh wa al-Nubalā’*, *Mu‘jam al-Niswān*, *Al-Ashrāf ‘alā M’arifat al-Aṭrāf*, and *Tabyīn Kadhib al-Muftarī fī ma Nusiba ilā Abī al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī*. He passed away the year 571 A.H./1176 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Jawzī: *Mir‘at al-Zamān fī Tārīkh al-‘A‘yan*, vol. 8 pg. 336; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-‘A‘yan*, vol. 3 pg. 309; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shafī‘iyyah*, vol. 4 pg. 273; Ibn Kathīr: *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 12 pg. 294; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 4 pg. 1330; Ḥājī Khalīfah: *Kashf al-Zunūn ‘an Asāmī al-Kutub wa al-Funūn*, vol. 1 pg. 294.

2 He is Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Umar ibn Kathīr al-Qurashī al-Baṣrawī al-Dimashqī, Abū al-Fidā’ al-Ḥāfiẓ. A Historian and theologian. He has authored, *Ikhtīṣār ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, *Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān al-Karīm*, *Al-Takmil fī M’arifat al-Thiqāt wa al-Du‘afā’ wa al-Majāhīl*, *Al-Ijtihād fī Ṭalab al-Jihād*, and *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā’ al-Shafī‘iyyah*. He passed away the year 774 A.H./1373 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. 1 pg. 373; Ibn al-‘Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab fī akhbār man dhahab*; Al-Shawkānī: *Al-Badr al-Talī ‘bi maḥāsīn min ba’d al-Qarn al-Sābi’*, vol. 1 pg. 153.

‘Umar al-‘Irāqī—the abuser. Perhaps some were forced to be inclusive to appease avenues of power and status.¹

These scholars included the chain of transmission for every narration so that the one studying their works would have the ability to ascertain the authenticity of each narrator. They thus left us a legacy. Not a compilation of our history. Rather a legacy through which we can extract our history by studying and reviewing its material. This is possible and simple for one who understands the weak and strong in these sources by using the yardstick afforded to us by the Shī‘ah. Through this one will extract historical actualities leaving behind fictitious accounts of the past. This will result in relying on the authentic narrations free from interpolations and fabrications. Referring to the books of ḥadīth and the observations of the scholars will make this task easy.

III. The effects of the Shī‘ah in fabricating and twisting narrations

The scholars of *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* are unanimous that lying and fabricating is found to a much higher degree amongst the Shī‘ah than any other. One studying the books of *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* dealing with the narrators’ names and conditions such as the books of al-Bukhārī, Ibn Ma‘īn, Ibn ‘Adī, al-Dārquṭnī, and other such masters of this science will soon come to the realisation that there is consensus on the following: Amongst all the different sects, lying is found to a much greater degree amongst the Shī‘ah. It is said that they are greater liars than the Rawāfiḍ. Hereunder are some quotations from the erudite scholars of ḥadīth and fiqh who clearly state that lying and fabricating goes hand in hand with the Shī‘ah.

Abū Mu‘āwiyah² says, I heard A‘mash saying:

1 Muḥib al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb: Footnotes of *Al-‘Awāṣim min al-Qawāsim*, pg. 177.

2 He is Muḥammad ibn Khāzīm al-Tamīmī al-Sa‘dī, Abū Mu‘āwiyah al-Ḍarīr al-Kūfī; one of the eminent reliable narrators. Ibn Sa‘d say, “He was reliable, narrated many ḥadīth, would make tadlīs, and was a Murjī.” Al-Nasaī says, “Reliable in the narrations of A‘mash.” Ibn Abī Ḥātim says, “The most reliable in the narrations of A‘mash.” Ibn Khirāsh says, “Truthful and in the narrations of A‘mash reliable. He passed away the year 195 A.H/ 810 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 6 pg. 392; al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* 1/1/74; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 7 pg. 246; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdad*, vol. 5 pg. 242; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 137.

I have met people who could only be called great liars.¹

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī² narrates with his chain of narration to Ibn al-Mubārak³:

سأل أبو عصمة أبا حنيفة ممن تأمرني أن أسمع - قال : من كل عدل في هواه إلا الشيعة فإن أصل عقدهم
تضليل أصحاب محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 1 pg. 16.

2 He is Aḥmad ibn 'Alī ibn Thābit al-Baghdadi, Abū Bakr famous as al-Khaṭīb; one of the great ḥuffāz. He was eloquent and knowledgeable in the fields of fiqh, adab, and tāriḫ. There are very few sciences in the field of ḥadīth that he hasn't authored a book in. Ḥāfiẓ Abū Bakr says, "Whoever is unbiased will know that the muḥaddithīn after al-Khaṭīb are dependent on his books." When he was in his final illness he gave his books and wealth as endowments to avenues of good and seekers of ḥadīth. He has authored among other books, *Tāriḫ Baghdād*, *Sharf aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth*, *Al-Asmā al-Mubhamah*, *Al-Sābiq wa al-Lāhiq fī taba'ud mā bayn wafāt rāwiyain 'an shaykh wāḥid*, *Mūḍiḥ awḥām al-Jam' wa al-Tafrīq*, *Al-Jāmi' li akhlāq al-Rāwī wa ādāb al-Sāmi'*, *Maqlūb al-Asmā wa al-Ansāb*, *Asmā al-Mudallisin*, *Taqyid al-'Ilm*, *Riwāyah al-ṣaḥābah 'an Tabi'yy*, *Ijāza al-Ma'dūm wa al-Majhūl*, *Al-Tāriḫ*, *Tamyiz mutṭaṣil al-Isnād*, *Talkhīṣ al-Mutashābih fī al-Rasm wa ḥimāyah mā ashkal minhu 'an bawādir al-Taṣḥīf wa al-Wahm*, and *Al-Mukmal fī bayān al-Muḥmal*. Al-Sam'ānī has mentioned that he has authored fifty-six books. He passed away the year 463 A.H./ 1072 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A'yan*, vol. 1 pg. 92; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 18 pg. 270; Dr Akram Diyā' al-'Umri: *Mawārid al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī* pgs. 13-84.

3 He is 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak al-Ḥanzalī al-Tamīmī al-Marwazī, Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ; the envy of warriors and leader of the ascetics. He spent his life in travelling for knowledge, pilgrimage, fighting in the path of Allah, and doing business. Al-Ḥasan ibn Māsarij the freed slave of Ibn al-Mubārak says, "A group with the likes of Faḍl ibn Mūsa and Makhlad ibn al-Ḥusayn were gathered and they said, 'Let us count the great qualities of Ibn al-Mubārak.' They said, 'Knowledge, fiqh, adab, grammar, language, asceticism, eloquence, poetry, standing in prayer at night, worship, pilgrimage, fighting in the cause of Allah, bravery, excellence in horse riding, strength, leaving out speaking that which does not concern him, justice, very little difference of opinion from his companions.'" He passed away the year 181 A.H./ 797 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tāriḫ al-ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 2 pg. 225; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 1 pg. 274 and *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 8 pg. 378.

Abū 'Ismah¹ asked Abū Ḥanīfah, “Whom do you command me to listen to?” He replied, ‘From every impartial person except the Shī'ah as their main goal is to discredit the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ.’²

Ḥammād ibn Salamah³ says that a Shaykh of them—the Shī'ah—narrated to him:

كنا إذا اجتمعنا فاستحسننا شيئا جعلناه حديثا

When we would gather and consider something good, we would make it a ḥadīth.⁴

Muḥammad ibn Sa'īd al-Aṣḥāhānī⁵ says, I heard Sharīk⁶ saying:

1 He is Nūḥ ibn Abī Maryam, Yazīd ibn 'Abd ibn 'Abd Allāh, Abū 'Ismah al-Marwazī. He was from Marw and was known as Nūḥ al-Jāmi' as he had combined the knowledge of ḥadīth, fiqh, tafsīr, and history of battles. He ascended the role of judge over Marw in the khilāfah of al-Manṣūr al-'Abbāsī. Ahmad says, “He wasn't all that in ḥadīth. He was stern against the Jahmiyyah. Muslim says, “He is weak in ḥadīth.” Al-Bukhārī says, “Extremely weak in ḥadīth.” Ibn 'Adī says, “Though weak his ḥadīth will be written.” He passed away the year 173 A.H./ 789 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Dārquṭnī: *Al-Ḍu'afā'*; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 4 pg. 279; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10 pg. 486.

2 Al-Khaṭīb: *Al-Kifāyah fī 'ilm al-Riwāyah*, pg. 303.

3 Ḥammād ibn Salamah ibn dinar, Abū Salamah al-Baṣrī. He is from amongst the ḥuffāz of ḥadīth. He was an Imām in Arabic and an eloquent jurist. He was stern against the innovators. He has a book *Al-Sunan*. He passed away the year 169 A.H./ 784 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 282; Ibn Ma'in: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 130; Ibn Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 317; Al-Anbārī: *Nuzḥah al-Albā fī tabaqat al-Udabā'*, pg. 50; Ibn al-Kayyāl: *Al-Kawākib al-Nayyirāt fī Ma'rifah man ikhtalaṭ min al-Ruwāt al-Thiqāt*, pg. 470.

4 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 1 pg. 66.

5 He is Muḥammad ibn Sa'īd ibn Sulaymān ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Kūfī Abū Ja'far al-Aṣḥāhānī. He is from amongst the teachers of al-Bukhārī and al-Nasa'ī. Ya'qūb ibn Shaybah says, “Strong”. Al-Nasa'ī says, “Reliable”. Ibn 'Adī says, “Reliable, from Kufa”. Abū Ḥātim says, “I haven't seen any Ḥāfiẓ more reliable than him in Kufa.” He passed away the year 220 A.H./835 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/95; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol. 7 pg. 265; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshifāt*, vol. 3 pg. 41; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 188.

6 He is Sharīk ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥārith, Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Kūfī al-Nakha'ī. He is of the scholars of ḥadīth and fiqh. He is known for his string intellect and quick wittedness. He was appointed as the judge for al-Manṣūr and then for al-Mahdī. He was a moderate Shī'ī. He passed away the year 177 A.D./794 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdad*, vol. 9 pg. 279; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yan*, vol. 2 pg. 464; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Tadhkirah*, vol. 1 pg. 232.

احمل العلم عن كل من لقيته إلا الرافضة فإنهم يضعون الحديث ويتخذونه دينا

Take knowledge from everyone you meet except the Rawāfiḍ as they fabricate ḥadīth and adopt it as religion.¹

Yūnus ibn ‘Abd al- A‘lā² says, Ashhab³ said:

سئل مالك فيه عن الرافضة فقال : لا تكلمهم ولا ترو عنهم فإنهم يكذبون

Mālik was asked regarding the Rawāfiḍ. He said, “Do not speak to them and do not narrate from them as they are liars.”⁴

‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Mubarak says:

الدين لأهل الحديث ، والكلام والحيل لأهل الرأي ، والكذب للرافضة

Religion is for the people of ḥadīth. Loopholes and theology is for the people of opinions and lying is for the Rawāfiḍ.⁵

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Muntaqā*, pg. 22.

2 He is Yūnus ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā ibn Maysarah, Abū Mūsa Al-Ṣadafī. He is of the great jurists of Egypt. He was a scholar of history and ḥadīth. He passed away the year 263 A.H./877 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A‘yan*, vol. 2 pg. 417; Al-Yāfi‘ī: *Mir‘āt al-Jinān wa ‘ibrah al-Yaqzān*, vol. 2 pg. 172; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 440; Ṭāsh Kubra Zādah: *Miftaḥ al-Sa‘ādah wa miṣbah al-Siyādah*, vol. 2 pg. 169.

3 He is Ashhab ibn ‘Abd al- ‘Azīz ibn Dāwūd al-Qīsī, Abū ‘Amr al-Miṣrī. He has narrated from Mālik. Saḥnūn and Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam have narrated from him. Reliable and a jurist. Abū ‘Amr al-Ḥāfiḍ says, “Ashhab was a jurist, intelligent, handsome, from the Mālikī researchers. He would write the tax of Egypt. His narrations from Mālik are reliable. He has a book Al-Ḥajj. He passed away the year 204 A.H./819A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 2810; Al-Qādī ‘Iyād: *Tartīb al-Madārik was Taqrīb al-Masālik li Ma‘rifah a‘lām madhab Mālik*, vol. 3 pg. 262; Al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā*, pg. 150; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pg. 80.

4 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Muntaqā*, pg. 21.

5 Ibid, pg. 480.

Ḥarmalah¹ says, I heard al-Shafī'ī saying:

لم أر أحدا أشهد بالزور من الرافضة

I have not seen anyone lying more than the Rawāfiḍ.²

Mu'ammil ibn Ihāb³ says, I heard Yazīd ibn Hārūn⁴ saying:

يكتب عن كل مبتدع إذا لم يكن داعية - أي إلى بدعته - إلا الرافضة فإنهم يكذبون

Narrations will be written from innovators as long as they are not inviting to it, i.e. their innovations, except the Rawāfiḍ as they lie.⁵

The Shī'ah made lying their salient feature and gave it a religious wrapping calling it Taqiyyah. They say:

1 He is Ḥarmalah ibn Yaḥyā ibn Ḥarmalah ibn 'Imrān, Abū Ḥafṣ al-Tajībī al-Miṣrī, the companion of al-Shafī'ī. He is truthful from the 11th level. Ḥāfiẓ Abū Sa'īd ibn Yūnus says, "Ḥarmalah knew more than anyone else regarding the narrations of Ibn Wahb. He passed away the year 243 A.H./858 A.D. His life is recorded by Ibn 'Abd al-Barr: *Al-Intiqā'*, pg. 109; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 1 pg. 84; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pg. 80.

2 Al-Khaṭīb: *Al-Kifāyah fi 'ilm al-Riwāyah*, pg. 202.

3 He is Mu'ammil ibn Ihāb al-'Ijlī al-Kūfī, Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Kirmānī. Abū Ḥātim says, "Truthful." Al-Nasa'ī says, "Reliable." Ibn Ḥajar says, "Truthful, he has some mistakes." He passed away the year 254 A.H./868 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 4 pg. 229; *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 3 pg. 168; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 2 pg. 290.

4 He is Yazīd ibn Hārūn ibn Zadhān in Thābit, Abū Khālid al-Wāsītī al-Sulamī; from amongst the reliable ḥuffāz. He had acquired a great amount of knowledge and was well respected amongst the people. He would say, "I have memorized twenty-four thousand aḥādīth with its chain of transmission. I say this with no pride." Aḥmad says, "Yazīd was a reliable Ḥāfiẓ." Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī says, "Yazīd was reliable and an Imām. The likes of him are not asked about." Al-Dhahabī says, "He was a fountainhead in knowledge and action, reliable and a proof. He was of great status." He passed away the year 206 A.H./821 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 2 pg. 677; Ibn Ma'in: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 677; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 2 pg. 307; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol. 9 p. 295; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 14 vol. 337.

5 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 1 pg. 16.

The one who does not do Taqiyyah has no faith.

They then falsely attribute this narration to Muḥammad al-Bāqir¹; a slander no less.²

‘Alī عليه السلام and the Ahl al-Bayt complained much of them and their lies as they would attribute lies to them.

Abū ‘Amr al-Kashshī³ writes: Abū ‘Abd Allāh—Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq⁴—says:

قال أبو عبد الله - جعفر الصادق - : إنا أهل بيت صادقون لا نخلو من كذاب يكذب علينا ، فيسقط صدقنا بكذبه علينا عند الناس كان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أصدق البرية لهجة وكان مسيلمة يكذب عليه ، وكان أمير المؤمنين - علي بن أبي طالب - أصدق من برأ الله من بعد رسول الله ، وكان الذي يكذب عليه عبد الله بن سبأ - لعنه الله - وكان أبو عبد الله الحسين بن علي قد ابتلي بالمختار الثقفي - ثم ذكر علي بن الحسين فقال : كان يكذب عليه أبو عبد الله بن الحارث الشامي وبنان ثم ذكر المغيرة بن سعيد

1 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ibn al-Ḥusayn Abū Ja‘far al-Hāshimī al-Qurashī; one of the eminent leaders of the Ahl al-Bayt. He became famous by the title al-Bāqir (one who tore through knowledge) due to his knowledge of the apparent and hidden. He narrated from the Ṣaḥābah عليهم السلام and is counted amongst the jurists of Madinah. He passed away the year, 114 A.H./732 A.D. His life has been recorded by Abū Nu‘aym: *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, vol. 1 pg. 180; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Ṣifat al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 2 pg. 60; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Tadhkirah*, vol. 1 pg. 124.

2 Al-Kulaynī: *Al-Kāfi fī al-Uṣūl*, Chapter of Taqiyyah, vol. 2 pg. 19.

3 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Abū ‘Amr al-Kashshī, hailing from Kash, a city in Transoxiana. He is amongst the Shī‘ah jurists. He has authored *M‘arifat Akhbār al-Rijāl*. He died the year 340 A.H./951 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Mamāqānī in *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl fī Taḥqīq Aqwāl al-Rijāl*, pg. 142; Al-Istarābadī in *Manhaj al-Maqāl fī Taḥqīq Aqwāl al-Rijāl*, pg. 312.

4 He is Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad al-Bāqir ibn ‘Alī ibn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ibn al-Ḥusayn—grandson of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم -, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ṣādiq. He was from amongst the great Tābi‘īn and an Imām in fiqh and ḥadīth. Abū Ḥātim says, “Reliable, the likes of him are not asked about.” Abū Ḥanīfah says, “I haven’t seen anyone more well versed in jurisprudence than Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad.” He passed away the year, 148 A.H./765 A.D. His life has been recorded by Abū Nu‘aym: *Al-Ḥilyah*, vol. 3 pg. 192; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Ṣifat al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 2 pg. 94; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Tadhkirah*, vol. 1 pg. 166.

والسري وأبا الخطاب... فقال: لعنهم الله، إنا لا نخلو من كذاب يكذب علينا، كفانا الله مؤنة كل كذاب، وأذاقهم الله حر الحديد،

We the Ahl al-Bayt are truthful. We are not protected from liars who will attribute lies to us, and tarnish our honesty with their falsehood. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was the most truthful and Musaylamah attributed lies to him. Amīr al-Mu'minīn—'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib— was most truthful after Rasūlullāh ﷺ and 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba'—may the curse of Allah be upon him—attributed lies to him. Similarly, Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī was tested by the falsities of Mukhtār al-Thaqafī. (Then mentioning 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn¹ he said,) "Abū 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥārith al-Shāmī and Bunān² attributed lies to him. So did Mughīrah ibn Sa'īd, Sarī³, Abū al-Khaṭṭāb and others." He then said, "May Allah's curse be upon them, we are not protected from liars who will attribute lies to us; however, Allah ﷻ spared us the ill of every liar and punished them."⁴

1 He is 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Abū al-Ḥasan Zayn al-'Ābidīn al-Hāshimī al-Qurashī. His piety, forbearance, and generosity was proverbial. After his passing it came to light that he was supporting one hundred homes. Ibn Ishāq says, "The people of Madinah were living not knowing where their expenses were coming from. When 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn passed away they realised it was he who would come to their houses at night to see to their needs." He passed away the year 94 A.H./712 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 211; Abū Nu'aym: *Al-Ḥilyah*, vol. 3 pg. 133; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Ṣīfat al-Ṣafwah*, vol. 2 pg. 52.

2 Al-Ḥārith al-Shāmī and Bunān. Their mention is found in *Rijāl al-Kashshī* wherein Ja'far al-Ṣādiq is reported to have criticized them and credited them with being liars. See pg. 249; Al-Mamāqānī in *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl fi Taḥqīq Aqwāl al-Rijāl*, pgs. 30-183.

3 He is Sarī ibn Ismā'īl al-Hamdānī al-Kūfī. Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd says, "His lies were exposed and he would not be narrated from." Abū Ṭālib narrates from Aḥmad, "The people have left his ḥadīth. Al-Dūrī narrates from Ibn Ma'īn, "He is worthless." Abū Ḥātim says, "Pointless in ḥadīth." Al-Ājurri narrates from Abū Dāwūd, "Extremely weak." Al-Nasa'ī says, "Weak." Ibn Ḥibbān says, "He would corrupt chain of transmissions." Refer to, Ibn Ma'īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 170; Al-Ājurri: *Suālāt Abī 'Ubayd al-Ājurri Abā Dāwūd al-Sijistānī*, pgs. 179-180; Al-Nasa'ī: *Kitāb al-Ḍu'afā' wa al-Matrūkīn*, vol. 1 pg. 355; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol. 4 pg. 282; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Majrūhīn*, vol. 1 pg. 355; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tadhīb*, vol. 3 pg. 4559.

4 Al-Kashshī: *Al-Rijāl*, pg. 257.

The Rawāfiḍ transgressed the bounds in fabricating aḥādīth and incidents that were conducive to their desires. Just as they fabricated aḥādīth on the virtue of the Ahl al-Bayt, they fabricated aḥādīth to vilify the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, especially Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا. Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd¹ says in this regard:

فالأمر المستبشعة التي تذكرها الشيعة من إرسال قنفذ إلى بيت فاطمة وأنه ضربها بالسوط ، فصار في عضدها كالدمليج ، وأن عمر ضغطها بين الباب والجدار ، فصاحت : يا أبتاه ، وجعل في عنق علي جبلا يقاد به ، وفاطمة خلفه تصرخ ، وابناه الحسن والحسين بيكيان - وأخذ ابن أبي الحديد في ذكر كثير من المثالب ثم قال - : فكل ذلك لا أصل له عند أصحابنا ولا يثبتة أحد منهم ولا رواه أهل الحديث ولا يعرفونه ، وإنما هو شيء تنفرد الشيعة بنقله

Part of the abhorrent incidents recounted by the Shī‘ah is the sending of Qunfudh² to the home of Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا and his hitting her with a whip which formed a welt around her upper arm. They also say that ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ pushed her between the door and wall upon which she cried ‘O my father!’ He then put a rope around the neck of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and dragged him with Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا behind him screaming and his two children al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا crying. (Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd after mentioning many such abhorrent incidents says,) “All of these have no origin according to our scholars. They do not recognise its authenticity nor do the Ahl al-Ḥadīth narrate such. It is incidents that are solely narrated amongst the Shī‘ah.³

Similarly, they fabricated narrations vilifying Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. An example of this is the narration attributed to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

إذا رأيتم معاوية على منبري فاقتلوه

When you see Mu‘āwiyah on my pulpit then kill him.⁴

1 He is ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd ibn Hibat Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd, Abū Ḥamid. He was a Shī‘ī Mu‘tazilī. He gained excellence in linguistics and composition. He served in the royal offices. He has written, *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, *Al-Qaṣā’id al-Sab’ al-‘Alawiyyāt*, and *Naẓm Faṣṭḥ Tha’lab*. He passed away the year 656 A.H./1358 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Ṣafādī in *Al-Wāfi bi al-Wafāyāt*, vol. 2 pg. 259 and Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 13 pg. 199.

2 I have not come across his biography.

3 Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd: *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 1 pg. 135.

4 Al-Ṣuyūtī: *Al-La’ālī al-Maṣnū‘ah fi al-Aḥādīth al-Mawdu‘ah*, vol. 1 pg. 323.

They narrated many other such fabrications with regards to the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ¹. This was done knowing full well that attributing lies to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is greater in severity than attributing lies to anyone else.

The books of Ibn al-Taymiyyah are considered amongst the best authored that expose the plots of the Rawāfiḍ and uncover their fabrications in the fields of ‘aqā’id, ḥadīth, fiqh, and tārikh. His books and legal verdicts are filled with defending the pristine sciences of Islam together with expounding on the actions taken by the Shī’ah in planting and concocting incidents under the guise of love for the Ahl al-Bayt.

He says regarding this:

وقد اتفق أهل العلم بالنقل والرواية والإسناد على أن الرافضة أكذب الطوائف ، والكذب فيهم قديم ، ولهذا كان أئمة الإسلام يعلمون امتيازهم بكثرة الكذب

The scholars have formed a consensus that the Rawāfiḍ are the greatest liars amongst the sects. Lying has been part of them since their inception. It is for this reason that they were renowned to the scholars by their great amount of lies.²

He further states:

القوم من أكذب الناس في الثقليات وأجهل الناس في العقلليات ولهذا كانوا عند العلماء أجهل الطوائف ... وإنما عمدتهم على تواريخ منقطعة الإسناد وكثير منها من وضع المعروفين بالكذب ، فيعتمدون على نقل أبي مخنف لوط بن يحيى ، وهشام بن الكلبي ... والخوارج مع مروقيهم من الدين ، فهم من أصدق الناس حتى قيل : إن حديثهم من أصح الحديث . والرافضة يقرون بالكذب حيث يقولون : ديننا التقية ، وهذا هو النفاق ، ثم يزعمون أنهم المؤمنون ويصفون السابقين الأولين بالردة والنفاق ، فهو كما قيل : »

1 Refer to the books authored in the field of fabricated narrations such as, *Al-Āthār al-Marfū’ah fī al-Akhbār al-Mawḍū’ah* of Al-Laknawī, *Al-Asrār al-Marfū’ah fī al-Akhbār al-Mawḍū’ah* of Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī, *Tanzīh al-Sharī’ah al-Marfū’ah ‘an al-Akhbār al-Shanī’ah al-Mawḍū’ah* of Ibn ‘Irāq, *Al-Fawā’id al-Mawḍū’ah fī al-Aḥādīth al-Mawḍū’ah* of al-Karmī, and *Tadhkirah al-Mawḍū’āt* of al-Fatnī.

2 Ibn al-Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 1 pg. 66.

رمتي بدائها وانسلت « ... بل هذه صفة الرافضة ، فشعارهم الذل ، وثارهم النفاق والتقية ، ورأس مالهم الكذب والأيمان الفاجرة إن لم يقعوا في الغلو والزندقة ، يقولون بألسنتهم ما ليس في قلوبهم

In Islamic knowledge they were the worst of liars¹ and in secular knowledge the most ignorant.² They were pegged by the scholars as the most ignorant of sects. They rely on narrations that either have broken chains of transmissions³ or are made up of mostly fabrications by known liars. They rely upon the narrations of liars such as Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā, Hishām ibn Kalbī. On the other hand, the Khawārij, though a sect that went astray, are considered to be amongst the most truthful of people. Some have said that their ḥadīth is the most authentic. The Rawāfiḍ though, admit to their lies when asserting their faith as one of Taqiyyah. This is nothing

1 The Shī'ah do not care about any sort of reliability, authenticity, or truth when narrating ḥadīth. They narrate in *al-Kāfi* and other—reliable books according to them—such books from the worst of liars. Their criterion of authenticity is conformity to their bias together with hatred of eminent personalities and scholars. They accept only those narrations that conform to their ideology; being an Imāmī not caring whether they lie to tell the truth. They do not apply any laws of scrutiny to the aḥādīth, not bothering with authenticating the subject matter nor the chain of narration. This is in stark contrast to the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah who rely on such techniques to differentiate the authentic from the weak. The Shī'ah rely on attributed narrations and claim infallibility of their leaders which, they say, does not require scrutiny. When asked for a chain of narrations they state, Al-Ḥusayn, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, or Mūsa al-Kāzīm has narrated it whilst repeating on end the following couplet:

روى جدنا عن جبرائيل عن الباري

فشايح أناسا قولهم وحديثهم

Spread their words and narrations.

Our grandfather narrated from Jibrīl from The Maker.

See, *Al-Shī'ah fi 'Aqā'idihim wa Aḥkāmihim* of Amīr Muḥammad al-Kāzīmī al-Qazwīnī pg. 6 taking from *Wijā' Dawr al-Majūs* of Dr 'Abd Allāh al-Gharīb pg. 121.

2 This is because the tenants of their faith are based upon falsehood, delusions, and impossibilities. Nothing makes this point clearer than their belief that their 12th Imām is alive and hidden from view for the past millennia whose emergence they eagerly await and pray for.

3 In the sense that a narrator before the Ṣaḥābī is omitted or an obscure narrator is mentioned.

other than hypocrisy. They then think they are believers whilst attributing apostasy and hypocrisy to the early Muslims!

A case of throwing stones from a glass house. This is the salient feature of the Rawāfiḍ. They are a cesspool of Taqiyyah, hypocrisy, and humiliation. Their greatest achievement: lies and faith bonded with immorality. This is if they are not already heretics. They speak that which is not in their hearts.¹

Whilst Ibn Taymiyyah comments on the reliability of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, their status, and their eminence as beacons of guidance based on the many and successive narrations found in the books of ḥadīth, tafsīr, and fiqh he indicates towards the fabrications that attempt to vilify them. He established these to be the false propaganda of the Shī'ah. He says:

وإن أصل كل فتنة وبلية هم الشيعة ومن انضوى إليهم

The origin of every fitnah and tragedy is the Shī'ah and those that rally around them.²

Concerning his refutation of 'Alī ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī al-Rāfiḍī³ and his statement that all the Shī'ah narrators are reliable as in *Minhāj al-Karāmah*, Ibn Taymiyyah in *Minhāj al-Sunnah* states:

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Muntaqā* pgs. 19 – 21 – 23 – 68.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 3 pg. 243.

3 He is al-Ḥasan ibn Yūsuf ibn 'Alī ibn al-Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī; an extremist Rāfiḍī. He has authored many books, amongst them is *Minhāj al-Karāmah fī Ma'rifat al-Imāmah* in which he has vilified the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, mentioning Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ most heinously. Ibn Taymiyyah then refuted this book by writing *Minhāj al-Sunnah fī Naqd Kalām al-Shī'ah wa al-Qadriyyah*. He died the year, 1325 A.D./726 A.H. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Wardī: Ibid, vol. 2 pg. 279; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī akhbār al-Mi'ah al-Thāminah*, vol. 2 pg. 71; *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, vol. 9 pg. 267.

نحن نقدر رجالنا من أهل السنة والحديث نقدا لا مزيد عليه، ولنا مصنفات كثيرة جدا في تعديلهم وضعفهم وصدقهم وغلطهم وكذبهم ووجههم، لا تحاييهم أصلا - مع صلاحهم وعبادتهم - ونسقط الاحتجاج بالرجل منهم لكثرة غلظه وسوء حفظه ولو كان من أولياء الله . وأنتم حد الثقة عندكم أن يكون إماما سواء غلط أو حفظ أو كذب أو صدق وغالب ما في أيديكم صحف وأخبار على ألسنتكم مكذوبة ، أو لم تعلم صحتها كدأب أهل الكتابين سواء - اليهود والنصارى - وكذب الرافضة مما يضرب به المثل ، ونحن نعلم أن الخوارج شر منكم ، ومع هذا فما نقدر أن نرميهم بالكذب ، لأننا جربناهم فوجدناهم يتحرون الصدق ، لهم وعليهم ، وأنتم الصادق فيكم شامة ! ... فأهل السنة والحديث لا يرضون بالكذب ولو وافق أهواءهم ، فكم قد روي من فضائل أبي بكر وعمر وعثمان بل ومعاوية وغيرهم أحاديث بالأسانيد يرويهها مثل النقاش، والقطيعي والثعلبي والأهوازي وأبي نعيم والخطيب وابن عساكر وأضعافهم ، ولم يقبل علماء الحديث شيئا يثبتون الكذب منه ، بل إذا كان في إسناد الحديث واحد مجهول الحال توقفوا في الحديث . وأنتم شرط الحديث عندكم أن يوافق أهواءكم غثا كان أو سمينا

We heavily critique the narrators of the Ahl al-Sunnah and people of ḥadīth. We have many books dedicated to establishing their reliability, weakness, mistakes, and lies. We do not favour them at all, even though their lives are imbued with piety and worship. We discontinue using their narrations as proofs due to their weak memory and many mistakes, even if they are illustrious pious men. You on the other hand, gauge reliability based on a narrator being an Imāmī not bothering if they had made mistakes, lied, or were correct and truthful. Most of what is in your scrolls and on your tongues are either lies or its authenticity unknown—like the tales of the Jews and Christians. Furthermore, the lies of the Rawāfiq are so considerable that it is used as a precedent. We know that the Khawārij are worse than you; yet we cannot accuse them of lying as we studied them and found them to be truthful in matters that conform to them and go against them. As for you people, truthfulness amongst you is a smear! The Ahl al-Sunnah and people of ḥadīth are not okay with lies even if it conforms to their desires. How much hasn't been narrated on the virtues of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, and even Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه amongst others with

chains of narrations from the likes of Al-Naqqāsh¹, Al-Qaṭīṭ², Al-Tha‘labī³, Al-Ahwāzī⁴, Abū Nu‘aym⁵, Al-Khaṭīb, and Ibn ‘Asākir. The scholars of ḥadīth

1 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Amr ibn Maḥdī al-Naqqāsh al-Aṣbahānī al-Ḥanbalī; from amongst the reliable memorisers. He travelled seeking ḥadīth, taking from Baghdad, Basra, Kūfah, Marw, Jurjān, Daynūr, Al-Ḥaramayn, Nīsāpūr, Hamdhān, and other Islamic cities. Al-Dhahabī says regarding him, “Al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ, he was from the leaders of ḥadīth.” From amongst his books are, *Al-Quḍat wa al-Shuhūd*, *Ṭabaqāt al-Sūfiyyah*, and *Al-Amālī*. He passed away the year 414A.H./1023A.D. His life has been recorded by Abū Nu‘aym: *Dhikr Akhbār Aṣbahān*, vol. 2 pg. 308; al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol.3 pg. 1059; Al-Ṣafḍī: *Al-Wāfi bi al-Wafāyāt*, vol. 2 pg. 119.

2 He is Aḥmad ibn Ja‘far ibn Hamdān ibn Mālik, Abū Bakr al-Qaṭīṭ; Scholar and muḥaddith. Al-Dārquṭnī says regarding him, “Reliable, ascetic, of the old times. I have heard that his prayers were readily accepted.” Abū al-Ḥasan ibn al-Furāt says, “He had heard much ḥadīth but his memory faltered at the end of his life.” He has written *Musnad al-Asharah*. He passed away the year, 368 A.H./979 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 4 pg. 73; Ibn Abī Ya‘lā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, vol. 3 pg. 6; Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fi Tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 3 pg. 48; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 1 pg. 145; Ibn al-Kayyāl: *Al-Kawākib al-Nayyirāt*, pg. 92.

3 Perhaps this refers to Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Tha‘labī, Abū Ishāq al-Nīsābpūrī; the commentator and historian. He has authored *Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān fi Tafsiṛ al-Qur‘ān* and *Qaṣaṣ al-Ambiyā’*. He passed away the year 428 A.H./1035 His life has been recorded by, Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fi Tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 1 pg. 194; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A‘yan*, vol. 1 pg. 79; Ibn Kathīr: *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 12 pg. 40.

4 He is Al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Yazdād, Abū ‘Alī al-Ahwāzī, the proficient reciter and scholar of ḥadīth. Amongst his books are *Sharḥ al-Bayān fi ‘Uqūd al-Imān* and *Al-Wajīz fi Sharḥ Adā’ al-Qurrā al-Thamāniyah*. He passed away the year 446 A.H./1073 A.D. His life has been recorded by Yaqūt in *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 9 pgs. 34-39; Ibn al-Jazrī: *Ghāyah al-Nihāyah fi Ṭabaqāt al-Qurrā’*, vol. pg. 220; Ibn al-‘Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 3 pg. 274.

5 He is Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Aṣbahānī, Abū Nu‘aym, al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Thiqah. He renowned for his piety, worship, truthfulness, reliability, and for being an authority in the creed. Ḥamzah ibn al-Abbās al-‘Awālī says regarding him, “The people of ḥadīth would say, ‘Abū Nu‘aym lived for fourteen years with no equal, there was no one in the east nor in the west that had a higher and more authentic chain than him.” From his works are *Faḍā’il al-Khulafā al-Arba‘ah*, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, *Ma‘rifat al-Ṣaḥābah*, *Ṣifat al-Jannah*, *Al-Mu‘taqad*, *Faḍl al-‘Ilm*, *Al-Ḍu‘afā’*, *Al-Amwāl*, and *Ṭabaqāt al-Muḥaddithīn wa al-Ruwāt*. He passed away the year, 430 A.H./1038 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A‘yan*, vol. 1 pg. 91; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 17 pg. 453; *Al-Mizān*, vol. 1 pg. 111; Dr Fārūq Ḥamādah; *Muqaddimah Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā’*, pgs. 5-22.

have not accepted any of these if they recognise a lie in it. The scholars went to the extent that if the chain of transmission had a single unknown narrator, they halted in accepting the ḥadīth. You though, determine the status of a ḥadīth based on its conformity to your ideas, be it strong or weak.¹

Ibn Taymiyyah further states in *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*:

إن الرافضة أمة ليس لها عقل صريح ، ولا نقل صحيح ، ولا دين مقبول ، ولا دنيا منصوره ، بل هم من أعظم الطوائف كذبا وجهلا . ودينهم يدخل على المسلمين كل زنديق مرتد ، كما دخل فيهم النصرانية والإسماعيلية وغيرهم ، فإنهم يعمدون إلى خيار الأئمة يعادونهم ، ويعمدون إلى الصدق الظاهر المتواتر يدفعونه ، وإلى الكذب المختلق الذي يعلم فساده يقيمونه ولهذا كانوا أبهت الناس وأشدهم فرية مثلما يذكرون عن معاوية ... والشيعه لا يكاد يوثق بروايه أحد منهم من شيوخهم لكثرة الكذب فيهم ، ولهذا أعرض عنهم أهل الصحيح ، فلا يروي البخاري ومسلم أحاديث علي إلا عن أهل بيته كأولاده مثل الحسن والحسين ، ومثل محمد بن الحنفية ، وكاتبه عبيد الله بن رافع والحارث التيمي وقيس بن عباد وأمثالهم ، إذ هؤلاء صادقون فيما يروون في علي ،

The Rawāfiḍ are a nation that does not possess true intellect, truthful transmissions, an accepted faith, nor a supported creed. They are the liars and idiots of the highest degree in comparison to all other sects. Their creed allows heretics and apostates to be included under the banner of Islam, just as the al-Nuṣariyyah, al-Ismā'īliyyah, and others have done. The eminent personalities of the ummah and the successive true narrations are rejected by them whilst they hanker after the fabricated lies that are notorious. They are thus most slanderous when speaking of Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه. The Shī'ah themselves, cannot commit to relying on almost any of the narrations from their scholars due to the spread of so much lies. Therefore, the people who rely on authentic narrations pay no heed to them. Al-Bukhārī and Muslim only narrate the aḥādīth concerning 'Alī رضي الله عنه coming from his family, such as, Al-Ḥasan, Al-Ḥusayn, Muḥammad ibn al-

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Muntaqā*, pg. 480.

Ḥanafiyah, his scribe ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Rāfi¹, al-Ḥārith al-Taymī², Qays ibn ‘Ubād³ and such as they are truthful in what they narrate concerning him.⁴

Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah mentioning the Shī‘ah says:

أما علي بن أبي طالب فانتشرت أحكامه وفتاويه ، ولكن قاتل الله الشيعة . فإنهم أفسدوا كثيرا من علمه بالكذب عليه ، ولهذا نجد أصحاب الحديث من أهل الصحيح لا يعتمدون من حديثه وفتواه إلا ما كان من طريق أهل بيته وأصحاب عبد الله بن مسعود

As for ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, his judgments and legal verdicts are widespread. However, may Allah’s سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَعَاقَبْ curse be upon the Shī‘ah, they corrupted much of his knowledge by fabricating lies against him. This is the reason why we find the scholars of ḥadīth and those who rely on authentic narrations not giving the light of day to their narrations and verdicts, except that which came via his family or from the students of Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه.⁵

It is important to note that a great majority of the narrators who have displayed hostility and related ill of khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه are of the Shī‘ah. Furthermore, none of those who witnessed these incidents reported anything of it, it is mere hearsay and lies upon lies. Many a times such narrations will have been reported by one who is decades apart from its occurrence. These narrators together with their lies and being inviters towards their cause, are party to those incidents as

1 He is ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Abī Rāfi’ al-Madanī. He was a scribe for ‘Alī رضي الله عنه whose reliability is agreed upon. He is from the third level. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/1/381; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 316; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 68.

2 He is al-Ḥārith ibn Suwayd al-Taymī, Abū ‘Ā’ishah al-Kūfi; reliable and strong, from the students of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه. He passed away after the year 70 A.H/689 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 93; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/269; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 102.

3 He is Qays ibn ‘Ubād Al-Ḍabī al-Baṣrī; from the students of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه. He is reliable from amongst the eminent Ṭābi‘īn. He came to Madinah during the khilāfah of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. The six major books besides *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* have his narrations. He passed away the year 85 A.H/703 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 131; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 394; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 8 pg. 400; Al-Khazrajī: *Khulāṣah Tahdhīb Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, pg. 270.

4 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā*, vol. 4 pg. 471/ vol. 13 pg. 31.

5 Ibn al-Qayyim: *A’lām al-Muqī’in*, vol. 1 pg. 21.

they follow the group who lit the flames of the fitnah. They are furthering the Sabaī cause by their speech and literary works just as their predecessors had done with body and spirit.

Hereunder are the comments of scholars of al-Jarḥ and al-Ta'dīl regarding some of the Shī'ah narrators. Narrators who are the primary source for historians and story tellers in relating incidents that occurred during the reign of 'Uthmān and 'Alī عليه السلام. Narrators that have skewed, dyed, and stretched incidents to spread the Shī'ī creed after having deceived people in the name of faith and love for the Ahl al-Bayt.

Three such narrators—narrators of *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* no less—are discussed below as an insight to the twisted version of history they have presented. It will also serve as a beginning point of those wishing to further delve into this topic as the books of al-Jarḥ and al-Ta'dīl are filled with the profiles of the Shī'ah. These Shī'ah narrators and their profiles have been gathered in a book called *Rijāl al- Shī'ah fi al-Mīzān*¹.

1. Abū Mihknaf Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā

- » Abū Ḥātīm² says, “He is *Matrūk* (suspected of forgery).”³
- » Al-Dārquṭnī says, “*Ḍa'īf* (weak).”⁴
- » Ibn Ma'in says, “*Laysa bi Thiqaḥ* (not reliable).”

1 A work of 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Abd Allāh al-Zar'ī, published by Dār al-Arḩam, Kuwait.

2 He is Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ibn al-Mundhir ibn Dāwūd al-Ḥanzalī al-Tamīmī, Abū Ḥātīm, the great memorizer. He was a contemporary of Imām al-Bukhārī and Imām Muslim. Al-Khaṭīb says regarding him, “He was one of the leaders of great memorizers who was reliable and famed for his knowledge. His name is taken with respect.” Al-Lālkā'ī says, “He was an Imām and scholar of ḥadīth. He had memorized ḥadīth and was reliable and strong therein. He has written *Ṭabaqāt al-Tābi'in*, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Azim*, and *A'lām al-Nubuwwah*. He passed away the year 277 A.H/890 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 73; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shaḥī'iyah*, vol. 1 pg. 299; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 31.

3 Ibn Abī Ḥātīm: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol. 7 pg. 182.

4 Al-Dārquṭnī: *Al-Ḍu'afā'*, pg. 333.

- » Murrah says, “*Laysa bi Shay’* (He doesn’t amount to much.)”¹
- » Ibn ‘Adī says, “A staunch Shī‘ī who relates their incidents.”²
- » Abū ‘Ubayd al-Ājurrī³ says, “I asked Abū Ḥātim regarding him in reply to which he dusted his hands and said, ‘Can someone ask about such a man?’”⁴
- » ‘Uqaylī⁵ has included him in *al-Ḍu‘afā’*.⁶
- » Al-Dhahabī says, “A foul story teller. Not to be relied upon.”⁷

2. Hishām ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Sā’ib al-Kalbī

- » Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal says, “He was just a story teller. I don’t think anyone would narrate from him.”⁸
- » Al-Dārquṭnī says, “He is *Matrūk* (suspected of forgery).”⁹
- » Ibn ‘Asākir says, “A Rāfiḍī, not reliable.”¹⁰

1 Ibn Ma’in: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 500.

2 Ibn ‘Adī: *Al-Kamil fi Ḍu‘afā’ al-Rijāl*, vol. 6 pg. 2110.

3 He is Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Ājurrī, Abū Bakr al-Ḥāfiḍ; scholar of ḥadīth, fiqh and history. Al-Dhahabī says regarding him, “He was a practising scholar who adhered to and followed the Sunnah. He has authored many books amongst them are *Al-Sharīah* and *Akhlāq al-‘Ulamā’*. He passed away the year 60 A.H/970 A.D. His life has been recorded Al-Dhahabī in *Al-Tadhkirah*, vol. 3 pg. 936 and by Al-Asnawī in *Ṭabaqāt al-Shafi‘iyyah*, vol. 1 pg. 79.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 4 pg. 492.

5 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Amr ibn Mūsa ibn Ḥammād al-‘Uqaylī al-Makkī, Abū Ja‘far; from the scholars of ḥadīth. Abū al-Ḥasan ibn Sahl al-Qaṭṭān says regarding him, “Abū Ja‘far is reliable and a ḥadīth scholar of great stature.” Maslamah ibn al-Qāsim says, “He was of great status. I haven’t seen the like of him.” He was a prolific author. From his writings is the book *Al-Ḍu‘afā’*. He passed away the year 322 A.H./943 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Dhahabī in *Al-Tadhkirah*, vol. 3 pg. 833; Al-Ṣafḍī in *Al-Wāfi‘ bi al-Wafāyāt*, vol. 4 pg. 291; Ibn al-‘Imād in *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 2 pg. 295.

6 Al-‘Uqaylī: *Al-Ḍu‘afā’ al-Kabīr*, vol. 4 pg. 18.

7 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 3 pg. 419.

8 Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal: *Al-‘Ilal*, vol. 1 pg. 219.

9 Al-Dārquṭnī: *Al-Ḍu‘afā’*, pg. 387.

10 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 10 pg. 101.

- » ‘Uqaylī says, “He has weakness.”¹
- » Ibn al-Jārūd², Ibn al-Sakan³, and others have included him amongst the weak narrators.
- » Al-Aṣmā’⁴ has accused him of lying.
- » Ibn Ḥibbān⁵ says, “He narrated from his father, Ma’rūf mawlā Sulaymān, and the people of Iraq strange incidents and stories that are baseless. He

1 Al-‘Uqaylī: *Al-Ḍu‘afā’ al-Kabīr*, vol. 4 pg. 339.

2 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Jārūd al-Nīsāpūrī, Abū Muḥammad al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ. Al-Dhahabī says, “He was from amongst the leaders of ḥadīth.” He has authored *Al-Muntaqā fi al-Sunan* wherein the narration is not lower than the status of Ḥasan, except a few wherein there is difference of opinion. He has also written, *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dil li Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth and Al-Asmā’ wa al-Kunā*. He passed away the year 307 A.H./919 A.D. His life has been recorded by Abū Nu‘aym in *Dhikr Akhbār Aṣbahān*, vol. 1 pg. 794; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 14 pg. 239; *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 3 pg. 794; Al-Ṣafḍī in *Al-Wāfi bi al-Wafāyāt*, vol. 7 pg. 215; Muḥammad ibn Ja’far al-Kattānī; *Al-Risālah al-Mustaṭrafah*, pg. 25.

3 He is Sa’īd ibn ‘Uthmān ibn Sa’īd ibn al-Sakan al-Baghdādī, Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Ḥujjah; from amongst the leaders of the great ḥuffāz. He has written *Al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muntaqā*. He passed away the year 353 A.H./694 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn ‘Asākir in *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 6 pg. 153; Al-Dhahabī in *Al-Tadhkirah*, vol. 3 pg. 937; Al-Kattānī in *Al-Risālah al-Mustaṭrafah*, pg. 20.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 6 pg. 197. Al-Aṣmā’ is ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Qarīb, Abū Sa’īd al-Baṣrī; port, historian, linguist and eminent personality. Abū Dāwūd says, “Truthful.” Ibn Ma’in says, He was not a liar.” Ibn Shaybah says, “I heard al-Aṣmā’ saying, ‘I have memorized sixteen thousand poems. He has written many books on the subjects of linguistics and history. He would roam amongst the Bedouins, learning their stories of old. The Khulafā’ would present him with much gifts. From his books are, *Al-Ibil*, *Khalq al-Insān*, *Al-Khayl*, *Al-Mutarādif*, *Al-Aḍḍād*, *Sharḥ diwān dhī al-Rimmah*, *Jazīrah al-‘Arab*, *Kitāb Miyyāh al-Arḍ*, *Kitāb al-Kharāj* and *Kitāb al-Nasab*. He passed away the year, 215 A.H/ 831 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Ṣayrafi in *Akhbār al-Nahwiyyīn al-Baṣriyyīn*, pg. 85; Ibn Nadīm in *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 60; Al-Khaṭīb in *Tārīkh Baghdad*, vol. 10 pg. 410 and Al-Dhahabī in *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 10 pg. 176.

5 He is Muḥammad ibn Ḥibbān ibn Aḥmad ibn Ma’bad al-Tamīmī Abū Ḥātim al-Baṣrī; the historian, geographer, traveller, and muḥaddith. Yaqūt says, “He has extracted from the sciences of ḥadīth what others have unable to.” Al-Ḥākim says, “Ibn Ḥibbān was a keeper of knowledge in the subjects of fiqh, linguistics, ḥadīth, and lecturing. He was extremely intelligent.” He has written, *Al-Musnad al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *‘Ilal awhām aṣḥāb al-Tawārikh*, *Al-Ṣaḥābah*, *Al-Tābi‘īn*, *Atbā’ al-Tābi‘īn*, *Atbā’ al-Tab’*, *Gharāib al-Akhbār*, *Asāmī man yu’raf bi al-Kuna*, *Wasf al-‘Ulūm wa Anwā’iha*, *Rawḍah al-‘Uqalā’*, and *Al-Mu’jam*. He passed away the year 354 A.H/965 A.D. His life has been recorded by Yaqūt in *Mu’jam al-Buldān*, vol. 1 pg. 514; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 3 pg. 506-508; Al-Subkī: *Tabaqāt al-Shafi’iyyah*, vol. 2 pg. 141.

was a Shīʿī. His falsities are far more notorious than need to be dissected.”¹

- » Ibn ‘Adī says, Hishām al-Kalbī is known for storytelling, I do not know of any linked narration of his. His father was a great liar as well.”²
- » Yahyā ibn Maʿīn says, “He does not amount to much, a great liar.”³
- » Al-Dhahabī says, “Hishām is not to be relied upon.”⁴

3. Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Juʿfī

- » Yahyā ibn Maʿīn says, “Jābir was a great liar.” In another place he says, “His narrations are not to be written.”⁵
- » Zāʿidah⁶ says, “As for al-Juʿfī, he was, by Allah, a great liar who believed in the doctrine of Rajʿah.”⁷
- » Abū Ḥanīfah says, “I have not met anyone, ever, who lied more than Jābir al-Juʿfī. I did not present anything to him of my opinion except that he brought fought a narration in that regard.”⁸
- » Al-Nasaʿī says, “He is discarded.”⁹
- » Abū Dāwūd says, “I do not deem him as strong in his ḥadīth.”¹⁰

1 Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Majrūḥīn*, vol. 3 pg. 91.

2 Ibn ‘Adī: *Al-Kamil fi Ḍuʿafāʾ al-Rijāl*, vol. 6 pg. 2568.

3 Ibn Ḥajar from Yahyā ibn Maʿīn: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 6 pg. 197.

4 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 4 pg. 305.

5 Ibn Maʿīn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3 pg. 364.

6 He is Zāʿidah ibn Qudāmah al-Thaqafī al-Kūfī, Abū al-Ṣalt al-Ḥujjah al-Imām. Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī says, “Reliable, a man of the Sunnah.” Abū Usāmah says, “He was most truthful and most pious.” Abū Dāwūd al-Ṭayālīsī says, “He would not engage the innovators. He passed away the year, 161 A.H/777 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-ʿIjlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 163; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Tadhkirah*, vol. 1 pg. 215; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pg. 256.

7 Ibn Maʿīn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3 pg. 281.

8 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 1 pg. 380.

9 Al-Nasaʿī: *Kitāb al-Ḍuʿafāʾ wa al-Matrūkīn*, pg. 71.

10 Al-Ājurrī: *Al-Suʿālāt*, pg. 180.

- » Al-Shafi‘ī says, “I heard Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah¹ saying, ‘I heard the speech of Jābir al-Ju‘fī and hastened out fearing the roof would fall on us.’”²
- » Yahyā ibn Ya‘lā³ says, “I heard Zā‘idah saying, ‘Jābir al-Ju‘fī is a Rāfiḍī who vilifies the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ.’”⁴
- » Ibn Ḥibbān says, “He was a Saba‘ī from the companions of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’. He would say, ‘Alī will return to the world.’”⁵
- » Al-Jūzajānī says, “A great liar.”⁶

1 He is Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah ibn Maymūn al-Hilālī al-Kūfī, Abū Aḥmad. Al-Dhahabī says, “He was an Imām, a Ḥujjah, had vast knowledge and great status. The ummah have consensus on using his narrations as proof due to his memory and reliability.” Al-Shafi‘ī says, “If it wasn’t for Mālik and Sufyān, the knowledge of Ḥijāz would have been lost.” From his books are, *Al-Jāmi‘* on the subject of ḥadīth and tafsīr. He passed away the year 198 A.H. /814 A.D. His life has been recorded by Abū Nu‘aym in *Al-Ḥilyah*, vol. 7 pg. 270; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdad*, vol. 9 pg. 174; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Tadhkirah*, vol. 1 pg. 262.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2 pg. 49.

3 He is Yahyā ibn Ya‘lā al-Muḥāribī, Abū Zakariyyā al-Kūfī. Abū Ḥātim says, “Reliable.” Ibn Ḥibbān has included him the reliable narrators. He passed away the year, 210 A.H./825 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 9 pg. 196; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/4/311; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 4 pg. 415; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 303.

4 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 1 pg. 383.

5 Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Majrūḥīn*, vol. 1 pg. 208.

6 Al-Jūzajānī: *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, pg. 50.

Section Two: Methodology in studying Islamic history

I. Methodology of authentication and ways of establishing the truth

A. Studying the *Sanad* (Chain of Narration)

Lexical meaning: Isnād literally means that which is relied upon,¹ it is so named because the *matn* (wording) of the ḥadīth relies upon it.²

Technical meaning: The chain of narrators who have transmitted a saying sequentially till they, by narration, reach its source of origin.³

The isnād is considered to be the backbone in Islamic methodology. It is the means to critiquing narrations. By identifying the narrators one will come to know the authenticity of the narration. The unbroken authentic chain of narration is one of the specialities of the Muslim ummah which gives the advantage of reliability and confidence of what has been narrated in this manner. This advantage is understood as the chain of narrators reflect the witness of a group who are reliable, accurate, and upright which gives emphasis to the authenticity and accuracy of the narration.

Another advantage of the sanad is that narrations that have a sanad are far better than those that do not. A sanad will establish its source which lends us the ability to authenticate and verify it in a much superior manner than one would be able to do with narrations that have no sanad.⁴ Thus, the objective of the sanad is authenticating texts and narrations together with sifting out fabrications and lies from them.

1 Al-Fīrozābādī: *Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīt*.

2 Maḥmūd al-Ṭaḥḥān: *Uṣūl al-Takhrīj wa Dirāsah al-Asānīd*, pg. 157.

3 Fārūq al-Ḥamādah: *Al-Manhaj al-Islāmī fi al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, 231.

4 Akram Dīyā al-'Umrī: *Dirāsāt Tārikhiyyah*, pg. 26.

Due to the importance of isnād, its use is not restricted to the aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. It carries over to other sciences as well such as, tafsīr, history, and linguistics; which reveals a common attribute in the methodology of codification in the various Islamic fields of knowledge.

With regards to the subject of history, due to the isnād helping in establishing authentic narrations and critiquing others, the eminent scholars have expanded their efforts in gathering and codifying history with the chain of narrations. This applies to historical accounts as well as the sīrah al-nabawiyyah. Abān ibn ‘Uthmān¹, ‘Urwah ibn Zubayr², Al-Zuhrī, Khalīfah ibn Khayyāt³, Ya‘qūb ibn Sufyān

1 He is Abān ibn ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān; the jurist and leader. He passed away the year 105 A.H./723 A.D. He is considered a reliable narrator and was from the jurists of Madinah. He was amongst the first to write on the sīrah (life) and maghāzī (campaigns) of Rasūlullāh ﷺ though his book on sīrah has been lost. None of the historians managed to salvage anything from his maghāzī except for Ya‘qūbī. Abān contributed in a critical era as the appointed governor over Madinah Munawwarah in the year 75 A.H/ 694 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 151; Khalīfah: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, pg. 240; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 4 pg. 351.

2 He is ‘Urwah ibn Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām رضي الله عنه, Abū ‘Abd Allāh. He was one of the seven jurists of Madinah. Ibn Sa‘d says regarding him, “‘Urwah was considered reliable, trustworthy, and strong. He narrated many aḥādīth together with being a jurist and a scholar par excellence.” Al-‘Ijlī says, “‘Urwah ibn Zubayr, a trustworthy Ṭābi‘ī. A pious man who did not involve himself in any of the fitnah. He was a muḥaddith who taught his students ḥadīth and the occurrences of the early Islamic years. His knowledge has reached us through the books of Ibn Ishāq, Al-Wāqidī, and Al-Ṭabarī; the earliest sources of the sīrah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. He passed away the year 94 A.H./712 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 178; Al-Fasawī: *Al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 1 pgs. 364-550; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Ṣifāt al-Ṣafwah*, vol. 2 pg. 47; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 4 pg. 421; Fu‘ād Sīzīn: *Tārīkh al-Turāth al-‘Arabī*, 1/2/70.

3 He is Khalīfah ibn Khayyāt ibn Khalīfah Al-Shaybānī al-‘Uṣfurī al-Baṣrī, Abū ‘Amr; Historian, genealogist, and muḥaddith. He was from amongst the reliable and vigilant narrators of ḥadīth. Ibn Khallikān says, “He was a Ḥāfiẓ and most knowledgeable on the subject of history and battles.” Ibn al-Athīr says, “He was eminent and knowledgeable on the subject of battles.” Ibn Kathīr has called him an Imām in *Tārīkh*. He has written *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, *Al-Tārīkh*, and *Ṭabaqāt al-Qurrā* amongst other books. He passed away the year 240 A.H./854 A.H. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī in *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/1/193; Ibn al-Athīr in *Al-Lubāb fī Tadhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 2 pg. 344; Ibn Khallikān in *Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, vol. 2 pg. 243; Al-Dhahabī in *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 436; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah*, vol. 10 pg. 222.

al-Fasawī¹, Abū Zur‘ah al-Dimashqī², Al-Ṭabarī and others have adopted this methodology.

Focus on the isnād had taken hold early on, right after the fitnah in the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and the emergence of various sects that had ulterior motives, both political and doctrinal. This was the cause for fabrications and lies, making use of such narrations, albeit false, to further their own objectives. This impelled the scholars to determine the source of narrations and querying the men who narrate them. This was in effect an extension of the commands of the Qur‘ān and Aḥādīth in investigating information coming from the wayward—not the reliable—lest one causes harm or regrets. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنِ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحِحُوا عَلَيَّ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ
نَادِمِينَ

*O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful.*³

1 He is Ya‘qūb ibn Sufyān al-Fārisī al-Fasawī, Abū Yūsuf al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ, al-Ḥujjah. Abū Zur‘ah al-Dimashqī says, “Two of the noblest of men came to us, the superior of the two Ya‘qūb ibn Sufyān Abū Yūsuf. The entirety of Iraq is unable to produce a man like him.” He has written, *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* and *Al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*. He passed away the year 277A.H./890 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* vol. 9 pg. 208; Ibn Abī Ya‘lā in *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, vol. 1 pg. 416; Al-Dhahabī in *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 582; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 59. Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 385.

2 He is ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ṣafwān al-Naṣrī Abū Zur‘ah al-Dimashqī; a master of ḥadīth, its narrators, and its sciences. He has written *Al-Tārīkh* and *‘Ilal al-Rijāl*. Ibn Abī Ḥātim says, “He was reliable and truthful.” Al-Dhahabī says, “He gathered and wrote. Revised with the ḥuffāz and surpassed his contemporaries due to his knowledge and superior sanad.” He passed away the year, 280 A.H./893 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* vol. 5 pg. 267; Ibn Abī Ya‘lā in *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, vol. 1 pg. 205; Al-Dhahabī in *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 624; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6 pg. 236.

3 Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 6.

In the same vein, Rasūlullāh ﷺ has said:

إياكم والظن فإن الظن أكذب الحديث

Beware of suspicion, for it is the worst of false tales.¹

كفى بالمرء كذبا أن يحدث بكل ما سمع

It is enough for a man to prove himself a liar when he goes on narrating whatever he hears.²

Ibn Sīrīn³ says regarding the isnād:

لم يكونوا يسألون عن الإسناد ، فلما وقعت الفتنة قالوا : سموا لنا رجالكم ، فينظر إلى أهل السنة فيؤخذ حديثهم ، وينظر إلى أهل البدعة فلا يؤخذ حديثهم

They would not ask about the isnād. But when the fitnah happened, they said: Name to us your men. So the narrations of the Ahl al-Sunnah would be accepted, while those of the *Ahl al-Bid'ah* (adherents to innovation) would not be accepted.⁴

We see here, Ibn Sīrīn establishes the fitnah as the beginning point of investigating the isnād to authenticate aḥādīth and accounts. Prior to this they would not

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Adab vol. 7 pg. 288; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb al-Barr wa al-Ṣilah vol. 16 pg. 118.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 1 pg. 72.

3 He is Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn al-Anṣārī al-Baṣrī, Abū Bakr. He is considered to be from amongst the most eminent of the Tābi'īn. He was a jurist, Imām, possessed vast knowledge and was reliable. A great scholar in the field of interpreting dreams and possessed piety of the highest degree. 'Amr ibn 'Alī al-Fallās says, "The most authentic chain of narration is Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn from — 'Ubaydah from — 'Alī. Ibn Sa'd says, "He was reliable, possessed integrity, of high status, a jurist, an Imām, of great knowledge, and pious." Aḥmad, Ibn Ma'in, and al-'Ijlī all attest to his reliability. He passed away the year 110 A.H./729 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 193; Al-'Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*; Abū Nu'aym in *Al-Ḥilyah*, vol. 2 pg. 263; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A'yān*; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taḥdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 214.

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 1 pg. 84; Al-Jūzajānī: *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, pgs. 35-36.

persist in asking regarding the chain of narrations; narrations were accepted on face value even though it be mursal by a reliable narrator.

This is also understood from the following statement of Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه:

إنا كنا نحدث عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ؛ إذ لم يكن يكذب عليه ، فلما ركب الناس الصعب
والذلول تركنا الحديث عنه

Indeed, we used to narrate from Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم when no one would attribute lies to him. But when people began narrating all sorts without discernment we left narrating from him.¹

Ibn ‘Abbās refers to this fitnah by saying people would just narrate everything that came to them. Therefore, what would not be known would not be accepted.

Ibn al-Mubārak says:

الإسناد من الدين ولولا الإسناد لقال من شاء ما شاء

Isnād is from the faith. If it was not for the isnād, anyone would have said whatever they wanted to.²

Al-Ḥākim³ commenting on this says,

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamdawayh ibn Na‘īm al-Ḍabbī al-Nīsābpūrī, famously known as Al-Ḥākim; one of the ḥuffāz of ḥadīth. Al-Dhahabī says referencing Ibn Zāhir, “I asked Abū Ismā‘īl ‘Abd Allāh al-Anṣārī regarding al-Ḥākim. He said, ‘An Imām in ḥadīth, though an extreme Rāfiḍī.’” Al-Dhahabī comments on this saying, “Allah سبحانه وتعالى loves justice, he was not a Rāfiḍī, just a Shī‘ī.” Amongst his books are *Al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, *Tasmiyah man Akhrajahum al-Bukhārī wa Muslim*, *Ma‘rifah ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, *Tarājim al-Shuyūkh*, and *Tārīkh Nīsābpūr*. Al-Subkī says, “This is according to me one of the best books in history regarding the jurists. Whoever reads it will understand this man’s knowledge in all the sciences.” He passed away the year 405 A.H./1014 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 473; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 3 pg. 1039; *Al-Mizān*, vol. 3 pg. 608; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shafi‘iyyah*, vol. 3 pg. 64.

فلولا الإسناد وطلب هذه الطائفة له وكثرة مواظبتهم على حفظه لدرس منار الإسلام ولتمكن أهل الإلحاد والبدع بوضع الأحاديث وقلب الأسانيد ، فإن الأخبار إذا تعرت عن وجود الأسانيد كانت بترء

If it wasn't for the isnād and this group querying it together with emphasising its importance by memorizing it, the symbols of Islam would have been obliterated and the innovators and heretics would have succeeded in the fabrication of narrations. Narrations without proper chains of transmission are defective.¹

The efforts of the Muslim scholars in facing off against the fabrication of narrations was two sided: An approach of methodology and an approach of practice. The former was by adopting principles that revealed lies and the latter by expounding on the profiles of those who were accused of lying and mentioning it to people so that one may exercise caution.

Approach of Methodology

The principles in the methodology of critiquing narrations as laid down by the Muslim scholars had reached the pinnacle of human accuracy in ascertaining authenticity. This accuracy in methodology can be understood by studying the books that deal with the principles of criticizing and praising the narrators (*al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*), the meaning of terms used, the grade of each term from the highest levels of praise to the lowest level of criticism, and the conditions of accepting narrations. The scholars have stipulated two fundamental conditions:

1. Al- 'Adālah: The narrator to be Muslim, mature, sane, truthful, free from immorality, and free from those attributes that are contrary to honour.
2. Al-Ḍabṭ: The narrator ought to have proficiency in what he narrates, have committed to memory the narration if he is narrating from memory, to have total confidence on his book if narrating from there, understanding the subject matter of what he is narrating, vigilant in what he narrates not oblivious of it.

1 *Ma'rifah 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, pg. 6.

Principles of Narration:

- » The aversion of narrating from weak narrators, rather opting to narrate from trustworthy sources.
- » The condition of truthfulness.
- » Weak-mindedness and lying will result in the loss of ‘adālah.
- » Similarly, not narrating from one who has become weak or unreliable.
- » One whose narrations mostly consist of obscurities, will not be deemed worthy of citing for proofs.
- » Not citing proofs from one whose narrations are riddled with mistakes.
- » Rejecting the narrations of the oblivious who are lax in what they narrate.
- » The aversion of narrating from immoral people.¹

Approach of Practice

The principles of practice are manifest in profiling the narrators. The expert scholars have authored a great amount of books that deal with this. Some deal specifically with the reliable narrators whilst others deal with the weak ones. Some have elected to write on both categories in a single book. These books include the terms of praise or criticism that apply to each narrator. Hereunder are some of the books that are of this genre:

A. Books on the reliable narrators

1 On the conditions and principles of narration refer to: Al-Khaṭīb: *Al-Kifāyah fi ‘ilm al-Riwāyah*; Qāḍī ‘Iyād: *Al-Ilmā’ ilā Ma’rifah Uṣūl al-Riwāyah wa Taqyīd al-Simā’*; Ibn Ṣalāh: *Ma’rifah ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth* more commonly known as *Muqaddimah Ibn Ṣalāh*; Ibn Ḥajar: *Nukhbah al-Fikr fi Muṣṭalaḥ ahl al-Athar*; Al-Subkī: *Qā’idah fi al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*; Ḍafar Aḥmad al-Thānwī: *Qawā’id fi ‘Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*; Al-Qāsimī: *Qawā’id al-Taḥdīth*.

- » *Kitāb al-Thiqāt* of Abū Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al- ‘Ijlī¹.
- » *Kitāb al-Thiqāt* of ‘Umar ibn Aḥmad ibn Shāhīn².

B. Books on weak narrators

- » *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā al-Ṣaghīr wa al-Ḍu‘afā al-Kabīr* of Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī.
- » *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā wa al-Matrūkīn* of Abū Zur‘ah al-Rāzī³.

C. Books on reliable and weak narrators

- » *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Ḥātim al- Rāzī⁴.

1 He is Ahmad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ṣāliḥ Abū al-Ḥasan al-‘Ijlī, al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ. He is of the reliable narrators who was pious and an ascetic. Ibn Nāṣir al-Dīn says, “He was an Imām, Ḥāfiẓ, reliable and an example in authenticity. He is considered as the likes of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and Yahyā ibn Ma‘īn. His book on the subject of *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* shows his vast knowledge.” He has written, *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt* and *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*. He passed away the year, 261 A.H./875 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 4 pg. 214 and Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 560.

2 He is ‘Umar ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Uthmān ibn Shāhīn Abū Ḥafṣ, al-Ḥāfiẓ. He has written *Al-Tafsīr*, *Al-Sunnah*, *Al-Thiqāt*, *Al-Afrād*, *Nāsikh al-Ḥadīth wa Mansūkhah*, and *Kashf al-Mamālīk*. He passed away the year 385 A.H./995 A.D. His life has been recorded by, Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11 pg. 265; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 4 pg. 283; Muḥammad ibn Ja‘far al-Kattānī; *Al-Risālah al-Mustatrafah*, pg. 29.

3 He is ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Makhzūmī Abū Zur‘ah al-Rāzī. One of leaders of the ḥuffāz. Abū Ḥātim says, “Imām.” Al-Khaṭīb says, “He was a pious Imām, Ḥāfiẓ, narrated many aḥādīth, and truthful.” Ibn Ḥibbān says, “He was one of the Imāms of the world in ḥadīth together with having a pious disposition, continuously revising ḥadīth, and an ascetic.” Muḥammad ibn Ja‘far says, Abū Zur‘ah said, “I have memorized one hundred thousand aḥādīth just as one memorizes Sūrah Ikhḷāṣ.” He passed away the year 264 A.H./878 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* vol. 1 pg. 328; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 10 pg. 326; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10 pg. 30.

4 He is ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad, ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Tamīmī al-Ḥanzalī al-Rāzī, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ, al-Imām. Abū Ya‘lā al-Kahlīlī says, “He took the knowledge of his father and of Abū Zur‘ah. He was an ocean of knowledge and specifically the knowledge of narrators. He has written in fiqh and the differences of the Ṣaḥābah and Tābi‘īn. He was an ascetic and considered to be an Abdāl.” Al-Dhahabī says, “His book in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* shows the great status of his memory. His book in tafsīr is voluminous. He has authored a large book refuting the Jahmiyyah which portrays his status.” He has also written *Ilal al-Ḥadīth*, *Al-Kunā*, and *Al-Marāsīl*. He passed away the year 327 A.H./938 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ya‘lā in *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, vol. 2 pg. 55; Al-Dhahabī in *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 3 pg. 829.

» *Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, *al-Awsat*, and *al-Ṣaghīr* of Imām al-Bukhārī.

There is no doubt that the books authored on the subjects of the Principles of Narration and The Narrators are a great service to the field aḥādīth. It is possible to benefit from these books, to an extent, in the field of Islamic history as well, as it reveals the principles of narration as well as the profiles of the narrators. This helps to differentiate the weak from the strong and the truthful from the liars. The researcher or historian can, by token of this, evaluate the strength of each narrations resulting in relegating the weak and fabricated narrations together making others aware so that people may refrain from quoting such. As the goal in studying history is to become aware of the realities of the past, the researcher or historian will then expound on the authentic found therein.

B. Studying the *Matn* (Wording/Text of the Narration)

Lexical meaning: *Matn*: An elevation on the earth's surface.¹

Technical meaning: The objective at which the sanad arrives at, consisting of speech.

Studying the *matn* means, studying the text from different angles. This assists in authenticating the text by making sure:

- » It does not contravene any of the established principles of the sharī'ah.
- » It is not at odds with the nature of the era under discussion; the customs and practices of the people.
- » It is not contrary to the nature of things that are undeniable by successive historical accounts.
- » It does not consist of impossibilities and so on.

1 Al-Fīrozābādī: *Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīt*.

Studying the matn is also aimed at understanding the text and its jurisprudic angle; understanding its injunctions, implications, language, and wording.

It should be noted that the efforts of the scholars were not solely focused on critiquing the sanad, they were just as focused on the matn as the 'illah¹ can be found in the matn just as it can be found in the sanad. A point of note, a weak sanad does not necessitate a weak matn, similarly, an authentic sanad does not necessitate an authentic matn. At times, there might be a weak sanad with an authentic matn due to the same matn being narrated through other chains which attest to its authenticity. On the other hand, one might find a sanad that is authentic; however, due to the obscurity or an 'illah the matn it is not authentic.²

The scholars have therefore, laid down a precise academic methodology in this field. They do not deem every narration weak wherein there is a weak narrator. Perhaps the weak narrator is correct on this occasion, and rejecting it would be rejecting the truth. The weak is at times correct and the truthful at times, makes mistakes.

Consequently, the scholars of ḥadīth, at times, cite narrations of a weak sanad when establishing the matn of a narration from another chain of transmission. This is done only if the narrators are not accused of lying or fabricating.

The above mentioned explanation is what is meant by the fact that the scholars look into the matn just as they look into the sanad. Accepting a matn that has some weakness of sanad is a clear indication to the deep insight of the scholars in critiquing the texts of the aḥādīth. A weak narration does not inhibit them from accepting an authentic matn or one well known from another chain.³

1 An indistinct, hidden defect that affects the authenticity of the ḥadīth, even though it apparently seems sound. See, Ibn al-Madīnī: *ʿIlal al-Ḥadīth wa Maʿrifah al-Rijāl*, pg. 10.

2 Ibid.

3 Misfir al-Dumaynī: *Maqāyīs Naqd Mutūn al-Sunnah*, pg. 113.

The methodology of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ was verification of narrations and establishing the authenticity of the text even though they did not accuse its narrators of lying.

Consider Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ seeking a witness from Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who answered his question regarding a grandmother inheriting by saying she will inherit one sixth. Muḥammad ibn Maslamah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ came forward as his witness.¹

Similarly, ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was wary of a narration of Ubay ibn Ka‘b that he narrated to him. He sought a witness to his statement. When he brought one ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, “I did not seek to accuse you, my desire was to verify.”²

Looking at ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا correcting the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, we find her statement when she heard ‘Umar and his son, ‘Abd Allāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا, narrating that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

إن الميت ليعذب ببكاء أهله عليه

The dead person is punished due to his family crying over him.

She commented:

رحم الله عمر ، والله ما حدث رسول الله عليه أن الله يعذب المؤمنين ببكاء أحد ، ولكن قال : « إن الله يزيد الكافر عذابا ببكاء أهله عليه » ، وقالت : حسبكم القرآن : و لا تزر وازرة وزر أخرى

May Allah have mercy on ‘Umar, by Allah, the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not say that Allah will punish the believer for his family’s crying over him, rather the Messenger of Allah (saw him) said, “Allah will increase the torment of the disbeliever because of his family’s crying for him.” And she said, “The Qur’ān is sufficient for you: *‘And no bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another’*.”³

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 1 pg. 2.

2 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 8.

3 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Janā’iz, vol. 2 pg. 81.

In the narration of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* she is reported to have said:

إنكم لتحدثوني عن غير كاذبين ولا مكذابين ، ولكن السمع يخطئ

You are narrating to me from those who do not lie nor do they attribute lies. However, the ear can be mistaken.¹

Looking at critiquing of *mutūn* (plural of *matn*) by the *Ṣaḥābah* رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, the jurists, and the *muḥaddithīn*, one finds that they abide by some yardsticks in order to critique a text.

They consider the *matn* in the light of the *Qur'ān*. If it contradicts the *Qur'ān* in a manner that is impossible to reconcile they reject it if interpreting becomes problematic.

They then consider the *matn* in light of the other *aḥādīth*. The scholars of *ḥadīth* would consider the narrations of one topic in relation to each other. This would result in many findings that would play a role in authenticating a text; by way of citing additions, comments of the narrators, or their errors.

This yardstick would similarly, reject a *matn* that contradicted the established principles of the *sharāḥ* and the known laws of the creed. In a similar fashion they would use logical conclusions and historical actualities in critiquing some of the *mutūn*.²

An example of this is an incident mentioned hereunder that occurred in the year 447 A.H./1055 A.D.

Some Jews produced a document wherein there was an order of *Rasūlullāh* صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to abolish tax from the people of *Khaybar*. There was mention of some

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Kitāb al-Janā'iz*, vol. 6 pg. 232.

2 *Misfir al-Dumaynī: Maqāyīs Naqd Mutūn al-Sunnah*, pgs. 95 – 183 – 207.

Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in there, as witnesses as well. When this document was brought before the vizier of the Khalīfah al-Qā'im al-'Abbāsī, he gave it over to the great historian and ḥāfiẓ, Abū Bakr al-Khaṭīb al-Baḡhdādī. He pondered over it and then said, "It is a fabrication." When asked how he had come to this conclusion he said, "In it is the witness of Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه who accepted Islam in the 8th year A.H. whereas Khaybar was conquered in the 7th year. Similarly, in it is the witness of Sa'd ibn Mu'ādh رضي الله عنه who passed away in the 5th year; two years before Khaybar."²

In this manner al-Khaṭīb al-Baḡhdadi, assisted by his accurate historical knowledge, was able to reject the lies of the text found in the document. The vizier accepted the conclusion of the historian and did not allow the Jews to follow through with the contents of the document.

The following statement of Sufyān al-Thawrī³ applies to this and other similar incidents that have been mentioned:

لما استعمل الرواة الكذب استعملنا لهم التاريخ

When the narrators began lying, we exposed them with history.⁴

1 He is 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Qādir bi Allāh al-'Abbāsī, Abū Ja'far. Given the title, Al-Qā'im bi Amr Allāh. He was one of the Khulafā' of the 'Abbāsīd dynasty. He came to the seat of khilāfah the year 422 A.H./1030 A.D. He was well known for his piety, justice, soft nature, and attention to knowledge. He passed away the year 467 A.H./1075 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baḡhdād*, vol. 9 pg. 399; Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, vol. 9 pg. 417; and Ibn al-Kathīr: *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 12 pg. 31.

2 Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 8 pg. 256; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 18 pg. 280; Ibn al-Qayyim: *Al-Manār al-Munīf*, pgs. 37 – 39.

3 He is Sufyān ibn Sa'īd ibn Masrūq al-Thawrī al-Kūfī; scholar, ascetic, pious, jurist, muḥaddith. One of the Khulafā' of the 'Abbāsīd dynasty sought to grant him a position of authority. He declined. He passed away the year 161 A.D./778 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 6 pg. 371; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baḡhdād*, vol. 9 pg. 151; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 4 pg. 111.

4 Ibn Ṣalāh: *Al-Muqaddimah*, pg. 577; Al-Sakhāwī: *Al-I'lān bi tawbīkh li man dhamm al-Tārīkh*, pg. 390.

It should be noted that though the principles adopted by the Muslim scholars in attaining the knowledge of the authentic texts were specifically determined for the aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, they are suited to be applied to other Islamic sciences as well, especially Islamic history. This is due to the fact that the early historians were modelled along the same lines as the muḥaddithīn in their manner of presenting and narrating *with* the chain of transmission. Similarly, the statements, incidents, and texts of history cannot be verified except through implementing these principles of methodology. Many of the contemporary historians have understood the advantages of this methodology and principles of critique. They have thus adopted this approach in their own books and have quoted chapters from the scholars of muṣṭalaḥ like Al-Khaṭīb al-Baḡhdādī, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr¹, Ibn Ṣalāh², and others. To the extent that one of the Christian historians has entitled a chapter in his book, ‘The terms used by the scholars of ḥadīth’³.

1 He is Yūsuf ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Barr al-Numayrī al-Qurtubī al-Mālikī, Abū ‘Amr, ḥāfiẓ, historian, and linguist. He was appointed judge in Spain. Abū al-Walīd al-Bājī says, “Abū ‘Amr is the greatest ḥāfiẓ of the west. There was no one in Spain like him in the field of ḥadīth.” Al-Ḥumaydī says, “Abū ‘Amr was a jurist, ḥāfiẓ, and narrated much. He was a scholar of the different modes of recital, ḥadīth, and its narrators. He would lean towards the views of Al-Shafī‘ī in fiqh. From amongst his books are, *Jāmi’ bayān al-‘ilm wa Faḍlihi*, *Al-Tamhīd*, *Al-Istī‘āb*, *Baḥjah al-Majālis*, *Al-Durar fi Ikhtisār al-Ma‘ānī wa al-Siyar*, and *Al-Qaṣd al-Umam fi Ansāb al-‘Arab wa al-‘Ajam*. He passed away the year 463 A.H./1071 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Bashkwāl: *Al-Ṣilah*, vol. 2 pg. 616; Ibn ‘Umayrah: *Buḡhyah al-Multamīs*, pg. 474; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 18 pg. 153.

2 He is ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Naṣrī al-Kurdī, Abū ‘Umar Taqī al-Dīn. Famously known as Ibn Ṣalāh. Muḥaddith, Faqīh, and Mufasssir. He rose to the position of lecturing at Al-Madrasah al-Ṣalāhiyyah in Bayt al-Maqdis and thereafter at Dārul Ḥadīth in Damascus. He has written, *Al-Amālī*, *Fawā'id al-Riḥlah*, *Adab al-Muftī wa al-Mustaftī*, and *Maḥāsin al-Iṣṭilāḥ* which is more famously known as Muqaddimah ibn Ṣalāh. He passed away the year 643 A.H./1245 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3 pg. 243; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 23 pg. 140; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shafī'iyyah*, vol. 5 pg. 137.

3 This is as done by Asad Rustum in his book *Muṣṭalaḥ al-Tārīkh*. He has taken and benefitted from *Muṣṭalaḥ al-Ḥadīth* placing the former on the style of the latter thus gaining much in adopting the principles of critiquing ḥadīth in history.

C. Conditions of Accepted Narrations

It is difficult to fully implement the methodology of critiquing as is by the scholars of ḥadīth upon every historical account, even though the scholars have placed the same conditions on the historian as they do on the narrator of ḥadīth; sanity, reliability, Islam, and moral integrity¹. This is because historical accounts do not reach the level of the aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in terms of the reliability of its narrators, unbroken chains of transmission, and substantiation. The exceptions to this are those historical accounts that deal with the sīrah and the lives of Rightly Guided Khulafā'; the authenticity of such historical accounts have been established through the books of ḥadīth. Most other accounts though, fall upon the words of story tellers with chains of transmission that are incomplete. Chains wherein there are many unknown, weak, and rejected narrators.

The scholars have therefore differentiated between the narrations that ought to be authenticated stringently and those wherein laxity is acceptable based on the nature of the narration. Implementing the principles of critiquing ḥadīth in the field of history is relative to the nature of the narration.

If the narration has to do with Rasūlullāh ﷺ or any of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, stringently assessing the narrators is necessary. This will also be the case if it contains criticism of any of the great scholars and leaders whose moral integrity has been established. The law is, criticism is not accepted in the right of someone whose moral integrity has already been established until it becomes so clear that no other possibility exists.²

Similarly, if the narration deals with matters of doctrine, sharī law, or ascertaining permissibility or impermissibility, it will be necessary to establish and review the

1 Al-Kāfījī: *Al-Mukhtaṣar fi 'Ilm al-Tārīkh* pg. 336. Al-Subkī says, "It is necessary for the historian to be a scholar, impartial, know well the life of whom he profiles, whilst having nothing against him that would render him biased nor have animosity towards him." *Qā'idah fi al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* and *Qā'idah fi al-Muarrikhīn*, pg. 71.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 273.

profile of the narrators. In all of the above, only those narrations will be accepted which have been related by narrators, reliable and who moral integrity. Dr Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umrī says:

كما أن استعمال قواعد المصطلح في نقد الروايات التاريخية ينبغي أن يشتد على قدر تعلق المادة بالأحداث الخطيرة التي تؤثر فيها الأهواء ويشتد عندها الرواة ، كأن تكون الروايات لها مساس بالعقائد كالفتن التي حدثت في جيل الصحابة ، أو ذات صلة بالأحكام الشرعية كالسوابق الفقهية ، فإن التشدد في قبولها يجعل استعمال قواعد نقد الحديث بدقة أمرا مقبولا أما إذا كان الخبر المروي لا يتعلق بشيء من الأحكام الشرعية - وإن كان الواجب التثبت في الكل - فإنه يتساهل فيه قياسا على ما اصطلاح عليه علماء الحديث في باب التشدد في أحاديث الأحكام والتساهل في فضائل الأعمال

Similarly, applying the laws of al-muṣṭalaḥ in critiquing the historical narrations will be necessary in the case of particularly volatile incidents that could have been influenced by the bias of the narrator. If a narration has a bearing on one's belief, for example, that of the fitnah that occurred amongst the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, or it plays a role in the laws of the sharī'ah and its legal precedents, scrutiny by way of ḥadīth critiquing methods will be accepted. On the other hand, if it does not affect the laws of sharī'ah—though authentication in every narration is necessary—laxity will be permitted based upon the maxim outlined by the scholars of ḥadīth, 'Scrutiny in the narrations that pertain to injunctions and laxity in the narrations that pertain to virtues of actions.'¹

Imām Aḥmad says:

إذا روينا عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في الحلال والحرام والسنن والأحكام تشددنا في الأسانيد ، وإذا روينا عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في فضائل الأعمال وما لا يوضع حكما أو يرفعه تساهلنا في الأسانيد

When we narrate from Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم statements that pertain to injunctions, ḥalāl, ḥarām, and Sunnah, we scrutinize the chain of transmission. When we narrate virtues of actions and those that does not impact injunctions we exercise laxity in the chain of transmission.²

1 Dr Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umrī: *Buḥūth fi tārikh al-Sunnah al-Mushrifah*, pg. 211.

2 Al-Khaṭīb: *Al-Kifāyah fi 'ilm al-Riwāyah*, pg. 212.

It should be noted that laxity in these instances does not mean narrating from those who are known liars and whose moral integrity has been long gone, as they are not fit to narrate from at all. Exercising laxity by the scholars is by accepting the narration of one who has some weakness in accuracy, due to making many mistakes, having changed owing to external implications, or the sanad not being complete as is in the case of *mursal*¹ and *munqaṭi*² narrations. Based on this maxim, some of the jurists have permitted acting upon weak narrations that pertain to virtues of actions or warnings and inspirations.

Therefore, if the historical narration has nothing to do with establishing or rejecting a sharī matter—be it regarding injunctions (ḥalāl and ḥarām) or personalities (Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ—the narration will be accepted even though it would not have been accepted in other instances. It will be cited and its details used as proof. These narrations will share common details with other authentic narrations that deal with the same account and attempts will be made to reconcile between any differences.

Al-Kāfījī³ says:

يجوز للمؤرخ أن يروي في تاريخه قولاً ضعيفاً في باب الترغيب والترهيب والاعتبار مع التنبيه على ضعفه، ولكن لا يجوز له ذلك في ذات البارئ وفي صفاته ولا في الأحكام، وهكذا جواز رواية الحديث الضعيف على ما ذكر من التفصيل المذكور

1 The muḥaddith narrates with a complete sanad back to the Tābīṭī, and the Tābīṭī says, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said...”

2 A break somewhere in the chain of narrators.

3 He is Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān ibn Sa’d al-Rūmī al-Ḥanafī al-Kāfījī, he had been given this title due to being constantly involved with the book *Al-Kāfīyah*. He had a penchant for linguistics, history, tafsīr, and other sciences. Ḥanafī mastery ended with him in Egypt. Amongst his book are, *Anwār al-Sa’ādah fi Sharḥ Kalimatay al-Shahādah*, *Manāzil al-Arwāḥ*, *Al-Ilmā’ bi Ifādah law la-Imtinā’*, *Al-Muhtasar fi ‘ilm al-Tārīkh*, *Ḥall al-Mashākil* in engineering, and *Al-Rumuz* in astronomy. He passed away the year 879 A.H./1474 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Sakhāwī: *Al-Ḍaw al-Lāmī li Ahl al-Qarn al-Tāsi’* vol. 7 pg. 259; Al-Ṣuyūṭī: *Bughyah al-Wu’āh*, pg. 48; Al-Laknawī: *Al-Fawā’id al-Bahiyah fi Tarājim al-Ḥanafīyah*, pg. 169.

It is permissible for the historian to narrate a weak statement pertaining to warnings and inspirations, whilst noting its weakness. This will not be permissible if it pertains to Allah ﷻ, His attributes, or injunctions. Narrating weak ḥadīth will be permissible as outlined above.¹

Dr Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umrī states further:

و أما اشتراط الصحة الحديثية في قبول الأخبار التاريخية التي لا تمس العقيدة والشريعة فيه تعسف كثير ، والخطر الناجم عنه كبير ، لأن الروايات التاريخية التي دونها أسلافنا المؤرخون لم تعامل معاملة الأحاديث بل تم التساهل فيها ، وإذا رفضنا منهجهم فإن الحلقات الفارغة في تاريخنا ستمثل هوة سحيقة بيننا وبين ماضينا مما يولد الحيرة والضياح والتمزق والانقطاع لكن ذلك لا يعني التخلي عن منهج المحديثين في نقد أسانيد الروايات التاريخية ، فهي وسيلتنا إلى الترجيح بين الروايات المتعارضة ، كما أنها خير معين في قبول أو رفض بعض المتون المضطربة أو الشاذة عن الإطار العام لتاريخ أمتنا . ولكن الإفادة منها ينبغي أن تتم بمرونة آخذين بعين الاعتبار أن الأحاديث غير الروايات التاريخية ، وأن الأولى نالت من العناية ما يمكنها من الصعود أمام قواعد النقد الصارمة

Applying the stringencies of authentication in accepting historical accounts that have no bearing on creed or sharī'ah law would be arbitrary together with posing a great risk. This would be due to historical accounts, as codified by our historians of the past, not being subject to such critique. Laxity in narrating them was the norm. If we disregard the methodology of the historians, we will effect a considerable gap between us and our past resulting in a disconnection of great magnitude. This does not mean that we ought to totally disregard the methodology of the muḥaddithīn in critiquing narrations either, as this is the way we give preference to irreconcilable narrations and it assists one in accepting or rejecting certain unusual accounts from the general framework of our history. What ought to be understood is that historical accounts should be handled with flexibility taking into consideration that historical accounts are not aḥādīth. The aḥādīth underwent much more rigorous verification comparatively.²

1 *Al-Mukhtaṣar fī 'Ulūm al-Tārīkh*, pg. 326.

2 Dr Akram Ḍiyā' al-'Umrī: *Dirāsāt Tārīkhīyah*, pg. 27.

This difference between stringently authenticating and between taking a lax approach is clearly outlined by Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī in *Fatḥh al-Bārī* when he reconciles between narrations.

We find him criticizing the narrations of Muhammad ibn Ishāq¹ and al-Wāqidī, the former for narrating *Muʿanʿan*² ḥadīth and the latter for not being rejected by the scholars of *al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʿdīl*. He also criticises the narrations of those who do not appear in the Six Canonical Books of Ḥadīth such as ʿUwānah³ and Al-Madāʿinī⁴. Yet he uses their narrations for corroboration, procuring details that

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ibn Yasār al-Muṭṭalibī al-Madanī, Abū Bakr; scholar and historian who has written the *sīrah*. He would narrate a lot. He specialised in the genres of prophetic battles and historical accounts. Imām al-Shafīʿī says, “Whoever wished to attain expertise in prophetic battles is in need of Muḥammad ibn Ishāq.” Ibn Ḥibbān says, “There was no one that came close to the knowledge of codification of Muḥammad ibn Ishāq in Madinah. He was excellent in articulating historical accounts.” He has written, “*Al-Maghāzī, Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ, Kitāb al-Futūḥ*, and others. He passed away the year 151 A.H./868 A.D. His life has been recorded by, Ibn Saʿd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 321, Al-Fasawī: *Al-Maʿrifah wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 27; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 1 pg. 214; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 7 pgs. 33-55; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 1 pg. 172.

2 The issue with the *muʿanʿan* ḥadīth is that it is linguistically accurate for someone to say “on the authority of such-and-such a narrator, the Prophet ﷺ said...” without him actually having met the narrator.

3 He is ʿUwānah ibn al-Ḥakīm al-Kalbī al-Kūfī. He was a historian, poet, and genealogist. He was extremely eloquent. Al-Aṣmaʿī, Al-Haytham ibn ʿAdī and Al-Madāʿinī have narrated from him. He has authored, *Al-Tārīkh* and *Siyar Muʿāwiyah wa Banū Umayyah*. He passed away the year 147 A.H./764 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 103; Yaqūt: *Muʿjam al-Udabāʾ*, vol. 16 pg. 134; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 7 pg. 201; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 4 pg. 386.

4 He is ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh Abū al-Ḥasan al-Madāʿinī; historian and prolific author. Al-Dhahabī says regarding him, “He was amazing in his knowledge of the prophetic life, prophetic battles, lineage, and Arabian wars. He was truthful in his narrations and had a high chain of narration.” Imām al-Ṭabarī says, “He was knowledgeable on the wars of the past and truthful in it.” He has written, *Al-Maghāzī, Akhbār al-Munāfiqīn, Khuṭab al-Nabī ﷺ, Akhbār al-Khulafāʾ, Al-Jamal, Kitāb al-Khawārij, Al-Futūḥ, Kitāb al-Madinah, Buyūtāt al-ʿArab*, and many other books. He passed away the year 224 A.H./838 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pgs. 148-152; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 54; Yaqūt: *Muʿjam al-Udabāʾ*, vol. 14 pg. 124; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 3 pg. 153; and *Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 10 pg. 400.

are not found in the authentic versions, and to reconcile between these and other narrations that have stronger chains of transmission.

This shows that he would accept their narrations in their field of expertise; historical accounts. This is the very same methodology accepted and adopted by the erudite scholars, even though their narrations that pertain to Islamic Law is not accepted. Ibn Ḥajar says regarding Muḥammad ibn Ishāq, “Imām in prophetic biography, truthful but makes *tadlīs*”². Regarding Al-Wāqidī he says, “He is rejected despite his great amount of knowledge.”³ Regarding Sayf ibn ‘Umar he says, “Weak in ḥadīth an authority in *tārīkh*.”⁴

Hereunder are some instances of this approach wherein Ibn Ḥajar considers the narrations of the historians:

a) Kitāb al-Maghāzī, Chapter of Ghazwah al-‘Ashīrah.

He recounts the number of battles of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, the number of expeditions he was present in, those he wasn’t present in, and those wherein fighting had taken place. He references the quotations of historians such as Ibn Ishāq, al-Wāqidī, and Ibn Sa’d⁵. He further mentions their differences of opinion and reconciles between their opinions and the opinions of the more authentic narrators of *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*.⁶

1 Hiding discontinuity in the chain.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mudallisīn*, pg. 51.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 2 pg. 194.

4 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 344.

5 He is Muḥammad ibn Sa’d al-Hāshimī al-Baṣrī. He lived in Baghdad and was the scribe of al-Wāqidī. He is the author of *Al-Ṭabaqāt*. He forms part of the great ḥuffāz and reliable narrators. Al-Khaṭīb says, “He was a scholar, righteous, possessed deep understanding, and was impartial. He has written a large book on the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and Tābi‘īn till his time. He wrote this book beautifully.” He has also written *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣaḥīḥ*. He passed away the year 230 A.H./844 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* vol. 7 pg. 262; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 321; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A’yān*, vol. 4 pg. 351; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 182.

6 Ibn Ḥajar: *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 7 pg. 279-280.

b) Kitāb al-Maghāzī, Chapter regarding the killing of Abū Jahl.

He adopts the narration of Ibn Ishāq as the reconciliatory one even though it goes against what is in the *Ṣaḥīḥ*. This is with regards to the killing of Abū Jahl on the Day of Badr. He states:

فهذا الذي رواه ابن إسحاق يجمع بين الأحاديث ، لكنه يخالف ما في الصحيح من حديث عبد الرحمن بن عوف به أنه رأى معاذًا ومعوذاً شدا عليه جميعاً حتى طرحاه - يعني أبا جهل

This, what Ibn Ishāq has narrated reconciled between the various aḥādīth. Although it does contradict the ḥadīth of the *Ṣaḥīḥ* wherein ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf رضي الله عنه saw Mu‘ādh and Mu‘awwidh رضي الله عنه attacking Abū Jahl until they threw him off.¹

c) Kitāb al-Maghāzī, Chapter regarding the Banū al-Naḍīr.

Regarding the incident of Banū Naḍīr and dating their siege, Ibn Ishāq has opined that it had occurred after the Battle of Uḥūd and after the incident of the martyrs of Bir Ma‘ūnah. The narration of ‘Urwah ibn Zubayr as in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* places it six months after Badr, i.e. before Uḥūd. Even though Ibn Ḥajar has disagreed with Ibn Ishāq on the circumstances that led to this expedition, he concurs with his timeline. He says:

فهذا أقوى مما ذكر ابن إسحاق من أن سبب غزوة بني النضير طلبه صلى الله عليه وسلم أن يعينوه في دية الرجلين ، لكن وافق ابن إسحاق جل أهل المغازي

This is stronger than what Ibn Ishāq has mentioned that the circumstances that led to the expedition of the Banū al-Naḍīr was seeking the help of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم in attaining the blood money of two men. However, Ibn Ishāq has concurred with most of the historians.²

1 Ibid, vol. 7 pg. 269.

2 Ibid, vol. 7 pg. 329-332.

II. Methodology of interpreting history: Sources and principles of judging incidents¹

Interpreting history, in this context, means, understanding the association that links different incidents and events so that one may realise the motives, premises, consequences, and norms inferred.

The methodology of interpreting history lies upon a set of ideas and values; if these ideas and values are in order than the methodology will be in order. On the other hand, if these ideas are distorted and misrepresented the methodology will be distorted and misleading as well. The fact that every nation has their own set of ideas that define humans, life, and the universe is quite clear. In the light of these ideas their political, social, and economic lives are formed. It is from this perspective that things, incidents, and people are looked at.

The cultural and academic pillars in the life of a nation form as a result of its ideas. Upon these ideas are its perceptions and balances are erected. These ideas are an outcome of the creed that the nation believes in and adheres to. Changes and variations in the above results in differences of perspective. [When the ideas change so too will the actions, and ultimately the methodology of the historian must change in order to pass an accurate judgment in relation to incidents and events.] Similarly, the less difference in ideologies of societies, the closer their perceptions and consequently judgments that are alike will be passed.²

Due to this—vast amounts of ideologies—there remains a great amount difference in interpreting history; though the methodology of writing *Islamic history* and interpreting the events therein relies in principle upon an Islamic perception. It lays the Islamic creed and its requisites as the foundation to the methodological premises, the interpretation of events, and the judgments passed thereon. Therefore, the sources that dictate the writing of Islamic history are

1 For further reading see, Muḥammad ibn Šāmil al-Sulamī: *Manhaj Kitābah al-Tārīkh al-Islāmiyyah*.

2 Muḥammad ibn Šāmil al-Sulamī: *Manhaj Kitābah al-Tārīkh al-Islāmiyyah*, pg. 112.

the sources of the sharīah; the Qur’ān and the Sunnah with the possibility of seeking assistance from Consensus and Analogical reasoning. The latter two a means to assist the researcher in understanding Islamic history and establishing the accounts found therein.

Owing to the fact that the Islamic interpretation of history originates from an Islamic perspective of man, life, and the universe it is with good reason that it is based upon belief in Allah ﷻ, His books, His Messengers, the last day, and predestination; good and bad. Thus, it does not exceed the bounds of Islamic beliefs. Moreover, it is based upon the behavioural motivations present in the early Islamic society. All this has resulted in Islamic history being distinct in nature compared to other histories of the world as it has the element of divine revelation in it.¹

The Islamic interpretation of history rests upon the principle that the extent of man in this world is that of being a successive authority:

وإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً

And [mention, O Muḥammad], when your Lord said to the angels, “Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority.”²

Thereafter, Allah ﷻ placed certain conditions for this authority:

قَالَ اهْبِطَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَىٰ وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَىٰ

[Allah] said, “Descend from Paradise - all, [your descendants] being enemies to one another. And if there should come to you guidance from Me - then whoever follows My guidance will neither go astray [in the world] nor suffer [in the Hereafter]. And

1 Dr Akram Ḍiyā al-‘Umrī: *Al-Mujtama’ al-Mudanī fi ‘ahd al-Nubuwwah*, pg. 15.

2 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 30.

*whoever turns away from My remembrance - indeed, he will have a depressed life,
and We will gather him on the Day of Resurrection blind.”¹*

Human history from an Islamic perspective is the study of the Divine will in respect to the role of mankind on earth according to the decree of Allah ﷻ; and according to the fixed traditions through which Allah ﷻ makes his decree manifest in the worldly life.

History, from a different perspective is, studying the pursuit of man in attaining complete self-realization. Not merely delving into the aspect of sustenance as is the materialistic interpretation of history or solely delving into the discussions of wealth, control, and possessions as is the liberal interpretation of history. It is the study of the potentials, capabilities, aspirations, and desires of human kind alongside their crucial needs and impulses. This is together with outlining the principles that mankind embrace and the beliefs they adhere to and practically follow. The attitudes, character and dealings of men cover the earth which people see and recognise as Islamic. Comprehending the above is the safety net in understanding the history of personalities and groups as understood in their era while simultaneously saving one from incessantly entangling the two and spiralling them to no end.²

It is therefore imperative to refer to the sources of sharīah in interpreting Islamic history to fully comprehend the behaviour and character of a society that was built upon and infused with Islamic teachings through and through. Teachings, commands, and prohibitions that permeated every facet of such a society.

Referring to the sources of the sharīah, gaining an understanding of the Islamic creed, and comprehending the effects of such on its adherents is a necessary condition for the one who busies themselves with writing and interpreting Islamic history. If any of the above is omitted, the result of the work would be

1 Sūrah Ṭāhā: 123/124.

2 Muḥammad Qutub: *Ḥawl al-Tafsīr al-Islāmī li al-Tārīkh*, pg. 13.

lacking and incomplete. Such work would be affected by the condition of the authors ideology, a social parasite no less, forcing the reader to wade through many pages of extraneous material resulting in an affront to the Islamic legacy.

Considering the above, many contemporary researchers have made many errors due to either falling short in referring to sources of the sharī'ah or due to murky perceptions that clouded their judgments. Some others have committed grave errors by conforming to western ideologies and interpreting Islamic events through western, secular ideals. If this is the condition of the studies conducted by those who are considered Muslims, then what would the results of the material produced by the enemies of Islam; orientalists and the like thereof—neo materialist atheist—be like? Men who, from the get go, disregard the explicit texts of the sharī'ah, and promote weak and fabricated incidents that conform to their views thereby inculcating within their youth enmity for Islamic history.

The Islamic methodology in compiling history relies greatly on Islamic principles and sources. This is the differentiating factor between it and between other methodologies that seek to interpret history through the lens of ethnicity, geographical location, economic values, or psychological prevalence.¹ These methodologies do not consider other factors that influenced the period of history under discussion. They rely on a single contributing factor which they blow out of proportion and by which they interpret the history of humanity.

The Islamic methodology is a methodology that seeks to be inclusive off all factors and behaviours, not simply relying on the apparent and perceptual. Rather, it provides an opportunity to an in depth study by which the historian is able to assess incidents coherently in a light that is true and genuine. A result of truly

1 Many schools of methodology were born to interpret history by singling out one factor to explain a time period of humankind. History through geography was headed by Brown and Michelet. History through psychology was taken on by the likes of Gabriel Tarde, Gustav Le Bon, and Sigmund Freud. History through ethnography was the brain child of Michelet and Hippolyte Taine. History through economics was taken on by Karl Marx.

understanding the human spirit and life; both body and mind. Not disregarding any part of the puzzle.

It is a methodology that clarifies the role and responsibilities of humans in social and historic change within the framework of the Divine decree.¹ It takes into account the impact of internal and external factors mankind must deal with, without blowing any single one of them out of proportion. These factors are then subjected to the decree of Allah *سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ*. There is no one and nothing that can go against His will and decree.

All the above factors need to be considered to accurately comprehend any historical event. The researcher should have a clear and coherent perspective in evaluating the factors, the weight they carry together with figuring out the proper connection between each one. Over and above this, having shar'ī knowledge is relevant to the highest degree in order to fully understand the fundamentals of man; soul, body, and mind.

The conditions outlined above cannot be found in a non-believer. A true perspective on the issues that have influenced historical events can only be understood through divine revelation; sources free from error: the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

Through revelation, a Muslim will understand these factors, the weight each factor and cause carry, and its impact in interpretation. This is because the divine revelation is from a being Most-Wise, All Aware. He possesses knowledge of the recesses of the soul and not absent from His knowledge is an atom's weight within the heavens or within the earth. When He intends a thing that He says to it, "Be," and it is. The methodology of a being whose knowledge, power, and justice is beyond the constraints of time and space will, with no doubt, be the best and most complete methodology. A methodology free from any weakness, error, fault, or desires that are fused with humanity.

1 Dr Akram Diyā al-'Umrī: *Al-Mujtama' al-Mudanī fi 'ahd al-Nubuwwah*, pg. 15

As our sources are thus the finest, most complete, most just, and are free from errors and discrepancies it is nothing short of oppressing ourselves and our history to take on foreign values, understandings, and methodologies in interpreting our history. Methodologies that are products of men who were prejudiced, hankered to fulfil their carnal desires, and adopted ideas that were littered with discrepancies and blunders.

Hereunder are some principles related to ‘sources’ that ought to be considered by the one writing Islamic history. They should be taken into account when penning down history, especially the history of the early Islamic era. It is not possible to study Islam by removing the subject of Islamic history. It is an inseparable part of studying Islam. The history of a nation that faithfully adhered to a creed that drove its inclinations and activities.

A. Relying on sharī sources and placing them above all other sources when regarding, inter alia, incidents, laws, and injunctions.

This is due to the following two reasons:

1. It is more truthful than any historical document that heralds incidents of the past. This is because of the truthfulness of its source; his knowledge and dominance. Together with this it has reached us through incontestable and genuine academic methodology. The Qur’ān has reached us through succession that is undoubtable (*mutawātir*). The authentic *aḥādīth* has reached us through a precise academic methodology wherein the scholars of *ḥadīth* critiqued every narration that came before them whilst codifying the *aḥādīth* as has already been explained.
2. It outlines historical principles, Divine mannerisms, and a holistic view of humankind; past, present, and future. This affords the researcher a wide and holistic vision into history together with a deep understanding in analysing incidents and identifying ills and solutions to it.

The Qur'ān and the Sunnah afford the researcher insights, concepts, and ideals which enable correct interpretation and judgments of historical incidents. Moreover, it gives details of what the Islamic ummah will face; divisions, efforts of reconciliations, and indications to many incidents, trials, and stances¹. The scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah have made efforts in gathering such material and have included it in their books, entitling specific chapters for such details.²

In the light of Islamic principles and concepts; measures which are suited to favour, study, and interpret events when studying Islamic history, the historian cannot do without the knowledge of *muṣṭalaḥ al-ḥadīth* (terminologies of ḥadīth principles) which would make him aware of the principles of *takhrīj* (the science of citation and extraction of ḥadīth) and study of *asānīd*.

Furthermore, the one studying Islamic history ought to be aware of the common injunctions of the sharī'ah, the beliefs of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, and the beliefs of the opposing groups. Additionally, he should rely on the narrations of the muḥaddithīn as an unsullied source and as a deciding factor when weighing the incidents of the early Islamic years.

1 An example of this is the stance adopted by Rasūlullāh ﷺ in foretelling the fitnah that would occur during the reign of 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. He gave great importance to it and said, indicating to 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

هذا يومئذ على الهدى

He will be rightly guided on that day.

In another narration Rasūlullāh ﷺ is reported to have said:

يقتل فيها هذا يومئذ ظلم

He will be killed unjustly on that day. (By the oppressive Khawārij)

See Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal; *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 450 and Ibn Ḥajar; *Al-Fath*, vol. 7 pg. 38.

2 Imām al-Bukhārī has a specific chapter in his book *Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ* entitled *Kitāb al-Fitan*. Similarly, Imām Muslim has in his *Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḥīḥ* *Kitāb al-Fitan wa ash-rāṭ al-Sā'ah*. Imām Abū Dāwūd has *Al-Fitan wa al-Malāḥim* in his *Sunan*. And so have other Ahl al-Sunnah scholars in their books.

Even though the amount of historical material found in the books of ḥadīth isn't as much as those found in the books of history, it still holds a critical position due to many factors, the key one being: Most of those that codified and authored the major books of ḥadīth, lived in the early era; majority of them living of the second and third century Hijrī and thus their sources are distinguished as being of the earliest times. Another exceptional quality of the muḥaddithīn is that they were particularly cautious in relating narrations. An element that drives the researcher to their narrations more than the traditions of the historians.

Add to this the fact that the muḥaddith holds higher status and is given greater prominence, by the Muslims, in comparison to the historian. This is due to the vigilance and cautiousness of the muḥaddith, whilst the historian would, generally, relate all sorts of obscurities and fabrications.

B. Truly understanding the role of īmān.

If the one studying Islamic history does not understand the role īmān played in the lives of the Muslims, he will not be able to accurately and academically assess events in Islamic history.

For example, the migration of the Muslims from Makkah to Madinah was for the cause of their īmān. The Muhājirīn, individuals and groups, were driven to migrate and settle elsewhere for no other cause. The hijrah was not to seek out a homeland, to attain wealth, or to achieve position. The Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who had migrated had left behind their homeland, wealth, homes, and belongings in order to save their faith and adhere to their creed. They raised the bar of sacrifice and sincerity to incredible heights in the path of upholding the word of Allah سبحانه وتعالى. On the other hand, the Anṣār of Madinah were those who harboured them in their own homes, aided them financially, and supported them. They left a stunning example of true Islamic brotherhood. Not a brotherhood tolerated by empty words or lip service, rather they were and would forever be fused together by blood, wealth, giving preference to others, and mutual solace. This was a society that was brimming with these qualities.

Allah سبحانه وتعالى says regarding the condition of their īmān:

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ
اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ
إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ
وَمَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

For the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and their properties, seeking bounty from Allah and [His] approval and supporting Allah and His Messenger, [there is also a share]. Those are the truthful. And [also for] those who were settled in al-Madinah and [adopted] the faith before them. They love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their breasts of what the emigrants were given but give [them] preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.¹

Imām al-Bukhārī has narrated the following:

لما قدموا المدينة آخى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بين عبد الرحمن بن عوف وسعد بن الربيع ، فقال سعد لعبد الرحمن : إني أكثر الأنصار مالا فأقسم مالي نصفين ولي امرأتان فانظر أعجبهما إليك فسمهما لي أطلقها فإذا انقضت عدتها فتزوجها ، قال : بارك الله لك في أهلك ومالك أين سوقكم ؟ فدلوه على سوق بني قينقاع فما انقلب إلا ومعه فضل من أقط وسمن

When we came to Madinah as emigrants, Allah’s Messenger ﷺ established a bond of brotherhood between ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf and Sa’d ibn al-Rabī’.

Sa’d ibn al-Rabī said to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, “I am the richest among the Anṣār, so I will give you half of my wealth and you may look at my two wives and whichever of the two you may choose I will divorce her, and when she has completed the prescribed period (‘iddat) you may marry her.”

1 Sūrah al-Ḥaṣhr: 8-9.

He replied, “May Allah bless your family and wealth, where is the market-place?”

They showed him the market of Qaynuqā'. He then brought back from there some dried butter-milk (yogurt) and butter from the profits he had earned.¹

From this it is pretty clear that setting the motivation of all historical occurrences as a result of ‘conflict’ or ‘material incentive’ is nothing short of inaccuracy and gross negligence.

Hereunder are some examples and elucidations of the reliance on īmān and the results of such, which if attributed to material causes would be a lie.

The one fighting in the path of Allah ﷻ knows well that he isn't fighting the disbelievers by himself and neither is the army fighting by their superior numbers or weaponry, if they have such. They fight by the spirit of their true īmān and knowledge that Allah ﷻ assists the true mujāhidīn by way of tangible and intangible means. Examples of the former would be by Allah ﷻ sending the angels to fight by their side or harnessing nature in their favour. Examples of the latter would be strengthening their hearts, sending down tranquillity amongst their ranks, or granting them the ability to persevere.

Allah ﷻ sent down angels to fight alongside the Muslims in the Battle of Badr. Allah ﷻ says:

إِذْ تَسْتَعِينُونَ رَبُّكُمْ فَأَسْتَجَابَ لَكُمْ أَنِّي مُمِدُّكُمْ بِأَلْفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُرَدِّفِينَ

[Remember] when you asked help of your Lord, and He answered you, “Indeed, I will reinforce you with a thousand from the angels, following one another.”²

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Buyū' vol. 3 pg. 3.

2 Sūrah al-Anfāl: 9.

Allah ﷻ sent heavy winds that disrupted the confederates that surrounded Madinah on the Day of Khandaq. Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَاءَتْكُمْ جُنُودٌ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا وَجُنُودًا لَمْ تَرَوْهَا ؕ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا

*O you who have believed, remember the favor of Allah upon you when armies came to [attack] you and We sent upon them a wind and armies [of angels] you did not see. And ever is Allah, of what you do, Seeing.*¹

Let us take for example the study of the causes of victory for the Muslims in the Battle of Yarmūk. We found find that the numbers of Roman army were six times that of the Muslim army together with having superior military skills and weapons. The Muslims were combatively weak in number and strength whilst also fighting far from the seat of khilāfah. Despite all this they won a clear and glorious victory. One studying the material visible causes by way of intellect alone will not be able to come to terms with the result of the battle, though it is unequivocally proven to be so. This would be due to having no knowledge about the true causes that outline human history and being unaware of the ways of Allah ﷻ in the universe.

فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللَّهِ تَحْوِيلًا

*But you will never find in the way of Allah any change, and you will never find in the way of Allah any alteration.*²

وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا

*And never will Allah give the disbelievers over the believers a way [to overcome them].*³

1 Sūrah al-Aḥzāb: 9.

2 Sūrah Fāṭir: 43.

3 Sūrah al- Nisā': 141.

كَمْ مِنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ

How many a small company has overcome a large company by permission of Allah.¹

وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ

And victory is not except from Allah, the Exalted in Might, the Wise -²

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ

And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy.³

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ

If you support Allah, He will support you and plant firmly your feet.⁴

So īmān is one of the factors that is used to evaluate and pass judgments on historical incidents.

It should be noted that the philosophers of old do not believe in such incidents which have, without a shadow of doubt, been authenticated. Some disregard it due to them rejecting the occurrence of *mu'jizah*⁵ and *karāmāt*⁶ whilst others find it difficult to comprehend or interpret. This is all due to them subscribing to the ideology that the intellect, with all its confinements and limitations, is and should be the quintessential element in judging the text of the Qur'an. They thus

1 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 249.

2 Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 126.

3 Sūrah al-Anfāl: 60.

4 Sūrah Muḥammad: 60.

5 Miracles performed by the Prophets عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ with the permission of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

6 Miracles performed by the pious servants of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, with His permission.

determine the meaning of the Qur'ān as their intellect deems fit.

The orientalists of late have embraced this ideology and have spread its purport far and wide; clashing with the creed that supports faith on the unseen. Many contemporary researchers have trodden the same path in the Muslim lands having adopted secularist ideologies during their stays in European lands. They do not consider Islam to have afforded humanity a complete way of life that extends to every facet of living, rather in their minds it merely represents one's heritage or personal worship. In fact, many of them have generated doubts and fabrications that have no authentic bases in Islamic history. This is all a result of wishing to regulate Islamic history in the confines of tangible, perhaps national, and/or other mediums.

C. Being aware of the status, situation and position of people, together with validating what has been said about them.

ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ says in this regard:

واحفظ لكل منزلته وأعطهم جميعا بقسطهم من الحق ، فإن المعرفة بالناس بها يصاب العدل

Identify the status of every person and afford every person their due of justice. Justice will come through being aware of the situations of people.¹

Ibn Taymiyyah has in the beginning of his famous *fatwā* (religious verdict) regarding the Tartars and killing, by his vast knowledge and deep understanding, laid down a profound principle for one intending to understand the law of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى in any case that one may be confronted with. He says:

أن الحكم على أي طائفة أو قوم يقوم على أصلين أحدهما : المعرفة بحالهم ، والثاني : معرفة حكم الله في أمثالهم ، وهذان الأصلان يقومان على الحكم المنافي للجهل ، إذ الكلام في الناس لا يجوز بغير علم وبصيرة

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 279.

Passing a judgment on any group or nation rests upon two principles. 1. Being aware of their condition. 2. Being aware of the law of Allah ﷻ regarding the likes of them. These two principles enact a law which counters ignorance as profiling people is not permissible without knowledge and insight.¹

Based on this, it is necessary to investigate what has been related with regards to the greats of the early Islamic years; the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. Studying their condition will make one aware of their perfect imān, honesty, internal piety, external good deeds, and sacrifice of both life and wealth in the path of the truth. All this only raises them to high stages which makes them all—those that played a part in the fitnah and those that did not—worthy of being followed and worthy of narrating from. There is no doubt that their narrations will be accepted and their actions weighed on the scale of piety and perfection. This will do away with any evil qualities attributed to them. This is over and above the judgment that Allah ﷻ has already passed regarding them; holding them pure and honorable. The explicit texts of the shar‘ah are replete and successive suggesting their purity and justice.

There remains no point of contention that the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ are leaders for every Muslim in matters of their faith. There is therefore, no chance for anyone to attempt to vilify their honour, pure beliefs, and untainted character. This does not mean that they never erred, as they were not infallible. Therefore, whatever occurred between them in political differences will be considered as *ijtihādī* (interpretive) differences which does not affect their noble status in any way. When codifying these issues in history, one should be extremely weary of holding them up in the light of disparagement.

Allah ﷻ has commanded the believers to look back at what they know of the faith of their brothers which would surely do away with any attempts at disparagement. This insightful principle should always be kept in the forefront

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, vol. 28 pg. 510.

and no attention should be paid to the talks of the predators and biased men who vilify and malign the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. Only good thoughts should be entertained regarding them. Moreover, any fabrications that are spread to malign them should be refuted thoroughly.

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says, admonishing the believers in taking part in rumours that the people of evil spread regarding their brothers:

لَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِنَفْسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا هَذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ

Why, when you heard it, did not the believing men and believing women think good of one another¹ and say, "This is an obvious falsehood"??²

وَلَوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ قُلْتُمْ مَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَتَكَلَّمَ بِهَذَا سُبْحَانَكَ هَذَا بُهْتَانٌ عَظِيمٌ

And why, when you heard it, did you not say, "It is not for us to speak of this. Exalted are You, [O Allah]; this is a great slander"??³

Both these verses outline an important principle:

الموهوم لا يدفع المعلوم و ان المجهول لا يعارض المحقق

Opinions do not render realities obsolete and fiction cannot oppose facts.⁴

1 Meaning their brothers. This is also explained in the ḥadīth of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

إن مثل المؤمنین فی توادهم و تراحمهم كمثل الجسد إذا اشتكى منه عضو تداعى له سائر الجسد بالسهر والحمى

The similitude of believers in regard to mutual love, and affection is that of one body; when any limb of it aches, the whole body aches, because of sleeplessness and fever. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 16 pg. 140.

2 Sūrah al-Nūr: 12

3 Sūrah al-Nūr: 16.

4 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sa'dī: *Al-Qawā'id al-Ḥisān li Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, pg. 195.

Based on this, it is imperative to refer to original authentic sources in order to know the true facts. Knowledge should not be attained from liars, evil men, and bigots. Their evil and desires will lead them to paint a picture that contradicts reality. Muslims have been commanded by the sharīh to investigate and verify what he hears. Ponder over the following verse of the Qur’ān and ḥadīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ
نُدْمِينَ

*O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful.*¹

Rasūlullāh ﷺ is reported to have said:

كفى بالمرء كذبا أن يحدث بكل ما سمع

It is sufficient for a man to be considered as a liar that he relates everything he hears.²

It is for these very reasons that the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah took a particular interest in profiling the capable narrators and mentors from the incapable. Some have developed chapters in their books based on this entitling it, ‘The chapter prohibiting weak narrations and exercising caution in learning them’.³ The profiling of men too, will be only sought from a reliable scholar who has insight on the conditions of the Muslims.

1 Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 6.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 1 pg. 72.

3 *Ibid*.

D. Knowing the boundaries of taking from the books of the prejudiced and those that ascribed to other sects.

Another pertinent principle is to know and consider the limitations when taking from authors who are prejudiced or subscribe to sects that are misguided and steeped in innovation due to their works being influenced by such.

The scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah have displayed a keen interest in classifying other sects and their statements so that one may come to realise their schools of thought, stances, and conditions. This is so that the Muslim can be sure of their state of affairs and not be fooled by them.

Taking this into consideration some scholars have authored books specific to this science with the likes of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī¹: *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Maltī²: *Al-Tanbīh wa-al-Radd ‘alā Ahl al-Ahwā’ wa-al-Bida’*, and Ibn Ḥazam: *Al-Faṣl fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā wa al-Niḥal*.

The individuals of the other sects have themselves made efforts to codify their school of thought, beliefs, chronicles, lives of their men and scholars, debates, and refutations to their opposition. Some of them have taken on writing history and have done so in line in line with their specific beliefs or political stance. They have thus sensationalised the flaws of their opposition whilst covering their own faults.

1 He is ‘Alī ibn Ismā‘īl ibn Ishāq, Abū al-Ḥasan. He was of the Mu‘tazilah sect initially. He left and opposed them widely. He then established the Ash‘arī school of thought which forms part of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah. See, *Al-İbānah ‘an Uṣūl al-Diyānah* and *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* both of which are authored by him. Also see *Tabyīn Kadhib al-Muftarī* of Ibn ‘Asākir. He passed away the year, 324 A.H./936 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A‘yān*; vol. 2 pg. 284; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 15 pg. 85; Ibn Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 187.

2 He is Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Maltī. He is from amongst the jurists of the Shafī‘ī madhab and was proficient in the field of Qirā‘ah. He passed away the year, 377 A.H./987 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shafī‘iyyah*, vol. 2 pg. 112; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Mir‘āt al-Zamān*, vol. 2 pg. 67; Ismā‘īl al-Baghdādī: *İdāḥ al-Maknūn*, vol. 1 pg. 328.

Owing to the above it is necessary for the historian to familiarize himself with their beliefs and orientations. This will enable him to handle the material and texts brought forth by them appropriately; keeping in mind their background, views, and stances whilst comparing it with other similar incidents mentioned by reliable historians and scholars. Drawing comparisons between the texts whilst keeping in mind the general orientation and character of Islamic society will give one a clear view of the presence of prejudice—or lack thereof—in a narrator or story teller. If the signs of prejudice become apparent by acts of vilifying or maligning reliable, worthy men, or by contradicting known aspects of the sharīah, or by contradicting the established traits, character, and norms of a society; his statements won't be heard and his narrations will not be given any attention. Disagreeing for the sake of disagreeing as well as prejudice blinds one from seeing the truth. The poet says:

ولكن عين السخط تبدي المساويا

وعين الرضا عن كل عيب كليلية

The pleased eye cannot see any faults;

Whilst the displeased eye sees nothing but faults

If the signs of prejudice are not apparent, even though he may be from the *Ahl al-Bida'* (innovators), and is known for his honesty, piety, taqwā, and reliability; his narrations will be accepted. Some of the great scholars of ḥadīth have reproduced narrations of those individuals of the *Ahl al-Bida'* who would not lie. Consider Imām al-Bukhārī reproducing in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from the narrator 'Imrān ibn Ḥaṭṭān al-Khārijī¹ who was one of the great proponents of the Khārijī sect. Yet he was famed

1 He is 'Imrān ibn Ḥaṭṭān ibn Ḍabyān al-Sadūsī al-Shaybānī, Abū Sammāk. He was of the Ṣufriyyah Khawārij and was considered to be their orator and poet. He rivalled the likes of Jarīr and Farazdaq in poetry. He is the one who has said:

ولا نرى لدعاة الحق أعوانا

حتى متى لا نرى عدلا نعيش به

Until we do not see just men to live by;

And we do not see helpers to the callers to truth.

continued

for his piety, taqwā, and honesty. A researcher would, at times, find amongst the narrations of Ahl al-Bida', such narrations that is a proof against them and proves their own illegitimacy.

E. Knowing the boundaries of taking from the book of the Non-Muslims.

Since Islamic history has sharī principles and guidelines, it is necessary for the Muslim historian to abide by these and base his research within the range of such. It is therefore imperative to be careful when taking from the books of non-Muslims. This is especially true since the secularists have been key proponents of unfettered freedom—in the east and the west—which they run with in outlining Islamic history. They apply their own—home grown—notions in expounding upon the history of Islam.

Together with this, they uphold a secularist methodology that is in stark contrast to an Islamic methodology. The result of which is polar perceptions and fundamentals. Methodology forms part of perception and results of studies are based on perceptions. All the above has decidedly affected their judgments and studies which contradict Islamic injunctions and the actualities of an Islamic society. The impressions that the books of non-Muslims deal with in addressing Islamic history—especially the early years—should be studied with painstaking attention and apprehension. This is due to their lack of honesty when addressing

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He was a narrator of ḥadīth and had met a number of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم whom he narrated from. The scholars of ḥadīth narrated from him due his honesty. He passed away the year, 84 A.H./703 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Mubarrad: *Al-Kāmil fi al-Lughah wa al-Adab*, vol. 2 pg. 121; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pgs. 335-336.

For further reading on narrating from the Ahl al-Bida' see, Ibn Kathīr: *Al-Ba'ith al-Ḥathīth*, pgs. 99-100; Al-Suyūṭī: *Tadrīb al-Rāwī*, vol. 1 pgs. 324-325; and Dr Fārūq Ḥamādah: *Manhaj al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, pg. 294. Narrating from all the Ahl al-Bida' is not accepted. The narrations of the Khawārij were accepted due to their honesty and total aversion to lies whilst the Shī'ah on the other hand were famed for lying, as lying forms the corner stone to their beliefs. Abū Dāwūd says, "There are no narrations more truthful amongst the innovators than that of the Khawārij." *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pg. 236.

issues pertaining to Islam, its system, and its men. In the light of such, it will not be permissible for a Muslim to narrate or take from them. This becomes even more clear when we consider that the conditions of delving into these issues is having faith in Allah ﷻ, His Messenger ﷺ, the Last Day, and weighing all actions and speech by the scale of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Furthermore, non-Muslims do not subscribe to any belief that would limit them from heaping lies upon the material of the Muslims. Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّمَا يَقْتَرِي الكَذِبَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الكٰذِبُونَ

*They only invent falsehood who do not believe in the verses of Allah, and it is those who are the liars.*¹

Similarly, their prejudice against the Muslims is not limited by anything either. Allah ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوْمِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَتَانُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ آلَا تَعْدِلُوا ۗ
اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

*O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do.*²

Consequently, they have no of limits in their society and environment—and man is a product of his environment—due to the tide of materialism, power, and luxuries that they continue to drown in.

1 Sūrah al-Naḥl: 105.

2 Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 8.

This in turn has led to exploitation and the planting of seeds of hatred in people; a recipe for never ending conflict. Since they have adopted their morals as the yardstick in deciding the morality of other societies, they have made blunders of epic proportions; skewing the history of entire societies.

To conclude consider the following: The Muslim scholars have not favoured the implementation of injunctions based upon the narrations of weak, albeit pious Muslims, then how would it be possible for Muslims to take from disbelievers who are far from reliable and who harbour ill towards the faith!

وَإِنْ كَانَ مَكْرُهُمْ لِتَزُولَ مِنْهُ الْجِبَالُ

Even if their plan had been [sufficient] to do away with the mountains.¹

F. Exploring the use of Islamic terminologies

The ideological warfare of the west against the Muslims has been peppered by introducing and spreading terminologies that are foreign to Islamic society and history, which has caught on in various genres of literature. This use of such shows the obliviousness of contemporary researchers in comprehending the slippery slope they have embarked on. These new-age technical terms bring along with them a specific western ideology. They bear the impressions and insinuations of societies and historical climates—where they originate from—that is impossible to disassociate from.

An example of these terms would be, ‘Democracy’, ‘Socialism’, ‘Aristocracy’, ‘Dictatorship’, ‘Theocracy’, ‘Imperialism’, ‘Right-wing’, ‘Left-wing’ etc...

It should be noted that many Arab researchers have used these terms in their historical literature. For example, they utilize the term ‘democracy’, in lieu of ‘shūra’ in an Islamic society or as a word to broadly outline its purport. Some

1 Sūrah Ibrāhīm: 46.

intellectuals of the Islamic world in the 1950s were, perhaps, unaware that terminologies cannot be disassociated from the environment society it emanates from. They, in an effort to reconcile between western and Islamic ideologies, began using these terms to describe many functions of an Islamic society without taking note of the glaring differences and stigmas that present itself when applying it to a different era and a different society.

Democracy, for example, is a system of government by the public upon the public. This means that the public are the source of legislation and governance. This system further rests on the separation of religion from state. Based on the above, in the democratic system, humans are taken to be the policymakers of liberty. Individual liberty, as well as freedom of belief, opinion, and ownership.

On the other hand, the shūra system in an Islamic state relies on the directives of the Qur'ān and Sunnah which are the sources of legislation and governance. It also entitles the ummah to appoint a governor by way of authorities in Islamic law with whom the governor would consult in important matters. They would monitor the dealings of people and to what extent its conformity is to carrying out the injunctions of Allah ﷻ, as there is no separation of religion from state in Islam. Dominion belongs solely to Allah ﷻ and sovereignty to the shar'ah. Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ

The decision is only for Allah.¹

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed - then it is those who are the defiantly disbelievers.²

1 Sūrah Yūsuf: 40.

2 Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 44.

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ
وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

But no, by your Lord, they will not [truly] believe until they make you, [O Muḥammad], judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in [full, willing] submission.¹

Islam is a complete way of life that addresses the political, social, and economic challenges faced by humanity. It ought to be understood, that Islam does not celebrate complete freedom and liberty as is the undertaking of the democratic system. Islam celebrates freedom as long as it does not result in harm to oneself or others.

Islam does not force anyone to accept the faith, though it does not allow a Muslim to change his or her faith. Anyone leaving the fold of Islam will consequently deal with the laws that apply to a renegade.

Islam does not advocate total freedom of individual ownership as is in vogue in the west. It would thus not be permissible to come into ownership of anything through impermissible means, such as through interest, monopoly, deceptive schemes, depreciating the value of goods and so on.

Islam does not accept personal liberty and freedom as outlined by democracy either. It would not be permissible for women to walk in the streets baring all, nor to be in seclusion with strange men; protecting the family model and the integrity of society.

Hence, as one may well understand unrestricted democracy clearly contradicts Islam. How did it then prove conceivable to some researchers to enforce this term upon Islamic history and say that the khilāfah in the era of the Righty Guided Khulafā' was a model of democracy?

1 Sūrah al-Nisā: 65.

The Muslims have followed the west in all things. Even in the terminologies that are linked to geographical boundaries and historical periods which have no connection to their reality or history. In the context of geographical representation, they say 'Middle East', 'Far East' and 'Near East', in relation to their location in Europe, as they consider themselves the centre of the world.

Similar is the issue of historical periods. Terms such as 'Ancient Times', 'Middle Ages', and 'Modern Times', are based on the historical vicissitudes of Europe which would imply particular ideas and characteristics that occupied these eras centred around ideological and social nuances and developments as lived by Europe; whereas Islamic history remained unaffected by these vicissitudes and developments. Muslim lands were determined by a single sequence of ideas, systems, and principles that remained unaffected by the change of time, empires, and kings. A history of one ummah, a history of principles established and unchanged.

Dr Akram Dīyā al-'Umrī states on dealing with terminologies:

إن استعمال المصطلحات الشرعية ضروري عند كتابة التاريخ الإسلامي من خلال التصور الإسلامي النابع من القرآن الكريم والسنة المطهرة، لأن هذه المصطلحات ذات دلالة واضحة ومحددة ولأنها معايير شرعية لها قيمتها في وزن الأشخاص والأحداث. والقرآن الكريم قسم الناس إلى (المؤمن) و(الكافر) و(المنافق) والصفات الثلاث محددة ثابتة ودقيقة لا تقبل التلاعب فيها. فما ينبغي أن نحيد عن هذا التقسيم إلى مصطلحات نبتت في أوساط غير إسلامية كوصف الإنسان بأنه (يميني) أو (يساري) أو غير ذلك من النعوت غير الشرعية التي ليست محددة بصورة دقيقة ثابتة، وكذلك فإن الحكم على الأعمال والمنجزات الحضارية ينبغي أن تستخدم فيه المصطلحات الشرعية وهي (الخير) و(الشر) و(الحق) و(الباطل) و(العدل) و(الظلم) كما حددها الشرع ولا تستخدم معايير الفكر الغربي (كالتقدمية والرجعية). لقد انجز بعض الكتاب المسلمين إلى استخدام مصطلحات وألفاظ ليست في القاموس الإسلامي، وفي ذلك يكمن خطر الذوبان في الفكر الجاهلي والضياع وسط مصطلحاته الكثيرة التي تفقدنا ذاتيتنا المستقلة

Utilizing Islamic terminologies is crucial when writing Islamic history from an Islamic perspective, emanating from the Noble Qur'an and Sunnah. This is because these terminologies relay clear and precise connotations whilst defining the standards of the sharī'ah in evaluating people and incidents.

The Noble Qur'ān has divided people into three; 'Believers', 'Disbelievers', and 'Hypocrites'. All three of these terms are precise, specific, and fixed that do not accept tampering. It is thus not appropriate for us to depart from this division and adopt terminologies that were introduced amongst non-Muslim quarters to describe people with terms such as, 'Right-wing', 'Left-wing', or any other term which is not precise, specific, nor fixed by the sharī'ah. Similarly, passing judgments upon actions and civilizational accomplishments should be done using sharī terms such as, '*al-Khayr*', '*al-Sharr*', '*al-Ḥaqq*', '*al-Bāṭil*', '*al-'Adl*', and '*al-Zulm*' as defined by the sharī'ah. Terms such as 'Progressive' and 'Regressive' that are an extension of western ideologies should not be used.

Some Muslim authors have opted to use terminologies and words that aren't found in the *Islamic dictionary*. In this lies a danger of assimilating ignorant ideologies and a loss amongst many self-sufficient terminologies.¹

1 Dr Akram Ḍiyā al-'Umrī: *Al-Mujtama' al-Mudanī fi 'ahd al-Nubuwwah*, pg. 23

Section Three: The Fiqh of the History of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ¹

I. Methodology of inferring from the history of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ

The Muslim ummah is an ummah of jihād and an ummah of da‘wah. These are its two focal points. If one of these two are left out, the value of the ummah will decrease accordingly. The exceptionality and honour that the ummah thrives on is dependant wholly fulfilling its principle responsibilities; fighting in the path of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and inviting towards His injunctions and sharī‘ah.

Since the first generation of the ummah fulfilled this responsibility to its fullest extent they became worthy of being the most honoured and the best. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ

*You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind.*²

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

خير الناس قرني

The best people are those of my era.³

They became role models and exemplary guides for those to come after them.

It is therefore compulsory upon every generation of Muslims that lived in the eras after them to recognise their true status as pious, pure, and honest souls. Hearts will thus be assured of the goodness they had carried and conveyed to

1 For further reading see, Muḥammad Rāshid Khalīl: *Manhaj Khāṣ li Dirāsah Tārīkh al-Ṣaḥābah* رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ wa *Tafsīrīhī*.

2 Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān: 110.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: vol. 4. pg. 189.

humanity. This must be done showing total disregard to those who attempt at creating barriers between the early and later generations of the ummah by skewing the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and casting doubts onto the faith by vilifying and defaming those who conveyed it.

Highlighting the history of the first generation of the ummah, the pious predecessors, is vital whilst focusing particularly on their efforts in taking upon themselves the responsibility of calling towards Allah ﷻ and fighting in His path. Similarly, recognising their eminence and rank whilst making others aware of their stances and actions will result in a special bond being created between them, us, and more importantly our youth. The youth will then want to follow in their footsteps, take pride in them, and be honoured by having a connection to them. This will result in a link between the ummah of the present and the ummah of the past. A long standing ummah with a radiant past of jihād, da'wah, spreading knowledge, and holding firm onto the values of justice in guiding people to the ultimate success of this world and the next.

It is further of key importance to remind the Muslims of the correct and true methodology that should be followed when discussing the fiqh of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم as opposed to becoming absorbed in the endless debates of common-law and arguing in establishing and negating with innovators and their like.

Laying down the true and correct methodology was the brain child of the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah who founded jurisprudic positions based on the Qur'ān and Sunnah, an avenue to develop all the legal injunctions of the sharī'ah.

The history of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and passing judgments upon it thus became the work of the muḥaddithīn and Muslim historians. It became necessary to evaluate all accounts found in the books of history by Muslim researchers and historians according to this methodology and by its conditions. This rings especially true in the current climate wherein its importance has been disregarded by many Muslims, ignorant of this methodology, which leads to doubts in evaluation and confusion in perception. These factors then result in accepting as true the lies

and fabrications attributed to the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ with a greater evil of falling in line with its proponents. As a consequence of this, a Muslim, unknowingly, falls into sin or goes on to oppose a divine ordinance of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

Question:

What is meant by ‘The methodology of the history of the Fiqh of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ’?

Answer:

Those sharī regulations and laws by which one is able to appropriately deal with the history of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. This ‘fiqh’ comprises of a range of sharī laws that are sourced from principle sources of legislation; The Qur’ān, Sunnah, and ijma’.

To infer from these laws or from this fiqh, the jurists and scholars of ḥadīth pondered over the Book of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and the Sunnah, finding therein many explicit texts that hold no ambiguity and give a single meaning. They adopted those as is. Together with these, additional texts of the sharīah were used to derive other laws from.

Amongst the laws inferred was:

- » The ‘*adālah* (reliability and integrity) of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ,
- » Their rights upon the Muslims, and
- » The law of those who vilify them.

All the above was considered to be amongst the principle beliefs of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah with no exception.

II. The status of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and their integrity

The explicit and successive texts of the sharī'ah illustrate the compulsion of loving, honouring, and venerating the Companions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. It further depicts the compulsion of adhering to their consensus, holding firm to their statements, and the impermissibility of vilifying them. All this is due to the honour afforded to them by Allah سُبحانه وتعالى in the form of companionship to His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, their fighting alongside him, persevering in the face of harm metered out to them by the polytheists, migrating from their homeland, leaving behind their wealth, giving preference over their children, and always placing the love of Allah سُبحانه وتعالى and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ above all else. By the virtue of this they became worthy of praise and their mistakes disregarded. Allah سُبحانه وتعالى declared, by way of revelation, His pleasure and promise of paradise for them. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ gave them the glad tidings of it and called towards honouring and venerating them. He proclaimed their status as overseers to the ummah and guiding stars for its people.

Hereunder are some of the texts that illustrate their purity and that they are the best nation produced as example for mankind. Allah سُبحانه وتعالى says:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah.¹

Allah سُبحانه وتعالى recounts them as being resilient in considering, protecting, and acting upon the requisites of the truth. They are therefore, an embodiment of integrity who shall be witnesses upon the actions of people. A witness can only be one who has the quality of integrity. Allah سُبحانه وتعالى says:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۗ

1 Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 110.

And thus we have made you a just community that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger will be a witness over you.¹

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى promised them great rewards and a beautiful end. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ لَا يَسْتَوِي مَنكُم مَّنْ أَنْفَقَ مِن قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَتْلٍ ۗ أُولَئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِن بَعْدِ وَقَتْلُوا ۗ وَكَلَّا وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

And why do you not spend in the cause of Allah while to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth? Not equal among you are those who spent before the conquest [of Makkah] and fought [and those who did so after it]. Those are greater in degree than they who spent afterwards and fought. But to all Allah has promised the best [reward]. And Allah, with what you do, is Acquainted.²

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُم مِّنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا ۗ وَهُمْ فِي مَا اشْتَهَتْ أَنفُسُهُمْ خَالِدُونَ

Indeed, those for whom the best [reward] has preceded from Us - they are from it far removed. They will not hear its sound, while they are, in that which their souls desire, abiding eternally.³

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى praises them thus:

وَالسُّبْقُونَ الْأَوْلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَّضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۗ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

And the first forerunners [in the faith] among the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār and those who followed them with good conduct - Allah is pleased with them and they

1 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 143.

2 Sūrah al-Ḥadīd: 10.

3 Sūrah al-Ambiyā: 101-102.

are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment.¹

Rasūlullāh ﷺ too, advised the ummah regarding his Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and displayed their status and honour.

Imām Aḥmad narrates in his *Musnad* from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ gave a sermon at Jābiyah² and said:

قام فينا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بمثل مقامي فيكم ، فقال : استوصوا بأصحابي خيرا ، ثم الذين يلونهم ، ثم الذين يلونهم

Rasūlullāh ﷺ stood before us as I stand before you today and said, “I implore you to be good to my Companions, then to those after them, then to those after them.”³

‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said:

خير الناس قرني ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم ثم إن بعدكم قوم يشهدون ولا يستشهدون ، ويخونون ولا يؤتمنون ، وينذرون ولا يوفون ، ويظهر فيهم السمن

The best of people are those of my era, then those who follow them, then those who will come after them. Then, they will be followed by those who will testify but will not be called upon to testify; they will betray the trust, and will not be trusted. They will make vows but will not fulfil them, and obesity will prevail among them.⁴

1 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 100.

2 A town in Syria. See. Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 2 pg. 91.

3 *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (Tartīb al-Sā‘ātī)* vol. 22 pg. 168; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Ḥadīth: 2166; *Mustadrak al-Ḥākim*, vol. 1 pg. 114. He has authenticated it and Al-Dhahabī has concurred. Al-Albānī has authenticated it in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, Ḥadīth: 1758.

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 189.

Abū Mūsa al-Ash‘arī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

النجوم أمانة للسماء فإذا ذهبت النجوم أتى السماء ما توعد و أنا أمانة لأصحابي فإذا ذهبت أتى أصحابي ما يوعدون و أصحابي أمانة لأمتي فإذا ذهب أصحابي أتى أمتي ما يوعدون

The stars are protection for the sky. When the stars go away, what the sky was promised will approach. I am a protection for my Companions. When I leave, what my Companions were promised will come. And My Companions are a protection for my Ummah. When my Companions leave, what my Ummah was promised will come.¹

Jābir ibn ‘Abd Allāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا says, Abū Sa‘īd Khudrī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrated to us that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

يأتي على الناس زمان يغزو فئام من الناس فيقال لهم فيكم من رأى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم فيقولون نعم فيفتح لهم ثم يغزو فئام من الناس فيقال لهم فيكم من رأى من صحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم فيقولون نعم فيفتح لهم ثم يغزو فئام من الناس فيقال لهم هل فيكم من رأى من صحب من صحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم فيقولون نعم فيفتح لهم

A time will come when a huge army will wage war.

They will be asked, “Is anyone who saw Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ among you?”

They will reply in the affirmative, and they will be victorious.

Then a huge army will wage war.

They will be asked, “Is anyone who saw someone who accompanied Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ among you?”

They will reply in the affirmative. And they will be victorious.

Thereafter a huge army will wage war.

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 16 pg. 82.

They will be asked, “Is anyone who saw someone who accompanied someone who accompanied Rasūlullāh ﷺ?”

They will reply in the affirmative. And they will be victorious.¹

In *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* the following narration is recorded:

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said:

ما من أحد من أصحابي يموت بأرض؛ إلا بعث قائدا ونورا لهم يوم القيامة

There is no one among my Companions who dies in a land except that he shall be resurrected as a guide and light for them (people of that land) on the Day of Resurrection.²

With regards to the impermissibility of vilifying the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, Rasūlullāh ﷺ has said:

لا تسبوا أصحابي، لا تسبوا أصحابي، فالذي نفسي بيده لو أن أحدكم أنفق مثل أحد ذهباً ما أدرك مَدْ أحدهم ولا نصيفه

Do not revile my Companions for if one of you gave in charity the amount of gold equivalent to Uḥud, it would not amount to as much as the *mudd*³ of one of them, or half of it.⁴

From these narrations it can be understood that Allah ﷻ has declared the ‘*ādālah* (integrity) of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ by Himself and on the tongue of His Messenger ﷺ. No one else is capable of having any other opinion on the issue. Every narrator and every witness will be investigated and evaluated, besides the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. The Ahl al-Sunnah are unanimous on this.

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 188; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 16 pg. 83.

2 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 5 pg. 375.

3 A unit of measurement equivalent to approximately 750 ml.

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 195; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 16 pg. 92.

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī says:

عدالة الصحابة ثابتة معلومة بتعديل الله لهم، وإخباره عن طهارتهم واختياره لهم في نص القرآن

The 'adālah of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم is known by the Allah سبحانه وتعالى proclaiming it and by Him giving news of their purity and selection in the texts of the Qur'ān.¹

He then declares consensus on this saying:

وهذا مذهب كافة العلماء ومن يعتد بقوله من الفقهاء

This is the view of all the scholars and those jurists whose statements hold weight.²

Ibn Ṣalāh says:

إن الأمة مجمعة علي تعديل جميع الصحابة ومن لايس الفتن منهم فكذاك ؛ بإجماع العلماء الذين يعتد بهم في الإجماع ، إحسانا للظن بهم، ونظرا إلى ما تمهد لهم من المآثر ، وكأن الله سبحانه وتعالى أتاح الإجماع على ذلك لكونهم نقلة الشريعة

The ummah are unanimous upon the 'adālah of all the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم including those who were involved in the Fitan. This view is unanimously agreed upon by the scholars who are worth of note. This view is based upon thinking good of them and taking into consideration their services to the cause. It is as though Allah سبحانه وتعالى created consensus upon this due to them being conveyers of the sharī'ah.³

Ibn Ḥajar says:

1 Al-Khaṭīb: *Al-Kifāyah fī 'ilm al-Riwāyah*, pg. 93.

2 Ibid, pg. 96.

3 Ibn Ṣalāh: *Ma'rīfah 'Ulūm al-Ḥadīth*, pg. 428.

اتفق أهل السنة على أن الجميع – أي الصحابة – عدول ، ولم يخالف في ذلك إلا شذوذ من المبتدعة

The Ahl al-Sunnah are unanimous that all—the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم—are reliable.

The only disagreement comes from obscure innovators.¹

Question: What is the meaning of ‘adālah when declaring the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم as such?

Answer: Being free from dishonesty and never lying in narrating ḥadīth. Never committing mistakes or sins is not meant by ‘adālah here as that is solely for the infallible.

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, in His infinite knowledge, knew that his vicegerents on the earth would be these individuals who were not infallible. They would sin and commit interpretive mistakes just as the fallible do. It is for this reason that their interpretive differences would, at times, lead them to conflict; upon which they would be rewarded. Unfortunately, those that are ignorant of the laws of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى in interpretive differences by authorities in Islamic law continue to vilify and defame them. Not understanding that good actions and seeking forgiveness effaces bad has lead them to attach sin to the name of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, without mentioning their good or their seeking of forgiveness.

Just as Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, in His infinite knowledge, knew that some of those who harbour hatred for Islam such as the extreme Rawāfiḍ and the Sabaiyyah will portray acceptance of the faith in order to cause disruption in it. They, together with the innovators such as the Khawārij and Mu‘tazilah amongst others will exploit the ignorant and attack the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم based on their interpretive differences. Some of them will then interpolate what has been narrated from them and go to the extent of fabricating lies against them.

Just as Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, in His infinite knowledge, knew that the goal of some of these would be to invalidate His vicegerents who carried the responsibility of conveying the Qur’ān and the Sunnah in order to incite doubts regarding His

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 1 pg. 9.

Book and the Sunnah of His Messenger; both principle regulators of His faith and sharī'ah. Abū Zur'ah, the teacher of Imām Muslim says:

إذا رايت الرجل ينتقص احدا من اصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فاعلم انه زنديق وذلك ان الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم حق والقرآن الكريم حق وما جاء به حق وانما ادى الينا ذلك كله الصحابة وهؤلاء يريدون ان يجرحوا شهودنا ليبطلوا الكتاب والسنة والجرح بهم اولى وهم زنادقة

If you see any person criticizing any of the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ then know full well that he is a heretic. This is because Rasūlullāh ﷺ is true, and the Qur'ān is true, and all that he brought was true. The Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ conveyed this Qur'ān to us and the Sunnah. They intend to criticize our witnesses only so that they falsify the Qur'ān and Sunnah. It is more fitting to criticize them (i.e. those who criticize the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, and they are heretics.¹

Due to all of the above, Allah سبحانه وتعالى left the task of proclaiming their 'adālah to Him and His Messenger ﷺ. The tongues of the opposition would thus be rendered speechless and the schemes of the conspirators would turn back onto them. He closed off every path that could have led to defaming their status and their vicegerency till the Day of Qiyāmah.

Al-Khaṭīb says:

على أنه لو لم يرد من الله - عز وجل - ورسوله فيهم شيء مما ذكرناه لأوجبت الحال التي كانوا عليها من الهجرة والنجد والتمسك بالأموال وقتل الآباء والأولاد، والمناصحة في الدين وقوة الإيمان واليقين القطع على عدالتهم والاعتقاد لنزاهتهم، وأنهم أفضل من جميع المعدلين والمزكين الذين يحيثون بعدهم أبد الأبدين

Even if, for arguments sake, none of the above was mentioned; Allah سبحانه وتعالى and His Messenger ﷺ proclaiming their 'adālah, their condition would compel us to attest to the same. Their hijrah, jihād, expanding their lives and wealth, killing their own kith and kin, seeking goodness for the faith, strength of faith, and conviction would automatically raise them to the

1 Al-Khaṭīb: *Al-Kifāyah fī 'ilm al-Riwāyah*, pg. 97; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 1 pg. 10.

highest stages of ‘adālah and purity. There would be no doubt that would surpass all those that evaluate the ‘adālah of others forever and ever.¹

It is therefore imperative for Muslims to dispel every statement that attempts to challenge their ‘adālah. They ought to affirm the purity of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ from greed, deceit, obliviousness, blame, shamelessness, oppression, injustice, misappropriation of funds, and every such evil quality that seeks to challenge their ‘adālah or defame their character. Muslims ought to attest to the fact that even though they weren’t infallible, their ‘adālah is unquestionable. Furthermore, they are rewarded in their interpretive differences even if it led to conflict. If they had perchance committed a sin, they sought forgiveness from Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى; the Oft Forgiving. And lastly, that they have attained the status of companionship with Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, a rank unattainable by anyone after them.

III. The stance of a Muslim regarding narrations that defame some of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ.

The stance of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah regarding the Companions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is between the two extremes of fanaticism and unappreciation. It is between those who raise the status of the Ṣaḥābah they revere above the Prophets, or more, and between those who vilify them, not understanding their status and rank. The Ahl al-Sunnah thus love the all Companions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and justly recognize the status they are worthy of. They do not raise them above the rank they are worthy of, nor do they relegate them below their appropriate status. The stance regarding their conflicts is that they had interpretive differences; one group correct, the other mistaken. The former receiving two rewards; for ijtihād and for coming to the correct conclusion. The latter receiving the reward of ijtihād with their mistake forgiven as it was done with pure intentions. They are not infallible, they were humans who would be correct at times and err at others. However, their correct conclusions were far greater compared to others and their mistakes were far less compared to others. Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى had promised them His forgiveness and pleasure.

1 Al-Khaṭīb: *Al-Kifāyah fī ‘ilm al-Riwāyah*, pg. 96.

Imām Aḥmad says:

ومن الحجة الواضحة الثابتة البينة المعروفة : ذكر محاسن أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كلهم أجمعين ، والكف عن ذكر مساويهم ، والخلاف الذي شجر بينهم ، فمن سب أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أو أحدا منهم ، أو تنقصه أو طعن عليهم أو عرض بعيبيهم ، أو عاب أحدا منهم ، فهو مبتدع رافضي خبيث مخالف ، لا يقبل الله منه صرفا ولا عدلا ، بل حبيهم سنة ، والدعاء لهم قربة ، والافتداء بهم وسيلة ، والأخذ بآثارهم فضيلة واصحاب رسول الله هم خير الناس لا يجوز لأحد أن يذكر شيئا من مساويهم ، ولا يطعن على احد منهم بعيب ولا نقص

From amongst the clear, established, and known proofs is mentioning the good of all the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ together with refraining from mentioning their errors and internal conflict. Whoever curses the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, or any one of them, defames them, or latches onto their mistakes is a Rāfiḍī accursed innovator. Allah ﷻ will not accept his compulsory nor voluntary actions. Loving the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ is sunnah, praying for them rewarding, following them a path to salvation, and holding firmly to their traditions an honor. The Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ are the best of people. It is not permissible to mention any of their faults nor defame or vilify any one of them.¹

Imām al-Ṭaḥāwī² writes in ‘*Aqīdah ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah*’:

ونحب أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ولا نفرط في حب أحد منهم ولا نتبرأ من أحد منهم ونبغض من يبغضهم وبغير الخير يذكرهم ولا نذكرهم إلا بخير وحبهم دين وإيمان وإحسان وبغضهم كفر ونفاق وطغيان

And we love the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ without discrimination or prejudice against any one of them. We hate whoever hates them and slanders them. We only say good things about them.

1 Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal: *Al-Sunnah*, pg. 78.

2 He is Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Salāmah al-Azdī al-Ṭaḥāwī, Abū Ja‘far ibn Abī al-‘Iz al-Ḥanafī. From amongst the Ḥanafī jurists. He has written many books. Of them is his book on the Islamic creed which has received much praise from the scholars. He has also written, *Aḥkām al-Qur‘ān*, *Bayān al-Sunnah*, *Mushkil al-Āthār*, *Al-Ikhtilāf Bayn al-Fuqahā’*, and *Sharḥ Ma‘ānī al-Āthār*. He passed away the year 321 A.H./933 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, vol. 1 pg. 71 and *Al-Qurashī: Al-Jawāhir al-Muḍīyyah*, vol. 1 pg. 102.

Loving them is an act of faith, belief and kindness, whereas hating them is heresy, hypocrisy and transgression.¹

Ibn Abī al-Qayrawanī² writes in the introduction to his famous work:

وأن خير القرون الذين رأوا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأفضل الصحابة الخلفاء الراشدون المهديون أبو بكر ثم عمر ثم عثمان ثم علي رضي الله عنهم أجمعين وأن لا يذكر أحد من صحابة الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم إلا بأحسن ذكر والإمساك عما شجر بينهم وأنهم أحق الناس أن يلتبس لهم أحسن المخارج ويظن بهم أحسن المذاهب

The best of generations are those who saw Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The best of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ are the Rightly Guided Khulafā'. Firstly, Abū Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān, then 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. None of the Companions of the Rasūlullāh ﷺ should be mentioned except in the best way and silence should be maintained concerning any disagreements that broke out between them. They are the people who are worthiest of being considered in the best light possible and the people whose opinions should be most respected.³

Imām 'Ubayd Allāh Muhammad ibn Baṭṭah⁴ says:

1 Ibn Abī al-'Iz: *Sharḥ al-'Aqīdah al-Ṭahāwī*, pg. 464.

2 He is 'Abd Allāh ibn Abī Zayd 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qayrawanī al-Mālikī, jurist and commentator of the Qur'ān. The Imām of the Mālikiyyah in his era and the commentator on the statements of Imām Mālik. He was called Mālik al-Ṣaghīr. Abū 'Abd Allāh says regarding him, "He possessed knowledge, piety, honour, and intelligence." He has written, *Uṣūl al-Tawḥīd*, *Al-Nawādir wa al-Ziyādāt 'Alā al-Mudawwanah*, *Mukhtaṣar al-Mudawwanah*, and *Matn al-Risālah* amongst other books. He passed away the year 386 A.H./996 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 283; Al-Shīrāzī: *Ṣifāt al-Fuqahā*, pg. 160; Qāḍī 'Iyād: *Tartīb al-Madārik*, vol. 6 pg. 217.

3 Ibn Abī Zayd Qayrawanī: *Matn al-Risālah*, pg. 11.

4 He is 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Muḥammad Abū 'Abd Allāh al-'Ukbarī al-Ḥanbalī, famously known as Ibn Baṭṭah, jurist and muḥaddith. He travelled to Makkah and Basra in search of ḥadīth. He then kept to his home for forty years writing books. He has written *Al-Inābah*, *Al-Sunan*, *Al-inkār 'Alā man Qaḍā bi Kutub al-Ṣuḥf al-Ūlā*. He passed away the year 387 A.H./997 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ya'lā: *Ṣifāt al-Ḥanābilah*, vol. 2 pg. 144; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 10 pg. 371; Al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā*, pg. 173; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 16 pg. 529.

ومن بعد ذلك نكف عما شجر بين أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ؛ فقد شهدوا المشاهد معه وسبقوا الناس بالفضل ، فقد غفر الله لهم وأمرك بالاستغفار لهم والتقرب إليه بمحبتهم ، وفرض ذلك على لسان نبيه وهو يعلم ما سيكون منهم وأنهم سيقتلون ، وإنما فضلوا على سائر الخلق لأن الخطأ والعمد قد وضع عنهم ، وكل ما شجر بينهم مغفور لهم

After that we should refrain from discussing the disputes that arose among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, for they witnessed great events with him and were the first people to attain virtue; Allah has forgiven them and has instructed us to pray for forgiveness for them and to draw close to Him by means of loving them, as He has enjoined on the tongue of His Prophet. He knew what would happen among them and that they would fight; however, they were given precedence over the rest of mankind because mistakes, whether deliberate or otherwise, were already forgiven for them, and they have been forgiven for all disputes that arose among them.¹

Imām Abū ‘Uthmān al-Ṣābūnī² says:

ويرون الكف عما شجر بين أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وتطهير الألسنة عن ذكر ما يتضمن عيباً ونقصاً فيهم ، ويرون الترحم على جميعهم والموالة لكافتهم

1 Ibn Baṭṭāh: *Al-Inābah*, pg. 260.

2 He is Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ismā‘īl, Abū ‘Uthmān al-Ṣābūnī. He is known as Shaykh al-Islam. He was amongst the early scholars of ḥadīth of Khurāsān. He was eloquent, vastly knowledgeable, and was fully aware of the sciences of ḥadīth and tafsīr. ‘Abd al-Ghāfir writes in, *Al-Siyāq*, “The teacher, Abū ‘Uthmān Ismā‘īl al-Ṣābūnī. Shaykh al-Islam, mufassir, muḥaddith, and orator. He delivered sermons to the Muslims for seventy years. He led the prayers in al-Jāmi‘ for around twenty years. He would narrate many ḥadīth and was a prolific author. He travelled to Nīsābpūr, Hurāt, Sarakhs, Ḥijāz, and Sham to gather ḥadīth. He lectured on ḥadīth in Khurāsān, Hind, Jurjān, Sham, Thughūr, Ḥijāz, and Quds. He was blessed with worldly and religious honour. He was accepted by one and all. He uprooted innovations in his time. He has written, *‘Aqīdah al-Salaf* and *Al-Fuṣūl fi al-Uṣūl*. He passed away the year 446 A.H./1057 A.D. His life has been recorded by Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā*, vol. 7 pg. 16; Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Lubāb fi tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 2 pg. 228; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā*, vol. 18 pg. 40; Ibn Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah*, vol. 12 pg. 76; Al-Suyūṭī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, pg. 7.

They believed that we should refrain from discussing the disputes that arose among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and that we should avoid saying anything that may be construed as criticism of them; we should pray for mercy for all of them and love all of them.¹

Ibn Taymiyyah says:

ومن أصول أهل السنة والجماعة: سلامة قلوبهم وألسنتهم لأصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ... ويتبرؤون من طريقة الروافض، الذين يبغضون الصحابة ويسبونهم، ومن طريقة النواصب، الذين يؤذون أهل البيت بقول أو عمل، ويمسكون عما شجر بين الصحابة. ويقولون: إن هذه الآثار المروية في مساويهم منها ما هو كذب، ومنها ما قد زيد فيه ونقص وغير عن وجهه والصحيح منه هم فيه معذورون، إما مجتهدون مصيبون، وإما مجتهدون مخطئون. وهم مع ذلك لا يعتقدون أن كل واحد من الصحابة معصوم عن كبائر الإثم وصغائره، بل تجوز عليهم الذنوب في الجملة، ولهم من السوابق والفضائل ما يوجب مغفرة ما يصدر منهم إن صدر، حتى إنه يغفر لهم من السيئات ما لا يغفر لمن بعدهم؛ لأن لهم من الحسنات التي تمحو السيئات ما ليس لمن بعدهم ... ومن نظر في سيرة القوم بعلم وبصيرة، وما من الله به عليهم من الفضائل، علم يقيناً أنهم خير الخلق بعد الأنبياء، لا كان ولا يكون مثلهم، وأنهم هم الصفوة من قرون هذه الأمة، التي هي خير الأمم وأكرمها على الله تعالى.

One of the basic principles of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah is that they think of and speak of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the best terms... They distance themselves from the stance of the Rawāfiḍ who hate and curse the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and from the stance of the Nawāṣib who cause harm to the Ahl al-Bayt by word or action. They do not delve into the conflict of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and say, 'The statements recorded against them are made up of fabrications, exaggerated, or taken out of context.' The Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم are excused in this regard as they based their actions on what they thought best (ijtihād); either coming to correct conclusions or making a mistake.

They do not believe that any of the Ṣaḥābah are infallible and were protected from major or minor sins; rather it is possible that they may

1 Al-Ṣābūnī: *Aqīdah al-Salaf wa Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth*, vol. 1 pg. 129.

have committed sins in general, but they did a great deal of righteous deeds and attained virtues by means of which they were forgiven for whatever sins they committed, to such an extent that they were forgiven for bad deeds for which no one who came after them was forgiven, because they did good deeds that erased bad deeds, in a manner that was not granted to anyone who came after them.

Anyone who studies their biographies with knowledge and insight, and sees what Allah bestowed upon them of virtues, will realize for certain that they are the best of people after the Prophets; there never was and there will never be anyone like them. They are the elite of this ummah, which is the best of nations and the dearest of them to Allah, may He be exalted.¹

Imām al-Dhahabī says:

كما تقرر الكف عن كثير مما شجر بين الصحابة وقталهم رضي الله عنهم أجمعين وما زال يمر بنا ذلك في الدواوين والكتب والأجزاء ولكن أكثر ذلك منقطع وضعيف، وبعضه كذب وهذا فيما بأيدينا وبين علمائنا فينبغي طيه وإخفاؤه، بل إعدامه لتصفوا القلوب، وتتوفر على حب الصحابة والترضي عنهم، وكتمان ذلك متعين عن العامة وأحاد العلماء وقد يرخص في مطالعة ذلك خلوة للعالم المنصف العربي من الهوى... فالقوم لهم سوابق وأعمال مكفرة لما وقع منهم وجهاد محاء وعبادة ممحصة

Just as it is established that one should refrain from the disputes and conflicts of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. Accounts of these incidents are found in books and records; however, most of them are munqati' and weak whilst some are total fabrications. The material of such that is in our hands and between the scholars should be concealed and hidden. Rather it should be buried so that the hearts may remain pure and so that the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم may be revered and love. Concealing these particulars should be from the general masses and some scholars. It would be permitted for an impartial scholar to study it at some point in seclusion. The Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were the first people to attain virtue and carried out actions, jihād, and worship that would efface any mistakes they had made.²

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-'Aqīdah al-Wasitiyyah*: pgs. 166-176.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 10 pg. 92.

These are some statements of the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah which clarifies the true and necessary stance a Muslim ought to adopt in understanding some of those statements that have been recorded in defaming some of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم due to the disputes and conflicts that arose between them.

In this stance lies the solution of protecting one's pen and tongue from mentioning the evil attributed to them. It also imparts the need to think good of them and pray on their behalf. This is done whilst understanding their status and rank, together with searching for the best application regarding what some may have done. One ought to realize that these occurrences had been during the time of fitnah which was in an environment overtaken by uncertainties and thus led to differences of opinion. An authority in Islamic law, in such instances, will be forgiven if mistaken in judgment.

Another point of note here, is that many of the statements recorded regarding these incidents are either taken out of context, or are complete lies, or have been tampered with resulting in a skewed perception of the truth.

It is therefore necessary to refrain from delving into their disputes. Delving into such will lead to speculation running wild, supporting one group, and harboring ill against the other. Spreading such amongst the general masses and students who do not have the ability of comprehending the true nature of the occurrences, due to their young age or lack of education, will result in creating an imbalance in recognizing the status and right the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم hold over the ummah.

As far as studying the topic in an academic setting that is governed by sharī principles and a correct methodology goes, it will be allowed if the intent is elucidation of sharī injunctions, explanation of correct stances, and correction of historical inaccuracies that have spread regarding the stance of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in those battles.

The researcher should know that the Ahl al-Sunnah have opposed and dealt with these inaccuracies. There are authentic sources that have can be relied upon in the exercise of dealing with falsities. Ibn Taymiyyah says:

ومن الذي يدع كتب النقل التي اتفق أهل العلم بالمنقولات على صحتها، ويدع ما تواتر به النقل في كتب الحديث على بعضها، كالصحيح والسنن والمسند، والمعجمات والأسماء والفضائل، وكتب أخبار الصحابة وغير ذلك، وكتب السير والمغازي، وإن كانت دون ذلك، وكتب التفسير والفقه، وغير ذلك من الكتب التي من نظر فيها علم بالتواتر اليقيني ضد ما في النقل الباطل، وعلم أن الصحابة - رضي الله عنهم - كانوا أئمة الهدى، ومصاييح الدجى، وأن أصل كل فتنة وبلية هم الشيعة ومن انضوى إليهم

The books of *manqūl* (reported testimonial statements), the authenticity of which the scholars have unanimously agreed on as well as the authentic and successive narrations found in other books such as the *Ṣiḥāḥ*, *Sunan*, *Masānīd*, *Mu'jamāt*, *Asmā'*, *Faḍā'il*, *Siyar*, *Maghāzī*, *Tafsīr*, *Fiqh* and others will convince a person beyond a shadow of doubt of the inaccuracies of false narrations. These books and narrations will, no doubt, assure one that the *Ṣaḥābah* رضي الله عنهم were guiding stars and that every fitnah, trial and tribulation, that emerged was a result of the *Shī'ah* and those that supported their cause.¹

IV. *Sabb al-Ṣaḥābah*²; definition, law, and those who involve themselves in it citing academic critique and freedom of discourse.

a. Definition:

Qāḍī Abū Ya'lā³ has explained it as attacking the integrity of the *Ṣaḥābah* رضي الله عنهم by saying that they committed injustices, deviated, and adopted falsehood after Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Qāḍī Abū Ya'lā says:

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 3 pg. 243.

2 Cursing the *Ṣaḥābah* رضي الله عنهم.

3 He is Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad ibn Khalf ibn al-Farrā', Abū Ya'lā; from amongst the Ḥanbalī scholars and from amongst the great scholars of principle and derivative law of his era. Al-Qā'im al-'Abbāsī appointed him as the judge of the capital of the khilāfah with conditions such as he would not go to the house of the sultan or take part in festivities to which he agreed. He has written *Tabri'ah Mu'āwiyah*, *Al-Kifāyah fi Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, and *Al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyyah*. He passed away the year 458 A.H./1066 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 256; Al-Ṣafḍī: *Al-Wāfi bi al-Wafāyāt*, vol. 3 pg. 7; Ibn al-'Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 3 pg. 306.

Whoever considers this view as correct will be unanimously viewed as a disbeliever.

Question: What of the statement of Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal that one who makes Sabb al-Ṣaḥābah will not be killed?

Answer: He had meant by this, those who disparage the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in aspects that do not pertain to their faith. For example, one who criticizes the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم by, falsely, claiming their lack of knowledge, political acumen, bravery, or by stating them to have been materialistic will not be killed.¹

b. Law:

Imām al-Nawawī says:

واعلم أن سب الصحابة رضي الله عنهم حرام، من فواحش المحرمات، سواء من لابس الفتن منهم وغيره

Know well, cursing the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم is ḥarām. It is from the impermissible abominations. Be it directed to those who played a part in the fitnah or not.²

Qāḍī 'Iyād³ says:

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Ḥukm Sabb al-Ṣaḥābah*, pgs. 35-36.

2 Al-Nawawī: *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 16 pg. 93.

3 He is 'Iyād ibn Mūsa ibn 'Iyād al-Yaḥṣabī al-Sabtī, Abū al-Faḍl, al-Imām al-Muḥaddith. He was extremely knowledgeable in the sciences of Arabic language, genealogy, and wars. He was appointed as the judge of Sabtah and Gharnāṭah. Ibn Farḥūn says, "Qāḍī Abū al-Faḍl was the Imām of his time in ḥadīth and its sciences, tafsīr and its sciences, a Faqīḥ and Uṣūlī. Knowledgeable in Arabic language, wars, and genealogy. He had a deep understanding of the laws and intimately knew the Mālikī madhab. A poet par excellence and an eloquent orator." He has written, *Tartīb al-Madārik*, *al-Tanbīhāt al-Mustanbaṭah 'alā al-Mudawwanah*, *al-Ilmā' ilā Ma'rifah uṣūl al-Riwāyah wa Taqyīd al-Simā'*, and *Tārīkh Sabtah*. He passed away the year 544 A.H./1149 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Muqarrī in *Azhār al-Riyāḍ fī akhbar al-Qāḍī 'Iyād*, vol. 1 pg. 23; Ibn al-Qāḍī: *Jadhwah al-Iqtibās fī man ḥalla min al-A'lām madīnah Fās*, pg. 277; Ibn Farḥūn: *Al-Dībāj al-Madhab*.

وسب أحدهم من المعاصي الكبائر، ومذهبنا ومذهب الجمهور أن يعزر

Cursing any one of them is from the major sins. Our view and the prevailing view is that one who does so will be punished.¹

Some of the mālikī scholars say that such a person will be killed.²

Imām Aḥmad says:

فقد وجب على السلطان تأديبه وعقوبته ليس له أن يعفو عنه بل يعاقبه ويستتبه

It is compulsory for the sultan to admonish and punish him. He cannot forgive him. Rather he will punish him and engage with him.³

Al-Maymūnī⁴ relates the following statement from Imām Aḥmad:

مالهم ولمعاوية رضي الله عنه نسأل الله العافية، إذا رأيت أحدا يذكر أصحاب رسول الله عليه السلام بسوء فاتهمه على الإسلام

What do they have against Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه? We seek Allah's pardon. If you see anyone speaking ill of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, doubt his Islam.⁵

1 Al-Nawawī: *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 16 pg. 93.

2 Al-Qāḍī 'Iyād: *Al-Shifā bi ta'rīf ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā*, vol. 2 pg. 653.

3 Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal: *Al-Sunnah*: 78.

4 He is 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Abd al-Hamid ibn Maymūn ibn Mahrān al-Jazrī, Abū al-Ḥasan al-Maymūnī; scholar and jurist of Raqqa. He spent time in the company of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and narrated from him. Al-Nasa'ī has deemed him reliable. He passed away the year 274 A.H./887 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* vol. 5 pg. 358; Ibn Abī Ya'lā in *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, vol. 1 pg. 212; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 2 pg. 185; Al-Suyūṭī: *Mu'jam Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥuffāz*, pg. 123.

5 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Ḥukm Sabb al-Ṣaḥābah*, pg. 32.

Ishāq ibn Rahawayh¹ says:

من شتم أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يعاقب ويحبس، وهذا قول كثير من أصحابنا

Whoever curses the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ will be punished and imprisoned. This is the view of most of our companions.²

Ḥārith ibn ‘Utbah³ says:

إن عمر بن عبد العزيز أتى برجل سب عثمان فقال: ما حملك على أن سببته؟ قال: أبغضه قال: وإن أبغضت رجلا سببته؟ قال: فأمر به فجلد ثلاثين سوطا

A man was brought to ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz who cursed ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

He asked, “Why did you curse him?”

The man replied, “I hate him.”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz said, “If you hate a man you curse him?”

He then ordered that the man be whipped 30 times as narrated by Al-Lālkāṭī.⁴

1 He is Ishāq ibn Ibrāhīm, ibn Makhlad al-Ḥanzalī al-Tamīmī, Abū Ya‘qūb ibn Rahawayh; from amongst the great ḥuffāz. He was reliable in ḥadīth and from amongst the teachers of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasa‘ī, and others. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī says, “He had mastered ḥadīth and fiqh together with being honest, pious, an ascetic, and had a phenomenal memory.” From amongst his writings is *Al-Musnad*. He passed away the year 238 A.H./853 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 6 pg. 345; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A‘yān*, vol. 1 pg. 199; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1 pg. 216.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Ḥukm Sabb al-Ṣaḥābah*, pg. 33.

3 He is Ḥārith ibn ‘Utbah, some say ‘Anbasah. He narrates from ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz and Sadaqaḥ ibn ‘Abd Allāh narrates from him. See al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/275 and Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 6 pg. 175.

4 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Ḥukm Sabb al-Ṣaḥābah*, pg. 33. Al-Lālkāṭī is Hibat Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Manṣūr al-Ṭabarī al-Rāzī al-Baghdādī, Abū al-Qāsim Al-Lālkāṭī. He is amongst the ḥuffāz of ḥadīth and jurists of the Shafī‘ī Madhab. He has written *Sharḥ al-Sunnah*, *Asmā’ Rijāl al-Ṣaḥābah*, and *Ḥujaj uṣūl Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah*. He passed away the year, 418 A.H./1027 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 14 pg. 70; Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 9 pg. 125=6; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 3 pg. 1083.

Ibrāhīm ibn Maysarah¹ says:

ما رأيت عمر بن عبد العزيز ضرب إنسانا قط إلا رجل شتم معاوية فضربه أسواط

I have never seen ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ever hit a man except a man who had hurled abuse at Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه. He whipped him.²

Imām Mālik says:

من شتم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قتل ومن سب أصحابه أدب

Whoever curses Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم will be killed and whoever curses his Companions will be punished.³

‘Abd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb⁴ says:

من غلا من الشيعة إلى بغض عثمان والبراءة منه أدب أدبا شديدا ومن زاد إلى بغض أبي بكر وعمر فالعقوبة عليه أشد ويكرر ضربه ويطال سجنه حتى يموت ولا يبلغ به القتل إلا في سب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم

Those of the Shī‘ah that hate ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه will be punished severely. Those that go to the extremes of hating Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنه will be punished more severely and will be hit and imprisoned till death. Killing though will

1 He is Ibrāhīm ibn Maysarah al-Ṭā’ifī. He resided in Makkah and was a jurist. Aḥmad and Ibn Ma‘īn have deemed him reliable. Ibn Ḥajar says, “Thabat, Ḥāfiẓ. From the fifth rank.” He passed away the year, 132 A.H./749 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaḡhīr*, vol. 2 pg. 29 Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* vol. 2 pg. 133; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā*, vol. 6 pg. vol. 2 pg. 123; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pg. 44.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Ḥukm Sabb al-Ṣaḥābah*, pg. 33.

3 Al-Qādī ‘Iyād: *Al-Shifā bi ta’rīf ḥuqūq al-Muṣṭafā*, vol. 2 pg. 652.

4 He is ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Ḥabīb ibn Sulaymān ibn Hārūn Al-Sulamī al-Qurṭubī; amongst the jurists of the Mālikīyyah. He was a scholar of history and language. He had written amongst other books, *Ḥurūb al-Islām* and *Ṭabaqāt al-Muḥddithīn*. He passed away the year, 238 A.H./853 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Farqī: *Tārīkh ‘Ulamā Andalus*, vol. 1 pg. 225; Ibn ‘Umayrah: *Bughyah al-Multamis*, pg. 364; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 2 pg. 652; Al-Muqrī: *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, vol. 1 pg. 331.

only be permitted for one who curses Rasūlullāh ﷺ.¹

Qāḍī Abū Ya‘lā says:

الذي عليه الفقهاء في سب الصحابة: إن كان مستحلا لذلك كفر وإن لم يكن مستحلا فسق

The opinion of the jurists regarding one who curses the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم is that if one does so viewing it as permissible, he will be considered a disbeliever. If not, he will be sinful.²

Ibn Taymiyyah says:

وصرح جماعات من أصحابنا بكفر الخوارج المعتقدين البراءة من علي وعثمان وبكفر الرافضة المعتقدين لسب جميع الصحابة الذين كفروا الصحابة وفسقوهم وسبوهم

A group of our scholars have explicitly mentioned that those Khawārij who believe in the total disregard of ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنهما are disbelievers. Similarly, those Rawāfiḍ who believe in cursing all the Ṣaḥābah will be labelled as disbelievers due to their regarding the Ṣaḥābah as apostate, cursing them, and branding them as sinners.³

Many narrations feature severe warnings for those who curse or malign the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah al-Madanī⁴ narrates from ‘Uwaym ibn Sā‘idah رضي الله عنه that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said:

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Ḥukm Sabb al-Ṣaḥābah*, pg. 33.

2 Ibid: 34.

3 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Ḥukm Sabb al-Ṣaḥābah*, pg. 34-35.

4 He is, Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ṭalḥah al-Taymī al-Madanī, famously known as Ibn al-Ṭawīl. Abū Ḥātim says, “Truthful though not suitable to use as evidence.” Ibn Ḥibbān has counted him amongst the strong narrators. Ibn Ḥajar says, “Truthful, though he makes mistakes.” He passed away the year 108 A.H./726 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/120; Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* vol. 7 pg. 292; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 361; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 2 pg. 173.

إن الله اختارني و اختار لي أصحابا فجعل لي منهم وزراء و أنصار و أصحابا فمن سبهم فعليه لعنة الملائكة
و الناس أجمعين لا يقبل الله منه يوم القيامة صرفا و لا عدلا

Verily Allah has selected me and has selected for me Companions. He has made within them for my benefit minister, helpers, and family. May the curses of the angels, and all of men be on a person who maligns them. Allah ﷻ will not accept such a person's compulsory or voluntary acts on the day of Qiyāmah.¹

‘Aṭā’ ibn Abī Rabāḥ² narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said:

لعن الله من سب اصحابي

May Allah's curse be upon who maligns my Companions.³

Ibn Mas‘ūd رضى الله عنه narrates that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said:

إذا ذكر القدر فأمسكوا وإذا ذكر أصحابي فأمسكوا

When they discuss predestination then stop and when they discuss my Companions then stop.⁴

1 Al-Ḥākim has recorded the narration in *Al-Mustadrak* and has commented on the chain of narration as authentic. Imām al-Dhahabī has concurred with him, vol. 3 pg. 632. The chain is weak due to Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah who was truthful but would make mistakes as has been mentioned. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Sālim ibn ‘Utbah is unknown. See, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*: 2182.

2 He is ‘Aṭā’ ibn Aslam ibn Ṣafwān ibn Abī Rabāḥ; a Tabiṭ and great jurist. He was raised in Makkah and would give legal verdicts to its people together with narrating traditions of the Prophet to them. Al-‘Ijlī says, “Tabiṭ, reliable. Ibn Ḥibbān has counted him amongst the string narrators.” He passed away the year 114 A.H./732 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 401; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/463; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 332; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 198.

3 Al-Suyūṭī has recorded it in *Al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḡhīr*, vol. 2 pg. 351 and has commented, “Al-Ṭabrānī has narrated it and is authentic.” Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim has recorded it in *Al-Sunnah*, vol. 2 pg. 453/Ḥadīth: 1000. Al-Albānī has deemed it sound by its supporting narrations, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘*: Ḥadīth: 5111; *Al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, vol. 5 pg. 446, Ḥadīth: 2340.

4 Al-Ṭabrānī has narrated it in *Al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, vol. 2 pg. 93. Al-Suyūṭī comments in *Al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḡhīr*, vol. 12 pg. 351 “A sound narration.” Al-Albānī has deemed it authentic in *Al-Ṣaḥīḥah*: Ḥadīth: 34.

Imām al-Tirmidhī narrates on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mughaffal رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

الله الله في أصحابي لا تتخذوهم غرضا بعدى فمن أحبهم فيحبي أحبهم و من أبغضه فببغضي أبغضهم و من آذاهم فقد آذاني و من آذاني فقد آذى الله و من آذى الله أوشك أن يأخذه

Fear Allah when with regards to my Companions. Fear Allah when with regards to my Companions. Do not make them a target of abuse after me. He, who loves them, loves them because he loves me. He, who hates them, hates them because he hates me. He who harms them has harmed me, and he who harms me has harmed Allah, and he who harms Allah, then it is very soon that Allah will take him to task.¹

Imām al-Būkhārī has recorded on the authority of Anas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

آية الإيمان حب الأنصار وآية النفاق بغض الأنصار

Loving the Anṣār is a sign of Imān and hating the Anṣār is a sign of hypocrisy.²

- c. Those who involve themselves in it citing academic critique and freedom of discourse.

The cursing and maligning that have been mentioned in the quotations provided above, has become known in contemporary times as ‘academically critiquing the history of the Ṣaḥābah’. This is infact the same curses that polluted the speech of the Saba’iyyah, Rawāfiḍ, Khawārij, Mu’tazilah, and

1 Al-Tirmidhī has recorded it in *Al-Sunan*, vol. 5 pg. 358 and has said, “It is a sound narration.” Aḥmad has also recorded it in *Musnad* vol. 5 pg. 45, 57; Abū Nua’ym in *Al-Ḥilyah*, vol. 8 pg. 287; Al-Baghawī; *Sharḥ al-Sunnah*, 14/70. There is some weakness in its chain, see *Da’if al-Tirmidhī*: Ḥadīth: 808

2 Imām al-Bukhārī has recorded it in *Al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, Kitāb Manāqib al-Anṣār, Bāb Ḥubb al-Anṣār min al-Imān, vol. 4 pg. 223.

heretics against the nobility of the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; the same curses that were heaped upon the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ by the lying narrators—especially the Shī'ah—in the books of Islamic history.

The same slanders that were established as untruths and blown to smithierins by just men; by the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah in their histories of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ.

The same slanders and vilification that caused many a man to become targets of the curses of Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ together with being targets of laws that entailed, being hit, imprisonment, or even death based on the differing views, as has been clearly explained above.

The renaming that has emerged in these latter times as 'academic critique of the early Islamic years' has remained exactly the same as the curses of the former times. It is a revival of the curses that the Ahl al-Sunnah put to bed when the lands and kingdoms were theirs and the heretics and innovators were subdued.

This revival, of late, has been at the hands of groups of the communists, Christians, Jews, and orientilists who harbour a deep hatred for Islam. Their cause has been further assisted by sons of this very ummah either unknowingly or due to becoming enamoured with the east, west, and their methodologies. They fall out of the sacred bounds of Allah ﷻ under the chants of academic critique and freedom of discourse. Forgetting, perhaps intentionally, that academic methodology in Islam and Islamic history is governed by shar'ī laws and principles that are vital to adhere to. Research and studies conducted have to remain within the bounds of these principles so that the conclusions reached are true to reality and conform to Islamic injunctions.

Innovators and heretics of these latter times have two distinct goals behind the revival of these curses:

1. Attacking the integrity of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ intending to sow doubts regarding the Qur'ān and the Sunnah as it was the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who were the mediums of conveying these two principle authorities of the religion of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ يَا رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ and His laws.
2. Establishing the inability of Islamic practices in the real world, especially in these times. Their effort is to malign and vilify the character of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ together with the society they lived in just after the passing of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Their conclusion being, if they could not uphold the practices of Islam in that time, then how can we be expected to hold onto those methodologies of reformation in our time.

Module Two: The Life of Imām al-Ṭabarī

Section One: Lineage, Travel for Knowledge, Character, and Views

I. Name, attribution, and lineage.

Name:

His name is Muḥammad and his teknonym Abū Jaʿfar. The reason behind this teknonym has not been provided by any of the scholars, as he hadn't developed an inclination towards women; never marrying and never having any children to take upon a teknonym. He has, himself spoken of this when arriving as a guest to Rabī ibn Sulaymān¹ in Egypt. The companions of Rabī came to the home wherein he was stationed and said to him:

تحتاج إلى قصرية وزير وحمارين وسدة، فقلت: أما القصرية فأنا لا ولد لي وما حللت سراويلي على
حرام ولا حلال قط

You will need a chamber pot, water jug, two donkeys, and a divan. He replied, "As for the chamber pot, well, I have no children and have never undone my pants for ḥarām or ḥalāl..."²

Attribution:

Al-Ṭabarī is an attribution to Ṭabaristān³ (modern Mazandaran Province of Iran). Some have stated his attribution to Amol, his place of birth. His full name and attribution would therefore be, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd ibn Kathīr al-Āmilī, al-Ṭabarī, Abū Jaʿfar.⁴ Some others have stated his attribution to Baghdād

1 He is Rabī ibn Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Jabbār ibn Kāmil al-Murādī al-Miṣrī, Abū Muḥammad, the great jurist, companion of al-Shafīʿī, and narrator of his book. He passed away the year 270 A.H/884 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā*, pg. 79; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-Aʿyān*, vol. 2 pg. 269; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3 pg. 245.

2 Yaqūt: *Muʿjam al-Udabāʾ*, vol. 18 pg. 55; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 5 pg. 102.

3 It should be noted that attribution that is made to Ṭabaristān is made as al-Ṭabarī and to Ṭabariyyah in Shām as al-Ṭabarānī. See, Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fi Tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 2 pg. 274.

4 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 326; Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fi Tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 2 pg. 274; Al-Dāwūdī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, vol. 2 pg. 106.

wherein he settled, lived, and eventually died. Thus some would say, Al-Ṭabarī, al-Āmilī, al-Baghdādī.¹

Lineage:

The historians are unanimous upon his lineage till his grandfather; Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd.

II. Birth, childhood, and search for knowledge.

Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī was born at the end of the year 224 A.H/838 A.D.² in the city of Amol, capital of the Ṭabaristān district.

He grew up in the care of his father who was eager to pave the way for him to attain knowledge after having gleamed his sharp intelligence and talent. His father thus made provisions for him to study from a young age. He sat in the circles of learning in his city of Ṭabaristān. Through the grace of Allah ﷻ he memorized the Qur’ān aged seven and began writing ḥadīth aged nine.

The early and prime years of Abū Ja‘far was spent in the city of Ṭabaristān seeking and gaining knowledge from its scholars. His severe and always increasing thirst for knowledge though led him to leave his city behind and travel in search for knowledge at a very young age.

At 12 years old in the year 236 A.H he travelled elsewhere seeking knowledge, as recorded by Maslamah ibn al-Qāsim.³

1 Ibn al-Jazrī: *Ghāyah al-Nihāyah*, vol. 2 pg. 106.

2 See, Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 166; Al-Qaṭṭī: *Al-Muḥammadūn min al-Shu‘arā’*, vol. 1 pg. 225; Al-Suyūṭī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, pg. 3.

3 He is Maslamah ibn al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥātīm, Abū Qāsim, the historian of Andalus and scholar of ḥadīth at Qurṭubah. He has written, *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*. He passed away the year 353 A.H/964 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Farqī: *Tārīkh ‘Ulamā al-Andalus*, vol. 2 pg. 5; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 6 pg. 35.

He then travelled to Baghdād and met with al-Ḥasan al-Za‘farānī¹ and Abū Sa‘īd al-Iṣṭakhrī² under whom he studied Shafi‘ī fiqh. He also met Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Taghlibī³ from who he studied the science of Qirā‘ah.⁴

He then headed to Baṣrah and studied ḥadīth from Muḥammad ibn Mūsa al-Ḥarshī⁵, ‘Imrān ibn Mūsa al-Qazzāz⁶, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā Abū ‘Abd Allāh

1 He is al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ṣabbāḥ al-Bazzār al-Za‘farānī al-Baghdādī—an attribution to Za‘farāniyyah, a town close to Baghdad, the jurist and scholar par excellence in ḥadīth. He was a narrator of the books of Imām al-Shafi‘ī. Al-Khaṭīb has counted him amongst one of the reliable narrators in the east of al-Salām, Baghdad. He passed away the year 259 A.H/873 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 7 pg. 407; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *Al-Intiqā*, pg. 105; Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 297; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2 pg. 318.

2 He is al-Ḥasan ibn Aḥmad ibn Yazīd al-Iṣṭakhrī, Abū Sa‘īd, the Shafi‘ī jurist and contemporary of Ibn Surayj. He was appointed as judge.

- Ibn Nadīm says, “He is reliable and an early jurist.”

He has written *al-Farā‘id al-Kabīr*, *Adab al-Qaḍā’*, and *al-Shurūṭ wa al-Wathā‘iq wa al-Muḥādir wa al-Sajallāt*. He passed away the year 328 A.H/940 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 300; Ibn al-Jawzī: *al-Muntaẓam fī Tārīkh al-Mulūk wa al-Umam*, vol. 6 pg. 302; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, vol. 2 pg. 74; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyyah al-Kubrā*, vol. 2 pg. 193.

3 He is Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Taghlibī Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Baghdādī, amongst the celebrated reciters. He passed away the year 277 A.H/886 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 218; Ibn al-Jazrī: *Ghāyah al-Nihāyah*, vol. 1 pg. 152; Al-Dāwūdī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, vol. 2 pg. 110.

4 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 52.

5 He is Muḥammad ibn Mūsa al-Ḥarshī, Abū Ja‘far, from amongst the great memorizers and reliable ḥadīth scholars.

- Al-Khaṭīb says, “He was reliable and a ḥāfidh.”

He passed away the year 248 A.H/862 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 3 pg. 240; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 4 pg. 51.

6 He is ‘Imrān ibn Mūsa ibn Ḥayyān al-Qazzāz al-Laythī Abū ‘Amr al-Baṣrī, from the Ahl al-Ḥadīth.

- Abū Ḥātim says, “Truthful.”
- Al-Nasa‘ī, Maslamah ibn Qāsim and al-Dāraquṭnī has deemed him reliable.
- Ibn Ḥibbān has recorded him in *al-Thiqāt*.

He passed away the year 240 A.H/854 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* vol. 6 pg. 306; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 8 pg. 499 and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 8 pg. 141.

al-Ṣan‘ānī¹, Abū al-Ash‘ath² and others³. In Kūfah he studied poetry⁴ under Tha‘lab⁵.

He searched for knowledge, sought out its purport, and was eager to meet, sit with, benefit from, and study under the scholars. Hearing about a scholar in a city would cause him to ready himself to undertake arduous travels for knowledge.

In his travels he passed through Damascus, studying ḥadīth from Ibrāhīm al-Jūzajānī⁶, who had settled in Damascus⁷.

1 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-A‘lā al-Ṣan‘ānī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Baṣrī, scholar of ḥadīth and from amongst the teachers of Muslim, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasa‘ī, Ibn Mājah and others.

- Abū Zur‘ah and Abū Ḥātim has deemed him reliable.
- Al-Nasa‘ī has mentioned good of him.
- Ibn Ḥibbān has recorded him in *al-Thiqāt*.

He passed away the year 245 A.H/859 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/174; Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* vol. 8 pg. 16; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 2 pg. 180.

2 He is Aḥmad ibn Miqdām ibn Sulaymān al-Ash‘ath ibn Aslam al-‘Ijlī, Abū al-Ash‘ath al-Baṣrī, the Imām, Mutqin, and Ḥāfidh. He is amongst the teachers of al-Bukhārī al-Nasa‘ī and others.

- Al-Nasa‘ī says, “Trustworthy.”
- Abū Ḥātim says, “Maḥalluhū al-Ṣidq.”
- Ibn Khuzaymah says, “He was a man of ḥadīth.”

He passed away the year, 253 A.H/867 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* vol. 2 pg. 78; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 162; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 12 pg. 219 Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1 pg. 81.

3 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 326; Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 52.

4 He is Aḥmad ibn Yahyā ibn Yazīd ibn Siyār, Abū al-‘Abbās, famously known as Tha‘lab. The Imām of the Kufiyyīn in grammar and language. He would narrate ḥadīth and poetry and is considered as reliable and strong by the scholars of ḥadīth. He has written, *Al-Faṣīḥ*, *Qawā‘id al-Shi‘r*, *Mā Talḥan fīhi al-‘Āmmah*, and *I‘rāb al-Qur‘ān*. He passed away the year 291 A.H/904 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 204; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, vol. 1 pg. 102; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 214; Al-Suyūṭī: *Bughyah al-Wu‘āh*, pg. 172.

5 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 204; Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 60.

6 He is Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb ibn Ishāq al-Sa‘dī al-Jūzajānī, Abū Ishāq. The muḥaddith of Shām and one of the great memorizers and reliable authors of Khurāsān. He has written, *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* and *Al-Ḍu‘afā’*. He passed away the year 259 A.H/873 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 549; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 31; Ibn al-Kayyāl: *Al-Kawākib al-Nayyirāt*, pg. 105; Muḥammad ibn Ja‘far: *Al-Risālah al-Mustaṭrafah*, pg. 110.

7 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 162; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1 pg. 86.

He stopped in Beirut as well and read the Qur'ān¹ to al-'Abbās ibn al-Walīd al-'Udhri².

In Egypt he met with Rabī' ibn Sulaymān al-Murādī and Abū Ibrāhīm al-Muzanī³ under whom he studied Shafī'ī fiqh. He also met with Sa'd ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam⁴ and Yūnus ibn 'Abd al-A'lā al-Ṣadafī under whom he studied Mālikī fiqh⁵.

After having attained the knowledge and understanding that he had sought out in Egypt, he returned to Baghdād. From there he travelled back to Ṭabaristān after a long and arduous journey the year 290 A.H/903 A.D. Not long thereafter he returned to Baghdād and settled there. He resided here in worship, writing, and teaching whilst staying far away from royal appointments and responsibilities.⁶

1 Ibn al-Jazrī: *Ghāyah al-Nihāyah*, vol. 1 pg. 355.

2 Al-'Abbās ibn al-Walīd ibn Mazīd al-'Udhri, Abū al-Faḍl al-Bayrūnī al-Muqri'. He was a reliable and well versed on the madhhab of al-Awzā'ī. He passed away the year 270 A.H/883 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* vol. 6 pg. 214; Al-Dhahabī: *M'arifah al-Qurrā' al-Kibār 'alā al-Ṭabaqāt wa al-A'sār*, vol. 1 pg. 213; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 5 pg. 131; Al-Dāwūdī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, vol. 1 pg. 355.

3 He is Ismā'īl ibn Yahyā ibn Ismā'īl, Abū Bakr al-Muzanī al-Miṣrī. Celebrated student of Imām al-Shafī'ī. He was a scholar and a mujtahid. Ibn Khallikān says, "He was an ascetic, scholar, mujtahid, and one that delved into the deeper meanings. His ascetic nature was second to none and his prayers were readily accepted." He has written *Al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr*, *Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr*, *Al-Targhīb fi al-'Ilm*, *Al-Wathā'iq*, and *Al-Masā'il al-Mu'tabarah*. He passed away the year 264 A.H/878 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 298; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr: *Al-Intiqā'*, pg. 110; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 1 pg. 217.

4 He is Sa'd ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam Abū 'Amr, amongst the Mālikī jurists of Egypt.

- Abū Ḥātim says, "Truthful."
- Al-Kindī says, "He was virtuous."
- Abū Bakr ibn Khuzaymah has praised his worship and ijtihād.

He passed away the year, 268 A.H/881 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* vol. 4 pg. 91; Al-Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ: *Tartīb al-Madārik*, vol. 4 pg. 166.

5 Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*; Al-Dāwūdī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, vol. 2 pg. 107.

6 Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 18 pg. 56.

It should be noted that Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī, in his travels, studied under many scholars that were giants of the era. He likewise studied ḥadīth from many trustworthy scholars of ḥadīth who had the highest chain of transmission in his time.

He studied ḥadīth under many of the teachers of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and others. He studied the science of Qirā‘ah from the Qurrā’ of highest regard in his era. He studied fiqh under the great jurists and mujtahidīn, and language from the notable linguists and masters of grammar—whose names have been mentioned—which chiselled his scholarly ability to near perfection. He thus became the undisputed Imām of his era. He gained prominence amongst the Imām’s and high profile individuals of his time as attested to by many scholars and historians. This will be explored further under the section dealing with the praise of scholars in his regard.

III. His character and views.

Imām al-Ṭabarī is characterised as a practising scholar who was embodiment of nobility and grace. Allah ﷻ has instilled within him, self-respect, sublime conduct, an easy manner, good social skills, the ability to champion the cause of truth, and humility without self-deprecation. These attributes of his are well documented.

Al-Farghānī¹ says:

كان محمد بن جرير ممن لا تأخذه في الله لومة لائم مع عظيم ما يلحقه من الأذى والشناعات من جاهل وحاسد وملحد . فأما أهل العلم والدين فغير منكرين علمه وزهده في الدنيا ورفضه لها ، وقناعته باليسير

1 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ja‘far Abū Muḥammad al-Turkī al-Farghānī, the leader and scholar. He has narrated from Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī and ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Sulaymān. Al-Dāraquṭnī and ‘Abd al-Ghanī have narrated from him. He has written *Al-Ṣilah* which is an appendix of *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*. He passed away the year, 362 A.H/972 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 9 pg. 389; Ibn Mākūlā: *Al-Ikmāl*, vol. 2 pg. 402; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 16 pg. 132.

Muḥammad ibn Jarīr was a man who did not fear the blame of the critics in the path to Allah even though the hate and criticism that came from the ignorant, jealous, and heretics was resounding. The men of knowledge and faith though, did not discount his knowledge, asceticism, and contentment with a little.¹

Ibn Kathīr says:

وكان من العبادة والزهد والورع والقيام في الحق لا تأخذه في ذلك لومة لائم

His worship, asceticism, piety, and standing for the truth was undeterred by criticism.²

His student, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabarī³ describes him in the following words:

وكان فيه من الزهد والورع والخشوع والأمانة وتصفية الأعمال ، وصدق النية ، وحقائق الأفعال ما دل عليه كتابه في آداب النفوس وكان عازفا عن الدنيا تاركا لها ولأهلها يرفع نفسه عن التماسها

His asceticism, piety, humility, reliability, purity of actions, genuine intentions, and awareness of actions can be understood from his book authored on the subject of rectifying the soul⁴. He was removed from the world, abstaining from it and its people. He was far from hankering after it.⁵

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 702; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyyah*, vol. 2 pg. 125.

2 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 146.

3 He is ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Muḥammad ibn Ishāq al-Ṭabarī, Abū al-Ḥasan. He is amongst the scholars of Islamic scholastic theology. He was under the tutelage of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī and studied the exegeses of the Qur‘ān from Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī. Ibn ‘Asākir says, “He has authored books of note, amongst them is the book, *Riyāḍah al-Mubtada’ wa Baṣīrah al-Mustahdī fi al-Radd ‘alā al-Mulhidah*. I have come across some of the material authored by him which shows his mastery and deep knowledge.” He passed away after the year 310 A.H/922 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 10 pg. 385.

4 It is a book that deals with rectifying the self, what adorns the self and what tarnishes it amongst other topics. Al-Dhahabī has praised it in *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’* vol. 14 pg. 277. Al-Khalīfah has mentioned it under the name *Al-Ādāb al-Ḥamīdah wa al-Akhlāq al-Nafīсах*. See, *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 1 pg. 42.

5 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pgs. 60-61.

He abstained from what had overcome many of the scholars and students of knowledge in his era; standing at the doors of the *Khulafā'*, leaders, governors, and rich men seeking wealth and provisions. Al-Farghānī relates his condition thus:

رحل ابن جرير من مدينة أمل لما سمح له أبوه بالسفر ، و كان طول حياته ينفذ إليه بالشيء بعد الشيء إلى البلدان ، فسمعته يقول : أبطأت عني نفقة والدي واضطرت إلى أن فتقت كمي القميص قبعتهما

Ibn Jarīr left from Amol when his father permitted him to travel. As long as his father lived, he would send something or the other to his son in whichever city he was.

I heard him say, “The expenditure that my father would send to me was delayed. I faced such dire straits that I cut off the sleeves of my garment and sold them.”¹

Even though it was possible for him to go to the doors of the wealthy and lovers of knowledge as the poor students of knowledge would do and receive some assistance, he preferred to sell the sleeves of his garment and spend on himself until the money his father sent would reach him.

He would shy away from accepting the many gifts that would come to him from the viziers and wealthy. An example of this is the incident recorded wherein the vizier al-'Abbās ibn al-Ḥasan² requested him to write a short book in fiqh. The Imām authored on his behest the book, *Al-Khafīf fī Ahkām Sharā'ī al-Islām*. The vizier sent him a thousand gold coins upon receiving it. The Imām returned the gold and did not accept it.³

1 Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 2 pg. 125.

2 Al-'Abbās ibn al-Ḥasan, ibn Ayyūb al-Jurjānī or al-Mādarānī, Abū Muḥammad. A vizier of the Abbasid dynasty. Al-Muktafī had him instated. He was eloquent and a linguist. He passed away the year 296 A.H./909 A.D. His life has been recorded by al-Ṭabarī in *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 1 pgs. 129-133, 140, and 141.

3 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 14 pg. 270.

‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabarī says:

ووجه إليه أبو الهيجاء بن حمدان ثلاثة آلاف دينار ، فلما نظر إليها عجب منها ثم قال : لا أقبل ما لا أقدر على المكافأة عنه ، ومن أين لي ما أكافئ عن هذا - فقيل : ما لهذا مكافأة ، إنما أراد التقرب إلى الله لك ، فأبى أن يقبله ورده إليه ،

Abū al-Hayjā’ ibn Ḥamdān¹ sent three thousand gold coins to him. When he saw the amount he was taken aback and said, “I cannot accept that which I am not able to repay. How will I ever repay this favour?”

It was said to him, “There’s no repayment for this. It was given to you solely to earn the pleasure of Allah سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ عَلَّامٌ.”

Yet, he refused to accept it and returned the amount.²

He was offered a judicial post which he did not accept based on various reasons. Amongst the reasons for not accepting was his bold attitude in standing for the truth. This could have been at odds with his position as a judge as he might be expected to be lenient towards the influential or ruling class in cases brought against them. He could not stand for such. Together with this his self-respect was too great for him to be under the thumb of a governor or minister. These reasons were perhaps overshadowed by his fear of oppressing any one person in passing a ruling if he accepted the post.

In any case, he took solace in the fact that many a great scholar—the likes of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and others—had refused to take up the post when presented to them.

1 He is Abū ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥamdān ibn Ḥamdūn al-Tha’labī al-‘Adawī. A leader in the ‘Abbāsī dynasty. He took to overseeing the operations in Mosul on behalf of Al-Muktafī al-‘Abbāsī. He was appointed as governor over Khurāsān and Dīnwar by Al-Muqtadir. He passed away the year 317 A.H/929 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 8 pg. 214; Ibn Khaldūn: *Al-‘Ibar wa al-Diwān al-Mubtada’ wa al-Khabar fi Ayyām al-‘Arab wa al-‘Ajam*, vol. 3 pg. 747.

2 Yaqūt: *Mu’jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 87.

Some who have profiled the life of Imām al-Ṭabarī have outlined the stance adopted by him when presented with the post in the following words:

لما تقلد الخاقاني الوزارة وجه إليه بمال كثير ، فأبى أن يقبله ، فعرض عليه القضاء ، فامتنع . وقالوا له - أي أصحابه - : في هذا ثواب وتحى سنة قد درست ، وطمعوا أن يقبل ولاية المظالم فانتهرهم وقال : وقد كنت أظن أنني لو رغبت في ذلك لنهيتموني عنه

When al-Khāqānī¹ became the vizier, he sent much wealth to him, which the Imām refused. He then presented him with the offer of appointment as judge, which he did not accept.

His companions said to him, “Accepting this position will be a means of reward and revival of a forgotten sunnah.” They hoped he would accept the mandate of the Ombudsman.

He said to them, “I thought that if I had been swayed towards it you all would have stopped me.”²

It should be noted that though his students were from different social strata, his attitude to them all was that of impartiality. He would not hold any one of them in a particular light due to their status or family influence.

Abū Ma'bad 'Uthmān ibn Aḥmad al-Dīnawarī³ says:

حضرت مجلس الطبري وحضر الفضل بن الفرات بن الوزير وقد سبقه رجل فقال الطبري للرجل : ألا تقرأ - فأشار إلى الوزير ، فقال له المطيري : إذا كان الثوبة لك فلا نكثر بدجلة ولا الفرات

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Yaḥyā ibn Khāqān, Abū 'Alī. He was a vizier of the Abbasid dynasty. He assumed the position at the behest of Al-Muqtadir the year 299 A.H/911 A.D. He passed away the year 312 A.H/924 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 8 pg. 21; Ibn Ṭabāṭabā famously known as Ibn al-Ṭīqṭaqā: *Al-Fakhrī fī al-Ādāb al-Sulṭāniyyah wa al-Duwal al-Islāmiyyah*, vol. 2; Abū al-Fidā': *Al-Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-Bashar*, vol. 2 pg. 66.

2 Al-Dhababī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 14 pg. 275.

3 I did not find his profile amongst the available sources.

I attended the lesson of al-Ṭabarī. Faḍl ibn al-Furāt ibn al-Wazīr¹ also attended the same lesson with one other man arriving before him. Al-Ṭabarī said to the man, “Wont you read?” The man indicated towards al-Wazīr. Al-Ṭabarī said to him, “When it is your turn don’t worry about the Dajlah² and Furāt.³”

Ibn Ḥajar commenting on this says:

وهذه من لطائفه وبلاغته وعدم التفائه لأهل الدنيا

This shows his subtlety, eloquence, and disinterest in men of worldly influence.⁴

This clearly demonstrates the clean and clear character of Imām al-Ṭabarī together with his abstinence, piety, self-respect, humility and boldness in proclaiming the truth. He declined a judicial appointment and did not accept gifts of the governors. This is in stark contrast to the presumptions of some Arab researchers who, influenced by the bias of orientalism, disregard the nobility and status of the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah by slating them as aristocrats who adopted a luxurious life. Aḥmad Amīn has in his book *Zuḥr al-Islām*, deemed Imām al-Ṭabarī as one of the famous aristocrats of his era. He writes:

وقد اشتهر في هذا القرن الرابع - عدد من الأرسقراطيين ، وذكر من بينهم ابن جرير الطبري

Many aristocrats became famous in the fourth century.⁵

1 He is al-Faḍl ibn Ja’far ibn al-Faḍl ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Furāt, Abū al-Faṭḥ. A vizier of the Abbasid dynasty. He is also known as Ibn Khanzābah, an attribution to his mother. He was appointed by al-Muqtadir Bi Allāh al-‘Abbāsī. He passed away the year 327 A.H/939 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 8 pg. 110; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 14 pg. 479.

2 In reference to the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. A play on words implying that one should not be influenced by someone of high standing.

3 Ibn ‘Asākīr: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 15 pg. 168; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 5 pgs. 102-103.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 5 pg. 102.

5 Aḥmad Amīn: *Zuḥr al-Islām*, vol. 2 pg. 17.

Counting amongst them Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī. This slate of defamation by Aḥmad Amīn against Imām al-Ṭabarī is not based on any evidence. It is merely an attempt to clutch at non-existent straws, lying and fabricating in the process. The basis of passing a judgment is being completely aware of all the elements of the subject being addressed. If Aḥmad Amīn was truly objective, he would have studied the life of Imām al-Ṭabarī before passing a horribly skewed judgement on him. If he had studied the life of the Imām he would not have been faced with this academic predicament. He would have further abstained from labelling him as an aristocrat, with all the negative connotations the label draws, and he would have no doubt found him to be far from such snobbery and elitism. The Imām passed through many moments of hunger and need to the extent, as has been mentioned, that he had to sell his own sleeves to survive. His indifference to cosyng up to those of influence and accepting their gifts together with rejecting the appointment of judge totally disregards the lie conjured against him.

From amongst the advices of the early scholars—whom Imām al-Ṭabarī would diligently follow—is the warning to stay away from the innovators and the sultans. Yūnus ibn ‘Ubayd¹ says:

لا تجالس سلطانا ولا صاحب بدعة

Do not take up to sitting with the Sultan or innovator.

Sufyān ibn al-Thawrī advised a man thus:

1 He is Yūnus ibn ‘Ubayd ibn Dinar al-‘Abdī al-Baṣrī, Abū ‘Ubayd. From amongst the best of people. Ibn Ḥibbān says, “He was amongst the best of his era in his knowledge, nobility, memory, mastery, adherence to the sunnah, dislike for the innovators, abstinence, and understanding of the faith.”

Aḥmad, ibn Ma‘īn, al-Nasa‘ī, and Abū Ḥātim have deemed him reliable.

He passed away the year 139 A.H/756 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 677; Al-Dāramī: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 100; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/2/402; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 647 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 442.

إياك والأهواء والخصومة وإياك والسلطان

Beware of your carnal self, quarrelling, and beware of the Sultan.

He would also say:

المسلمون كلهم عندنا على حالة حسنة إلا رجلين : صاحب بدعة وصاحب سلطان

We think good of all the Muslims except the innovator and one who takes to the Sultan.¹

1 Al-Lālkāfī: *Sharḥ Uṣūl I'tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah*, vol. 1 pg. 136.

Section Two: Knowledge, Integrity, Scholarship, and Praise of Scholars for Him

I. Knowledge and integrity.

Imām al-Ṭabarī was divinely blessed with abilities that allowed him to draw from every science and attain from it such knowledge that would make him the undisputed Imām of his era. His fame caused people to flock to him with questions, him to widen his scope, and deepen his own understanding.

Ibn al-Nadīm¹ says regarding him:

علامة وقته وإمام عصره وفقهه زمانه و كان متفننا في جميع العلوم ، علم القرآن والنحو والشعر واللغة
والفقه ، كثير الحفظ

The great scholar of his time, Imām of his era, and jurist of his period. He was a polymath, having mastered the sciences of the Qur’ān, grammar, poetry, linguistics, and jurisprudence. He had memorized a great sum of knowledge.²

Ibn al-Jawzī³ says regarding him:

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ibn Muḥammad, Abū al-Farj ibn Abī Ya’qūb al-Nadīm. Author of the book *Al-Fihrist*; one of the earliest biographical books. He was a papermaker who would sell books. He was also a Shī‘ī, Mu’tazilī. He passed away the year 438 A.H./1047 A.D. His life has been recorded by Yaqūt: *Mu’jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 6 pg. 408; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 5 pg. 72.

2 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pgs. 326-327.

3 He is ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Jawzī al-Qurashī al-Baghdādī, Abū al-Farj. Historian, scholar of ḥadīth, orator. He has left behind many books. Amongst them are: *Talqīh Fuhūm Ahl al-Athar fī Mukhtaṣar al-Siyar wa al-Akḥbār*, *Manāqib ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz*, *Shudhūdh al-‘Uqūd fī Tārīkh al-‘Uhūd*, *Al-Ḍu‘afā’ wa al-Matrūkīn*, *Al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh*, *Ṣawlah al-‘Aql ‘alā al-Hawā*, *Talbīs Iblīs*, and *Funūn al-Afnān fī ‘Uyūn ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān*. He passed away the year 597 A.H./1201 A.D. His life has been recorded by Abū Shāmah: *Al-Dhayl ‘alā al-Rawḍatayn*, pg. 21; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 3 pg. 140; Ibn al-Kathīr: *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 13 pg. 28.

And he attained such knowledge, by virtue of which he surpassed the people of his era.¹

Hereunder is a brief outline of his scholarly abilities under the various subjects he had mastered.

A. Exegesis of the Qur'ān (Tafsīr)

The talents of Imām al-Ṭabarī became apparent and his fame spread as result of his exegesis of the Noble Qur'ān titled, *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān*. Many scholars have praised his *Tafsīr*.

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī says:

لم يصنف احد مثله

No one has written the likes of it.²

Ibn Khuzaymah³ commented on it after reading the *Tafsīr* in its entirety that he knows no one on the earth more knowledgeable than Ibn Jarīr.⁴

1 Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 6 pg. 171.

2 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 163.

3 He is Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ibn Khuzaymah al-Sulamī. Ḥāfidh, Ḥujjah, Faqīh. Shaykh al-Islām and the Imām of Nīsāpūr in his era.

- Al-Dhahabī says, “He took to the sciences of ḥadīth and fiqh in his early years till he attained proficiency and deep knowledge therein by which similitudes would be given.”

Amongst his books are, *Al-Tawḥīd wa Ithbāt Šifah al-Rabb*, *Mukhtaṣar al-Mukhtaṣar* which is known as *Šaḥīḥ ibn Khuzaymah*, and *Fiqh Ḥadīth Barīrah*. He passed away the year 311 A.H/924 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* vol. 7 pg. 196; Al-Sahmī: *Tārīkh Jurjān*. Pg. 413; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 720; *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 14 pg. 365; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 2 pg. 130.

4 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 164.

‘Allāmah Abū Ḥāmid al-Isfirāyīnī¹ states:

ولو سافر رجل إلى الصين في تحصيل تفسير ابن جرير لم يكن كثيرا

If one travels to China in order to attain *Tafsīr ibn Jarīr*, it wouldn't be considered a great deal.²

Similarly al-Suyūṭī³ has placed it above all other commentaries attesting to it being the greatest tafsīr the like which has not been written. He says referring to Ibn Jarīr:

وله التصانيف العظيمة منها تفسير القرآن وهر أجل التفسير ولم يؤلف مثله ،

He has authored books of note, amongst them the tafsīr of the Qur'ān. It is the greatest tafsīr the likes of which has not been written.⁴

1 He is Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Isfirāyīnī, Abū Ḥāmid. From amongst the renowned Shafīṭī jurists.

- Shaykh Abū Ishāq says, “Mastery in the religious and secular sciences ended with him in Baghdad. He had disciples throughout the lands and his circle of learning boasted three hundred jurists.”
- Al-Khaṭīb says, “He was reliable.”

People would say that if al-Shafīṭī had seen him, he would have been impressed by him. He has written, *Al-Rawnaq fi al-Lughah* and has commentaries as well as footnotes on books of jurisprudence and its principles. He passed away the year 406 A.H/1016 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 4 pg. 368; Al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā*, pg. 123; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 1 pg. 72 and Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 2 pg. 24.

2 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 12 pg. 169; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 712.

3 He is ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abū Bakr Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī. Imām, Ḥāfidh, historian, and linguist. The books he has written amount to six hundred or so. The leaders and affluent would visit him presenting him with money and gifts, which he would return. The Sultan requested his presence on numerous occasions but he did not accede his request. He further sent many gifts to him which he returned. From amongst his great many books are, *Al-Aḥādīth al-Munīfah*, *Is'āf al-Mubatta'* fi Rijāl al-Muwaṭṭa', *Durr al-Saḥābah fi man Dakhal Miṣr min al-Ṣaḥābah*, *Al-Shamārīkh fi 'ilm al-Tārīkh*, *Mā Rawāh al-Asāfīn fi 'Adm al-Majī' ilā al-Sultān*, *Muḥamāt al-Aqrān fi Mubhamāt al-Qur'ān*, *Nuzhah al-Julāsā' fi Ash'ār al-Nisā'*, and *Mushtaha al-'Uqūl fi Muntaha al-Nuqūl*. He passed away the year 911 A.H/1505 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Sakhāwī: *Al-Daw' al-Lāmi'*, vol. 4 pg. 65; Ibn Iyās: *Badā'ī' al-Zuhūr*, vol. 1 pg. 226; Ibn al-'Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 8 pg. 51.

4 Al-Suyūṭī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, pg. 30.

This sentiment has been echoed by the entire fraternity of scholars. Hereunder are further testimonials by erudite scholars of the past.

Al-Nawawī¹ states in *Tahdhīb*²:

وذلك لأنه جمع بين الرواية والدراية

This is because he married the concepts of *riwāyah* and *dirāyah*³ in his *tafsīr*.

Al-Suyūṭī says:

ولم يشاركه في ذلك أحد لا قبله ولا بعده

No one had done so before him nor has anyone done so after him.⁴

Al-Dāwūdī⁵ says quoting Al-Farghānī in his *Tārīkh*:

فثم من كتبه كتاب تفسير القرآن ، وجوده وبين فيه أحكامه ، وناسخه ومنسوخه ، ومشكله وغريبه ، ومعانيه ، واختلاف أهل التأويل والعلماء في أحكامه ، والصحيح لديه من ذلك ، وإعراب حروفه ، والكلام على

1 He is Yaḥyā ibn Sharaf al-Ḥawrānī al-Nawawī, Abū Zakariyyā. Al-‘Allāmah. Faqīh, and Muḥaddith. Quṭub al-Dīn al-Nawawī, Abu Zakariyyā. Erudite scholar, jurist, and muḥaddith.

• Quṭub al-Dīn al-Yūnīnī says, “He was a unique force of knowledge, piety, worship, and abstinence in his era.”

He has authored, *Al-Taqrīb wa al-Taysīr*, *Khulāṣah al-Aḥkām*, *Al-Arba‘ūn Ḥadīth al-Nawawaiyyah*, *Tahdhīb al-Asmā’ wa al-Lughāt*, and *Manāqib al-Shafī’ī*. He passed away the year 676 A.H/1277 A.D. His life has recorded by Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, vol. 7 pg. 278; Ibn ‘Aṭīyyah al-Shubrākhītī: *Al-Futūḥāt al-Wahbiyyah bi Sharḥ Al-Arba‘īn Ḥadīth al-Nawawaiyyah*, pg. 2; and *Muqaddimah Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

2 *Tahdhīb al-Asmā’ wa al-Sifāt*, vol. 1 pg. 78.

3 ‘Ilm al-Riwāyah is studying the chain of narration whilst ‘Ilm al-Dirāyah pertains to the study of the narration.

4 Al-Suyūṭī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, pg. 20.

5 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad, Shams al-Dīn al-Dāwūdī al-Mālīkī, al-Miṣrī. One of the great scholars of ḥadīth in his era. He has written, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn* and *Dhayl Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘īyyah*. He passed away the year 945 A.H/1538 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-‘Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 8 pg. 264 and Ḥājī Khalīfah: *Kashf al-Zunūn*, vol. 2 pg. 1107.

الملحدين فيه ، والقصاص وأخبار الأئمة والقيامة وغير ذلك مما سواه من الحكم والعجائب كلمة كلمة ،
أية آية ،

And from amongst his books is the Exegesis of the Qur'ān. He has excelled in authoring the tafsīr. He has elucidated therein the injunctions, the abrogating and abrogated, the obscure and difficult, the meanings and scholastic differences whilst giving his own preference of the views presented. He has explained the diacritical marks, incidents, stories of nations, and future events such as the Day of Judgment. Besides the above he has expressed much detail in the various laws and miraculous happenings by dissecting each word and verse.¹

Al-Qāsim ibn 'Aqīl al-Warrāq² narrates that Abū Ja'far said to his students:

أتنشطون لتفسير القرآن - قالوا : كم يكون قدره - فقال : ثلاثون ألف ورقة ، فقالوا : هذا ما يقني الأعمار
قبل تماميه ، فاختصره في نحو ثلاثة آلاف ورقة

“Are you'll ready to write down a Tafsīr of the Qur'ān?”

They enquired as to how lengthy it would be.

“30 000 pages,” he replied.

They said, “This would take a long time and cannot be completed in one lifetime.”

He therefore made it concise and kept it to 3000 pages.³

Ibn Taymiyyah has presented the Tafsīr of Imām al-Ṭabarī as one of the only books of tafsīr wherein quotations of the pious predecessors have been complied with their chain of transmissions.⁴

1 Al-Dāwūdī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, vol. 6 pg. 111.

2 I did not find his profile amongst the available sources.

3 Al-Dāwūdī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, vol. 6 pg. 113.

4 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, vol. 6 pg. 389.

B. Ḥadīth

In the science of ḥadīth too, Imām al-Ṭabarī gained prominence due to his talent. He studied the noble ḥadīth under the masters of the science. He narrated much from the great ḥuffāz and muḥaddithīn; the teachers of al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and other authors of the canonical books.

He has authored *Tahdhīb al-Āthār* wherein he began with the narrations of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رضي الله عنه through his chain of narration commenting on each ḥadīth and if any, the impairing defects therein. He has also noted the jurisprudic angles to the narrations, the differences of scholars and each of their proofs, commentating on the meanings of the aḥādīth, and elucidating the obscure words. He concluded the compilation of the Ten Promised Paradise and the Ahl al-Bayt. However, he passed away before completing the book.¹

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī—a specialist ḥadīth scholar—honours him as a scholar of ḥadīth. He says:

كان .. عالما بالسنن وطرقها ، وصحيحها وسليمتها ، وناسخها ومنسوخها ، وله كتاب سماه تهذيب الآثار ، لم أر سواه في معناه إلا أنه لم يتمه

He was... a scholar of ḥadīth, its chains of transmissions, the authentic and weak, and the abrogating and abrogated. He had authored a book which he titled *Tahdhīb al-Āthār*. I have not seen the like of it. However, he did not complete it.²

Al-Dhahabī has considered him to be from amongst the 6th *ṭabaqah* (level) of narrators.

1 See, Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 14 pgs. 270-273; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 3 pg. 121. The book has been printed under the auspices of Jāmi'ah al-Imām Muḥammad ibn Sa'ūd, Riyadh in 4 volumes. Maḥmūd Muḥammad Shākir has worked on the citation and extraction of the narrations.

2 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 163.

He states:

وابن جرير ، وابن خزيمة ، وابن صاعد وعبد الرحمن بن أبي حاتم ، من رجال الطبقة السادسة

Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Khuzaymah, Ibn Ṣā'id¹, and 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Abī Ḥātim are from the narrators of the 6th ṭabaqah.²

Al-Nawawī has placed him in the ṭabaqah of al-Nasa'ī and al-Tirmidhī.³

Ibn Khallikān⁴ says:

إنه كان اماما في الحديث

He was a leading authority in ḥadīth.⁵

1 He is Yaḥyā ibn Muḥammad ibn Ṣā'id, Abū Muḥammad al-Baghdādī. From amongst the leading ḥuffāz of ḥadīth.

- Al-Dhahabī says, "Ibn Ṣā'id has substantial solid opinions regarding narrators and impairments which shows his vast knowledge."
- Abū 'Alī al-Nīsāpūrī says, "Amongst the contemporaries of Ibn Ṣā'id in Iraq there was no one of his understanding. We believe that understanding trumps memory. He is of a higher standing than Ibn Abī Dāwūd in understanding and memory."

He has written, *Al-Sunan* which is in order of the injunctions and *Musnad Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq*. He passed away the year 318 A.H. / 930 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 325; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 14 pg. 321; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 776; *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 14 pg. 501.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 715.

3 Al-Nawawī: *Tahdhīb al-Asmā' wa al-Lughāt*, vol. 1 pg. 78.

4 He is Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Khallikān al-Irbilī, Abū al-'Abbās. Historian and linguist. He took on the judicial chair of Shām as well as lecturing in many of the institutes of Dimashq during the period of al-Malik al-Zāhir. He passed away the year 681 A.H./1282 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Shākir al-Kutubī: *Fawāt al-Wafayāt*, vol. 1 pg. 55; by Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, vol. 7 pg. 353.

5 Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 4 pg. 191.

Al-Khaṭīb says, I heard Abū Ḥāzim ‘Umar ibn Aḥmad al-‘Abduwī¹ saying in Nīsāpūr²:

سمعت أبا حازم عمر بن أحمد العبدوي نيسابور يقول : سمعت حسينك واسمه الحسين بن علي التميمي يقول : لما رجعت من بغداد إلى نيسابور سألني محمد بن إسحاق بن خزيمة فقال لي : ممن سمعت بغداد ، يعني الحديث - فذكرت له جماعة ممن سمعت منهم ، فقال : هل سمعت من محمد بن جرير شيئا - فقلت له : لا إنه ببغداد لا يدخل عليه لأجل الحنابلة - وكانت تمنع منه - فقال : لو سمعت منه لكان خيرا لك من جميع من سمعت منه سواه

I heard Ḥusaynik; Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī al-Tamīmī³ saying:

When I returned from Baghdād to Nīsāpūr, Muḥammad ibn Ishāq ibn Khuzaymah asked me who I had heard hadith from in Baghdād. I mentioned a number of scholars to him whom I had heard from.

He said, “Did you hear anything from Muḥammad ibn Jarīr?”

I countered that I hadn’t as he in Baghdād is not permitted to be met due to the Ḥanābilah—who would bar meeting him.

He then said, “If you had heard from him it would have been better for you in comparison to all that you heard from everyone besides him.”⁴

1 He is ‘Umar ibn Aḥmad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abdwayh ibn Sadūs al-Hudhalī al-‘Abduwī al-Nīsāpūrī, Abū Ḥāzim. From amongst the ḥuffāz of ḥadīth.

- Al-Khaṭīb says, “He was reliable, honest, and a ḥāfidh.”
- Al-Dhahabī says, “He wrote narrations of high transmission and low. He gathered, extracted, and drew differences in the science of ḥadīth.”

He passed away the year 417 A.H./1026 A.D. His life has been recorded Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11 pg. 272; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 8 pg. 27; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 3 pg. 1072.

2 A city in Khurāsān. See al-Ḥumayrī: *Al-Rawḍ al-Mī‘ār fi Khabr al-Aqtār*.

3 He is Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī al-Tamīmī, Abū Aḥmad. He was known as Ḥusaynik. From the people of ḥadīth. He heard from Abū al-‘Abbās al-Sīraj and others. Al-Ḥākim and others narrate from him.

- Abū Bakr al-Barqānī says, “Ḥusaynik was a proof, reliable, and a great personality.

He passed away the year 375 A.H. /985 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 8 pg. 67; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 304.

4 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 164.

C. The Science of Qirā'ah

Imām al-Ṭabarī was an expert in the science of Qirā'ah. He attained his knowledge by the masters of the field in 'Irāq, Shām, and Egypt.¹ He kept himself within the ambit of the famous modes of recitation, relying on the chain of transmissions, his pure perception, and upon his deep insight into language and grammar.

He gathered his knowledge of this field and codified it into a book titled, *Al-Qirā'āt wa Tanzīl al-Qur'ān*. He recorded the differences of the Qurrā', the names of the various Qurrā' within the Islamic cities, and outlined the mode of each recitation together with its explanation and the preference of each reciter. He then selected, in his opinion, the correct mode based on proofs that stem from his expertise into language and tafsīr.²

Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī al-Ahwāzī states in his book *Al-Iqnā' fi Ihdā' Ashar Qirā'ah*, that Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī was a scholar of grammar, language, and the scales of poetry. He then says:

وله في القراءات كتاب جليل ذكر فيه جميع القراءات من المشهور والشواذ وعلل ذلك وشرحه ، واختار منها قراءة لم يخرج بها عن المشهور

He has authored a significant book in Qirā'āt wherein he has recorded all the famous and obscure modes of recitation. He has commentated on each and expounded on any impairments therein. He has selected from those such modes that are well within the recognised famous modes.³

D. Fiqh

Imām al-Ṭabarī paid special attention to the science of fiqh, making efforts to acquire it from a young age. His travels in seeking knowledge was a catalyst for

1 See, pgs. 169-167.

2 Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 18 pg. pgs. 45- 65.

3 Ibid, vol. 18 pg. 65.

his profound understanding of the opinions held by the jurists and authorities in Islamic law (*mujtahidīn*), the judgments passed by the judges and legal experts that were his contemporaries and those prior to his era. This left him with a deep insight into *fiqh* with a comprehensive awareness of the positions of consensus and a familiarity of the differences held in injunctions. He thus became a authority in Islamic law, i.e. he developed enough mass in Islamic law to attract other seekers of the same.

Abū Bakr ibn Kāmil¹ says:

لم أر بعد أبي جعفر أجمع للعلم وكتب العلماء ومعرفة اختلاف الفقهاء وتمكنه من العلوم منه

I have not seen anyone after Abū Ja'far who was more knowledgeable, had a greater understanding of the books of the scholars and the differences of the jurists, and held such deep insight into the sciences.²

Imām al-Ṭabarī studied the *fiqh* of the various recognised schools of thought. Ibn al-Nadīm says, “He studied the Zāhirī *fiqh* at the hands of Dāwūd al-Zāhirī³,

1 He is Aḥmad ibn Kāmil ibn Shajarah ibn Manṣūr al-Qāḍī al-Baghdādī. His teknonym is Abū Bakr. He is one of the students of Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī. He was a scholar of the battles, injunctions, sciences of the Qur'ān, grammar, poetry, and the history of the narrators of ḥadīth. He was the judge of Kūfah. He has written, *Al-Qirā'āt*, *Mūjiz al-Ta'wīl 'an Ḥukm al-Tanzīl*, *Al-Tārīkh*, *Ummahāt al-Mu'minīn*, and *Akhbār al-Quḍāt*. He passed away the year 350 A.H/961 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 1 pg. 357; Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 4 pg. 104; Al-Qaṭī: *Inbā' al-Ruwāt 'alā Anbā' al-Nuḥāt*, vol. 1 pgs. 132-133; Al-Qurashī: *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, vol. 1 pg. 90.

2 Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 8 pg. 75.

3 He is Dāwūd ibn 'Alī ibn Khalf al-Aṣbahānī, Abū Sulaymān. Famously known as Al-Zāhirī. One of the Imām's of *ijtihād*. The Zāhiriyyah school of thought is attributed to him. They are known as such as they take the *Zāhir* (literal) meanings of the Qur'ān and aḥādīth, not delving into explanations, opinion, and or deductive analogy. He has written many books in *fiqh* and others in principles of *fiqh*. Amongst them are, *Al-Khayr al-Mūjib li al-'ilm*, *Al-Khuṣūṣ wa al-'Umūm*, *Al-Mufassar wa al-Mujmal*, *Al-Ijmā'*, and *Ibtāl al-Qiyās*. He passed away the year 270 A.H/884 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 33; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 8 pg. 369; Al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, pg. 92; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol.13 pg. 97; *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 572.

the Shafi'ī fiqh from al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Za'farānī, the Mālikī fiqh from Yūnus ibn 'Abd al-A'lā, and the fiqh of the people of Iraq from Muḥammad ibn Muqātil al-Rāzī¹ in Ray.²

He took to Shafi'ī fiqh and gained a comparatively deeper insight into it, resulting in him passing legal verdicts according to the Shafi'ī school of thought. He says regarding himself:

أظهرت فقه الشافعي ، وأفتيت به ببغداد عشر سنين ، وتلقته مني ابن بشار الأحول أستاذ أبي العباس بن
سريج

I took to Shafi'ī fiqh and passed legal verdicts in accordance with it for a period of 10 years in Baghdad. Ibn Basshār al-Aḥwal³, the teacher of Abū al-'Abbās ibn Surayj⁴, studied it under my tutelage.⁵

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Muqātil al-Rāzī. He heard from the great muḥaddithīn and was a jurist of note. He passed away the year 248 A.H/862 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Qurashī: *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, vol. 2 pg. 134; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 5 pg. 388; *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 469.

2 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 326. Between Ray and Nīsāpūr is the distance of approximately 860 km. See, Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 3 pg. 116.

3 He is 'Uthmān ibn Sa'īd ibn Basshār, Abū al-Qāsim al-Aḥwal al-Anmāṭī. He was one of the jurists of the Shafi'ī madhab. He passed away the year 288 A.H/900 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11 pg. 292; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 3 pg. 123.

4 He is Aḥmad ibn 'Umar ibn Surayj al-Baghdādī, Abū al-'Abbās. A Shafi'ī jurist of his era. He was appointed as judge of Shīrāz. Ibn Khallikān has recorded that it used to be said regarding him in his time period, 'Verily Allah ﷻ sent 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz at the turn of the century to celebrate every sunnah practice and destroy every innovation. Allah ﷻ favoured the turn of the second century by Imām al-Shafi'ī who celebrated every sunnah and supressed every innovation. And Allah ﷻ favoured the turn of the third century by you. You gave strength to every sunnah and weakened every innovation. He has written many books. Amongst them are, *Al-Taqrīb bayn al-Muzanī wa al-Shafi'ī*, *Al-Wadā' li Manṣūṣ al-Sharā'ī*, and *Al-Radd 'alā Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn*. He passed away the year 306 A.H/918 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 299; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 4 pg. 287; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A'yān*, vol. 6 pg. 66; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 2 pg. 87.

5 Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 15 pg. 167; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 3 pg. 123.

However, his deep insight and vast knowledge of fiqh qualified him to be an independent authority in Islamic law. Consequently, he initiated a school of thought of his own; an Imām with followers. He authored a book that outlined his school of thought and included the proofs he relied on.

Al-Suyūṭī says:

وكان أولاً شافعياً ثم انفرد بمذهب مستقل وأفاويل واختيارات ، وله أتباع ومقلدون ، وله في الأصول والفروع كتب كثيرة

He adhered to the Shafīṭ school of thought initially. Thereafter, he initiated an independent school of thought with his own opinions. He had followers that adhered to him and he had authored many books in legal principles and verdicts.¹

The school of thought of Imām al-Ṭabarī gained prominence in Baghdad with many adherents and supporters. Many scholars studied his opinions and wrote books on them. Amongst the more famous is Abū al-Farj al-Mu‘āfi ibn Zakariyyā al-Naharwānī². He was known as al-Jarīrī; an attribution to the school of thought of Abū Ja‘far. His madhhab spread and his books were memorised.

1 Al-Suyūṭī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, pg. 30.

2 Al-Mu‘āfi ibn Zakariyyā ibn Yaḥyā al-Jarīrī al-Naharwānī, Abū al-Farj. Judge, linguist, and jurist. He is known as al-Jarīrī as he was adherent to the madhhab of Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī.

- Ibn al-Nadīm says, “He was unique in his era as an adherent to the madhhab of Abū Ja‘far. He memorized his books and was a polymath. Extremely intelligent, had an amazing memory, and was witty.”

He has written amongst other books, *Al-Jalīs wa al-Anīs*, *Al-Ḥudūd wa al-Uqūd*, *Al-Radd ‘alā Abī Yaḥyā al-Balkhī fī Iftirāq al-Imā’*, *Al-Muḥāwarah*, and *Al-Bayān al-Mūjiz ‘an ‘ulūm al-Qur‘ān al-Mūjiz*. He passed away the year 390 A.H/1000 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 328; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 328; Al-Zabīdī: *Tāj al-Urūs min Jawāhir al-Qāmūs*, vol. 3 pg. 359.

Amongst his adherents is Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Munajjam¹, Abū Bakr ibn Kāmil and others². Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā al-Munajjam has authored the book *Al-Madkhal ilā Madhab al-Ṭabarī*.

However, the followers of Imām al-Ṭabarī did not grow exponentially, as was the case with the other schools of thought. The result of this was that this school of thought was short lived, not gaining any traction past the 5th century Hijrī.³

Imām al-Ṭabarī produced many works in the science of fiqh which is a definitive indication to his prominence and talent in this field. Amongst these works are, *Laṭīf al-Qawl fi Aḥkām Sharāi' al-Islām* which is thought to be one of his best works. It outlines his entire madhhab and the its proofs. It is also considered to be the amongst the greatest books authored on the principles of a school of thought.

Abū Bakr ibn Ramīk⁴ says:

ما عمل كتاب في مذهب أجدود من كتاب ((اللطيف)) ، لأبي جعفر

No book has been authored in any madhhab that surpasses *Al-Laṭīf* of Abū Ja'far.⁵

1 He is Abū al-Ḥasan Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Manṣūr al-Munajjam al-Nadīm. Linguist, poet, and jurist. From amongst the companions of Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī and one who had attained a deep understanding of his madhhab. He has written amongst other books, *Al-Ijmā' fi al-Fiqh 'alā madhhab ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī*, *Al-Madkhal ilā Madhhab al-Ṭabarī wa Nuṣrah Madhhabih*, and *Kitāb al-Awqāt*. He passed away the year 300 A.H/912 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 205; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 215; Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 2 pgs. 28-29; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 1 pg. 324.

2 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pgs. 327-328.

3 Ibn Farḥūn: *Al-Dībāj al-Madhab*, vol. 1 pg. 62.

4 I did not find his profile amongst the readily available sources.

5 Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 18 pg. 73.

Another book of note is, *Ikhtilāf al-Fuqahā*. He mentioned in it the opinions of some of the jurists like Mālik, Abū Ḥanīfah, and Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī.¹ Yaqūt² has named this work *Ikhtilāf al-Amṣār fī Aḥkām Sharāi' al-Islām*.³

1 He is Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Farqad Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Shaybānī al-Kufī. The jurist of Iraq.

- Imām al-Shafi'ī says, "I have not seen any man with greater knowledge pertaining to the permissible and impermissible, the abrogating and abrogated, and the deeper impairments than Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan. If I wish, I could say that the Qur'ān had been revealed in the dialect of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan due to his eloquence."
- Al-Dhahabī says, "He took on the position of chief justice for Al-Rashīd after Qāḍī Abū Yūsuf. Together with his deep insight into fiqh, similitudes were drawn by his intelligence."
- Imām Aḥmad was once asked, "Where have you attained these intricate injunctions?" He replied, "From the books of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan."

The quality and detail of the works he produced are indicative of his high rank. Amongst his books are, *Al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaḡhūr*, *Al-Aṣl*, *Al-Āthār*, and *Al-Siyar al-Kabīr* which is thought to be the first work produced on international relations. This has led many researchers, domestic and foreign, to celebrate Imām Muḥammad as the father of International Law preceding even Hugo Grotius and others. In celebration and recognition of this fact, a group of distinguished scholars and specialists in international law established the 'Al-Shaybānī Society for International Law' in Göttingen, Germany. Imām Muḥammad and Al-Kisā'ī both passed away on the same day having left with Al-Rashīd to Ray. It has been narrated that Al-Rashīd was shaken by their deaths and said, 'I have buried jurisprudence and grammar in Ray.' This was in the year, 189 A.H/804 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma'n: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 511; Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* vol. 7 pg. 227; Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 287; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 172; Al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā*, pg. 135; and Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 4 pg. 184.

2 He is Yaqūt ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Rūmī al-Ḥamawī, Abū 'Abd Allāh. Historian, linguist, geographer and scholar familiar with the shaping of territories. The author of *Tārīkh Irbil* mentions that he initially lived in Khawarizm but left after what occurred between the Tatar and Sulṭān Muḥammad ibn Tekish Khawārizmī Shah. Amongst his works are, *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, *Mu'jam al-Shu'arā'*, *Al-Mabda' wa al-Ma'āl*, *Kitāb al-Duwal*, and *Al-Muqtaḍab*. He passed away the year 626 A.H/1229 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Mustawfā': *Tārīkh Irbil*, vol. 1 pg. 319; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 6 pg. 127; Al-Yāfi'ī: *Mir'āt al-Jinān*, vol. 4 pg. 59.

3 Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 18 pg. 72. This book has been published with the annotations of Dr Frederik Kirn by Zinco-graph Al Tarakī, Egypt.

E. History

On the subject of history, Imām al-Ṭabarī has authored a book titled, *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, a historical work distinguished by its comprehensiveness and immense size in comparison to other notable works by Muslim historians. He has secured a large number of narrations and records therein from principle sources that have been lost. It has thus assumed a principle source in the post-Ṭabarī era for historians such as Mas‘ūdī, Ibn al-Athīr¹, and Ibn Khaldūn.

Al-Qāsim ibn ‘Aqīl al-Warrāq narrates that Abū Ja‘far said to his students:

أنشطون لتاريخ العالم إلى وقتنا هذا - فقالوا : كم يكون قدره - فذكر نحو مما ذكر في التفسير - أي ثلاثون ألف ورقة - فأجابوه يمثل ذلك - أي قالوا : هذا مما يفني الأعمار قبل تمامه - فقال : إنا لله ، مائت الهمم ، فاخصره في نحو ما اختصر التفسير

“Are you’ll ready to write down a universal history up to the current era?”

They enquired as to how lengthy it would be.

He mentioned it would be similar to what he had mentioned regarding the tafsīr, i.e. 30,000 pages.

They said as they had said regarding the tafsīr, “This would take a long time and cannot be completed in one lifetime.”

He said, “To Allah do we belong! It seems as though aspirations have died.”

He therefore made it concise as he had done with the tafsīr.²

1 He is ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn ‘Abd al-Wāḥid al-Shaybānī al-Jazrī, ‘Iz al-Dīn ibn al-Athīr, Abū al-Ḥasan. He was a scholar of history, genealogy, and language. Amongst his books are, *Al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, *Usd al-Ghābah fī Ma‘rifah al-ṣaḥābah*, and *Al-Lubāb fī Tahdhīb al-Ansāb*. One should not confuse him with Ibn al-Athīr the muḥaddith. He passed away the year 630 A.H/1233 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, vol. 3 pg. 348; and Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyyah*, vol. 5 pg. 127.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 712.

It should be noted that the book under discussion received much attention from the scholars and historians alike throughout the ages. Yaqūt mentions that Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad al-Mughallis¹, a respected scholar, would say:

ما عمل أحد في تاريخ الزمان وحصر الكلام فيه مثل ما عمله أبو جعفر

No one has produced a work of universal history in a comprehensive manner as done by Abū Ja‘far.²

Ibn Khallikān has lauded the historical knowledge of Imām al-Ṭabarī stating him to be a master polymath. He mentions that amongst the fields in which he excelled was history. Ibn Khallikān states:

وكان ثقة في نقله ، وتاريخه أصح التواريخ وأثبتها

He was reliable in narrating history. His *Tārīkh* is the most authentic and accurate.³

Yes, praising his reliability in narrating is on spot, however; saying that his *Tārīkh* is the most authentic and accurate is problematic. The methodology of Imām al-Ṭabarī is one of impartiality. He produced a work that gathers narrations and accounts without delving into explaining or examining any of it leaving the reader with differing accounts. The reader would then determine the correct version of events based on the strength and weakness of the narrators. Furthermore, the same yardstick would be used to determine the authenticity of narrations presented.

1 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Mughallis al-Baghdādī, Abū al-Ḥasan. A jurist of the Zāhirī school of thought. Amongst his books are, *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, *Al-Ṭalāq*, and *Al-Walā’*. He passed away the year 324 A.H/936 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 306; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 9 pg. 385; Al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā*, pg. 150; and Abū al-Fidā’: *Al-Mukhtaṣar fi Akhbār al-Bashar*, vol. 2 pg. 90.

2 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pgs. 68 – 69.

3 Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 4 pg. 191.

Therefore, authenticity in this context—as stated by Ibn Khallikān—will be taken to mean authenticity in narrating and sourcing the principle narrator. This is the only suitable explanation as Al-Ṭabarī, at times, produces opposing accounts of a single incident.

F. Linguistics

Imām al-Ṭabarī excelled in the fields of linguistics. He was well-versed in grammar, morphology, rhetoric, literature, poetry, and the scales of poetry. His discussions on grammar, morphology, and rhetoric in his *Tafsīr* is indicative of this.

He was also a poet and has been included by Al-Qaṭṭī¹ in his book *Al-Muḥammadūn min al-Shu‘arā’*. He has also reproduced some of his poetry in the same book.²

‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabarī recalls his memorising of poetry in the following words:

وكان يحفظ من الشعر للجاهلية والإسلام ما لا يجهره إلا جاهل به

He would memorise pre-Islamic and Islamic poetry. This fact would be unknown to only one unfamiliar to him.³

1 He is ‘Alī ibn Yūsuf ibn Ibrāhīm al-Shaybānī al-Qaṭṭī, Abū al-Ḥasan. Vizier, historian, and author. He took on the position of judge for Malik al-Zāhir at Aleppo. Malik ‘Abd al-‘Azīz later made him a vizier in the year 633 A.H/1235 A.D. Amongst his books are, *Ikhbār al-‘Ulamā’ bi Akhbār al-Ḥukamā’*, *Inbāh al-Ruwāt ‘alā Anbāh al-Nuḥāt*, *Akhbār Miṣr*, *Tārīkh al-Yemen*, *Akhbār al-Muṣannifīn wa mā Ṣannafūhu*, *Iṣlāḥ Khalal al-Ṣiḥāh li al-Jawharī*, and *Al-Muḥammadūn min al-Shu‘arā’*. He passed away the year 646 A.H/1248 A.D. His life has been recorded by Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 15 pg. 145/204; Ibn al-Qūṭī: *Al-Hawādith al-Jāmi‘ah wa al-Tajārib al-Nāfi‘ah fi al-Mi‘ah al-Sābi‘ah*, pg. 237; Al-Adfūy: *Al-Ṭālī‘ al-Sa‘īd al-Jāmi‘ li Asmā’ al-Fuḍalā’ wa al-Ruwāt bi al-Ṣa‘īd*, pg. 237.

2 Al-Qaṭṭī: *Al-Muḥammadūn min al-Shu‘arā’*, vol. 1 pg. 223.

3 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 60.

Abū ‘Amr al-Zāhid¹ says:

سمعت ثعلبا يقول : قرأ علي أبو جعفر الطبري شعر الشعراء قبل أن يكثر الناس عندي بمدة طويلة

I heard Tha‘labi saying, “Abū Ja‘far recited poetry of the poets to me long before people flocked to me.”²

Abū Bakr ibn Mujāhid³ says:

قال أبو العباس - ثعلب - يوما : من بقي عندكم - يعني في الجانب الشرقي ببغداد من النحويين - فقلت : ما بقي أحد ، مات الشيخ ، فقال : حتى خلا جانبكم - قلت : نعم ، إلا أن يكون الطبري الفقيه ، فقال لي : ابن جرير قلت : نعم ، قال : ذاك من حذاق الكوفيين . قال أبو بكر : وهذا من أبي العباس كثير ، لأنه شديد النفس ، شرس الأخلاق ، و كان قليل الشهادة لأحد بالحدق في علمه

Abū al-‘Abbās — Tha‘lab — said one day, “Who remains by you?” meaning grammarians in the east of Baghdad.

I replied, “No one remains. The greats have passed on.”

He said, “So, it remains deserted?”

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Hamdān Abū ‘Amr Al-Zāhid al-Nīsāpūrī. He is famed as the muḥaddith of Nīsāpūr. He was a scholar of ḥadīth, grammar, and Qirā‘āt.

• Al-Dhahabī says, “An ascetic, reliable.”

He has written the book, *Al-Fawā'id*. He passed away the year 378 A.H/988 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Dhahabī: *Mizān al-Itidāl*, vol. 3 pg. 457; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘īyah*, vol. 2 pg. 107; Al-Suyūṭī: *Bughyah al-al-Wu‘āh*, pg. 9.

2 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 60.

3 He is Aḥmad ibn Mūsā ibn al-‘Abbās ibn Mujāhid al-Tamīmī al-Baghdādī. Famously known as Ibn Mujāhid, Abū Bakr, reciter, scholar of ḥadīth and grammar.

• Al-Khaṭīb says, “He was the leader of the Qurrā’ in his era and surpassed all those in his time period.”

Amongst his books are, *Qirā‘ah al-Nabī* صلى الله عليه وسلم, *Al-Qirā‘āt al-Kabīr*, *Qirā‘ah Ibn ‘Amr*, *Qirā‘ah ‘Āsim*, *Qirā‘ah Ḥamzah*, *Qirā‘ah Nāfi’*, *Qirā‘ah al-Kisā‘ī*, *Kitāb al-Yā‘āt*, and *Kitāb al-Hā‘āt*. He passed away the year 324 A.H/936 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 47; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 144; Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 5 pg. 65; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘īyah*, vol. 2 pg. 102.

I said, “Yes, except for Al-Ṭabarī, the jurist.”

He inquired, “Ibn Jarīr?”

I said, “Yes.”

He commented, “He is one of the most sagacious Kūfī (grammarians).”

Abū Bakr says, “This was an admiration of the highest form from Abū al-‘Abbās as he was extremely critical and cantankerous. He would seldom attest to the sagaciousness of any person’s knowledge.”¹

G. Sciences of Philosophy, Logic, Dialectics, Mathematics, Algebra, and Medicine

Imām al-Ṭabarī had taken great strides in acquiring the various sciences prevalent in his era. Though he did not attain brilliance in every such science, he was certainly versed to a certain degree in them. His achievements in the fields of Islamic scholastic theology and dialectics is apparent from his dismantling of the ideas he did not agree with. This can be seen quite clearly in his works *Al-Taḥfīf* and *Ikhtilāf al-Fuqahā’*.

‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabarī says in this regard:

وكان له قدم في علم الجدل ، بدل على ذلك مناقضاته في كتبه على المعارضين المعاني ما أتى به

He was well versed in dialectics as is apparent from the arguments he has constructed against his opposition.²

1 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Uḍabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 60.

2 Ibid, vol. 18 pg. 60.

He was, similarly, well versed in philosophy. His student Abū Bakr ibn Kāmil mentions that he studied the book *Firdaws al-Ḥikmah*¹ from the author²; ‘Alī ibn Sahl al-Ṭabarī³.

As for mathematics, algebra, medicine, and logic, ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabarī relates that he had studied these sciences and had garnered a large amount of medicinal knowledge. His texts in *Al-Waṣāyā* are clear in relating this.⁴

‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabarī commenting on his firm grasp over the afore mentioned sciences notes that one reading his works would think him to be an authority in that particular subject under review. He says:

وكان كالقارئ الذي لا يعرف إلا القرآن ، وكالمحدث الذي لا يعرف إلا الحديث ، و كالفقيه الذي لا يعرف إلا الفقه ، و كالنحوي الذي لا يعرف إلا النحو ، و كالحاسب الذي لا يعرف إلا الحساب ، و كان ...
جامعا للعلوم ، وإذا جمعت بين كتبه وكتب غيره وجدت لكة فضلا على غيرها

He was like a reciter who did not know anything besides the Qur’ān, like a muḥaddith who did not know anything besides ḥadīth, like a jurist who did not know anything besides fiqh, like a grammarian who did not know anything besides grammar, like a mathematician who did not know anything besides mathematics, he was... a polymath. Comparing his works to the works of others, his works produced appear superior.⁵

1 Al-Baghdādī mentions this in *Hadiyyah al-‘Ārifin fi Asmā’ al-Muallifin wa Āthār al-Muṣannifin*, vol. 5 pg. 669.

2 ‘Alī ibn Sahl al-Ṭabarī, Abū al-Ḥasan. Physician and professor of medicine. He was a Jew who became a Muslim at the hands of Al-Mu‘taṣim al-‘Abbāsī. He was alive before the year 227 A.H/841 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Usaybi‘ah: *‘Uyūn al-Anbā’ fi Ṭabaqāt al-Aṭibbā’*, pg. 414; Al-Qaṭṭī: *Tārīkh al-Ḥukamā’*, pg. 128.

3 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 92.

4 Ibid, vol. 18 pg. 61.

5 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 61.

II. His reliability and the praise of scholars for him.

A large number of erudite scholars; masters in ḥadīth, fiqh, literature, and history have praised Imām Abū Ja'far. They have extolled his high rank, his faith, piety, sincerity, honesty, and nobility. Hereunder are a small number of quotations from scholars who have applauded him and his talents:

Abū al-ʿAbbās ibn Surayj:

محمد بن جرير الطبري فقيه العالم

Muḥammad Jarīr al-Ṭabarī; jurist of the world.¹

Imām ibn Khuzaymah:

وما أعلم على أديم الأرض - يعني في عصره - أعلم من محمد بن جرير ، ولقد ظلمته الحنابلة

I do not know of anyone more knowledgeable than Muḥammad ibn Jarīr, in his era. The Ḥanābilah had oppressed him.²

Abū Bakr ibn Kāmil al-Qāḍī:

لم أر بعد ابن جرير أجمع للعلم وكتب العلماء ومعرفة اختلاف الفقهاء وتمكنه من العلوم منه

I have not seen anyone after Ibn Jarīr who was more knowledgeable, had a greater understanding of the books of the scholars and the differences of the jurists, and held such deep insight into the sciences.³

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī:

1 Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'īyyah*, vol. 3 pg. 123

2 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 166.

3 Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 18 pg. 75.

وكان الطبري أحد أئمة العلماء يحكم بقوله ويرجع إلى رأيه بمعرفته وفضله . وكان قد جمع من العلوم ما لم يشاركه فيه أحد من أهل عصره ، و كان حافظا لكتاب الله ، عارفا بالقراءات ، ففيها في أحكام القرآن ، عالم بالسنن وطرقها ، وصححها وسقيمها ، ناسخها ومنسوخها ، عارفا بأقوال الصحابة والتابعين ومن بعدهم من المخالفين في الأحكام ومسائل الحلال والحرام ، عارفا بأيام الناس وأخبارهم

Al-Ṭabarī was one of the leading scholars. His opinions were decisive and his views held in high esteem due to his precedence. He had acquired knowledge, surpassing one and all in his era. He had memorized the Book of Allah and was well acquainted with the different modes of recital. A jurist of the Qur'ānic injunctions, scholar of ḥadīth its chains of transmission, authentic and weak, abrogating and abrogated. He was fully aware of the opinions of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, Ṭābi'īn, and those that came after them in the injunctions, laws, permissible, and impermissible. He also had insight into the accounts and tales of the earlier societies.¹

Al-Isfirāyīnī²:

ولم يكن في جميع ما نسب إليه شيء من أصول التفسير من وقت الصحابة إلى يومنا هذا من تلوث بشيء من مذاهب القدرية والخوارج الروافض - ثم يعدد المفسرين من أهل السنة فيقول - إلى أن انتهت النوبة إلى محمد بن جرير واقترانه

The principles of tafsīr from the time of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم up to this day and the material therein are not muddled by other sects such as the Qadriyyah, Khawārij, and Rawāfiḍ. [After listing the commentators of the Ahl al-Sunnah he says,] and so excellence in this field ends with Muḥammad ibn Jarīr and his contemporaries.³

Ibn Khallikān:

1 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2, pg. 163.

2 He is not to be confused with Abū Ḥāmid al-Isfirāyīnī. He is known as Abū al-Muẓaffar Shāhḥūr ibn Ṭāhir. Author of *Al-Tabṣīr fi al-Dīn*. He passed away the year 471 A.H./1078 A.D.

3 Al-Isfirāyīnī: *Al-Tabṣīr fi al-Dīn wa Tamyīz Furqah al-Nājjiyah 'an al-Hālikīn*, pg. 172.

إن الإمام ابن جرير كان إماما في فنون كثيرة منها التفسير والحديث والفقه والتاريخ وغير ذلك

Imām ibn Jarīr was a leading scholar in many sciences such as tafsīr, ḥadīth, fiqh, history, and others.¹

Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī²:

وهو الإمام الجليل المجتهد أحد أئمة الدنيا علما ودينا

He is the great Imām, independent authority, and one of the leading scholars of the world in knowledge and practice.³

Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī:

كان ثقة صادقا حافظا رأسا في التفسير ، إماما في الفقه والإجماع والاختلاف ، علامة في التاريخ وأيام الناس ، عارفا بالقراءات وباللغة وغير ذلك

He was reliable, honest, a ḥāfiẓ, and a giant in tafsīr. An Imām in fiqh; in issues of consensus and contention. A erudite scholar of history and well versed in the modes of recital, linguistics and other sciences.⁴

1 Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 4 pg. 191.

2 He is 'Abd al-Wahhāb ibn 'Alī ibn 'Abd al-Kāfi al-Subkī al-Miṣrī, Abū Naṣr. Jurist, historian, and judge. He faced great difficulties and challenges when he was judge. Amongst his books are *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah al-Kubrā'*, *Mu'īd al-Ni'am wa Mubīd al-Niqam*, *Tawshīḥ al-Taṣhīḥ*, and *Al-Ashbāh wa al-Nazā'ir*. He passed away the year 771 A.H/1370 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. 2 pg. 425; Al-Suyūṭī: *Ḥusn al-Muḥaḍarah*, vol. 1 pg. 182.

3 Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 3 pg. 120.

4 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 14 pg. 270.

Section Three

The Smear Campaign of Rafḍ Against Him.

Establishing His True Creed.¹

- I. The principle groups that accused him of Rafḍ
- II. The principle reasons that led to the accusations and discussions of Rafḍ in relation to him.
- III. Comparing his views with that of the Shī'ah.

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Imām al-Ṭabarī was tormented, just as other scholars of his era were, of being framed by accusations against their beliefs that were both bogus and false. Falsities were attributed to them, of which they had no association. These were based solely on maliciousness, fanaticism, and a coordinated attack by immoral degenerates. Imām al-Ṭabarī was accused of Rafḍ² by his enemies in order to smear

1 For further reading see, Aḥmad al-'Awāyishah: *Al-Imām ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī wa Difā'uhu an 'Aqīdah al-Salaf*.

2 The term Rafḍ is used to describe those Shī'ah who harbor enmity for Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما. Imām Aḥmad was asked, "Who are the Rawāfiḍ?" He replied, "Those who curse Abū Bakr and 'Umar." This sect is also called the Rāfiḍah due to them having rejected Zayd ibn 'Alī bin al-Ḥusayn; a man who celebrated the khilāfah of Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما, as they consider them to have usurped the khilāfah from 'Alī رضي الله عنه and not having fulfilled the wish of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم who—according to their understanding—granted Imamate to 'Alī رضي الله عنه at Ghadīr Khumm. Extremism of this sort is termed as Rafḍ and its adherents are known as the Rawāfiḍ or the Rāfiḍah. In the early Islamic period there was a distinction between the Rawāfiḍ and the Shī'ah. The latter were those who supported 'Alī رضي الله عنه and were with him in the Battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn. They harbored no ill towards Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما, did not support the idea of preference of 'Alī رضي الله عنه over Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما, and weren't embroiled in cursing 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه as was common amongst the Rawāfiḍ. This group of Shī'ah as defined above consisted of the Ṣaḥābah, Ṭābi'īn, and great scholars and noble men of the past. See, Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, vol. 4 pgs. 435-436/ 470. Those termed as Shī'ah in the early period had no qualms regarding the greater status of Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما. continued

his position, reputation, and reliability. This route of attack was adopted since the Shī'ah Rawāfiḍ are a sect well known for their instability, being dominated by their carnal self, and falling wayward from the true Islamic creed.¹

It should be noted that Imām al-Ṭabarī was not the first of the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah to have been accused of Rafḍ and neither was he the last to endure such slanders. Many of the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah were slandered by such untruths such as Al-Ḥākim, Al-Dāraquṭnī, and others.

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It is no wonder that Sharīk ibn 'Abd Allāh says, "The most noble of people after Rasūlullāh ﷺ are Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنه." It was said to him, "You say this though you are a Shī'ah?" He replied, "Every person that ascribed themselves to the Shī'ah said the same. In fact, it is the very same thing 'Alī رضي الله عنه said on the pulpit. Should we then belie him!" Ibid, vol. 13 pg. 34. Ibn Shawdhab narrates from al-Layth ibn Abī Salīm who says, "I encountered the early Shī'ah in Kūfah. Not a single one of them gave preference to 'Alī رضي الله عنه over Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنه. Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pg. 441. The Shī'ah of the latter and contemporary times and Shī'ism in its current form is essentially Rafḍ as stated by Ibn Ḥajar. See, *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1 pg. 93.

1 The Rāfiḍah did not hold their deviances to the extent of vilifying the khilāfah of Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنه. They went much further in attempts to unravel the fundamental basis of the Islamic creed. They hold the opinion that interpolation had occurred in the texts of the Qur'ān. One of their great scholars, Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad Taqī al-Nawawī al-Ṭabarsī, has authored a book to this effect wherein he gathered hundreds of texts of the Shī'ah scholars and law makers over the centuries who opine that interpolation had occurred in the Qur'ān. This book is entitled *Faṣl al-Khiṭāb fī Tahriḥ Kitāb Rabb al-Arbāb* and had been published in Iran the year 1289 A.H./1872 A.D. Furthermore, they reject the second fundamental source of Islamic teachings; the Aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. They do not accept the aḥādīth that have been recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, nor those which the scholars of the ummah have relied upon throughout the ages. Similarly, they believe in the infallibility of their Imāms, holding them to a higher status than that of the Prophets عليهم السلام, proclaiming their Imāms as knowers of the unseen, and in control of their own death. To add to this, they vilify the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and consider all of them as having turned apostate besides a few, viz. 'Alī, Al-Miqdād, Abū Dharr, Salmān, and 'Ammār ibn Yāsir رضي الله عنه. Other than these, the Rāfiḍah hold many erroneous and fringe beliefs regarding the fundamentals of Islam. For further reading see, Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Fatāwā*; Iḥsān Ilāhī Ḥaḥīr: *Al-Shī'ah wa al-Sunnah*; Dr. 'Abd Allāh al-Gharīb: *Wijā' Dawr al-Majūs*; Muḥib al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb: *Al-Khuṭūṭ al-'Arīḍah li al-Asas allatī Qāma 'Alayhā Dīn al-Imāmiyyah Al-Ithnay 'Ashariyyah*.

This slander should be also considered in the context of the era wherein Imām al-Ṭabarī lived. An era that was dominated by ideological differences and political upheaval¹ which resulted in smear campaigns of innovation being the order of the day. This was especially prevalent between contemporary scholars of that time who had scholastic differences.

All in all, we shall address the principle groups that slandered Imām al-Ṭabarī with the accusation of Rafḍ, followed by discussing and dissecting the reasons that led to the slander, and concluding with a comparison between his views and that of the Shī'ah. Differences in views vast and irreconcilable will become clear leaving no doubt that the accusation levelled against him was nothing more than a lie.

I. The principle groups that accused him of Rafḍ

Many groups have contributed to the accusation of Rafḍ levelled against Imām al-Ṭabarī; in the former and latter time periods. Amongst these, the most notable are:

A. The Ḥanābilah

The prejudice of some of the Ḥanābilah had an immense effect on the accusations of Rafḍ against Imām al-Ṭabarī. He faced violent attacks from a group of the Ḥanābilah who credited him with opinions contrary to that of the predecessors; eventually accusing him of Rafḍ. The factuality of this opposition is cemented by the exoneration of Imām al-Ṭabarī expressed by himself his work *Sarīḥ al-Sunnah*. His awareness of the fact that certain factions accused him of holding views contrary to the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah was the catalyst for him outlining his creed and beliefs in this work. He tackled every opinion that had been attributed to him wherein he had allegedly contradicted the Ahl al-Sunnah by first defining

1 Refer to the last section of *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* as well as *Al-Fakhrī fī al-Adab* by Ibn al-Ṭaqaṭī, pgs. 237-269.

the belief according to the creed of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah after which he would follow it up with the statement reproduce hereunder:

فمن تجاوز ذلك فقد خاب وخسر وضل وهلك ، فليبلغ الشاهد منكم أيها الناس من بعد ما فنأي أو قرب
فدنا أن الذي ندين الله به في الأشياء التي ذكرناها ما بينها لكم على وصفنا، فمن روى عنا خلاف ذلك
أو أضاف إلينا سواه أو نحلنا في ذلك قولا غيره ، فهو كاذب متخرض معتد بيوء بسخط الله وعليه غضبه
ولعنته في الدارين

Whoever goes beyond this has been disillusioned, beguiled, gone astray, and destroyed. Those that are a witness to these words should pass it on to those that are not, expounding that we believe in Allah ﷻ in the issues under discussion as we have outlined. Whoever reports from us contrary to this or attributes to us any other view is a liar and one marked by calumny. Such a person will be worthy of the displeasure, anger, and curse of Allah ﷻ in both worlds.¹

Ibn Kathīr whilst citing the cause of differences between him and the Ḥanābilah together with the effects of slander that stemmed from it says:

وأما ما ذكره - يعني ابن مسكويه - عن تعصب العامة عليه ، فليس الأمر كذلك ، وإنما بعض الحنابلة
تعصبوا عليه ووقعوا فيه فتبعهم غيرهم ، ولذلك سبب وهو أن الطبري جمع كتابا ذكر فيه اختلاف الفقهاء
، ولم يذكر فيه أحمد بن حنبل ، فقبل له في ذلك ، فقال : لم يكن فقيها ، وإنما كان محدثا ، فاشتد ذلك
على الحنابلة ، وكانوا لا يحصون كثرة ببغداد ، فشغبوا عليه وقالوا ما أرادوا

Ibn Miskawayh² has erroneously attributed prejudice of general masses against him (Imām al-Ṭabarī). In fact, it was some of the Ḥanābilah who were impartial and opinionated against him, others merely shadowed them. The reason for this was that Al-Ṭabarī had authored a book wherein

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Sarīḥ al-Sunnah*, pg. 27.

2 He is Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb ibn Miskawayh, Abū 'Alī. Historian and philosopher. He was the chief treasurer for 'Aḥud al-Dawlah, supreme ruler of the Buyid dynasty. He has written, *Tajārib al-Umam Ta'āqib al-Himam*, *Ādāb al-'Arab wa al-Furus*, *Risālah fī Māhiyah al-'Adl*, and *Tartīb al-Sa'ādāt*. He passed away the year 421 A.H/1030 A.D. His life has been recorded by Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī: *Al-Imtā' wa al-Mu'anasah* and Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 3 pgs. 5 - 19.

he quoted the differences of the jurists, omitting those of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. When questioned regarding this he said, “He (Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal) was not a jurist. He was a scholar of ḥadīth”. This did not sit well with the Ḥanābilah, of which there were multitudes in Baghdad. They thus rioted in contradiction of his view and were vocal of their opinions.¹

Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī says:

وكانت الحنابلة حزب أبي بكر بن أبي داود وقد وقع بينه وبين ابن جرير كلام ، فكثروا وشغبوا على ابن جرير وناله أذى ولزم بيته

The Ḥanābilah were the partisans of Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd². There was dispute between him and Ibn Jarīr which caused them to riot and intend harm against Ibn Jarīr, restricting him to his home.³

The oppression of the Ḥanābilah against him has been chronicled quite clearly by Imām ibn Khuzaymah. He states:

ظلمته الحنابلة

The Ḥanābilah oppressed him.⁴

1 Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kamil fi al-Tārīkh*, vol. 8 pg. 134.

2 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sulaymān ibn al-Ash’ath al-Azdī al-Sijistānī, widely known as Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd. Imām, Ḥāfidh, Mufassir, and Shaykh of Baghdad.

- Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Muḥammad al-Khallāl says, “Ibn Abī Dāwūd was the Imām of the people of Iraq. The Sultan had appointed him to the pulpit. Though there were other elder scholars in Iraq in his era, they did not reach the levels of mastery he had.”

Amongst his books authored are, *Al-Maṣāḥif*, *Al-Musnad*, *Al-Sunan*, *Al-Taḥfīr*, *Al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh*, and *Al-Qirā’āt*. He passed away in Baghdad the year 316 A.H/929 A.D. His life has been recorded by Abū Nu’aym: *Akhbār Aṣḥābān*, vol. 2 pg. 66; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 9 pg. 464; Ibn Abī Ya’lā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, vol. 2 pg. 51; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 767; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 13 pg. 221.

3 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 14 pg. 277.

4 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 164.

B. The Zāhiriyyah.

The Zāhiriyyah too had a measurable effect on the accusations of Rafḍ against Imām al-Ṭabarī, a result of the dispute that arose between him and the leader of this school of thought; Dāwūd ibn ‘Alī al-Zāhirī and his son, Muḥammad. Imām al-Ṭabarī had authored a book refuting Dāwūd ibn ‘Alī al-Zāhirī titled, *Al-Radd ‘Alā Dhī al-Asfār*. The cause for this refutation was that Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī had in fact spent much time under the tutelage of Dāwūd ibn ‘Alī al-Zāhirī. However, on one occasion they had a debate in which Dāwūd was silenced. His followers felt snubbed and retaliated by badmouthing Abū Ja‘far at which point he left the gathering and began working on this book¹. The son of Dāwūd, in an effort to avenge his father, authored the book, *Al-Intiṣār min Muḥammad ibn Jarīr* wherein he vilified Ibn Jarīr and slandered him with Rafḍ and other issues of consequence. The masses, influenced by this, spread its false message.

‘Alī ibn ‘Īsā would say:

والله لو سئل هؤلاء عن معنى الرفض والإلحاد ما عرفوه ولا فهموه

If these people were questioned on the meaning of Rafḍ and Ilḥād they would not have an inkling of its purport.

Ibn al-Athīr has commented on this saying:

وحاشا ذلك الإمام عن مثل هذه الأشياء ... وقد ذكرت شيئا من كلام الأئمة في أبي جعفر يعلم منه محله في العلم والثقة وحسن الاعتقاد

God forbid such statements be uttered by the Imām. His status in knowledge, nobility, and reliability is well recorded by the scholars.²

Ibn Kathīr says:

1 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 79.

2 Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 8 pg. 135.

ونسبوه إلى الرفض ، ومن الجهلة من رماه بالإلحاد ، وحاشاه من ذلك ، بل كان أحد أئمة الإسلام علما وعملا بكتاب الله وسنة رسوله ، وإنما تقلدوا ذلك عن محمد بن داود النقيه الظاهري ، حيث كان يتكلم فيه ويرميه بالعظائم وبالرفض ،

They have attributed the belief of Rafḍ to him with some ignorant one's going to the extent of accusing him of heresy. Far be he from such! He was one of the great leaders of Islam on both knowledge and action; following the dictates of the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Messenger. The masses took to these statements due to Muḥammad ibn Dāwūd al-Faqīh al-Zāhirī who accused him of issues of consequence and of Rafḍ.¹

C. The Imāmiyyah Shī'ah.

They were perhaps *the* most notable group to have accused Imām al-Ṭabarī of ascribing to the belief of Rafḍ. An effort to achieve a longstanding goal of theirs; tarnishing the status of the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah. They were quite aware that accusations of Rafḍ would place a huge question mark on the integrity of a person according to the Ahl al-Sunnah and would further bring into question the narrations of the accused. The Imāmiyyah Shī'ah are ever eager to vilify the scholars who are the custodians of the narrations of the early part of the ummah. Imām al-Ṭabarī is amongst these custodian scholars.

They have enumerated him amongst their scholars who ascribed to the Shī'ah doctrine behind closed doors fearing the oppressive rulers of his era.

Al-Khuwānasārī² says:

1 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 146.

2 He is Muḥammad Maḥdī ibn Muḥammad al-Kāẓimī al-Musawī al-Khuwānasārī al-Aṣfahānī, historian from amongst the scholars of the Rāfiḍah. He was born and died in Baghdad. Amongst his books are, *Uṣūl al-Sharī'ah wa Furū'ihā*, *Aḥsan al-Wadī'ah fi Tarājim Ashhar Mashāhūr al-Shī'ah*, and *Rawḍat al-Jannāt fi Aḥwāl al-'Ulamā al-Sādāt*. He died the year 1391 A.H/1971 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Zarkalī: *Al-A'lām*, vol. 7 pg. 116 and Joseph Elian Sarkis: *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt al-'Arabiyyah wa al-Mu'arrabah*, pg. 1699.

ولكن عندي مع ذلك كله شبهة عظيمة في أمر مذهب أبي جعفر الطبري المؤرخ المفسر - الذي هو صاحب الترجمة - بل ظني يذهب إلى كونه أيضا من جملة أهل مذهب الحق - يقصد مذهب الرافضة - ... فلا داعي إلى ذلك إلا كونه من هذه الطائفة في الباطن والحقيقة وإن كان لا يظهر من جهة معرفته عند خلفاء الجور وعظماء دولة الباطل - يريد دولة أهل السنة - كما هو شأن كثير من العلماء المشبهة أمورهم

However, I have much doubt regarding the school of thought of Abū Ja'far al-Ṭabarī, the historian and mufassir. I do lean towards the idea that he was part of the true creed (referring to the Rāfiḍah). It makes sense that he was part of this creed behind closed doors even though he did not make this apparent to the oppressive rulers of the illegitimate state (referring to the state of the Ahl al-Sunnah) as was a common occurrence amongst many scholars.¹

D. The group that calls themselves the Ahl al-Qur'ān, centered in Pakistan.

This group too, has accused Imām al-Ṭabarī of ascribing to a Shī'ah doctrine in order to achieve its goal of rejecting the sayings of Rasūlullāh ﷺ which centers around vilifying the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah who made an all-out effort to codify the aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and saying of the early Muslims.

They have accused Imām al-Ṭabarī of ascribing to a Shī'ah doctrine in order to tarnish his *Tafsīr*, as it is an exegesis of the Qur'ān by way of the Sunnah. They are well aware that accusations of ascribing to a Shī'ah doctrine will place a question mark on the integrity of the accused and by extension their works. Thus, they declare, based on this accusation, that his *tafsīr* is not acceptable from an academic standpoint (*according to them*) and neither are any of the *tafsīrs* based on his work that come after him acceptable. They claim this on the premise that all that came after him is based on an illegitimate foundation.

Al-'Imādī says:

1 Al-Khuwānasārī: *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, vol. 7 pg. 295.

كان ابن جرير من بلدة أمل من طبرستان ، ولد وترى فيها ، وارتحل إلى طلب العلم وتجول في البلاد الإسلامية قرابة ٤٤ سنة ، كان من الشيعة ، ولكنه كان يظهر نفسه سنيا على وجه التقية وكان اسم جده رستما ، وتسمى بعد إسلامه بيزيد ، وكان ابن جرير يسمي نفسه محمد بن جرير بن رستم في الكتب التي كان يكتبها للشيعة ، وكان يسمي نفسه محمد بن جرير بن يزيد حين يكتب لسائر المسلمين

Ibn Jarīr was from the city of Amol, Ṭabaristān. He was born there and was raised there. He travelled in search of knowledge in the Islamic lands for close to 44 years. He was from the Shī'ah, though he portrayed himself a Sunni by way of Taqīyyah. His grandfather's name was Rustam who after becoming a Muslim was named Yazīd. Ibn Jarīr would refer to himself as Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Rustam in the books he would write supporting the Shī'ah and Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd when writing for the rest of the Muslims.¹

The distortion and errors in the above passage is clear as day for any fair sighted person. The historians and genealogists are unanimous that the grandfather of Imām al-Ṭabarī is named Yazīd² whilst Rustam is the grandfather of Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī al-Imāmī al-Rāfiḍī³. Those overtaken by prejudice have exploited the similarity of the teknonym, name, and affiliation of these two distinct individuals. This is done to distort the view of the reader, spread doubts regarding Imām al-Ṭabarī, and tarnish his status.

E. The Orientalists.

The orientalist have exploited this accusation to arouse suspicion and highlight criticism, especially since they endlessly pine to distort the image of Islam and its

1 'Umar al-Fārūq (Shāhkār Risālah 'Umar Fārūq) Pg. 504 as taken from the Magazine *Majallah Ṭulū' al-Islām* 1968, August issue, pg. 61.

2 See, Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 326; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 2 pg. 162; Sam'ānī: *Ibid*, vol. 8 pg. 205; Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 17 pg. 40; Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fi tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 2 pg. 274; *Al-Qaṭī*, vol. 1 pg. 223; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 4 pg. 191; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 14 pg. 267; Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 3 pg. 120; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 145; and Al-Suyūfī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, pg. 30.

3 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 4 pg. 499.

scholars. To the extent that Hluost, an orientalist, has inferred the secret support of Imām ibn Jarīr to the Shī'ah camp based on his authentication of the Ghadīr Khumm narration.¹

II. The principle reasons that led to the accusations and discussions of Rafḍ in relation to him.

1. Authenticating Ghadīr Khumm

The fact that Imām al-Ṭabarī authenticated the narration pertaining to the incident at Ghadīr Khumm² had a marked effect in attracting the accusations of Rafḍ against him. Many of his enemies exploited his authentication of this ḥadīth. They raised a hue and cry over this in order to accuse him and bring into question his beliefs. Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar commenting on the reasons that led to accusations of Rafḍ says:

وإنما نبذ بالتشيع؛ لأنه صحح حديث غدیر خم

He was accused of ascribing to Shī'ah beliefs due to him authenticating the Ghadīr Khumm narration.³

A point worthy of note here is that, Imām al-Ṭabarī was not the only one to authenticate this ḥadīth. Many of the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah authenticated it. Furthermore, one ought to know that it is also narrated from multiple chains of transmission.

The text of the ḥadīth as narrated by Barā' ibn al-ʿAzīb رضي الله عنه is as follows:

كنا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في سفر، فنزلنا بغدير خم، فتودي فينا: الصلاة جامعة، وكسح لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم تحت شجرتين، فصلى الظهر، وأخذ بيد علي رضي الله عنه، فقال:

1 As quoted from Al-Ḥibr Yūsuf Nūr al-Dā'im: *Al-Aqwāl fī Ittihām al-Ṭabarī bi al-Tashayyū'*, pg. 35.

2 Al-Zamakhsharī says, "Khummm is the name of a dyer to who the pool at al-Juḥfah, between Makkah and Madinah, is attributed to. See, Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 2 pg. 389.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 5 pg. 100.

أَلَسْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ؟ قَالُوا: بَلَىٰ، قَالَ: أَلَسْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي أَوْلَىٰ بِكُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ؟ قَالُوا: بَلَىٰ، قَالَ: فَأَخَذَ بِيَدِ عَلِيٍّ، فَقَالَ: مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ، فَعَلِيٌّ مَوْلَاهُ، اللَّهُمَّ وَالِ مَنْ وَالَاهُ، وَعَادَ مِنْ عَادَاهُ قَالَ: فَلَقِيهِ عُمَرُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ، فَقَالَ: لَهُ هَنِيئًا يَا ابْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ، أَصْبَحْتَ وَأَمْسَيْتَ مَوْلَىٰ كُلِّ مُؤْمِنٍ، وَمُؤْمِنَةٌ

We were on a journey with Allah's Messenger ﷺ. On the way we stayed at Ghadīr Khum. There it was announced that the prayer was about to be offered. The space under two trees was cleaned for Allah's Messenger ﷺ.

Then he offered the Ḥuḥr prayer, and, holding 'Alī's hand, he said, "Don't you know that I am even nearer to the believers than their own selves?"

They said, "Most definitely!"

He said, "Do you not know that I am closer to the believers than themselves?"

They said, "Most definitely!"

Holding the hand of 'Alī ﷺ he said, "Whoever's friend I am, 'Alī is his friend. O Allah, befriend whom he befriends and be at war with the one who shows him hostility."

Thereafter 'Umar ﷺ met him and said to him, "O Ibn Abī Ṭālib! Congratulations, you have forever become the friend of every male and female believer."

This ḥadīth has been recorded by, Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal in *al-Musnad*¹ and in *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*², by Ibn Mājah in *al-Sunan*³, by al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak*⁴, by

1 Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 1 pg. 1185; vol. 4 pg. 281.

2 Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal: *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah* vol. 2 pg. 563-596. The annotations of the researcher Ibn Muḥammad Abbās suggest that the ḥadīth is authentic.

3 Ibn Mājah: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 1 pg. 43.

4 Al-Ḥākim: *Al-Mustadrak 'Alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* vol. 3 pg. 110.

al-Tirmidhī in *al-Sunan*¹, by Abū Bakr ibn Abī Shaybah² in *al-Musnad*³, by Ibn Abī ‘Āsim⁴ in *al-Sunnah*⁵, by al-Dūlābī⁶ in *Al-Kunā*⁷, and by al-Nasa’ī in *al-Khaṣā’iṣ*⁸. Al-Albānī has gathered the many chains of transmission and has authenticated it.⁹

1 Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 5 pg. 297.

2 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Shaybah Al-Kūfī al-‘Absī, Abū Bakr al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Thiqāh.

- Ibn Ḥibbān says, “He was well-versed, a Ḥāfiẓ, and devout. He authored, gathered texts, and held gatherings of discussions. He was unrivalled in the memorization of couplets.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “He was trustworthy and a ḥāfiẓ of ḥadīth.

He has authored *Al-Musnad* and *Al-Muṣannaf fi al-Aḥādīth wa al-Āthār*. He passed away the year 235 A.H/849 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 276; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 8 pg. 358; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 10 pg. 66; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 432; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6 pg. 2.

3 See, Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Maṭālib al-‘Āliyah bi Zawā’id al-Masānīd al-Thamāniyah*, vol. 4 pg. 60.

4 He is Aḥmad ibn ‘Amr ibn Abī ‘Āsim al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Makhlad al-Shaybānī, Abū Bakr al-Baṣrī al-Ḥāfiẓ *al-Kabīr*. He was appointed as judge over Aṣbahān.

- Abū al-‘Abbās al-Nasawī says, “Abū Bakr ibn Abī ‘Āsim is from the people of Sunnah and Ḥadīth. An ascetic and one who invited towards good and forbade from evil.”
- Abū Bakr ibn Mardawayh says, “A ḥāfiẓ who had memorized a great number of ḥadīth.”

He has authored, amongst other books, *Al-Musnad al-Kabīr* and *Al-Āḥād wa al-Mathānī*. He passed away the year 287 A.H/900 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥatīm in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* vol. 2 pg. 67; Abū Nu’aym: *Dhikr Akhbār Aṣbahān*, vol. 1 pg. 100; Al-Dhahabī in *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 640; and Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 84.

5 Ibn Abī ‘Āsim: *Al-Sunnah*, vol. 2 pg. 604-607.

6 He is Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥammād ibn Sa’d ibn Muslim, Abū Bishr al-Anṣārī al-Rāzī al-Dūlābī. He was a historian and reliable scholar of ḥadīth. He was a papermaker and book seller. From amongst his books are, *Al-Kunā wa al-Asmā’* and *Al-Dhurriyah al-Ṭāhirah wa al-Muṭahharah*. He passed away between Makkah and Madinah whilst carrying out the rites of his obligatory hajj the year 310 A.H/923 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-‘A’yān*, vol. 4 pg. 352; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 759; and Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 145.

7 Al-Dūlābī: *Al-Kunā wa al-Asmā’*, vol. 2 pg. 61.

8 Al-Nasa’ī: *Khaṣā’iṣ ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, pg. 72.

9 Al-Albānī: *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Saḥīḥah*, vol. 4 pg. 330 no: 1750.

Al-Hāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar says:

وأما حديث : من كنت مولاة فعلي مولاة ، فهو كثير الطرف جدا ، وقد استوعبها ابن عقدة في كتاب مفرد ، وكثير من أسانيدھا صحاح وحسان

The narration, 'Whoever's friend I am, 'Alī is his friend' has many chains of transmission. Ibn Uqdah¹ has gathered these in a stand-alone book. Many of these chains are authentic and sound.²

Al-Dhahabī says:

جمع - يعني الإمام الطبري - طرق حديث غدیر خم في أربعة أجزاء رأيت شطره فيهرني سعة رواياته ، وجزمت بوقوع ذلك

Imām al-Ṭabarī has gathered the chains of transmission of the Ghadīr Khumm narration on four parts. I have come across half of it and I am taken aback by the sheer number of narrations. It convinced me of the incident.³

Whilst considering the above it should be noted that Imām al-Ṭabarī was not the only one to authenticate the ḥadīth. Rather, many other scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah cited and authenticated it as well. It would thus be a folly to accuse him of Rafḍ on the basis of him authenticating the ḥadīth. In fact, it would amount to gross academic negligence.

Apart from this, Imām al-Ṭabarī has fundamentally differed with the Shī'ah in

1 He is Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Sa'īd ibn 'Uqdah al-Kūfī. Amongst the freed slaves of the Banū Hāshim. He was a Shī'ī and ḥāfiẓ of ḥadīth. Amongst his books is the one Ibn Ḥajar has mentioned in the principle quotation to this footnote. He has gathered the chains of transmission of the Ghadīr Khumm narration under the chapter *Al-Wilayah wa man Rawā Ghadir Khumm*. He has also written, *Al-Tārīkh*, *Ṣulḥ al-Ḥasan wa al-Mu'āwiyah*, *Al-Ādāb*, *Al-Shī'ah min Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth* and *Akhbār Abī Ḥanīfah wa Musanādihī*. He died the year 332 A.H/944 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 14; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 3 pg. 839.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 7 pg. 73.

3 Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 713.

the conclusions they draw from this ḥadīth. Hereunder are some comparisons of these polar conclusions:

Shī'ah:

- a. The Shī'ah say that the Ghadīr Khumm narration explicitly infers that Rasūlullāh ﷺ specified 'Alī رضي الله عنه as the khalīfah after him as well as the keeper of revelation. Rasūlullāh ﷺ further took the pledge of leadership for him on the day of Ghadīr.¹
- b. They conclude that specifying 'Alī رضي الله عنه forms part of the completion of faith as the following verse was revealed at this occasion:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ

This day I have perfected for you your religion.²

They also attribute the following statement to Rasūlullāh ﷺ, citing it as a ḥadīth:

الله أكبر على تمام الدين ورضا الرب برسالي وبالولاية لعلي من بعدي

Allah is the greatest! The faith has been perfected. The Lord is pleased with my prophethood and with the leadership of 'Alī after me.³

1 Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar: 'Aqā'id al-Imāmiyyah, pgs. 60-61.

2 Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 3.

3 Al-Suyūṭī comments in *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 2 pg. 259: "Ibn Mardawayh and Ibn 'Asākir have cited this with a weak chain of narration as follows. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ appointed 'Alī رضي الله عنه as the khalīfah on the day of Ghadīr Khumm and announced his leadership, Jibrīl descended with the verse:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ

This day I have perfected for you your religion.

Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī has recorded a similar narration in *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 8 pg. 296. In the chain of this narration is Maṭr al-Warrāq who is weak. Refer to, *Taqrīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2 pg. 257. And besides the weak chain of narration, narrations with this purport contradict authentic narrations that establish the revelation of the verse was at the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage. (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 5 pg. 285).

Imām al-Ṭabarī:

He has fundamentally opposed the Shī'ah in their deductions from this ḥadīth.

- a. He has established that the most rightful to the khilāfah after Rasūlullāh ﷺ was Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and the rightful leaders were Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, thereafter 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, thereafter 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān, and then 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He has further recognised their virtue per their succession in leadership.¹

There remains no doubt that these beliefs of al-Ṭabarī regarding the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, as celebrated by the Ahl al-Sunnah, are not acceptable to the Shī'ah. It contradicts the fundamental beliefs of the Shī'ah who opine that 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was the rightful khalīfah with the other Khulafā' having usurped his right neglecting the wishes of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. These are amongst other such wicked beliefs held by the Shī'ah regarding the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ.

وهم خير الخلق بعد الأنبياء، وخير قرون هذه الأمة التي هي أشرف الأمم بنص القرآن وإجماع السلف والخلف

They were the best of creation after the prophets. Their era was the best of this nation; the best of nations as unequivocally declared by the texts of the Qur'ān and consensus of the former and latter generations.²

Similarly, Imām al-Ṭabarī would declare apostate those Shī'ah and Khawārij who consider the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ to have turned apostate. He would not accept the narrations or testimony of such individuals. This is as he has stated in his work *Dhayl al-Mudhayyal*³.

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Sarīḥ al-Sunnah*, pg. 24.

2 Ibn al-Kathīr: *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pgs. 225-226.

3 See, Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 18 pg. 83. The work *Dhayl al-Mudhayyal* is a book that discusses the history of those Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who passed away during the lifetime of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and those who passed away after his passing in order of relation to him; from the Quraysh and then the other tribes.

He was also of the view that whoever says Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما were not just and guided rulers should be killed.¹ Furthermore, he would not accept narrations of those who were accused of Tashayyu‘; considering it a blight on their integrity. Consider the following statements of his regarding such narrators:

Sālim ibn Abī Ḥafṣah, Abū Yūnus-

وكان يتشيع تشيعا شديدا

He was extreme in his Shī‘ah beliefs.²

Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju‘fī-

وكان متشيعا

He ascribed to Shī‘ah beliefs.³

The goal of Imām al-Ṭabarī in authenticating the Ghadīr Khumm narration was not to establish the khilāfah of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه as the Shī‘ah have done. Rather, the aim was to expound his virtues and formulate a refutation against Abū Bakr ibn Abī Dāwūd who had qualms regarding the ḥadīth.

Moreover, he did write on the virtues of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنهم. On his return to Ṭabaristān he found Rafḍ and reviling the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم to have become a common thing amongst its folk. He thus dictated

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The book then discusses the life, school of thought, and death of the Tābi‘īn and early prominent Muslims. See, Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pgs. 70-71. A portion of it has been published together with *Tārīkh al-Rusul* in the eleventh part under the heading ‘*Al-Muntakhab min Kitāb Dhayl al-Mudhayyal*’.

1 Al-Dhababī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 712.

2 *Dhayl al-Mudhayyal*, vol. 11 pg. 666.

3 *Ibid*, vol. 11 pg. 646.

the virtues of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما to the extent that he became apprehensive of harm from the Rawāfiḍ and so left the city.¹

If he was a Rāfiḍī, he would not have written on the virtues of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما; the two greatest targets of vilification for the Shī‘ah.

- b. Imām al-Ṭabarī has not addressed the ḥadīth of Ghadīr Khumm nor the issue of Imāmah under the discussion of the verse:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ

*This day I have perfected for you your religion.*²

He has in fact fundamentally contradicted the Shī‘ah in the exegesis of this verse by establishing its revelation, through authentic chains of narrations, to be at the occasion of ‘Arafah. This goes against the notion of the Shī‘ah who believe it to be revealed on the occasion of Ghadīr Khumm.³

He has also contradicted their interpretation of the intent of the verse. He has explained that it was revealed during the Farewell Pilgrimage so that it may become plain before the people that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has perfected for them their faith by assembling them *alone* in the sacred city and banishing the polytheists.⁴ This opposes the notion of the Shī‘ah who believe it to be revealed in order to ordain the perfection of faith by the instruction of leadership in favour of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه.

‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabarī commenting on the reason for the authentication of the Ghadīr Khumm narration by Imām al-Ṭabarī states:

1 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 85.

2 Sūrah al-Mā‘idah: 3.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān ‘an Ta’wīl al-Qur’ān*, 4/6/51.

4 Ibid, 4/6/52.

وسبب تصحيحه هذا الحديث أن بعض الشيوخ ببغداد قال بتكذيب حديث غدير خم وقال : إن علي بن أبي طالب كان باليمن في الوقت الذي كان رسول الله مع بغدير خم ، وبلغ أبا جعفر ذلك فرد عليه ، وذكر طرق حديث خم ، فكثرت الناس لاستماع ذلك ، واجتمع قوم من الروافض ممن بسط لسانه بما لا يصلح في الصحابة و فابتداً - أي الإمام ابن جرير - بفضائل أبي بكر وعمر رضي الله عنهما

The reason for authenticating the ḥadīth was due to the view of some scholars of Baghdād who opined it to be a fabrication. They would state that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib was in Yemen when Rasūlullāh ﷺ was at Ghadīr Khumm. When this erroneous view reached Abū Ja’far, he refuted it by mentioning the various chains of transmission of the Ghadīr Khumm narration. People came in droves to hear this, with a group of Rawāfiḍ—who vilify the Ṣaḥābah—also gathering for the same. Imām ibn Jarīr thus began expounding the virtues of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما.¹

The above discussion is conclusive enough to deem any labelling of Imām al-Ṭabarī as a Rāfiḍī due to him authenticating the Ghadīr Khumm narration as unsubstantiated and baseless from an academic viewpoint. Such labelling is also an indication of shallow thinking as many of the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah have cited, narrated, and authenticated this ḥadīth. It thus becomes quite evident that the view of Imām al-Ṭabarī fundamentally contradicts that of the Shī’ah in relation to this ḥadīth.

The erudite scholars have expounded the purport of this ḥadīth and have razed to the ground the Shī’ah claims in this regard. Whoever wishes can refer to books such as *Minhāj al-Sunnah* of Ibn Taymiyyah, *Minhāj al-Ītidāl* of Al-Dhahabī, and *Al-‘Awāṣim min al-Qawāṣim* of Ibn ‘Arabī.

2. His adopting an individual school of thought (*madhhab*) or not following any one of the famous jurisprudic schools of thought.

His enemies consider this a proof against Imām ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī in accusing him of ascribing to Shī’ah beliefs or his support for the Shī’ah. Al-Khuwānasārī has adopted this view. He states:

1 Yaqūt: *Mu’jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pgs. 84-85.

وثالثا عدم قبوله أحدا من المذاهب الأربعة التي انحصر فيها أهل السنة

Thirdly, his non acceptance of any one of the four school of thoughts which the Ahl al-Sunnah are confined to.¹

This reason cannot be deemed academically acceptable as it contradicts the following:

- a. The study of Imām al-Ṭabarī into the four schools of thought as previously mentioned.
- b. His special attention to and deep study of the Shafiī school of thought.
- c. The fact that he passed legal verdicts according to the Shafiī school of thought for a period of ten years in Baghdād.
- d. He then formulated his own school of thought which became known as the Jarīrī madhhab as and when Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى inspired him to consider himself of that calibre. He had followers and students who defended his madhhab and authored many books expounding on it.

Furthermore, not following one of the four schools of thought does not necessitate adopting the Shī'ah creed. Consider that there are no sharī texts that prevent a Muslim from becoming an absolute Mujtahid as long as the individual has acquired complete eligibility and competence.

The Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah have recognized many jurisprudic schools of thought. Amongst these accepted schools of thought are the madhāhib of Awzā'ī²,

1 Al-Khuwānasārī: *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, vol. 7 pg. 295.

2 He is 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Amr ibn Yaḥmad al-Awzā'ī, Abū 'Amr. Shaykh al-Islam and the scholar of Shām. He had formulated his own jurisprudic school of thought. An awe inspiring ascetic. He was offered the position of chief justice but refused. *continued...*

Dāwūd al-Zāhirī, and Layth ibn Sa'd¹. However, the four renowned schools of thought—that of Mālik, al-Shafī'ī, Aḥmad, and Abū Ḥanīfah—achieved prominence due to its many followers who codified the views of their respective Imāms, securing it from becoming irrelevant and disseminated it amongst the people.

Therefore, to say that the Ahl al-Sunnah is confined within the four schools of thought is a clear error. Such a view is aimed at blighting the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah by the Shī'ah.

3. His hailing from a city renowned for ascribing to the Shī'ah creed.

Al-Khuwānasārī says:

بل ظني يذهب إلى كونه أيضا من جملة أهل مذهب الحق - مذهب الرافضة في نظره - من جهة كونه أولا
من أهل بلدة كانوا قديمي التشيع

I would presume him to be part of the true creed—in his view, the Rāfiḍah creed—as he hails from an old Shī'ah city.²

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- Imām Mālik says, “Al-Awzā'ī, an Imām that is followed.”
- Al-Kharībī says, “Al-Awzā'ī was the most virtuous of his era.”

He has authored amongst other books, *Al-Sunan*. He lived in Beirut and passed away there in the year 157 A.H/774 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'd: *Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 488; Al-Fasawī: *Al-Ma'rifaḥ wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pgs. 390, 397, and 408; Abū Nu'aym: *Al-Ḥilyah*, vol. 6 pg. 135; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3 pg. 127.

1 He is Layth ibn Sa'd ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Fahmī, Abū al-Ḥārith. The Imām of Egypt in Fiqh and Ḥadīth.

- Al-Shafī'ī says: “Al-Layth had greater jurisprudic acumen than Mālik; however, his students did not preserve him, i.e. did not disseminate his school of thought.”

He has written amongst other books, *Al-Tārīkh and Masā'il fī al-Fiqh*. He passed away the year 175 A.H/791 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'd: *Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 517; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 2 pg. 209; Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 281; and Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 1 pg. 224.

2 Al-Khuwānasārī: *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, vol. 7 pg. 295.

This reason though is not suitable to be used as academic evidence in attributing Imām al-Ṭabarī to the Shī'ah creed. A majority of the population of a city ascribing to the Shī'ah creed does not necessitate him being a Shī'ī. Believing such is a fallacy, refuted by mere observation. Almost all cities have predominant beliefs with pockets of individuals and groups believing in something else.

Aside from this, Imām al-Ṭabarī travelled from his city at a very young age and upon returning having found Rafḍ spread amongst its people wrote on the virtues of Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما; defending their honor.¹ If he was in fact a Rāfiḍī or was sympathetic to their cause he would not have adopted this stance.

4. Some of his teachers were accused of Rafḍ.

His antagonists have clutched onto this reason in accusing him of being a Shī'ī. It is said that he studied ḥadīth in the city of Rayy under the tutelage of Muḥammad ibn Ḥumayd al-Rāzī². His opponents consider al-Rāzī to be one of his main channels of Shī'ī information.³ This reason too, does stand to academic scrutiny as Ibn Ḥumayd al-Rāzī was accused by some whilst he was deemed reliable by others.⁴

1 Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 18 pg. 85.

2 He is Muḥammad ibn Ḥumayd ibn Ḥibbān al-Tamīmī Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Rāzī, al-Ḥāfiẓ. Many prominent scholars have narrated from him, such as, Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah, Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal, and Yaḥyā ibn Ma'īn. Imām Aḥmad has praised him.

- Ibn Ma'īn says, "Reliable, there is no issue with him."
- Al-Bukhārī on the other hand says, "His narrations are subject to scrutiny."
- Al-Jūzajānī says, "Of a poor creed, not reliable."
- Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī says, "Very weak.:"
- Ibn Ḥajar says in *Al-Taqrīb*, "Ḥāfiẓ, but weak as those who have blighted him are of his city and know him better."

He passed away the year 230 A.H/844 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/69; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl* vol. 7 pg. 232; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pg. 530; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 2 pg. 156.

3 Al-Ḥibr Yūsuf: *Al-Aqwāl*, pg. 9.

4 Al-Dhahabī: *Mīzān al-I'tidāl*, vol. 3 pg. 530; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 127.

Additionally, Imām ibn Jarīr did not confine his studies to Ibn Ḥumayd. He sought knowledge from the great famed scholars of ḥadīth and fiqh of the Ahl al-Sunnah; largely the teachers of al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

Besides, the fact that some of his teachers were accused of Tashayyu‘ does not mean that he be accused of the same. Many students have disagreed with their teachers on a wide array issues. Whilst at times, a student has far outdone the academic capabilities of his teacher.

5. His quoting the poem of Kumayt¹, a renowned Shī‘ah poet in his Tafsīr.

This is also one of the reasons of the accusations of Tashayyu‘ in relation to Imām al-Ṭabarī.² This reason is unacceptable as evidence for their claim due to the following:

Imām al-Ṭabarī quotes poems in his *Tafsīr* in order to clarify the meanings of the Noble Qur’ān. He does not consider the poets political or religious views. The poem of Kumayt that he has reproduced was to clarify the meaning of the verse, Ḥā Mīm.

Imām al-Ṭabarī says:

اختلف أهل التأويل في معنى قوله : حم ، فقال بعضهم ... وقال آخرون ... ويقول الكميّ

The interpreters have a differed in the meaning of Ḥā Mīm. Some have said... whilst others have said... and Kumayt says:

1 He is Kumayt ibn Yazīd ibn Khunays Al-Asadī, Abū al-Mustahil. A poet of the Umayyad era. He was famed for being biased towards the Shī‘ah. He was a scholar of Arabic language, traditions, and lineage. He passed away the year 126 A.H/744 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Aṣḥāhānī: *Al-Aghānī*, vol. 15 pg. 983; and Al-Mirzabānī: *Mu‘jam al-Shu‘arā*, pg. 238.

2 Al-Ḥibr Yūsuf: *Al-Aqwāl*, pg. 54.

تأولها منا تعي ومعرب

وجدنا لكم في آل حم آية

We have found a verse in the Ḥā Mīm family;

Recited, though its meaning hidden from us.¹

Imām al-Ṭabarī has reproduced a poem of the Umayyad poet, ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Qays al-Ruqyāt². He writes in his *Tafsīr* commentating under the verse:

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ هَلْ تَتَعَمُّونَ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ أُمِنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلُ وَأَنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

Say, “O People of the Scripture, do you resent us except [for the fact] that we have believed in Allah and what was revealed to us and what was revealed before and because most of you are defiantly disobedient?”³

أن العرب تقول : نقتم عليك وأنقم ، مستشهدا بقول عبيد الله بن قيس

The Arabs say, (explaining the word *Naqama*) ‘I resent you’. As ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Qays says:

إلا أنهم يحلمون إن غضبوا

وما نقموا من بني أمية

They did not resent the Banū Umayyah;

Except for their forbearance at times of anger.⁴

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān*, 9/24/27.

2 He is ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Qays ibn Shurayḥ ibn Mālik, a decedent of Banū ‘Āmir ibn Luayy. A Qurashī poet in in the Umayyad era. Most of his poems were court flattery. He passed away around the year 85 A.H/700 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Jumāḥī: *Ṭabaqāt Fuḥūl al-Shu‘arā’*, 648; and Al-Zabīdī: *Ibid*, vol. 10 pg. 155.

3 Sūrah al-Māidah: 59.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān*, 4/6/188.

If Imām al-Ṭabarī was a Shī'ī or sympathetic to their cause, he would not have quoted a poem in his *Tafsīr* that celebrates the Banū Umayyah; sworn enemies of the Shī'ah.

6. Confusing Imām al-Ṭabarī with Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Rustum al-Ṭabarī—the Rāfiḍī, Imāmī

The accusations of Rafḍ laid out against Imām al-Ṭabarī stands on assumptions and conjecture arising due to the similarity of his name and teknonym with that of Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Rustum al-Ṭabarī, the Rāfiḍī, Imāmī¹. This has led to confusing their views and works.

Note the comments of Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī exonerating Imām al-Ṭabarī and clearing up this confusion:

أفدع أحمد بن علي السليماني الحافظ ، فقال : كان يضع للروافض ، كذا قال السليماني ، وهذا من الظن الكاذب ، بل إن ابن جرير من كبار أئمة الإسلام المعتمدين ولا يحل لنا أن نؤذيه بالباطل والهوى ، فإن كلام العلماء بعضهم في بعض ينبغي أن يتأني فيه ، ولا سيما في مثل إمام كبير ، ففعل السليماني أراد الآتي : محمد بن جرير بن رستم ، أبو جعفر الطبري رافضي له توأليف ، منها كتاب الرواة عن أهل البيت ، رماه عبد العزيز الكتاني بالرفض . ولو حلفت أن السليماني ما أراد إلا الآتي - ابن رستم - لبررت ، والسليماني حافظ متقن كان يدري ما يخرج من رأسه ، فلا أعتقد أنه يطعن في مثل هذا الإمام - ابن جرير السني - بهذا الباطل ، والله أعلم

Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Sulaymānī² has slighted by saying, “He would fabricate

1 He is Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Rustum al-Ṭabarī. From the Shī'ah scholars.

- Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī says, “A Rāfiḍī. He has works such as *Al-Ruwāt 'an Ahl al-Bayt*. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Kattānī has accused him of rafḍ.”

He died in the early 4th century Hijrī. His life has been recorded by Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pg. 499; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 5 pg. 103; Āghā Buzurg Tehrani: *Al-Dharī'ah ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī'ah*, vol. 8 pg. 241.

2 He is Aḥmad ibn 'Alī ibn 'Amr ibn Aḥmad al-Sulaymānī al-Bīkandī al-Bukhārī, al-Ḥāfiẓ. The muḥaddith of Transoxiana.

- Al-Sam'ānī says, “He has authored great works. He would write every week and then go from Bīkand to Bukhāra and narrate what he wrote.” continued...

narrations for the Rawāfiḍ.” This, as Sulaymānī has put it, is nothing more than a misconception. Rather, Ibn Jarīr was from the great reliable Islamic scholars. It is not permissible for us to seek to harm him by falsities and prejudice. The refutations of scholars against each other ought to be carefully considered, especially when it relates to a great Imām. Perhaps al-Sulaymānī meant Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Rustum Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī the Rāfiḍī who has written amongst other books, *Al-Ruwāt an Ahl al-Bayt*. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Kattānī¹ has accused him of Rafḍ. If I were to take an oath that al-Sulaymānī had intended Ibn Rustum, I would be absolved of it. Al-Sulaymānī was a stellar Ḥāfiẓ who knew what was coming out of his head. I do not believe that he would vilify the like of Imām ibn Jarīr al-Sunnī with such falsities. And Allah knows best.²

Ibn Ḥajar furthers this, commenting in *Lisān al-Mīzān*:

قد اغتر شيخ شيوخنا أبو حيان بكلام السليمانى ، فقال في الكلام على الصراط في أوائل تفسيره : وقال أبو جعفر الطبري وهو إمام من أئمة الإمامية : الصراط بحرف الصاد من لغة قريش ... إلى آخر المسألة ، ونهت عليه لثلا يغتر به ، فقد ترجمه - أي الإمام ابن جرير - أئمة النقل في عصره وبعده ، فلم يصفوه ،

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- Al-Dhahabī says, “He has authored, compiled, and reached a high status in ḥadīth.”
- Ibn al-Athīr says, “He travelled in search of knowledge to far lands. He was unrivalled in his era in chains of transmission, memory, and reliability.”

He passed away the year, 404 A.H/1014 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Sam‘ānī: *Al-Ansāb*, vol. 7 pg. 122; Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 1 pg. 533; Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fi tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 2 pg. 133; and Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyyah*, vol. 3 pg. 17.

1 He is ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Tamīmī al-Dimashqī, Abū Muḥammad al-Kattānī. Historian, Imām, outstanding Muḥaddith.

- Al-Khaṭīb says, “Reliable, trustworthy.”
- Al-Akfānī has described him as one who was honest, steadfast, had a pure madhhab, and would continuously recite the Qur’ān.

He passed away the year 466 A.H/1074 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Mākūlā: *Al-Ikmāl*, vol. 7 pg. 187; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Muntazam*, vol. 8 pg. 288; Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fi tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 3 pg. 83; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 3 pg. 1170 and *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 13 pg. 180.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Mīzān al-I‘tidāl*, vol. 3 pg. 499.

بذلك ، وإنما ضره الاشتراك في اسمه واسم لقبه ونسبته وكنيته ومعاصرتة وكثرة تصانيفه والعلم عند الله تعالى ، قاله الخطيب

The teacher of our teachers, Abū Ḥayyān, has been misled by the words of al-Sulaymānī. He writes under the commentary of *al-ṣirāṭ* at the beginning of his *Tafsīr*, “Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī, an Imām from the Imāms of the Imāmiyyah, says ‘*Al-ṣirāṭ*, as is with the letter *ṣād* is the dialect of the Quraysh...”” I allude to this mistake here so that no one else be misled. He had in fact profiled Imām ibn Jarīr, an erudite scholar who collated works for his era and that to come after him, without marking him with such beliefs. The misconception arose from the similarity of name, teknonym, and title. Further confusion results from their sharing the same era, geographical location, and number of works produced. And true knowledge is only for Allah ﷻ. This is as al-Khaṭīb as stated.¹

Fu‘ād Sizkīn concludes in his book *Tārīkh al-Turāth* that some scholars have confused Muḥammad in Jarīr ibn Rustum al-Ṭabarī and the famous historian al-Ṭabarī on various occasions.²

What strikes one as peculiar is that al-Khuwānasārī, in branding Imām al-Ṭabarī a Shī‘ī, has employed the use of Taqīyyah³. This becomes quite clear when considering his contradictory statements by later recognizing the difference and emphatically establishing two individuals; Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Sunnī and Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Rustum al-Imāmī.⁴

Due to the similarities in name some books authored by the Rawāfiḍ have been attributed, knowingly or not, to Imām al-Ṭabarī. Amongst these are *Bashārah al-Muṣṭafā* which is actually the work of Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī as mentioned by Āghā Buzurg Tehrani in *Al-Dharī‘ah ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī‘ah*. Another

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 5 pg. 100-101.

2 Fu‘ād Sizkīn: *Tārīkh al-Turāth al-‘Arabī*, 1/3/291.

3 See pg. 205.

4 Al-Khawānsarī: *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, vol. 7 pg. 293-295.

book that is wrongly attributed to him is *Al-Mustarshid fi al-Imāmah* which is written by Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Rustum al-Ṭabarī. Al-Dhahabī has eluded to this reproducing the statement of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Kattānī, “He is from the Rawāfiḍ. He has authored ... *Al-Mustarshid fi al-Imāmah*.”¹

III. Comparing his views with that of the Shī‘ah.

After listing the reasons that led the adversaries of Imām al-Ṭabarī to accuse him of Rafḍ and laying out the evidence that disproves such reasons, we continue to remove the cobwebs of uncertainty by comparing the views of Imām al-Ṭabarī and that of the Shī‘ah. This will unveil the huge disparity between him and them, and accusations pitted against him will thus implode under the weight of the truth.

A. The infallibility of the Imāms.

The Shī‘ah believe that the Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ are truly infallible. Therefore, no possibility of committing a major or minor sin exists. They further believe that no mistake can be made by them just as they are immune to forgetfulness.

It ought to be noted that the Shī‘ah cling to the doctrine of prophetic infallibility as a measure to cite the infallibility of their Imāms. Consider the following statement of one of their scholars:

ونعتقد أن الإمام كالنبي يجب أن يكون معصوما من جميع الرذائل والفواحش ما ظهر منها وما بطن من سن الطفولة إلى الموت عمدا وسهوا ، كما يجب أن يكون معصوما من السهو والخطأ والنسيان ؛ لأن الأئمة حفظة الشرع والقوامون عليه حالهم في ذلك حال النبي ، والدليل الذي اقتضانا - وأي دليل ! - أن نعتقد بعصمة الأنبياء هو نفسه يقتضينا أن نعتقد بعصمة الأئمة بلا فرق

And we believe that an Imām like a Prophet is infallible. He is free from all types of evil and lewdness; both internal and external from childhood till death. This includes mistakes that are intentional or unintentional. He is also above forgetfulness and errors. This is because the Imāms are the

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 14 pg. 282.

preservers of the faith and thus their state would be the same as that of a Prophet. The proof of this is—some proof this is—that that our belief in infallibility of the Prophets necessitates our belief in the infallibility of the Imāms in the same way.¹

One of the contemporary Shī'ah A'immah—Khomeini—goes beyond this saying:

وإن من ضروريات مذهبنا أن الأئمتنا مقاما لا يبلغه ملك مقرب ولا نبي مرسل

Amongst the requirements of our creed is the belief that our Imāms hold a position that no close Angel nor sent Messenger can aspire for.²

As for Imām al-Ṭabarī, he believes in the infallibility of the Prophets as far as delivering the message of their Lord is concerned. However, making mistakes at other junctures is a possibility as per the evidence of the Qur'ān and Prophetic traditions.³ Furthermore, he sees no issue in citing the mistakes and errors of some Prophets verbatim as Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has stated.

The belief of Imām al-Ṭabarī in this regard becomes quite clear in his commentary on the inclination of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

وأولي الأقوال في ذلك بالصواب أن يقال : إن الله جل ثناؤه أخبر عن هم يوسف وامرأة العزيز كل واحد منهما بصاحبه لولا أن رأى يوسف برهان ربه ، وذلك آية من آيات الله زجرته عن ركوب ما هم به يوسف من الفاحشة ... والصواب أن يقال في ذلك ما قاله الله تبارك وتعالى والإيمان به، وترك ما عدا ذلك إلى
عالمه

The most appropriate and correct opinion is to say, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has informed us of the inclination of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and determination of the Minister's wife for each other had Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ not seen the proof from his

1 Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar: 'Aqā'id al-Imāmiyyah, pg. 51.

2 Khomeini: Al-Ḥukūmah al-Islāmiyyah, pg. 52.

3 See for example the lengthy ḥadīth of shafā'ah as narrated by al-Bukhārī in *Kitāb al-Riqāq*, vol. 7 pg. 203.

Lord. This was a sign from the signs of Allah ﷻ to deter Yūsuf عليه السلام from the ill inclination. The correct thing to do is say what Allah ﷻ has said and believe in that, leaving all other details to Him.¹

His belief about the Imāms is that they are not infallible; mistakes in their actions and speech is possible. This contradicts the belief of the Shī'ah who assume the impossibility of such. Imām al-Ṭabarī has alluded to this in citing the Tafsīr of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا under the verse:

وَأُولَاتُ الْأَحْمَالِ أَجَلُهُنَّ أَنْ يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ

*And for those who are pregnant, their term is until they give birth.*²

These two Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا have concluded that this verse is specific to the divorced women, whilst Imām al-Ṭabarī opines this to be incorrect stating it to include both divorced and widowed women. This is due Allah ﷻ leaving it open ended and not specified it to divorced women thereby including in its purport both divorced and widowed pregnant women.³

If Imām al-Ṭabarī was a Shī'ī he would not have contradicted the Tafsīr of 'Alī عليه السلام nor would he have cited it to be incorrect. Furthermore, if he considered the Imāms to be infallible he would not have considered 'Alī عليه السلام to have made a mistake and neither would he have opposed his view. In this approach of Imām al-Ṭabarī there is definitive opposition to the Shī'ah creed in one of their fundamental doctrines.

B. Al-Raj'ah.

The Shī'ah believe in the doctrine of al-Raj'ah which is the belief of return; return of the Imāms to this world after their death. Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar says:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 6/12/113.

2 Sūrah al-Ṭalāq: 4.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 1/28/93.

إن الذي تذهب إليه الإمامية أخذاً ما جاء من آل البيت أن الله يعيد قوماً من الأموات إلى الدنيا ... فيعز فريقاً ويذل فريقاً ، ويديل المحقّين من المبطلين والمظلومين منهم من الظالمين ، وذلك عند قيام مهدي آل محمد - عليه وعليهم أفضل الصلاة والسلام - ، ثم يصيرون بعد ذلك إلى الموت ، ومن بعده إلى النشور

The Imāmiyyah, ascribing to that which has come from the Ahl al-Bayt, opine that Allah will return certain individuals to life in this world thereby giving honour to some and dishonour to others, distinguishing the true from the false, and the oppressed from the oppressors. This will occur when Mahdī will make his appearance. They will then die once again till resurrection.¹

Imām al-Ṭabarī has opposed the Shī'ah in their belief of Raj'ah. He rejects the return of the dead back to life after their death. This is as Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى would not afflict one with death twice over. He has alluded to this in his explanation of the verse:

إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِنِّي فَتَوَقَّيْكَ وَرَأْفَعُكَ إِلَيَّ

[Mention] when Allah said, "O 'Īsā, indeed I will take you and raise you to Myself."²

After relating the successive narrations that establish the descent of 'Īsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and explaining that *wafāt*³ in this verse holds the meaning of raising he writes:

ومعلوم أنه لو كان قد أماته الله لم يكن بالذي يميتة ميتة أخرى يجمع عليه ميتتين ، لأن الله إنما أخبر عباده أنه يخلقهم ثم بينهم ثم يحييهم

It is known that if Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى had taken his life, He would not afflict him with a second death as Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has informed his servants that he would create them, grant them death, and then resurrect them.⁴

1 Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar: 'Aqā'id al-Imāmiyyah, pg. 67.

2 Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 55.

3 Literally meaning death.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 3/3/203-204.

The above quotation of Imām al-Ṭabarī is quite clear in conveying his sentiment of rejection to the doctrine of Raj'ah as adopted by the Shī'ah. Raj'ah according to the Shī'ah is life followed by death followed by life once more before death and then resurrection on the Day of Qiyāmah. Whist the view of Imām al-Ṭabarī is vastly different. He believes that Allah ﷻ created people, giving them life and will grant them death before resurrecting them on the Day of Qiyāmah. He is quite clear in rejecting the possibility of death twice over on one person.

C. Al-Taqiyyah

This is defined as concealment of one's beliefs from another or expressing that which is contrary to one's belief. Taqiyyah, to the Shī'ah is a fundamental part of their faith and a defining characteristic of their creed. This belief of theirs has led them to permit dishonesty to the extent that examples are given of the extent of their dishonesty. In fact it has been become a proverb: *More dishonest than a Rāfiḍī*. Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar states:

روي عن صادق آل البيت - يعني جعفر الصادق - التقيية ديني ودين آبائي من لم يقل بها فقد كفر ، ،
ومن لا تقمته له لا دين له»

It has been narrated from Ṣādiq of the Ahl al-Bayt—i.e. Ja'far al-Ṣādiq—
“Taqiyyah is my faith and the faith of my ancestors. Whoever does not believe in it has turned renegade.” “Whoever doesn't carry out Taqiyyah has no faith.”¹

1 Muḥammad Riḍā al-Muẓaffar: 'Aqā'id al-Imāmiyyah, pg. 72.

Note the fabrications of the Rawāfiḍ against Ja'far al-Ṣādiq ﷺ. Allah ﷻ has kept the Ahl al-Bayt pure from such frivolous activities and has imbued within them honesty and faith of the highest degree. Their faith was based on *taqwā* (piety) not *Taqiyyah* (dissimulation). Ibn 'Asākir has cited the following in *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 4 pg. 435:

أن الحسن المثني بن الحسن السبط ابن علي بن أبي طالب قال لرجل من الرافضة : « والله لئن أمكننا الله منكم لنقطعن أيديكم وأرجلكم ، ثم لا نقبل منكم توبة ، فقال له رجل - آخر - : لم لا تقبل منهم توبة - قال : نحن أعلم هؤلاء منكم إن شاءوا صدقوكم وإن شاءوا كذبوكم ، وزعموا أن ذلك يستقيم لهم في التقيية . وملك إن التقيية هي باب رخصة للمسلم إذا اضطر إليها وخاف من ذي سلطان وأعطاه غير ما في نفسه يدرأ عن ذمة الله ، وليست باب فضل ، إنما الفضل في القيام بأمر الله وقول الحق ، وإيم الله ما بلغ من التقيية أن يجعل الله بها لعبد من عباد الله أن يضل عباد الله

The Shī'ah indulge in Taqiyyah by way of speech and actions with Muslims and others.

Imām al-Ṭabarī on the other hand has opposed the Shī'ah in law and practice. They, the Shī'ah, believe it to be a fundamental aspect to be practiced upon whilst he views it to be a safety mechanism which can be relied upon in times of extreme need. Similarly, in practice he is at loggerheads with them. He does not deem it permissible to be employed with Muslims. Its use against disbelievers will be permitted under the ambit of the verse:

إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاةً

*Except when taking precaution against them in prudence.*¹

Furthermore, he views Taqiyyah in this instance as permitted solely in speech, not in actions.²

D. Mut'ah marriage.

The Mut'ah marriage serves as one of the greatest issues of contention between the Ahl al-Sunnah and the Shī'ah. The Shī'ah permit it and consider its legislation

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Al-Ḥasan ibn al-Muthannā ibn al-Ḥasan, son of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib said to a man of the Rawāfiq:
"By Allah! If we gain an upper hand over you, we would cut your hands and legs and would not accept your pleas of forgiveness either."

A man said to him, "Why would you not heed their pleas of forgiveness?"

He replied, "We know these people better than you. When they wish they narrate truths from you and when they wish they attribute lies to you assuming it to be correct under the guise of Taqiyyah. Know well! The option of Taqiyyah is available as an alleviation for a Muslim in a state of extreme necessity permitting one to express other than what he believes. This is not an option based on virtue. Virtue lies in adhering to the commands of Allah ﷻ and uttering the truth. By Allah! Taqiyyah has become a tool of misguidance."

1 Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 28.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 3/3/152-153.

as continually legitimate whilst the Ahl al-Sunnah consider it to be an abrogated law that holds a perpetual prohibition.

Imām al-Ṭabarī is just one of the countless scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah who have disproved the permissibility of Mut‘ah. He has vehemently attacked the notion of Mut‘ah and has refuted the opinions that permit temporary marriages. Consider the following statements:

فأما الذي قال السدي فقول لا معنى له لفساد القول بإحلال جماع المرأة بغير نكاح ولا ملك يمين ،

The statement of al-Suddī¹ holds no water due to it permitting marital relations without nikāḥ or ownership which is not recognized.²

لقيام الحجة بتحريم الله تعالى متعة النساء على غير وجه النكاح الصحيح أو الملك الصحيح على لسان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ،

Due to the evidence of prohibition set by Allah ﷻ through the medium of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in having marital relations without a recognised marriage or recognised ownership.³

E. Al-Ṣaḥābah.

The Shī‘ah insult the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ due to them having gone against the supposed ordainment of the Imāmah of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. They also introduce the notion that the

1 He is Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Karīm al-Suddī al-Kufī, the Mufasssīr.

- Ibn Taghrībirdī says, “Author of tafsīr, incidents of battle, and life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. He was an Imām and was an authority on the instances of battle.”
- Ibn Ḥajar says: “Truthful, would err. Was accused of Tashayyu”

He has authored *Kitāb al-Tafsīr*. He passed away the year 127 A.H/744 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 323; Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* vol. 1 pg. 184; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pgs. 71-72; Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhiraḥ*, vol. 1 pg. 308.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān*, 4/5/9-10.

3 Ibid, 4/5/10.

Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ had turned renegade¹ due to not taking the pledge of allegiance at the hands of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ after Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. They further renounce all besides a few; roughly ten, from the entire galaxy of Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. This renouncement extends to the Ten Companions given glad tidings of Jannah, besides ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, the Companions present at Bay‘at al-Riḍwān, and above all the most noble and notable of them all Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا whom they label as ‘the two idols of the Quraysh’ and ‘Jabat and Ṭāghūt’². Consider the fact that Allah سُبحانه وتعالى has said regarding the Companions present at Bay‘at al-Riḍwān:

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ

*Certainly was Allah pleased with the believers when they pledged allegiance to you, [O Muḥammad], under the tree.*³

And Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said:

لا يدخل أحد ممن بايع تحت الشجرة النار

No one who took the pledge under the tree will enter the fire.⁴

On the other hand we find Imām al-Ṭabarī praising the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ⁵ to the extent of writing a book on the virtues of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا⁶. He has praised ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and applauded his efforts in compiling the Noble Qur’ān saying:

1 Al-Kashi: *Al-Rijāl*, pg. 101.

2 Both meaning idols. See, Dr ‘Abd Allāh Gharīb: *Ibid*, pg. 176. The author writes that this is in their book *Ḍiyā al-Ṣaliḥīn*, pg. 523.

3 Sūrah al-Faṭḥ: 18.

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Kitāb Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah, vol. 16 pg. 58.

5 Al-Ṭabarī: *Sariḥ al-Sunnah*, pg. 23.

6 In his book *Al-Faḍā’il*. Yaḳūt has alluded to this in *Mu’jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 85.

فلا قراءة اليوم للمسلمين إلا بالحرف الواحد الذي اختاره إمامهم الشفيق الناصح دون ما عده من الأحرف الستة الباقية

There is no mode of recitation for the Muslims except that which was chosen by their compassionate and well-wishing Imām. Choosing one over the other six.¹

Apart from the above mentioned issues there are many other fundamental issues of doctrine wherein Imām al-Ṭabarī has differed with the Shī'ah. Mentioning them all would render the discussion lengthy.

Based on the above discussion and the evidence presented therein coupled with the elucidation of beliefs and praise of scholars, it becomes clear as day that accusing Imām al-Ṭabarī of Rafḍ or Tashayyū' is fundamentally wrought with implausibilities. Such accusations lean on the brittle crutch of assumptions and delusions not having any rational academic basis to stand upon. This sort of mudslinging can be attributed to fanaticism based on a doctrinal divide, sectarianism, and/or the need to stain Islam and its scholars. It does not behoove a fair minded individual or scholar to be influenced by such biased rhetoric coming from those who detested him and were resentful of his achievements. The poet has so aptly said:

فالناس أعداء له وخصوم
حسدا وبغيا إنه لدميم

حسدوا الفتى إذا لم ينالوا سعيه
كضرائر الحسناء قلن لوجهها

They envy the youth whose prestige they cannot reach;

People become his enemies and adversaries.

Like co wives of a beautiful women say;

Out of jealousy and hate, she is ugly.²

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 1/1/22.

2 Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 8 pgs. 134-135.

Abū Ja‘far—may Allah shower his mercies upon him—was a reliable and stellar Imām as attested to unanimously by the scholars of Islam. Those that have diverged from this opinion are far and few removed; their judgment at loggerheads with the facts. Those that have made this great Imām a target of accusations or falsely attributed unsuitable works to him find within themselves deep seeded envy for Islam and its adherents.

IV. The creed of Imām Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī

Imām al-Ṭabarī ascribed to the creed of the *Salaf* (predecessors), the creed of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah; that which Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, and the Tābi‘īn ascribed to. It is the creed of those individuals who followed them without inferring any change, interpolation, or innovation. He concurred with and defended the doctrine of the *Salaf* against the innovators and prejudiced. He believed that the Qur‘ān and the Aḥādīth were the sole sources that could establish the beautiful names of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. He further opined that discussions of *al-Isim wa al-Musammā*¹ is an innovation not present in the era of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ and Tābi‘īn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ.²

It should be noted that Imām al-Ṭabarī fundamentally disagreed with the scholars of theology in their views of negating or interpreting the attributes of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. He concurred with the *Salaf* in establishing the attributes whilst leaving its purport to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى without affirming similarity, negating its existence, or interpreting its meaning.³

‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Ṭabarī states:

كان أبو جعفر يذهب في جل مذاهبه إلى ما عليه الجماعة من السلف ، وطريق أهل العلم المتمسكين
بالسنن شديدا عليه مخالفتهم ، ماضيا على مناهجهم لا تأخذه في ذلك ولا في شيء لومة لائم

1 A matter of speculative theology which discusses the issue of whether the name is different from the thing named or if the name is identical to the thing named.

2 Al-Lālkāṭī: *Sharḥ Uṣūl I’tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah*, vol. 1 pgs. 185-186.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān*. See for instance, vol. 1 pg. 62.

The views of Abū Ja‘far mostly concurred with that of the majority of the Salaf and scholars who were adherents of the sunnah. He would not tolerate opposing them. He continued to hold firm to their path not fearing in the least any hostility in this path.¹

Abū Bakr ibn Kāmil said to him once:

من سبقك إلى إكفار أهل الأهواء – فقال : إماما عدل : عبد الرحمن بن مهدي ويحيى بن سعيد القطان

Is there anyone who considered the Ahl al-Ahwā’ as heretics prior to you?

He replied, “Yes, two just Imāms; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī and Yaḥyā ibn Sa‘īd al-Qaṭṭān.”²

When Imām al-Ṭabarī would see innovation in a person he would distance himself from him.³

Imām al-Ṭabarī opposed the innovators in many issues of theology. He refuted the Mu‘tazilah in their claim that the Qur’ān is created. He established that the Qur’ān is the direct speech of Allah and not created.⁴

He has also refuted those who deny seeing Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى on the Day of Qiyāmah. He establishes that the believers will see Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى on the Day of Qiyāmah as clear from the Qur’ān and authentic narrations of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.⁵

1 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 82.

2 He is Yaḥyā ibn Sa‘īd ibn Farrūkh al-Qaṭṭān al-Tamīmī, Abū Sa‘īd al-Hāfiẓ al-Baṣrī. An authority in ḥadīth.

Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal says: “I have not laid my eyes upon anyone the like of Yaḥyā ibn al-Qaṭṭān. He passed away the year 198 A.H/813 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘īd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 293; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 14 pg. 135; and Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 1 pg. 298.

3 Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 84.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Sariḥ al-Sunnah*, pgs. 18-19.

5 Ibid, pg. 20.

On the issue of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى being the creator of a servant's actions he has opposed the Qadriyyah who opine that a servant is the originator of his actions. He has branded their view as senseless, ignorant, and an interpretation that is insubstantial as grasping at flimsy reeds. He has established that servants and their actions are a creation of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى whilst the servant is the one carrying out the act. Thus, good and evil are both creations attributed Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى whilst the act and its consequence are attributed to the doer.¹

On the issue of imān he has opposed the Murji'ah and Jahmiyyah, refuting their view that imān is solely attesting with the tongue or believing with the heart, by way of logic and divine texts. He opines that imān is made up of attestation and action. It rises and falls. The former by good deeds and the latter by evil.

و به جاء الخير عن جماعة من أصحاب رسول الله وعليه مضى أهل الدين والفضل

Thus the traditions have reflected from a group of the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; and to this have the faithful and noble adhered to,²

On the issue of being opinionated regarding the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم he has opposed the Khawārij and the Shī'ah who view them as having turned apostate and take to cursing them. He has established the great and noble status of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم through the texts of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. He views the most noble and most deserving of khilāfah and Imāmah from the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم to be Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه followed in succession by 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, 'Uthmān ibn al-'Affān, and 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنهم. He views their virtue and nobility to be in the same order.³

Amongst the books of Imām al-Ṭabarī on the subject of 'Aqīdah (theology) is a booklet titled *Risālah al-Baṣīr fī Ma'ālim al-Dīn* which he wrote addressing the folk of Ṭabaristān on the issue of al-Is'm wa al-Musammā which had divided them.

1 Ibid, pgs. 21-22.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Sariḥ al-Sunnah*, pgs. 25-26.

3 Ibid, pgs. 23-24.

Regarding the creed of the innovators¹ he has a renowned booklet entitled *Sarīḥ al-Sunnah* in which he recounts his creed and beliefs.

In short, his creed is that which the Aḥl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah are known for, as narrated, and accepted by them from the era of the Salaf till our era.

¹ Yaḳūt: *Mu‘jam al-Uḍabā’*, vol. 18 pg. 80.

Module Three: Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk of Imām al-Ṭabarī

Section One: The nature of the Tārīkh of Imām al-Ṭabarī and its academic significance

I. The Tārīkh of Imām al-Ṭabarī

Imām al-Ṭabarī speaks of the nature of his *Tārīkh* in the introduction to his book. He says:

وأنا ذاكر في كتابي هذا من ملوك كل زمان من لدن ابتداء ربنا خلق خلقه إلى فنائهم ، من انتهى إلينا خبره ، من ابتدأه الله تعالى بالاله ونعمه فشكر نعمه من رسول مرسل أو ملك مسلط أو خليفة مستخلف ، فزاده إلى ما ابتدأه به من نعمة في العاجل نعما ، وإلى ما تفضل به عليه فضلا ، ومن أقر ذلك له منهم وجعله له عنده ذخرا ، ومن كفر منهم نعمه فسلبه ما ابتداه به من نعمه وعجل له نقمه ، ومن كفر منهم نعمه فمتعه ما أنعم به عليه إلى حين وفاته وهلاكه ، مقرونا ذكر كل من أنا ذاكره منهم في كتابي هذا يذكر زمانه وجمل ما كان من حوادث الأمور في عصره وأيامه

In this book of mine, I shall mention whatever information has reached us about kings throughout the ages from when our Lord began the creation of His creation to its annihilation. There were messengers sent by Allah, kings placed in authority, or Khulafā' positioned in succession. Allah had early on bestowed His benefits and favours upon some of them.

They were grateful for His favours, and He thus gave them more favours and bounty in addition to those bestowed by Him upon them in their fleeting life, or He postponed the increase and stored it up for them with Himself. There were others who were not grateful for His favours, and so He deprived them of the favours He had bestowed upon them early on and hastened for them His revenge. There were also others who were not grateful for His favours, He let them enjoy them until the time of their death and destruction. Every one of them whom I shall mention in this book of mine will be mentioned in conjunction with his era but only summaries of the events in his day and age will be added.¹

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk*, vol. 1 pg. 6.

It should be borne in mind that Imām al-Ṭabarī penned his *Tārīkh* in order to reinforce a core ideology emanating from his beliefs and perception of faith. The ideology of faith in the commands, prohibitions, justice, judgment, and decree of Allah ﷻ. This ideology extends to the include belief in a continuous tradition of Allah ﷻ that does not change. It further takes into account the belief that every individual is free, able to make a choice, and governed by his servitude to Allah ﷻ and weight of vicegerency on this earth by way of which he ought to establish the Sharīah of Allah ﷻ. This ideology culminates in the belief that Allah ﷻ will reward the faithful obedient servants whilst He will punish the disloyal sinful ones.

Thus, his historical view when assessing events is governed by a thought process that is illuminated by a deep belief in Allah ﷻ and a profound understanding of his laws and injunctions. Similarly, the methodization of his work, taking inspiration from the lives of Prophets and Kings, is based upon principles that seek to reveal lessons of a continuous tradition of Allah ﷻ in relation to humanity. These lessons are for the intellectual to ponder over and realise the tradition of assistance that is granted to the believers who enact his laws; be it the Prophets or their followers. Similarly, the tradition of destroying the oppressors and their cronies and at times giving them respite till they taste the punishment on the Day of Qiyāmah. Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ

*Indeed, We will support Our messengers and those who believe during the life of this world and on the Day when the witnesses will stand.*¹

Imām al-Ṭabarī divided his work into two distinct parts. The first part deals with vicegerency and human origins. It discusses the descent of Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to the earth and the incident of Qābīl and Hābīl followed by a profile of the various Prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ. It deals with the lives of Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Lūṭ, Ismā'īl, Ayyūb,

1 Sūrah Ghāfir: 51.

Shu‘ayb, Ya‘qūb, Yūsuf, Mūsa, Ilyās, Dāwūd, Sulaymān, Ṣāliḥ, Yūnus, ‘Īsā, and Muḥammad—pre migration—may peace and blessings be upon them all.

Similarly, Imām al-Ṭabarī has, in this first part, given historical accounts of the previous nations. He discusses the Persians, the Banū Isrā‘īl, and the Arabs. He outlines the history of the Sasanians from its inception; under Manushahr, to the era of Khosrow Parviz. He discusses the Battle of Dhī Qār and Yazdegerd ibn Shahriyar¹. Persians and Sassanid history form a large part of the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī especially the latter², as the historical records of this time period had been circulated with much attention given to the Sassanid-Arab relations. Imām al-Ṭabarī then details the history and narrations of the Banū Isrā‘īl. He also recounts the Roman Empire, listing the names and eras of its Emperors³ whilst giving far less detail than that given under the discussion of the Sassanid Empire.

He then relates the events of ‘Ād, Thamūd, Jurhum, Judays, and Ṭism.⁴ This is followed by discussing the Kingdoms of Yemen; the Tabābi‘ah and others. The incident of Judhaymah al-Abrash with al-Zabbā‘; the renowned Queen is related.⁵ The incidents of al-Munādhirah and al-Ghasāsinah⁶ has been discussed here. He then goes on to discuss the forefathers of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and profile the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ before prophethood.⁷

It becomes apparent in this first part that Imām al-Ṭabarī outlines events without delving into specifics, either due to the fear of lengthening the book beyond its scope, or due to a lack of confidence in these details considering the long time period, possibility of embellishments and non-continuity of the chain of

1 *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, first and second parts.

2 Ibid, vol. 2 pg. 37.

3 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 606.

4 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 629.

5 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 613.

6 Ibid, vol. 1 pgs. 193-213.

7 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 239.

narrators. Or perhaps these details simply don't hold much importance in his view.

The second part of the book deals with the events of Islamic history, post-migration of Rasūlullāh ﷺ up to the year 303 A.H/915 A.D. Imām al-Ṭabarī recounts the events of migration, battles of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, his emissaries, and delegations that came to him. He further discusses the life, characteristics, and death of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.¹

He then begins discussing the era of the Rightly Guided Khulafā' by narrating the khilāfah of Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and the battles against apostasy in his era.² He recounts the conquests that came about during the reign of Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.³ This is followed by the fitnah that began taking shape in the era of 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ which ultimately led to his confinement and assassination.⁴ The themes after this are dedicated to the events and fitnah during the era of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ culminating with the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn.⁵ The consequences of these events are discussed in the light of *Tahkīm* (arbitration) and physical confrontation with the Khawārij.⁶ Imām al-Ṭabarī thereafter discusses the abdication of al-Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ wherein he ceded the khilāfah to Mu'āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ as a result of which the Muslims came together under one banner and one khalīfah; an event that caused that year to be known as 'Ām al-Jamā'ah (year of reconciliation).⁷

This dates the beginning of the Umayyad Dynasty under the leadership of Mu'āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and some of the most significant events that occurred in during

1 Ibid. Refer to the end of the second volume and beginning of the third volume.

2 Ibid, vol. 3 pg. 249.

3 Ibid. Refer to the third volume and beginning of the fourth volume.

4 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 263 and after.

5 Ibid. Refer to the end of the fourth volume and beginning of the fifth volume.

6 Ibid, vol. 5 pg. 67.

7 Ibid, vol. 5 pg. 158.

his reign; taking the pledge of allegiance in favour of his son, Yazīd¹, and the revival of conquests which had fallen dormant during the era of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه due to the fitnah.² Imām al-Ṭabarī then goes on to discuss the events that occurred during the reign of Yazīd; such as the murder of Ḥusayn and the Battle of Ḥarraḥ.³ This is followed by the passing down of the khilāfah after the death of Mu‘āwiyah ibn Yazīd⁴ marking the end of the Sufyanid line and the inception of the Marwanid line of the Banū Umayyah.⁵

Generally, Imām al-Ṭabarī does not omit major events that occurred during the Umayyad Dynasty. He includes incidents such as the clash between the Umayyads and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr رضي الله عنه regarding the khilāfah⁶, the mobilisation of Al-

1 He is Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān, Abū Khālid al-Qurashī, al-Umawī, the khaliḥfah.

- Al-Dhahabī says profiling him, “He was strong, brave, opinionated, resolute, intelligent, and eloquent. He was a good poet, a Nāṣibī, rude, harsh, and tough. He drank wine and was involved in evil. His reign began with the murder of Ḥusayn and ended with the Battle of Ḥarraḥ. People showed aversion to him. His life was bereft of blessings—his reign lasted less than four years—and many opposed him after Ḥusayn. Amongst his good recorded is the Battle of Constantinople wherein he led an army. An army that had the likes of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī رضي الله عنه. We do not curse him nor express love for him. Many of the Khulafā’ from Dynasties—the Umayyad, Abbasid, and others—were like him and many worse than him.”

He passed away the year 64 A.H/683 A.D. His life has been recorded by Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pgs. 211-262; Ibn Qutaybah: *Al-Ma‘ārif*, pg. 153; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 1 pg. 35; and Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8 pg. 226.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 5 pgs. 229-301.

3 Ibid, vol. 5 pg. 400 and after and pg. 485 and after.

4 He is Mu‘āwiyah ibn Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān, Abū Layla al-Qurashī al-Umawī, the khaliḥfah.

- Al-Dhahabī says, “He was young, pious, and better than his father. He ruled for forty days and then abdicated. He refused to appoint a successor.”

His life has been recorded by Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 255; Ibn Qutaybah: *Al-Ma‘ārif*, pg. 154; and Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 1 pg. 139.

5 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 5 pg. 53.

6 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 173.

Mukhtār ibn Abī ‘Ubayd Allah al-Thaqafī¹, the uprising of ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ash‘ath² against al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī³ at Sijistān⁴, and the conflicts between the Umayyads and the Khawārij.⁵

This is besides the other scattered events which he has recounted regarding the appointment of governors, emissaries, leaders in Ḥajj, and records of conquests during the era of the Umayyad Dynasty. At the end discussing the events of a year he mentions the names of governors and leaders of Ḥajj. Similarly, he mentions the names of leaders of battles if there were any in that year.⁶ He profiles every khalīfah from the Khulafā’ of the Umayyad Dynasty at the date of their death. For example, he profiles Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه at his death recounting his life and events that relate to him.⁷

1 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 38.

2 He is ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ash‘ath ibn Qays al-Kindī. Governor of Sijistān. Al-Ḥajjāj deployed him as the governor of Sijistān where he gave rise to a rebellion. He marched with a large army which consisted of scholars and pious people when al-Ḥajjāj violated the sacred bounds. A battle ensued between the two and Ibn al-Ash‘ath was defeated. He sought refuge at Ratbil, Sijistān. However, they betrayed him and sent him to al-Ḥajjāj in chains. It is said that when he neared Iraq, he threw himself of a derelict tower and met his end. This was in the year 84 A.H/703 A.D. His life has been recorded by, by Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pgs. 280-288; and Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 6 pgs. 326-393.

3 Al-Dhababī says profiling him, “Allah سبحانه وتعالى destroyed him the year 59 A.H in old age. He was an oppressor and a tyrant. A Nāṣibī, evil, a blood shedder. He was brave, courageous, conniving, and cunning. He was eloquent and revered the Qur‘ān. He laid siege to Ibn al-Zubayr at the Ka‘bah and attacked him with catapults. He humiliated the residents of the sacred cities, governed Iraq and the east for twenty years, fought Ibn al-Ash‘ath, and delayed the times of prayer until Allah removed him. We do not swear him not express love for him. Rather we show disdain to him for the sake of Allah. This being an integral part of faith. He has done good that drowns in the ocean of his evil. In some ways other tyrants were like him yet in some ways his tyranny was unprecedented.” His life has been recorded by Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pgs. 205-357; Al-Mas‘ūdī: *Murūj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3 pg. 365; Al-Dhababī: *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 4 pg. 343; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2 pg. 311.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 6 pg. 334.

5 Ibid. Refer to volume five and six.

6 Ibid. For example see, vol. 5 pg. 289.

7 Ibid, vol. 5 pg. 323.

Imām al-Ṭabarī then outlines the rise of the Abbasid Dynasty by a major proponent of the movement in the east; Abū Muslim al-Khurāsānī.¹ He details the events that led to the rise of this dynasty, mainly due to the weakening of the Umayyad Dynasty as a result of infighting between the sons of the house of al-Ḥākim² and the strengthening of the Abbasids. He then mentions the Khulafā' of this dynasty in succession and the events in their eras, notably the rise to the seat of khilāfah and fall from it. And as per his habit, he profiles them at the end of every year.³

He then references the battles against the Romans as well as the summer and winter raids into enemy territory.⁴ He recounts the border patrols⁵, conflicts with the Khawārij⁶, matters of strife such as the Alawite rebellion against the Banū al-'Abbās⁷, pursuing the heretics, the Barāmikah catastrophe in the era of al-Rashīd⁸,

1 He is 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muslim. Commonly known as Abū Muslim al-Khurāsānī. A proponent of the Abbasid Dynasty and defeater of the Umayyad armies.

- Ibn Khallikān says, "He was eloquent in both Arabic and Farsi. He was a gifted orator. He narrated poems and was well aware of the state of affairs."
- Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī states, "He narrated from Abū al-Zubayr and others. He wasn't worthy of narrating from as he shed more blood than al-Ḥajjāj. He was an extraordinary and unusual individual. A man who would travel upon a donkey with packsaddle from Shām to Khurāsān. He continued to connive and work tirelessly in Marw for ten years till he marched with battalions like mountains toppling dynasties and forming new ones. Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr killed him fearing for his Sultanate the year 137 A.H/754 A.D."

His life has been recorded by Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 415; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 10 pg. 207; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3 pg. 145; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 6 pg. 48; and Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 2 pg. 589.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*. See, volume seven.

3 Ibid. See for example, vol. 7 pg. 649.

4 Ibid, vol. 8 pg. 320.

5 Ibid, vol. 8 pg. 313.

6 Ibid, vol. 8 pg. 142; vol. 7 pg. 498.

7 Ibid, vol. 7 pg. 552.

8 Ibid, vol. 8 pg. 287.

the uprising of some Arab tribes due to the preference given to the Persians and Turks¹, the dispute between the sons of al-Rashīd regarding the Sultanate², and the revolts of the Rāwandiyyah, Kharamiyyah, Zanj, and Qarāmiṭah³.

He then mentions the struggle for leadership after the khilāfah of al-Mu'taṣim⁴ and the rise and dominion of the Turks in whose hands the Khulafā' had become a play thing, appointing, demoting, and killing⁵ at whim which significantly weakened the Abbasid leadership and began a tumultuous period.

II. The academic significance of his Tārīkh.

The book of Imām al-Ṭabarī is unique in the long time period it covers, large volume of information it contains, and multitude of sources. It also remains distinct as a compendium of narrations, articles, and booklets of historians from a time before it. The Imām thus absorbed most of that which preceded it. He created an encyclopaedia which was of considerable benefit, as many early sources had later went missing. The book of Imām al-Ṭabarī, essentially an encyclopaedia persevered these lost works. Many works of al-Madā'inī, Sayf ibn 'Umar, al-Wāqidi, Ibn Shabbah, Hishām ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī, al-Sha'bī⁶, al-

1 Ibid. Refer to the eighth and ninth volume.

2 Ibid, vol. 8 pg. 364.

3 Ibid. Refer to the ninth and tenth volume.

4 He is Muḥammad ibn Hārūn al-Rashīd, titled al-Mu'taṣim. The Abbasid Khalīfah and conqueror.

- Al-Khaṭīb says, "Al-Mu'taṣim stormed Byzantine cities the year 223 A.H. vanquishing them."
- Al-Dhahabī says, "He was strong, resilient, brave, and awe inspiring. However, he lacked knowledge."

He passed away the year 227A.H/841 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Qutaybah: *Al-Ma'ārif*, pg. 171; Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnawarī: *Al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, pg. 401; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 9 pg. 118; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 3 pg. 342; and Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 9 pg. 290.

5 Ibid, vol. 9 pg. 222.

6 He is 'Āmir ibn Shurāḥīl ibn 'Abd Dhī Kibār al-Sha'bī al-Yemeni Abū 'Amr. A narrator of the prophetic life and historical events. Similitudes are given owing to his extraordinary memory. He is considered to be reliable. He accepted the appointment of judge for 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. From his books are, *Al-Maghāzī*, *Al-Shūrā wa Maqal 'Uthmān*, *Al-Farā'id wa al-Jarāḥāt* and *Al-Kifāyah fi al-'Ibādah wa al-Ṭā'ah*.

Aṣḡmā'ī, 'Uwānah ibn al-Ḥakam, al-Haytham ibn 'Adī, and others were lost. Imām al-Ṭabarī absorbed these and added tens of narrations to each which he had gained from his teachers, especially the scholars of ḥadīth and tafsīr.

Other unique characteristics of his book lay in the preservation of chains of transmission, referencing opinions, and gathering differing narrations regarding a single event. This enables the academic to recognize the strength of each narration by way of critiquing the chain of transmission, knowing its narrators, and sources whilst at the same time providing the opportunity to evaluate one narration against another. This makes it easy to identify any impairing defect (*'Ilal*) in the chains of narrations and sift the strong from the weak. The brilliance of his *Tārīkh* also lays in the chronological order it is set in. This aids the reader or researcher in noting the socio-political stages of the Muslim ummah throughout its history as well as the periods of strength and weakness that brightened and plagued it. Observing these stages concurrent to the efforts of jihād and adherence of society to the laws and injunctions of the sharī'ah brings about the realization that whenever the ummah adhered to the sharī'ah of Allah ﷺ and continued striving in jihād it held, strong and majestic. On the other hand, it becomes clear that when the ummah deviated from the sharī'ah, gave up striving in jihād, sunk into internal conflicts, and began contesting the seat of leadership, it resulted in weakening and falling into helplessness.

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He passed away the year 103 A.H./721 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 246; Al-Fasawī: *Al-Ma'rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 592; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 12 pg. 227; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 5 pg. 65; and Abū Nu'aym: *Al-Ḥilyah*, vol. 4 pg. 310.

1 He is Al-Haytham ibn 'Adī ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Ṭā'ī al-Kūfī Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān. Genealogist and historian. He has many works on history, accolades, and genealogy. Amongst them are, *Kitāb al-Tārīkh 'alā al-Sinīn*, *Al-Wufūd*, *Khawātīm al-Khulafā'*, *Tārīkh al-'Ajam wa Banī Umayyah*. *Khiṭaṭ al-Kūfah*, *Qaḍā' al-Kūfah wa al-Baṣrah*, *Kitāb al-Dawlah*, *'Ummāl al-Sharṭ wa Umarā' al-Iraq*, and *Tārīkh al-Ashrāf*. He passed away the year 207 A.H. 822 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pgs. 145-146; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 14 pg. 52; Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 19 pg. 309; and Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 1 pg. 111.

It is worthy of mention that though the focal point of the *Tārīkh* and a great portion of its subject matter is dedicated to states, rulers, and authority; it does not disregard monitoring and mentioning of socio-economic trends throughout the ages. The author discusses the uprising of the scholars in Iraq¹, the Sudanese revolt in Madinah², the public upheaval in Baghdad³, Arab sectarian antagonism in Baṣrah, Khurāsān, and Shām⁴, and the contention between the Arabs and non-Arabs⁵. All of these were a result of socio-economic grievances and disregard to a harmonious governance approach. Similarly, the academic will note sectarian movements of a political or military nature such as those introduced by the Khawārij⁶, Shī'ah⁷, Kharamiyyah⁸, Rāwandiyyah⁹, Zanj¹⁰, and Qarāmiṭah¹¹; together with the stages of consolidation and action they passed through. This was done under a rule wherein they could appeal to sentiments of exploitation to various segments of society by way of social injustices to the peasants, tradespeople, and general public which came as a result of internal instability and strife amongst the Abbasid Dynasty.

Another distinction of the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī is that it highlights important administrative information of annual appointments such as revenue collectors, commanders of the pilgrims, regional governors, and chief justices.¹² Similarly,

1 *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 6 pg. 347.

2 *Ibid*, vol. 7 pg. 609.

3 *Ibid*, vol. 7 pg. 609.

4 *Ibid*, vol. 7 pgs. 30/505 and vol. 8 pg. 262.

5 *Ibid*, vol. 7 pg. 285.

6 *Ibid*, vol. 5 pg. 165; vol. 7 pg. 498.

7 *Ibid*, vol. 5 pg. 551; vol. 7 pg. 552.

8 *Ibid*, vol. 9 pg. 23.

9 *Ibid*, vol. 7 pg. 505.

10 *Ibid*, vol. 9 pg. 407.

11 *Ibid*, vol. 10 pg. 23.

12 *Ibid*, vol. 3 pg. 342; vol. 5 pg. 308; vol. 7 pg. 142.

it highlights information pertaining to urban development and expansion of Islamic cities¹, particularly that of Baghdad. It recounts the developmental stages of urban expansion that created the city.² It also details the stages of expansion of the two holy cities; Makkah al-Mukarramah and Madinah al-Munawwarah.³

Some Arab academics have erred in their study of the book. For example, Jawād ‘Alī in his work titled *Mawārid Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* published by Majallah al-Majma‘ al-‘Ilmī al-Iraqī⁴ and Shākir Muṣṭafā in his book titled *Al-Tārīkh al-‘Arabī wa al-Mu’arrikhūn*⁵ have deemed the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī to have focused solely on the feats and actions of individuals together with opining that the work according to Imām al-Ṭabarī is a historical record of political events, rulers, battles, and armies.

This opinion is far from fact. It is, in fact, an injustice to Imām al-Ṭabarī who has clarified his approach and view to history in the introduction to his book. Besides, he has not disregarded the political, social, and administrative aspects in his *Tārīkh* as has been elucidated.

It should also be noted that the work *Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk* is considered a great accomplishment that denotes the profound knowledge of the author. None of the early or later day historians have embarked on gathering and presenting such a multitude of narrations in a single book. Neither have any of them shown the keen interest that Imām al-Ṭabarī displayed in gathering multitudes of narrations. His work therefore stands out as a treasure of narrations and texts that have been sought out within the realm of possibility. Furthermore, this was done with absolute neutrality, total integrity in narrating, and complete

1 Ibid, vol. 6 pg. 383.

2 Ibid, vol. 7 pg. 614.

3 Ibid, vol. 5 pg. 622; vol. 6 pg. 435; vol. 7 pg. 500.

4 Jawād ‘Alī: *Mawārid Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, Majallah al-Majma‘ al-‘Ilmī al-Iraqī. Issue 1 1370 A.H. 1950 A.D. pg. 167.

5 Shākir Muṣṭafā: *Al-Tārīkh al-‘Arabī wa al-Mu’arrikhūn*, vol. 1 pg. 256.

comprehensiveness in presentation. These are the reasons that his book has attained distinction and fame that other books of history have not.

Owing to this, historians that have come in the eras after that of Imām al-Ṭabarī find themselves dependent upon his book in aspects that relate to the first three centuries of Islamic history.

Individuals have worked diligently on his *Tārīkh* since its release. His book was laboriously copied out by hand time and again. It became a thing of admiration in libraries of Kings and rulers. Al-Maqrīzī¹ states that the library of al-ʿAzīz bi Allāh al-Fātimī² boasted more than twenty copies of it, one of them in the writing of the author himself.³

Historians took to appending it periodically from the appendix of Gharīb ibn Saʿd⁴,

1 He is Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Qādir, Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Ḥusaynī al-ʿAbīdī al-Maqrīzī. He was born and brought up in Cairo where he was appointed to intervene in enjoining good and forbidding evil (ḥisbah), give lectures, and lead the prayer. Amongst his books are, *Al-Mawāʿiz wa al-Iʿtibār bi Dhikr al-Khuṭaʿ wa al-Āthār*, *Al-Sulūk li Maʿrifah Duwal al-Mulūk*, *Al-Bayān wa al-Iʿrāb ammā fi Arḍ Miṣr min al-Aʿrāb*, *Tārīkh al-Aqbāt*, *Shudhūr al-ʿUqūd fi Dhikr al-Nuqūd*, *Risālah fi al-Awzān wa al-Akyāl*, *Imtāʿ al-Asmāʿ bima li al-Rasūl min al-Abnāʾ wa al-Amwāl wa al-Ḥafadah wa al-Matāʿ*, *Tajrīd al-Tawḥīd al-Mufīd*, *ʿIqd Jawāhir al-Asqāt min Mulūk Miṣr wa al-Fuṣṭāṭ*, *Al-Ilmām bi Akhbār min Arḍ al-Ḥabashah min Mulūk al-Islām* and *Al-Turuq al-Gharībah fi Akhbār Haḍar Mawt al-ʿAjibah*. He passed away the year 845 A.H/1441 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Sakhāwī: *Al-Tibr al-Masbūk*, pg. 21; Al-Shawkānī: *Al-Badr al-Ṭālī*, vol. 1 pg. 79.

2 He is Nizār ibn Maʿd al-ʿAzīz bi Allāh al-ʿAbīdī al-Fātimī, Abū Maṅṣūr. A ruler of the Fatimid Dynasty. The pledge of allegiance was given to him after the death of his father Al-Muʿiz li-Dīn Allah in Egypt the year 365 A.H/975 A.D. He had a keen interest in linguistics and books. He died the year 386 A.H/996 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 8 pg. 220/ vol. 9 pg. 40; Al-Maqrīzī: *Al-Mawāʿiz wa al-Iʿtibār bi Dhikr al-Khuṭaʿ wa al-Āthār*, vol. 2 pg. 284.

3 Shākīr Muṣṭafā: *Al-Tārīkh al-ʿArabī wa al-Muʿarrikhūn*, vol. 1 pg. 262.

4 He is Gharīb ibn Saʿd al-Qurtubī, physician and historian. He was favoured by the Banū Umayyah in Andalus. Al-Nāṣir appointed him to a position and Al-Muntaṣir made him his scribe. He has works on the topics of medicine and history. Amongst these is the book, *Khalq al-Janīn wa Tadbīr al-Ḥabalā wa al-Mawlūdīn*. He passed away the year 369 A.H/979 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn ʿAbd al-Malik al-Marākīshī: *Al-Dhayl wa al-Takmilah li Kitābay al-Mawṣūl wa al-Ṣilah*, 5/1/141.

author of *Şilah Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, to the one written by King al-Şāliḥ Ayyūb ibn al-Kāmil¹.

Similarly, many abbreviated his Tārīkh. Ibn Nadīm has counted amongst these, Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān al-Hāshimī², Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Shimshāṭī³, and others⁴.

Many have translated this monumental work of his as well. Muḥammad ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh al-Bal‘amī⁵ translated it into Farsi upon the instruction of Amīr Manşūr ibn Nūḥ al-Sāmānī⁶. This Farsi translation was then translated into Turkish during the Ottoman Caliphate and was published in Astana the year 1260 A.H/ 1844 A.D. The Turkish translation was translated into French by Hermann Zotenberg and

1 He is Ayyūb ibn Muḥammad al-Kāmil. Known as Al-Malik al-Şāliḥ. From amongst the great Ayyubid Kings in Egypt.

- Ibn Wāsil says, “Al-Malik al-Şāliḥ Najm al-Dīn was, dignified, chaste, modest, pure, far from levity and frivolity, dignified, and would remain silent for lengthy periods. He bought a large number of Kipchak slaves, who formed the core of his army and upon whom he depended heavily. They were known as the *Baḥriyyah* (River Corps).”

He passed away the year 647 A.H/1249 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Jawzī: *Mir‘āt al-Zamān fi Tārīkh al-A‘yān*, vol. 8 pg. 775; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 23 pg. 187; Al-Maqrīzī: *Al-Sulūk li Ma‘rifah Duwal al-Mulūk*, vol. 1 pg. 296; Ibn Iyās: *Badā’ al-Zuhūr*, vol.1.

2 I haven’t come across his profile.

3 He is ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Shimshāṭī al-‘Adawī. A scholar of linguistics and history. Amongst his books is *Mukhtaşar Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*. He abbreviated the book by omitting the chain of narrations and completed it the year 377 A.H/987 A.D. His life has been recorded by Yaḳūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 14 pg. 240; and Al-Baghdādī: in *Hadiyyah al-‘Ārifīn fi Asmā’ al-Muallifīn wa Āthār al-Muşannifīn*, vol. 5 pg. 682.

4 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 327.

5 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Tamīmī al-Bal‘amī, Abū al-Faḍl. A minister as well as an eloquent scholar. Ismā‘īl ibn Aḥmad al-Sāmānī had appointed him. He has written, *Talqīḥ al-Balāghah* and *Al-Maqālāt*. He passed away the year 329 A.H/940 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 8 pg. 122; and Ibn al-‘Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 2 pg. 324.

6 He is Manşūr ibn Nūḥ ibn Naşr al-Sāmānī. Ruler of cities in Transoxiana. He was based in Bukhāra. He passed away the year 366 A.H/977 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 8 pg. 673; and Ibn Khaldūn: *Al-‘Ibar*, vol. 4 pg. 752.

was published in Paris the year 1291 A.H/ 1874 A.D. This was used to translate the book into other European languages.¹

The Arabic manuscript was first published by orientalists in Leiden, Netherlands the year 1297 A.H/1879 A.D. It was then published by Al-Maṭba'ah al-Ḥusayniyyah in Egypt the year 1339 A.H/1920 A.D. It was thereafter published by Dār al-Istiqāmah in Egypt the year 1358 A.H/1939 A.D. The latest and what is considered the most accurate print was by Dār al-Ma'ārif in Egypt with the annotations of Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm. This was published the year 1387 A.H/ 1967 A.D.

1 Shākir Muṣṭafā: *Al-Tārikh al-'Arabī wa al-Muarrikhūn*, vol. 3 pg. 262.

Section Two

The principle sources of Imām al-Ṭabarī in discussing the fitnah

Penning down history had appeared quite early by the Muslims. The first century Hijrī saw the emergence of historical books that discussed the prophetic life. These works diversified into the second century by including significant happenings of Islamic history such as the apostasy, conquests, and civil unrest. These writings included events such as al-Jamal, al-Ṣiffīn, the arbitration, and similar vents. The books become known as *Kutub al-Akḥbār* and the authors as *Ikhbārīyyīn*.

The evolution of written history came about in the third century by specialist historians who benefited much from the *Kutub al-Akḥbār*. They codified these books and contributed greatly to it thereby producing large works that came to be known as *Kutub al-Tārīkh*¹. In the forefront of these historians was Imām al-Ṭabarī who had access to a large number of the earlier books. He included parts of these works into his own monumental *Tārīkh* thus displaying an amazing capacity in sourcing from earlier works as well as filtering through the narrations of events.

He relied on two principle sources in formulating his work. The narrations that he heard directly from his teachers is the first principle source of his historical records. In the book he refers to these sources with the wordings, *Ḥaddathanī* or *Akhbaranī*² (he narrated to me). The second principle source were the works of others which he had been permitted to relate from such as the books of al-Wāqidī and Abū Mikhnaḥ. He refers to these sources in his book with the wordings, *Dhakara* (he mentioned), *Qāla* (he said), or *Za'ama*³ (he presumed).

1 See, Franz Rosenthal: *ʿIlm al-Tārīkh ʿinda al-Muslimīn*; and Dr Sāmī al-Ṣaqqār: *ʿIlm al-Tārīkh ʿinda al-Muslimīn*.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*. See for instance, vol. 4 pg. 335.

3 Ibid. See for instance, vol. 4 pg. 372/375/160.

The preferred source of Imām al-Ṭabarī in relating events and presenting these in his book was by way of narrating. Citing chains of transmissions relieves one from citing the names of books, as the name of the narrator stands in place of his book. This is the reason that one notices the indifference of Imām al-Ṭabarī in mentioning written sources or the names of books that he relied upon. He very rarely will cite a narrator as well as his book. There are examples of this in the *Tārīkh* though they are few and far apart. For instance, he states:

وحدثني عمر - ابن شبة - مرة أخرى في كتابه الذي سماه كتاب أهل البصرة ، فقال ...

‘Umar - ibn Shabbah- narrated to me at another instance as in his book which he titled *Kitāb Ahl al-Baṣrah*, he says...¹

Naturally, this method of Imām al-Ṭabarī creates challenges and hurdles for researchers who seek to ascertain his sources. This is due to the fact the scholars whose books he narrates from, by merely mentioning their names in his chain of transmission, have many other works as well. It therefore becomes difficult to determine which book he is referring to.

It is worth noting that Imām al-Ṭabarī relied on four principle sources when writing events that relate to the fitnah. These four sources, books and narrations, are that of:

1. Sayf ibn ‘Umar al-Tamīmī,
2. Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Wāqidī,
3. ‘Umar ibn Shabbah al-Numayrī, and
4. Abū Mikhnaf Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā.

Imām al-Ṭabarī relies upon the narrations Sayf ibn ‘Umar primarily and compliments them with those of al-Wāqidī in the events that relate to the fitnah during the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and his assassination.

1 Ibid, vol. 5 pg. 297.

The Battle of Jamal and the events that preceded it such as the pledge of khilāfah to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and the journey of Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها to Baṣrah are primarily sourced from the narrations of ‘Umar ibn Shabbah and complimented by the narrations of Sayf ibn ‘Umar.

The Battle of Ṣiffīn and the events that came about as a result of it such as the arbitration and conflict with the Khawārij are told primarily through the narrations of Abū Mikhnaf.

This is besides the secondary sources that Imām al-Ṭabarī presents from some of his teachers. These secondary sources occasionally star amongst the primary sources.

I. Sayf ibn ‘Umar al-Tamīmī

The first source, Sayf ibn ‘Umar al-Tamīmī al-Ḍabbī al-Asadī died the year 180 A.H/ 796 A.D. He was renowned for his profound knowledge of Islamic history and his books were critically acclaimed by the historians, especially his works on the topics of the apostasy, conquests, and events of the fitnah.

Sayf had studied under the tutelage of Ikhbāriyyīn such as, Hishām¹ ibn ‘Urwah

1 He is Hishām ibn ‘Urwah ibn Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām al-Asadī al-Qurashī, Abū al-Mundhir. A renowned narrator of history and ḥadīth.

- Ibn Sa’d says, “Reliable, strong, narrator of many ḥadīth, and an authority.”
- Abū Ḥātim says, “Reliable, an Imām in ḥadīth.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “He was reliable.”
- ‘Uthmān al-Dāramī states relating from Ibn Ma’īn, “Reliable.”

He passed away the year 145 A.H/762 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, pg. 229 (the section that deals with the Ṭābi’īn of Madinah); Al-Dāramī: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 203; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 459; Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* vol. 9 pg. 63; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 48.

ibn Zubayr, Mūsa ibn ‘Uqbah¹, Muḥammad ibn al-Sā’ib al-Kalbī², Muḥammad ibn Ishāq, and others.

He narrates the events of the fitnah from his teachers who are:

Muḥammad ibn Nuwayrah³, Ṭalḥah ibn al-A‘lam⁴, and ‘Aṭīyyah ibn al-Ḥārith Abū Rawq al-Hamdānī⁵. It is as though they all narrated the events to him in a similar

1 He is Mūsa ibn ‘Uqbah ibn Abī ‘Ayyāsh, Abū Muḥammad. A reliable specialist of the prophetic life.

- Imām Mālik would praise his knowledge of the battles and would say, “Rely on the incidents of battle as related by Mūsa ibn ‘Uqbah as he is a reliable man He has not embellished as others have.”

Imām al-Bukhārī has relied upon his narrations of the battles in *Al-Ṣaḥīḥ*. There is consensus on his reliability as has been attested to by Imām Aḥmad, Ibn Ma‘īn, al-Nasa‘ī, Abū Ḥātim, Ibn Ḥibbān, and others. He passed away the year 141 A.H/758 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 594; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 2 pg. 70; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 3 pg. 248; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10 pg. 360.

2 He is Muḥammad ibn al-Sā’ib ibn Bishr Abū al-Naṣr al-Kalbī, the historian and mufassir. He was an authority in genealogy; however, he was a Shī‘ī whose narrations are discarded, and is not reliable.

- Ibn Ḥibbān says, “He was a Saba‘ī. He ascribed to the belief of those who would state that ‘Alī عليه السلام had not passed away and that he would return to the world. When they would see a cloud they would say Amīr al-Mu‘minīn is in it.”
- Aḥmad says, “The tafsīr of al-Kalbī is made up of lies. It is not permissible to read it.”

He died the year 146 A.H/763 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 249; Ibn Abī Ḥātim in *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* vol. 7 pg. 280; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Majrūḥīn*, vol. 2 pg. 253; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 180.

3 He is Muḥammad ibn Nuwayrah, from amongst the teachers of Sayf ibn ‘Umar. He narrates from Umm ‘Uthmān—from Abū Miknaf. See, Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 8 pg. 110.

4 He is Ṭalḥah ibn al-A‘lam Abū al-Haytham al-Ḥanafī. A resident of Rayy. Sufyān al-Thawrī and Sayf ibn ‘Umar narrate from him. See, Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 277; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 4 pg. 482.

5 He is ‘Aṭīyyah ibn al-Ḥārith Abū Rawq al-Hamdānī al-Kūfī. Amongst the great narrators of Kūfah. He narrates from Anas, ‘Ikrimah, Al-Sha‘bī, Al-Ḍaḥḥāk, and others.

- Aḥmad, al-Nasa‘ī, and al-Fasawī say, “There is no issue with him.”
- Ibn Ma‘īn says, “He is good.”
- Abū Ḥātim says, “Truthful.”

continued

manner as after listing their names he says, “They said...”¹ and then he relates the events. It seems as though they agree more or less on the events and details of the fitnah which indicates that they all narrate it from a single source.

From amongst the teachers of these:

Yazīd al-Faq‘asī al-Tamīmī al-Asadī². His rank denotes that he lived at the end of the first century. He relates the incident, movements, and correspondence of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ with other states.³ Reading into this indicates that the narrations of Sayf is from an exceptionally early source within the first century.

After summarizing the narrations of Sayf regarding the incident of Jamal, Ḥāfidh ibn Kathīr acknowledges the narrations of Sayf and his teachers regarding the fitnah saying:

هذا ملخص ما ذكره أبو جعفر بن جرير رحمه الله عن أئمة هذا الشأن - سيف وشيوخه

This is a summary of what Abū Ja‘far ibn Jarīr has related from the Imāms in this field; Sayf and his teachers.⁴

The works of Sayf:

*Al-Futūḥ al-Kabīr wa al-Riddah*⁵, a book that brought Sayf into the limelight. Imām al-Ṭabarī has made use of this book in relating the incidents of apostasy. He has

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Ibn Sa‘d has counted him amongst the fifth ṭabaqah stating, “He is the one with the tafsīr.” His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 369; Al-Fasawī: *Al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3 pgs. 106, 199; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 6 pg. 382; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 277; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 224.

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pgs. 326-340.

2 I could not locate his profile amongst the available resources.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pgs. 326-340.

4 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 247.

5 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 137.

given preference to his narrations over all the other narrations that speak of the apostasy.¹ Ibn al-Nadīm has recorded another book of his titled, *Kitāb al-Jamal wa Masīr ‘Ā’ishah wa ‘Alī’*. Imām al-Ṭabarī relates the narrations of Sayf regarding the Battle of Jamal from this book.³

This work is indicative of the fact that Sayf related the narrations of the Battle from sources close to the incident. Imām al-Ṭabarī has mentioned their names in his chain of transmission. Thus, a true depiction of this tragic Battle remains preserved. A battle that was instrumental for the Saba’iyyah in igniting the fire of discord. Furthermore, Imām al-Ṭabarī relies on Sayf in those narrations that pertain to the fitnah in the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, such as the fitnah that Ibn Saba’ gave rise to in Baṣrah and Kūfah the year 33 A.H/653 A.D. Sayf had narrated these incidents from ‘Aṭīyyah ibn al-Ḥārith; a great narrator of Kūfah.⁴

Another mode Imām al-Ṭabarī has adopted in taking from the books of Sayf ibn ‘Umar is through ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Sa’d al-Zuhrī al-Baghdādī⁵ a resident of Surr, Rayy and Al-Sariyy ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Sariyy al-Tamīmī al-Kūfī.⁶

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pgs. 249-341.

2 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 137.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 2 pgs. 455-562.

4 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 326-340.

5 He is ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Sa’d ibn Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf al-Zuhrī, Abū al-Faḍl al-Baghdādī. He was appointed as judge of Aṣbahān.

- Ibn Abī Ḥātim says, “Truthful.”
- Al-Nasa’ī says, “There is no issue with him.”

Al-Khaṭīb and al-Dāraquṭnī have cited him as reliable. He passed away the year 260 A.H/873 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 5 pg. 317; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 9 pg. 472; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 2 pg. 192; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 15.

6 The author will discuss two chains of narrations. They are as follows:

1. Al-Ṭabarī — ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Sa’d al-Zuhrī — Ya’qūb ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Sa’d al-Zuhrī — Sayf ibn ‘Umar
2. Al-Ṭabarī — Al-Sariyy ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Sariyy al-Tamīmī — Shu’ayb ibn Ibrāhīm al-Kūfī — Sayf ibn ‘Umar.

‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Sa’d al-Zuhrī al-Baghdādī narrates from his father¹ and Yūnus ibn Muḥammad². Great, reliable, and renowned scholars such as al-Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasa’ī, Ibn Abī ‘Āsim, and others narrate from him.³ ‘Ubayd Allāh relates the narrations of Sayf ibn ‘Umar from his uncle Ya‘qūb ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Sa’d al-Zuhrī⁴, resident of Baghdād and narrator of Sayf ibn ‘Umar. Listing the names of his teachers makes it clear that he wasn’t only a muḥaddith. He was also knowledgeable in the fields of history, jurisprudence, and poetry.⁵

1 He is Sa’d ibn Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf al-Zuhrī, Abū Ishāq al-Baghdādī. He was appointed as judge over Wāsiṭ during the khilāfah of Hārūn al-Rashīd. He was then appointed as the judge over the army of al-Mahdī during the khilāfah of al-Ma’mūn. Ibn Sa’d and Ibn Ma’īn have deemed him reliable.

- Al-‘Ijlī says, “There is no issue with him.”
- Abū Dāwūd narrating from Aḥmad says, “There was no issue with him.”

He passed away the year 201 A.H/816 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma’īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 190; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/2/52; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 177; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3 pg. 462.

2 He is Yūnus ibn Muḥammad al-Baghdādī al-Ḥāfidh. He narrates from Dāwūd ibn Abī al-Furāt, Ṣāliḥ al-Mizzī, and Layth ibn Sa’d.

- ‘Uthmān al-Dāramī narrating from Ibn Ma’īn states, “Reliable.”
- Ya‘qūb ibn Sahybah says, “He is reliable, reliable.”
- Abū Ḥātim says, “Truthful.”

He passed away the year 207 A.H/A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Dāramī: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 228; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 9 pg. 246; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 14 pg. 350; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 447.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 15.

4 He is Ya‘qūb ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Sa’d ibn Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf al-Zuhrī, Abū Yūsuf al-Madanī. A narrator of maghāzī.

- Ibn Sa’d says, “He was reliable and trustworthy.”
- ‘Uthmān al-Dāramī narrating from Ibn Ma’īn states, “Reliable.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Madanī, reliable.”
- Abū Ḥātim says, “Truthful.”

He passed away the year 208 A.H/823 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Dāramī: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 230; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 9 pg. 202; and Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 3 pg. 254.

5 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 4 pg. 285.

Imām al-Ṭabarī has narrated much from Sayf through the following medium as well: Al-Sariyy wrote to me — from Shu‘ayb — from Sayf ibn ‘Umar; or Al-Sariyy narrated to me — from Shu‘ayb — from Sayf ibn ‘Umar. This shows that Imām al-Ṭabarī would correspond with his teacher al-Sariyy and ask him questions. His teacher would then reproduce from the writings of Sayf through the medium of Shu‘ayb and respond to him. It becomes evident that the books of Sayf were in the possession of al-Sariyy and that Imām al-Ṭabarī read a portion of it to him.

Al-Sariyy, a link between Imām al-Ṭabarī and the narrations of Sayf is, Al-Sariyy ibn Yaḥyā ibn al-Sariyy al-Tamīmī al-Kūfī. He narrates from Shu‘ayb as is clear from the chains of transmission of Imām al-Ṭabarī. Ibn Abī Ḥātim says regarding him, “We weren’t granted the opportunity of narrating from him. He wrote to us some of his ḥadīth. He was truthful.”¹ He is considered amongst those who Imām al-Ṭabarī narrated from most. His narrations in the *Tārīkh* amount to 284.²

This Shu‘ayb, who al-Sariyy narrates from, is Shu‘ayb ibn Ibrāhīm al-Kūfī. Ibn ‘Adī mentions him and says:

ليس بالمعروف وله أحاديث وأخبار ، وفيه بعض النكرة ، وفيه ما فيه من تحامل على السلف

He is not renowned. He has narrated aḥādīth and historical traditions. There remains some erroneousness therein. It contains prejudice against the pious predecessors.³

Al-Dhahabī says in *al-Mizān*:

راوية كتب سيف عنه ، فيه جهالة

The narrations of the books of Sayf are from him. He is unfamiliar.⁴

1 Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 4 pg. 285.

2 Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl: *Fahāris min Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 10 pg. 261.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 2 pg. 145.

4 Al-Dhahabī: *Mizān al-I’tidāl*, vol. 2 pg. 145.

Imām al-Ṭabarī narrates from him in his *Tārīkh* by way of his teacher Al-Sariyy more than five hundred and twenty times.¹

The complete count of the narrations of Sayf in the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī amounts to 296. From these, 73 narrations pertain to the fitnah.² In this manner Imām al-Ṭabarī has graded him an important source in relating traditions. He has related the events pertaining to the fitnah from him more than anyone else, to the extent of almost relying on him.

The scholars of ḥadīth have questioned the reliability of Sayf ibn ‘Umar:

- » Abū Ḥātim says, “He is *matrūk* (suspected of forgery). His narrations resemble the narrations of al-Wāqidi.”³
- » Ibn Ma‘īn says, “*Ḍa‘īf* (weak).”⁴
- » Al-Nasa‘ī and al-Dāraquṭnī say, “*Ḍa‘īf* (weak).”⁵”⁶
- » Ibn Ḥibbān says, “He narrates fabrications from reliable narrators and has been accused of *Zandaqah* (heresy).”⁷ However, Ibn Ḥajar disagreed with this accusation saying, “Ibn Ḥibbān has been inaccurate in labelling him so.”⁸

We are unable to comprehend the legitimacy of this accusation against him. His narrations pertaining to the fitnah and the events that occurred between the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم is far-flung from the method of heresy. How can it be possible to

1 Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl: *Fahāris min Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 10 pg. 284.

2 Ibid, vol. 10 pg. 280.

3 Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 4 pg. 278.

4 Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 245.

5 Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 245.

6 Al-Nasa‘ī: *Kitāb al-Ḍu‘afā wa al-Matrūkīn*, pg. 123; Al-Dāraquṭnī: *Al-Ḍu‘afā wa al-Matrūkīn*, pg. 243.

7 Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Majrūḥīn*, vol. 1 pg. 345.

8 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pg. 344.

accuse him of heresy when he is the one who exposed the secrets of heretics such as ibn Saba'!

It is certainly within the realm of factuality to say that the narrations of Sayf are far-fetched and completely immune from such accusations. His narrations in fact eliminate any trace of heresy as it reflects the stance of the pious predecessors in revering the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and holding them free from evil acts. He has reproduced historical records which do not attempt to vilify the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. Rather, it affirms their desire to reconcile. Factual findings that grants ease to the soul in the light of authentic narrations as per the conditions set by the scholars of ḥadīth.

Since the scholars of ḥadīth were tolerant of narrations from weak narrators when their narrations gave strength to other authentic and verified narrations, it serves as an indication that there remains no issue in applying the same methodology in historical records to glean actualities of historical events. Based on this, the authentic narrations will serve as a yardstick by which historical traditions will be treated from the likes of Sayf, al-Wāqidī, and Abū Mikhnaf. The historical recollections of these historians that correspond with authentic narrations will be accepted whilst those that do not will be rejected.

There remains no doubt that the recollections of Sayf are considered to a greater degree than those of others as it coincides and matches with the authentic narrations from reliable narrators. This is besides the fact that his recollections are sourced from those who personally witnessed these events or were close to the happenings of the time.

It is for these reasons that al-Ḥāfiẓ has commended the historical knowledge and expertise of Sayf.

» Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī says, “He was an expert historian.”¹

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 2 pg. 255.

» Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar says, “Weak in ḥadīth, excellent in history.”¹

Jawād ‘Alī, commenting on Carl Brockelmann—who has accused Sayf of not disclosing things that were said to him and of exaggerating the nobility of his tribe, the Tamīm—states:

أما ما ادعاه - بروكلمان - من أن الطبري قد لاحظ ذلك عليه - عاطفته القبلية تجاه تميم - فكان يحاذر منه ، واضطر إلى ترك قسم من رواياته ، فهو قول لا يؤيده كتاب الطبري نفسه ، ففي أخبار الردة جعله الطبري المرجع الأول المفضل على المراجع الأخرى ، وفي أخبار معركة الجمل ترى لروايته مكانة بارزة بين الروايات . ثم إن النسخة الأصلية - التاريخ الطبري - لا تزال في ضمير الغيب ، فكيف عرف - بروكلمان - أن الطبري قد نبذ روايات سيف في تمجيد تميم

The claim of Brockelmann that al-Ṭabarī noted and cautioned against the bias of Sayf toward his tribe, the Tamīm, due to which he was forced to forego a portion of his narrations is not corroborated by the very book of al-Ṭabarī. In the events surrounding the apostasy, al-Ṭabarī has considered his traditions to be the primary source that trumps other sources. And in the events of the Battle of Jamal we see a clear veneration for his narrations amongst the other narrations. Besides, the original copy of *al-Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* has yet to be found. So how does Brockelmann know that al-Ṭabarī left out the narrations of Sayf that complement the Tamīm?²

In reality, the supposed bias of Sayf towards his tribe is refuted by the condition of and stance adopted by the Banū Tamīm in the fitnah. It is well established that they were amongst those who took no part in the fitnah, remaining neutral with their leader al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays on the Day of Jamal.³ On the other hand the narrations of Sayf that pertain to the fitnah though impartial are painstakingly detailed.

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pg. 344.

2 Jawād ‘Alī, *Mawāriḍ Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, Majallah al-Majma‘ al-‘ilmī al-Iraqī. Issue 3 1374 A.H. 1954 A.D. pg. 49.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pgs. 498/500/501.

The narrations of Sayf ibn ‘Umar in the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī appear discussing the fitnah in the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, and the Battle of Jamal in complete detail amongst scattered passages. At the beginning of every passage the complete chain of narration is reproduced. An academic, Aḥmad Ratib ‘Armūsh has gathered these narrations and codified it in a book titled, *Al-Fitnah wa Waq‘at al-Jamal*.¹ This book takes up 207 pages. The large number of narrations show that Imām al-Ṭabarī considered Sayf ibn ‘Umar to be more reliable than others.

II. Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Wāqidī

The second source is al-Wāqidī. He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Wāqidī al-Madanī, al-Qāḍī. He passed away the year 207 A.H/ 822 A.D, a prolific author. Al-Khaṭīb says:

هو من طبق ذكره مشرق الأرض ومغربها ، وصارت بكتبه الركبان في فنون العلم من المغازي والسير
والفقه ، وكان جوادا كريما مشهورا بالسخاء

He is amongst those whose name was across the east and the west of earth, people spread his books that contained art of the sciences of wars (*maghāzī*), biographies (*siyar*), and the books of jurisprudence. He was famed for his generosity and nobility.²

Al-Wāqidī is considered to be one of the vessels of knowledge.³ However, he was accused and discarded despite his profound knowledge.⁴ He was a scholar of *maghāzī*, *siyar*, and the conquests. He was a prolific author who would amass many books. He left a large collection after his death.

1 This book has been published in Beirut by Dār al-Nafā’is in 1391 A.H/1972.

2 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 3 pg. 3.

3 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pg. 662.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 2 pg. 194.

Ya'qūb ibn Shaybah¹ says:

لما تحول الواقدي من الجانب الغربي - في بغداد - يقال : إنه حمل كتبه على عشرين ومائة وقر وقيل :
كان له ستمائة قمطر كتب

When al-Wāqidī moved from the western area of Baghdad it is said that his books were carried upon one hundred and twenty mule loads². Some say that he had six hundred loads (each load carried by two men).

Al-Wāqidī encompassed many important discussions in history. He wrote regarding conquests and events that occurred during the early Islamic period such as the events of Saqīfah, apostasy, Battles of Jamal and Şiffīn, opposition of the Khawārij, and so on. Unfortunately, many of his works were lost with certain portions remaining, reproduced in the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī and other such books.

Ibn Nadīm has cited approximately thirty books of his. Amongst these are, *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, *Al-Maghāzī*, *Al-Riddah*, *Al-Jamal*, *Şiffīn*, *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, *Futūḥ al-Shām*, *Futūḥ al-ʿIrāq*, *Maqtal al-Ḥusayn*, *Ṭaşnīf al-Qabāʿil wa Marātibaha wa Ansābaha*, etc.³

Al-Wāqidī payed a keen interest in codifying historical events and military campaigns. Similarly, he was diligent in recounting those who showed great feats of equipping, spending, giving opinions, and bravery in the said campaigns. He would mention the prisoners of war, Muslim martyrs and slain disbelievers. He would classify them in order of their tribes whilst always giving a special mention to those Muslims who took part in Badr; a tribute to their achievements.⁴

1 He is Ya'qūb ibn Shaybah ibn al-Şalt ibn ʿAşfūr al-Sadūsī, Abū Yūsuf. He was a reliable scholar of ḥadīth and a master in the Mālikī school of thought. He has authored *Al-Musnad al-Kabīr al-Muʿallal*. He passed away the year 262 A.H/875 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 14 pg. 281; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 577; and Ibn Farḥūn: *Al-Dībāj*, pg. 355.

2 Each load between 83kg to 301kg. The weight differing by city.

3 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 144.

4 Al-Wāqidī: *Al-Maghāzī*, vol. 1.

His interest in identifying geographical locations of significance is also noted. He would personally search for places of significance. Al-Khaṭīb, in his profile, relates from him:

ما أدركت رجلا من أبناء الصحابة وأبناء الشهداء ولا مولى لهم إلا وسألته هل سمعت أحدا من أهلك
يخبرك عن مشهده و أين قتل ، فإذا أعلمني مضيت إلى الموضوع فأعاینه

Whenever I met a descendant or freed slave of a Companion or martyr, I would ask them if they were informed of the battle and place of martyrdom.

In case of them informing me, I would go to that place and examine it.¹

It is for this reason that al-Wāqidi has recounted battles in much greater detail compared to others. This is perhaps why al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī has considered him ‘The leader of maghāzī and siyar.’²

Testimony of trustworthiness for al-Wāqidi:

The scholars of *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dil* (narrator criticism and accreditation) have many opinions regarding his reliability. Many have criticized whilst some have cited him as reliable.

- » Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal says, “He is a *Kadhāb* (liar). He corrupts narrations.”
- » Ibn Maʿīn says, “His narrations are not to be written.”
- » Murrah says, “*Laysa bī Shay’* (he does not amount to much).”³
- » Al-Bukhārī and Abū Ḥātim say, “*Matrūk* (suspected of forgery).”⁴
- » Al-Nasaʿī says, “*Matrūk* (suspected of forgery).”⁵

1 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 3 pg. 6.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 1 pg. 348.

3 Ibn Maʿīn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 532.

4 Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/77; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dil*, vol. 8 pg. 20.

5 Al-Nasaʿī: *Kitāb al-Ḍuʿafā wa al-Matrūkīn*, pg. 217.

- » Al-Dāraquṭnī says, “He has some weakness.”¹
- » Ibn ‘Adī says, “His narrations are not retained. Their bane comes from him.”
- » Ibn al-Madīnī² says, “His narrations shouldn’t be used. Ibrāhīm ibn Abī Yahyā is a *Kadhāb* (liar), though he holds a better position in my eyes compared to al-Wāqidī.”³
- » Abū Zur‘ah says, “His narrations will be written for *I’tibār*.”⁴
- » Abū Nu‘aym al-Aṣbahānī says, “*Matrūk* (suspected of forgery).”⁵
- » Muṣ‘ab al-Zubayrī⁷ says, “Reliable.”⁸

1 Al-Dāraquṭnī: *Al-Du‘afā*, pg. 347.

2 He is ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ja‘far al-Sa’dī al-Madīnī al-Baṣrī, Abū al-Ḥasan. Historian and scholar of ḥadīth. Amongst the great memorizers of his era. Amongst his books are, *Al-Asāmī wa al-Kunā*, *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, *Al-Du‘afā*, *‘Ilal al-Musnad*, *Man Rawā ‘an Rajul wa lam Yarahu*, *Man lā Yuḥtajj bi Ḥadīthihi wa lā Yasqūṭ*, *Al-Wahm wa al-Khaṭa’*, *Al-Thiqāt wa al-Muthbitīn*, *Madhāhib al-Muḥaddithīn* and *‘Ilal al-Ḥadīth wa Ma‘rifah al-Rijāl*. He passed away the year 234 A.H. 849 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 308; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/284; Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 322; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11 pg. 458; and Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 428.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 367.

4 *I’tibār* (consideration) is the process in which a ḥadīth critic would collect all the reports that a transmitter had narrated from various teachers and then analyse them for corroboration.

5 Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 8 pg. 21.

6 Abū Nu‘aym: *Kitāb al-Du‘afā*, pg. 146. See the annotations regarding al-Wāqidī in the footnotes.

7 He is Muṣ‘ab ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muṣ‘ab ibn Thābit al-Zubayrī al-Asadī al-Madanī. He was a noble person was well versed in genealogy.

- Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkār says, “He was the most noble of the Quraysh, knowledgeable and well versed in poetry and rhetoric.
- Ibn Ma‘īn and al-Dāraquṭnī have deemed him reliable.
- Aḥmad says, “Trustworthy.”

He has authored *Nasab Quraysh* and *Al-Nasab al-Kabīr*. He passed away the year 326 A.H/850 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 567; Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 344; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 13 pg. 114; and Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 3 pg. 113.

8 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 366.

» Ibn Sa'd says, "He was a scholar of maghāzī, sīrah, conquests, and the differences of people in ḥadīth and laws as well as their agreement."¹

» Al-Dhahabī writes:

جمع فأوعى وخلط الغث بالسمين والخرز بالدر الثمين فاطرحوه لذلك ، ومع هذا فلا يستغني عنه في المغازي وأيام الصحابة وأخبارهم

He gathered and remembered. He mixed the good with the bad, the wheat with the chaff. They have therefore discarded him. Yet, he is indispensable in the fields of maghāzī, military campaigns of the Ṣaḥābah, and their traditions.²

He further states:

وقد تقرر أن الواقدي ضعيف يحتاج إليه في الغزو والتاريخ ، وتورد آثاره من غير احتجاج ، أما الفرائض فلا ينبغي أن يذكر ، فهذه كتب السنة ومسند أحمد وعامة من جمع في الأحكام تراهم يترخصون في إخراج أحاديث أناس ضعفاء ومتروكين ، ومع هذا لا يخرجون لمحمد بن عمر شيئاً ، مع أن وزنه عندي أنه مع ضعفه يكتب حديثه ويروي ، لأني لا أتهمه بالوضع ، وقول من أهدره فيه مجازفة من بعض الوجوه ، كما أنه لا عبرة بتوثيق من وثقه ... إذ انعقد الإجماع اليوم على أنه ليس بحجة وأن حديثه في عداد الواهي

It has already been mentioned that al-Wāqidi is weak, but he is needed in case of incidents of Battles and History. We mention his works without taking evidence from them. As far as injunctions go, it is not good to mention him. Here are the six books of Ḥadīth and *Musnad Aḥmad* and you will see them reporting the narrations of several weak narrators, rather even discarded reporters, but they do not mention Muḥammad ibn 'Umar. This is besides the fact that his status according to me is that his narrations are to be written as I do not accuse him of fabricating hadith. There is extremism, of some sort, from those who totally lay waste to him. Just like there is no weight in the statements of those who declared him reliable as there is agreement among scholars in these days that he is not reliable and his narrations are of the category of severely weak narrations.³

1 Ibid, vol. 9 pg. 365.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 9 pg. 365.

3 Ibid, vol. 9 pg. 469.

» Ibn Sayyid al-Nās¹ says after accumulating the opinions regarding him in the foreword to his book *‘Uyūn al-Athar*:

بأن سعة العلم مظنة لكثرة الإغراب ، وكثرة الإغراب مظنة للتهمة ، والواقدي غير مدفوع عن سعة العلم ، فكثرت بذلك غرابته وقد روينا عنه من تتبعه آثار موضع الوقائع وسؤاله أبناء الصحابة والشهداء عن أحوال سلفهم ما يقتضي انفرادا بروايات وأخبار لا تدخل تحت الحصر

Depth of knowledge produces oddities. Oddities fall prey to accusations. And al-Wāqidī cannot be barred from having depth of knowledge. His depth of knowledge led to such oddities. We have already reported from him his travels to locations of significant occurrences and his correspondence with the sons of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and martyrs regarding the lives of their predecessors. This all would result in innumerable unique narrations.²

Al-Wāqidī had the habit of referring to sources by saying ‘It has reached me’³ and ‘He has narrated to me who I rely on’⁴ without identifying the name of the narrator. This shows disregard in sourcing the narration correctly. Besides this he would also converge chains of narrations citing many sources together⁵ at the beginning of a chapter instead of citing individual sources for individual texts. Reproduction of this sort proves difficult when wanting to refer to an individual source. What becomes apparent from the views of those who have criticised al-Wāqidī is the acceptance of his narrations that pertain to historical records and *siyar* if it doesn’t contradict authentic narrations. This is as he does not serve as evidence individually and more so in the instance of contradicting those more reliable than him.

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Sayyid al-Nās al-Ya‘murī al-Rab‘ī al-Miṣrī, Abū al-Faṭḥ. Muḥaddith, historian, and scholar. He has written, *‘Uyūn al-Athar fī Funūn al-Maghāzī wa al-Siyar* and *Taḥṣīl al-Iṣābah fī Taḥḍīl al-Ṣaḥābah*. He passed away the year 734 A.H./1334 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. 4 pg. 208; Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, vol. 9 pg. 303; and Al-Shawkānī: *Al-Badr al-Ṭālī*, vol. 2 pg. 249.

2 Ibn Sayyid al-Nās: *‘Uyūn al-Athar*, vol. 1 pg. 26-27.

3 Al-Wāqidī: *Futūḥ al-Shām*, pgs. 14-18.

4 Ibid, pg. 163.

5 Ibid, pg. 5.

Ibn Nadīm—a Rāfiḍī—assumes that al-Wāqidī accepted the dogma of tashayyu‘ and adopted the essential practice of Taqiyyah.¹ Just as al-Khuwānasārī and others have done whilst profiling him in their books.²

These views do not prove anything that would necessitate a deeper look into al-Wāqidī having adopted the Shī‘ah dogma as the Rawāfiḍ are habitual liars. They wrongly attribute to their creed many famous scholars in order to bolster their numbers and attract others to their creed. Consider the book titled *Falāsafah al-Shī‘ah* authored by a Lebanese Shī‘ah named Shaykh al-Ni‘mah; he has, in this book, claimed many scholars to be Shī‘ah. Besides, according to my knowledge not a single scholar of the Ahl al-Sunnah accused him of tashayyu‘, including those who criticised him. They criticised him solely due to his weakness in ḥadīth.

Imām al-Ṭabarī benefited from the works of al-Wāqidī in sīrah, maghāzī, conquests, and history of khilāfah. He relates from him in 316, 43 of these pertain to the fitnah. In speaking of the fitnah that appeared during the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, Imām al-Ṭabarī utilizes the narrations of al-Wāqidī and relies on him as a source. This is notwithstanding the fact that he criticized his narrations and avoided many of them. He says:

فأما الواقدي فإنه ذكر في سبب مسير المصريين إلى عثمان ونزولهم ذا خشب أموراً منها ما قد تقدم ذكره ، ومنها ما أعرضت عن ذكره لبشاعته

Al-Wāqidī has mentioned the reason of the Egyptians heading to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and descending at Dhā Khushub which has already been dealt with. Other things he has mentioned I have avoided due to its heinousness.³

1 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 111.

2 Al-Khuwānasārī: *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, vol. 7 pg. 268.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 356.

The teachers of al-Wāqidī:

Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Dīnār al-Madanī al-Tammār¹, the ring in the chain that joins al-Wāqidī to ‘Āṣim ibn ‘Umar ibn Qatādah al-Zafarī² master in the field of maghāzī. Al-Wāqidī has reproduced the narrations of ‘Āṣim through his medium with the latter occupying a status that is no cause for concern for Imām al-Ṭabarī. He brings about his recollections regarding the events of the year 35 A.H/655 A.D whilst discussing the fitnah that arose during the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.³

The narrations that Imām al-Ṭabarī has codified from al-Wāqidī from Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ, and the examination of the latter into the eras of ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Dīnār al-Tammār, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Madanī. He narrates from ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir, al-Zuhrī, and others.

- Aḥmad says, “Reliable, reliable.”
- Al-Ājurrī relating from Abū Dāwūd says, “Reliable.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Madanī, reliable.”
- Ibn Sa’d says, “He was of strong intellect. He has met people and attained knowledge as well as the maghāzī. He was reliable, narrated few ḥadīth.”
- ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī al-Zinād says, “My father said to me, ‘If you want an authentic source of maghāzī, go to Muḥammad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Tammār.’”

He passed away the year 168 A.H/784 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, pg. 446 (section of the Tābī‘īn of Madinah); Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/117; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 405; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 7 pg. 287; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 225.

2 He is ‘Āṣim ibn ‘Umar ibn Qatādah ibn al-Nu‘mān al-Zafarī al-Anṣārī al-Madanī, Abū ‘Umar. A scholar from the Tābī‘īn. Those that critique form a consensus on his reliability, nobility, and knowledge of maghāzī. He narrates from Jābir, Anas, and others.

- Ibn Ma‘īn, Abū Zur‘ah, and al-Nasa‘ī have deemed him reliable.
- Ibn Sa’d says, “He was a narrator of knowledge. He was well versed in maghāzī and sīrah. ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz instructed him to hold a gathering in the Masjid of Damascus and narrate to the people the maghāzī and virtues of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. He complied to the request. He was reliable and narrated much ḥadīth. A scholar.”

He passed away the year 126 A.H/743 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, pg. 128 (section of the Tābī‘īn of Madinah); Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/478; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 6 pg. 346; and Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 2 pg. 355.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 359.

ﷺ together with the fitnah that occurred during his era indicated that he had authored significant works regarding the history of the Rightly Guided Khulafā'. It also shows that al-Wāqidī relied on him a great deal.¹

III. 'Umar ibn Shabbah al-Numayrī

The third source is Abū Zayd 'Umar ibn Shabbah al-Numayrī al-Baṣrī, al-Hāfiz, al-'Allāmah, al-Ikhhārī, reliable. He passed away the year 262 A.H/ 875 A.D.

Those that have profiled him mention that he was honest, would not corrupt narrations, well versed in ḥadīth, a narrator of historical traditions, scholar of jurisprudence, prolific author, well versed in the field of Qirā'āt, and profound in his knowledge of siyar, maghāzī, and battles.²

- » Ibn Abī Ḥātim says, "My father and I wrote from him. He is truthful, knowledgeable in Arabic language and linguistics."³
- » Al-Dāraqūṭnī says, "Reliable."⁴
- » Ibn Ḥibbān has included him amongst the reliable narrators and has said, "His narrations were precise. He was a master in linguistics, poetry, traditions, and battles."⁵
- » Al-Khaṭīb says, "He was reliable, a scholar of siyar and battles. He had authored many books."⁶

1 Jawād 'Alī, *Mawārid Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, Issue 3 1374 A.H. 1954 A.D. pg. 56.

2 See, Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 163; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11 pg. 208; Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Uḍabā'*, vol. 16 pg. 60; Al-Nawawī: *Tahdhīb al-Asmā' wa al-Lughāt* 1/2/16; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafāyāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3 pg. 440; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 510; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 460.

3 Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol. 6 pg. 116.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 460.

5 Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 8 pg. 446.

6 Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 11 pg. 208.

Ibn Shabbah heard and narrated from the reliable scholars of his era who represented the different branches of knowledge in that time period. He was under the tutelage of Ibn Mahdī and al-Qaṭṭān in ḥadīth, al-Aṣmaʿī in linguistics, al-Madāʿinī in history and so on.

Similarly, he narrated from a large number of scholars, the likes of Ibn Mājah¹, Thaʿlab the famed grammarian, al-Balādhurī², Ibn Abī al-Dunyā³,

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Yazīd al-Rabʿī, Abū ʿAbd Allāh ibn Mājah al-Qazwīnī. A muḥaddith and great memorizer.

- Al-Khalīlī says, “Reliable, giant, relied upon by consensus, and whose narrations are adduced in legal discourse. He was well versed in ḥadīth and held a unique memory. He has authored works in ḥadīth, tafsīr, and history. he was a master in these fields.”

From amongst his books are *Al-Sunan*, *Tafsīr al-Qurʿān*, and *Tārīkh Qazwīn*. He passed away the year 273 A.H/887 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Muntaẓam*, vol. 5 pg. 90; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-Aʿyān*, vol. 4 pg. 279; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 636; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 530.

2 He is Aḥmad ibn Yahyā ibn Jābir al-Baghdādī al-Balādhurī, historian, writer, and linguist. He has authored *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*.

- Al-Dhahabī says: “He was an exceptional writer and a good poet. He regressed in old age due to the consumption of *Balādhur* (marking nuts) for strengthening memory.”

Amongst his books are *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, *Al-Qarābah wa Tārīkh al-Ashraf*, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, and *Kitāb al-Buldān al-Kabīr*. He passed away the year 279 A.H/892 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 164; Ibn ʿAsākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 2 pg. 112, Yaqūt: *Muʿjam al-Udabāʾ*, vol. 5 pg. 89; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 1 pg. 322.

3 He is ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿUbayd al-Qurashī al-Baghdādī ibn Abī al-Dunyā. Educator and Prolific author.

- Abū Ḥātim says, “Truthful.”
- Al-Khaṭīb says, “He educated more than one of the children of the Khulafāʾ”

Amongst his works are *Al-Tārīkh*, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, *Maqṭal ʿUthmān*, *Maqṭal ʿAlī*, *Maqṭal Ṭalḥah*, *Maqṭal Zubayr*, *Al-Maghāzī*, *Faḍāʾil ʿAlī*, *Akhbār Muʿāwīyah*, *Akhbār Quraysh*, *Akhbār al-Aʿrāb*, *Dhamm al-Dunyā*, *Al-Zuhd*, *Qaṣr al-Amal*, *Dhamm al-Malāhī*, *Makāʾid al-Shayṭān*, and *Aḥwāl al-Qiyāmah*.

He passed away the year 281 A.H/894 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʾdīl*, vol. 5 pg. 163; Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 262; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 10 pg. 89; and Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 71.

al-Baghawī¹ author of the *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and others.²

‘Umar ibn Shabbah left a trove of works spanning a number of subjects. Ibn Nadīm has counted about twenty such works. Some of these pertain to the fitnah such as *Maqṭal ‘Uthmān*, *Akhbār Kūfah*, and *Akhbār Baṣrah*.³ Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar has reproduced a lengthy text from the book *Akhbār Baṣrah* of Ibn Shabbah in his *Al-Fath*. He says, “‘Umar ibn Shabbah has gathered the incident of Jamal in *Akhbār Baṣrah*, I will summarize it and confine myself to that which he has written with an authentic or sound chain of narration...”⁴

The books of Ibn Shabbah are not in circulation these days besides the book *al-Madīnah* which has been published under the title *Tārīkh al-Madīnah*.⁵

The third part of this book pertains to the life of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه. It pays special attention to the incidents that led to bringing the people onto a single copy of the Qur’ān and how the copy was written. It also discusses the conquests, financial prosperity, and affluence the people of Madinah enjoyed. It deliberates over the distractions that were introduced into the Madanī society and the opposition of the Amīr al-Mu‘minīn to games such as backgammon, slingshots, and bird racing.

1 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Baghawī al-Baghdādī, al-Imām, al-Ḥāfiẓ, al-Ḥujjah.

- Abū Muḥammad al-Rāmahurmuzī says, “There is no other known muḥaddith in Islam that matches Baghawī in early narrations.”
- Al-Dāraquṭnī says, “Reliable, a giant. An Imām from the expert Imāms. He was one with the least mistakes from the scholars. His views in ḥadīth is better than the views of Ibn Ṣā‘id.”

From his books are *Mu‘jam al-Ṣaḥābah*, *Ma‘ālim al-Tanzīl*, *Fan al-Taṣṣīr*, *Al-Musnad*, and *Al-Sunan*. He passed away the year 317 A.H/929 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 325; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 10 pg. 111; Ibn Abī Ya‘lā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, vol. 1 pg. 190; and Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 737.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 460.

3 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 163.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 13 pg. 54

5 It is printed in four volumes with annotations by Muḥammad Shaltūt. It has been published by Dār al-Aṣfahānī the year 1393 A.H/1973 A.D.

The author then discusses various other events and the stance of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, concluding with the ill-fated martyrdom of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه that broke open the doors of evil upon the Islamic civilization.

We would perhaps not find any other early source that addresses the life of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, Madanī society, and events of the fitnah so meticulously and in such detail as done by Ibn Shabbah. The only other source that could rival it would be *Tārīkh Dimashq* of Ibn ‘Asākir. This painstaking detail is what marks the work as a significant available primary source.

The methodology of Ibn Shabbah in *Tārīkh al-Madīnah*:

The author narrates events with chains of narrations in the manner done by the muḥaddithīn. He does not combine chains of narrations as done by historians that pre dated him such as Ishāq, al-Wāqidī, and others. Though it should be noted that not all of his chains of narrations are complete. The book contains some chains that are *Mawṣūl*¹ whilst others are *Munqati*² or *Mu‘allaq*³.

Similarly, his sources and narrators upon which he relies are not all of the same level of reliability. Some are acceptable whilst others are not. Hereunder are some examples of him sourcing from unknown narrators:

» Abū Ghassān⁴ says — some of our teachers have informed me...⁵

1 See, for example, *Tārīkh al-Madīnah*, vol. 3 pg. 907

2 Ibid, vol. 2 pg. 763.

3 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 176.

4 He is Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Yasār al-Kinānī, Abū Ghassān al-Madanī. He narrates from Mālik ibn Anas, Al-Darāwardī, Ibn ‘Uyaynah, and others.

- Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Bakr al-Shāḥibī says, “He was renowned and reliable. Knowledgeable in ḥadīth, linguistics, and tafsīr. From a home of knowledge and intellect.”
- Al-Dāraqūṭnī says, “Reliable.”
- Al-Nasaī says, “There is no issue with him.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has counted him amongst the reliable narrators.

He is from the tenth ṭabaqah. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/266; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 8 pg. 123; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 517.

5 *Tārīkh al-Madīnah*, vol. 1 pg. 62.

- » Al-Aṣmaʿī mentioned as reported to me by someone I deem reliable...¹
- » Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā – Abū Ghassān – narrated to us saying – one who we deem reliable narrated to us...²
- » A man from the Quraysh informed me...³

It should be noted that he was not one to transmit with *tadlīs*⁴ (obfuscation) in his transmission. He sometimes narrates from a single person who he met by various, higher and lower, modes and phrases of transmission. For example, when narrating from his teacher Abū Ghassān al-Kinānī he sometimes uses the phrase, Abū Ghassān *narrated* to us or Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā *narrated* to us.⁵ Yet at other times he says, Abū Ghassān *says*.⁶ Sometimes, he will say, *we narrate from* Abū Ghassān.⁷ And sometimes he will say, from what *I found in the books* of Abū Ghassān.⁸

Ibn Shabbah in his book *Tārīkh al-Madīnah* did not follow the system of the muḥaddithīn who would write the history of a location together with profiling its scholars and entrants as done by al-Ḥākim in *Tārīkh Nīsāpūr*, al-Khaṭīb in *Tārīkh Baghdād*, and Ibn ‘Asākir in *Tārīkh Dimashq*. He wrote the history of Madinah from political and developmental viewpoint. Hence we can fathom the importance of the information he has gathered. He has recollected information regarding the planning, evolution, plantations, and tribal locations of the era. He also discusses early events and occurrences that cannot be sourced elsewhere.

1 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 291.

2 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 16.

3 Ibid, vol. 2 pg. 763.

4 *Tadlīs* refers to the practice of narrating a hadith in manner that obscures or omits transmitters in the isnād, either intentionally or unintentionally

5 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 61-79.

6 Ibid, vol. pg. 129.

7 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 61.

8 Ibid, vol. 2 pg. 688.

It becomes clear that Imām al-Ṭabarī relied heavily upon the narrations and works of Ibn Shabbah regarding events that occurred in Madinah such as the fitnah during the khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and those events that had an association to Iraq such as the journey of Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها to Baṣrah and the Battle of Jamal amongst other such happenings.

This reliance can be credited to his acute awareness of the history of Madinah and Baṣrah. Both works, *Akhbār Baṣrah* and *Akhbār Madīnah* are considered to be original primary sources of early Islamic history.

Admiring these works al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī says:

وصنف - ابن شبة - تاريخا كبيرا للبصرة ، وكتابا في أخبار المدينة رأيت نصفه يقضي بإمامته

Ibn Shabbah has authored a sizeable history of Baṣrah and a book regarding the events of Madinah. I have seen a portion of it which leaves no doubt to his high stature.¹

As Abū Zayd ibn Shabbah was amongst the teachers of Imām al-Ṭabarī, it is evident that he heard from him and thus Abū Zayd had authorized him to relate from Ibn Shabbah and his works. This was the custom amongst the scholars of that era. They would authorize their students to narrate from them if they had confidence in their academic capabilities.

His narrations in *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* amount to 196. 30 of these pertain to the fitnah.²

IV. Abū Mikhnaf Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā

The fourth principle source relating to the fitnah in the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī is Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā, famously known as Abū Mikhnaf. A historian who died before the year 170 A.H/ 786 A.D. He was a prolific author of events that occurred in the early Islamic khilāfah.

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 12 pg. 371.

2 Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl, vol. 10 pg. 348.

Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥārith al-Khazzāz¹ relating from the scholars says:

أبو مخنف بأمر العراق وأخبارها وفتوحها يزيد على غيره ، والمدائني بأمر خراسان والهند وفارس ،
والوافدي بأمر الحجاز والسيرة ، واشتركوا في فتوح الشام

Abū Mikhnaf has more material in the events and conquest of Iraq. Al-Madā'inī holds this honour in the events that pertain to Khurāsān, Hind, and Persia. Al-Wāqidi surpasses them in sīrah and events that pertain to Ḥijāz. They all have a similar standing regarding the conquest of Shām.²

Ibn Qutaybah says:

كان صاحب أخبار وأنسب ، والأخبار عليه أغلب

He attained mastery in history and genealogy, though more so in history.³

Abū Mikhnaf related more information regarding Iraq than other historians, especially regarding Kūfah the centre of the Shī'ah. He therefore payed special attention to the issues of the Khawārij and rebellion of the Shī'ah whilst still being attentive to the revolts in other parts of Iraq. He would generally reference Kūfī narrations as he was inclined to the opinions of the people of Iraq instead of that of Shām. He was more so inclined to the Alawites and in contradiction to the Umayyad's.

Taking to this, the Shī'ah consider Abū Mikhnaf a great historian of theirs. A Shī'ī says:

1 He is Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥārith ibn al-Mubārak al-Khazzāz al-Baghdādī. Historian and poet. Amongst his works are, *Maghāzī al-Nabī ﷺ wa Sarāyāhu*, *Asmā' al-Khulafā' wa Kuttābihim*, *Maghāzī al-Baḥr fi Dawlah Banī Hāshim*, *Al-Masālik wa al-Mamālik*, and *Al-Akhbār wa al-Nawādir*. He passed away the year 258 A.H./872 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 152; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 4 pg. 122; and Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 3 pgs. 3-8.

2 Al-Dhababī: *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 10 pg. 400.

3 Ibn Qutaybah: *Al-Ma'ārif*, pg. 234.

كان أبو مخنف من أعظم مؤرخي الشيعة ، ومع اشتهاه تشيعه اعتمد عليه علماء أهل السنة في النقل عنه كالطبري وابن الأثير

Abū Mikhnaf was from amongst the great Shī'ah historians. Even though his tashayyu' was renowned, the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah relied on him, with the likes of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Athīr narrating from him.¹

However, narrating from his books does not necessitate their relying on him.

Ibn Nadīm has listed the names of his works which amount to approximately fifty. Some of them pertain to the fitnah such as, *Kitāb al-Shurā wa Maqṭal 'Uthmān*, *Kitāb al-Jamal*, *Kitāb al-Ṣiffīn*, *Kitāb Maqṭal Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr wa al-Ashtar wa Muḥammad ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah*, *Kitāb Ahl al-Naharwān wa al-Khawārij*, and *Maqṭal 'Alī* رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.²

Abū Mikhnaf though is not reliable. His tashayyu' caused him to be biased in that what he narrated regarding the fitnah.

Al-Dhahabī says:

إخباري تالف لا يوثق به

He is a corrupt historian, not to be relied upon.³

He states at another place:

روى عن طائفة من المجهولين .. هو من بابة سيف بن عمر التميمي صاحب الردة و و عوانة بن الحكم

He narrates from a group of unknowns. He is in the category of Sayf ibn 'Umar al-Tamīmī, author of *Al-Riddah* and *'Uwānah ibn al-Ḥakam*.⁴

1 Agha Buzurg Tehrani: *Al-Dharī'ah ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī'ah*, vol. 1 pg. 312.

2 Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 105-106.

3 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pg. 419.

4 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 7 pg. 302.

Yes, Abū Mikhnaf is like these other historians; weak. However, his bias and extreme tashayyu‘ makes him far worse.

It ought to be kept in mind that Abū Mikhnaf deliberately falsifies and distorts narrations. Examples of this can be found in narrations that discuss the consultative council that was convened after the murder of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه. Even though Imām al-Bukhārī and Abū Mikhnaf narrate the incident from a single individual; ‘Amr ibn Maymūn¹, Abū Mikhnaf interpolates the text and introduces deplorable additions.²

In the incident of the pledge of allegiance to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, he cites the same chain of narration that Imām Aḥmad has³ yet, he changed the wordings and added inconsistent and deplorable phrases.⁴

Comparing the narrations makes this abundantly clear. Consider the following inaccuracies:

- » Abū Mikhnaf omitted mentioning the anger of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه on behalf ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and his hastening to assist him.
- » Imām Aḥmad did not specify who came to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه at his home. Abū Mikhnaf mentions that they were from the Ṣaḥābah.
- » Abū Mikhnaf changed the word ‘khalīfah’ to a term common in his era ‘Imām’.

1 He is ‘Amr ibn Maymūn al-Awdī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh. He is also known as Abū Yaḥyā al-Kūfī. A Mukhaḍram Ṭābī‘ī. He lived through the age of ignorance but did not meet Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم.

- Ibn Ma‘īn, al-Nasa‘ī, and al-‘Ījlī have deemed him reliable.
- Ibn Ḥibbān has counted him amongst the reliable narrators.

He passed away the year 75 A.H./694 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 454; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/367; and Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 166.

2 See, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 204 and Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 227.

3 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 2 pg. 573.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 429.

- » Imām Aḥmad has mentioned the general pledge of allegiance to him. Whilst Abū Mikhnaf mentions that not all pledged to him citing a group of Anṣār had refused to do so.
- » Abū Mikhnaf added deplorable words in his narration that are not found in any other authentic or weak narration. Neither have any of the other historians made mention of it. The added words are:

فقال طلحة : مالنا في هذا الأمر إلا كحسة أنف الكلب

Ṭalḥah said, “A dog licking its nose is all we will get from this.”

The chains of narrations of Abū Mikhnaf are weak. Yet, the defects with his narrations is not confined to it being weak. His chains of narrations consist of other issues like *Irsāl*¹, *Inqitā*², *ʿAḍl*³, *Tadlīs*⁴, or weakness in the narrators above him.

Imām al-Ṭabarī has sourced texts from the books of Abū Mikhnaf verbatim. However, sometimes, he narrates his traditions through the medium of Hishām ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī.⁵

He has relied upon him in the events surrounding the Battle of Ṣiffīn and the consequences of it such as the Arbitration, conflict with the Khawārij, and martyrdom of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه at one of their hands. In these issues Abū Mikhnaf remains a principle source for Imām al-Ṭabarī. The narrations of Abū Mikhnaf in *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* amount to 344. 67 of these pertain to the fitnah.⁶

1 A *mursal* ḥadīth is when a transmitter cites someone or the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم without actually having met him.

2 A broken chain.

3 *Mu’ḍal* (confusing/problematic) report can refer to a ḥadīth with an isnād that contains two or more missing consecutive links.

4 *Mudallis* refers to a transmitter who (sometimes) transmits with obfuscation in his transmission; either intentionally or unintentionally narrating a hadith in manner that obscures or omits transmitters in the isnād.

5 See, Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 5 pgs. 39,42,106,113, and 173.

6 Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl, vol. 10 pg. 383.

Section Three

His methodology in writing his *Tārīkh*

Imām al-Ṭabarī began his academic journey by studying ḥadīth. Thus, the ways of the muḥaddithīn was imprinted upon him through collecting historical narrations and focusing on its chains of narrations. He would gather narrations and codify them with their chains of narration till their respective source; for instance, to a teacher whom he sought knowledge from, or to one who was involved in an event, or to one who had knowledge of an incident, or to a book which he had studied with its complete chain of narration and had been given authorization to narrate. He would, by and large, adhere to the ways of the muḥaddithīn in paying special attention to recording and preserving the chains of narration. This is the condition of a majority of the narrations and historical records in his book.

He indicates towards this in the forward to his book:

وليعلم الناظر في كتابنا هذا أن اعتمادي في كل ما أحضرت ذكره فيه ، إنما هو على ما رويت من الأخبار التي أنا ذاكرها فيه والأثار التي أنا مسندها إلى رواتها فيه دون ما أدرك بحجج العقول واستنبط بفكر النفوس ... إلا القليل اليسير منه

The one studying this book should know that my reliance in all that I have presented herein is upon the incidents that I have narrated and sayings that I have sourced. It is not through logical conclusions except for a little that is far and few.¹

In this manner Imām al-Ṭabarī has established his fervour in sourcing each saying to its origin in codifying and gathering material. He would not tolerate conclusions and explanations that are based solely on logic or mental gymnastics. This was due to his intense desire to gather all or a majority of the material that was available and thereafter present it for study, assessment, and elucidation. Either acceptance would follow or rejection.

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 1 pgs. 7-8.

Since the history of the early Islamic years—especially the time of the fitnah—is more sensitive than other eras, the complexity of the opinions and views garnered cannot be understated. The narrations that pertain to that era are at times influenced by political views, differing opinions, and differing levels of understanding. Besides, forgetfulness, inclinations, and conflict have an impact on the narrations as well. All the above render passing a judgment on the narrations a seriously complicated matter.

This is why Imām al-Ṭabarī, whilst discussing the differing views of his narrators and sources, by following in the way of compiling and codifying leaves the question mark of veracity on the narrators and historians. He says:

فما يكن في كتابي هذا من خبر ذكرناه عن بعض الماضين مما ينكره قارئه أو يستشعنه سامعه ، من أجل أنه لم يعرف له وجهها في الصحة ولا معنى في الحقيقة ، فليعلم أنه لم يؤت في ذلك من قبلنا ، وإنما أتى من قبل بعض ناقله إلينا ، وأنا إنما أدينا ذلك على نحو ما أدى إلينا

Some of the narrations that lay in this book of mine which I have sourced from those of the past would be unacceptable and appalling to one reading or listening to it as it cannot be reconciled nor does it hold any intrinsic correct meaning. Know well, that such narrations do not emanate from us, it is from those whom we have narrated from. We presented it just as we received it.¹

Neutrality and impartiality forms part of his methodology. He presents differing views without bias or prejudice. If he does hold an opinion of his own, it becomes apparent when he presents some narrations whilst neglecting others. Yet, he still remains impartial by not passing a judgment on the event at hand. It is very seldom that he will give preference to one narration over another.

This methodology is a result of his aspiration to compile differing narrations regarding a single event. When drawing a comparison between narrations he uses the phrase, ‘There has been a difference in this...’ he then presents an opposing

1 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 8

narration by saying, 'And some have said...' 'And some have said...' 'And Hishām al-Kalbī says...' ¹ sometimes he says, 'It has been mentioned from so and so that he said...' 'And so and so has narrated to us...' 'And others have said...' 'And some have said...' ²

Critique and comparison becomes quite evident in many of the traditions that are presented at the end of the year under discussion when commenting on dates of death, summer raids, identifying the governors and leaders of ḥajj, and so on. For example, he says, 'In such and such year Abū 'Abbās passed away the day... due to smallpox.' 'And Hishām ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī says he passed away the day...' 'And there has been difference on the age he reached...' 'Some have said...' 'And others have said...' 'And al-Wāqīdī says...' ³ He says, 'So and so took part in the summer raids in such and such year...' 'And al-Wāqīdī says, 'That year's summer raids were undertaken by so and so...' ⁴

In this manner if there are differing narrations regarding one particular event, Imām al-Ṭabarī deems it necessary to present both opinions in order to have a complete overview of the incident. He tried his utmost to compile all the possible narrations and sayings regarding one event. When coming across a lengthy article in which there is difference, he breaks it into sections indicating to the differences at points of difference. ⁵ After mentioning the difference, he reverts back to the main article, continuing from where he left off by saying, 'Returning to the narration of so and so...' ⁶

It ought to be noted that this manner of citing differences can, at times, confuse the reader, thinking it to be part of the main article as it comprises of details that pertain to the very article. Perhaps it would be better to present the complete

1 Ibid, vol. 8 pg. 61.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 417.

3 Ibid, vol. 7 pg. 470.

4 Ibid, vol. 8 p. 241.

5 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 466, 468, and 469.

6 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 470.

narration and then follow it up with another complete, opposing narration. Presenting it in this manner allows the reader to have a better understanding of the incident and the differences, thus allowing one to compare and critique between views and ultimately give preference to one over the other. This would result in a constructive review of the incident.

Imām al-Ṭabarī has followed a chronological order in his book when detailing events. He discusses year after year from the hijrah up to the year 302 A.H/ 914 A.D. He details the significant events of each year per his discretion.

The discussion of each year differ in length depending on the amount of events, their significance, and the information reaching him. Therefore, the discussion of some years are shorter than others. Some years barely make up a few lines¹, some a few pages², and some go over one hundred pages.³ And if the incidents spans across more than one year he will break it up according to the years.

His method in presenting the events of a year differs. Sometimes, he will mention a historical incident and then present the details and narrations regarding it.⁴ At times, he will mention all the incidents of a particular year and then revert to detailing each one.⁵ And at other times he will merely mention the events of a year in a few lines.⁶ At the end of each year he will, at times, mention the dates of death of renowned personalities.⁷ What he generally will not miss mentioning at the end of every year though, are the names of the governors or leaders of ḥajj, or both.⁸ In the event of a year preceding a conquest, he will endeavour to

1 Ibid, for example the years 25, 274, and 298.

2 Ibid, for example the years, 29, 48, and 70.

3 Ibid, for example the years, 35 and 36.

4 Ibid, vol. 442.

5 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 317.

6 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 250.

7 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 113.

8 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 145, 263, vol. 5 pg. 308.

mention the clashes of the border patrol guards¹, just as he mentions the winter and summer raids² together with the forts and castles that had been conquered by the Muslims.³

As for those events that aren't confined to one particular year, for example, life profiles of the Khulafā', he discusses these at end of their rein. After discussing the details of their rein in chronological order, he will at the end profile their life as a whole.⁴

It should be noted that a yearly chronological order has not been maintained throughout the book by Imām al-Ṭabarī. He has followed this style in recounting the events specific to Islamic history.

In the first part, from creation to the hijrah, he has adopted a different methodology. In this portion he has not followed the chronological order of years, as it would be nigh impossible. He has adopted the way of the old historians in this regard by beginning with the issue of creation thereafter discussing the Prophets, their lives and times. He then goes on to discuss the lives of Kings and nations that lived during the eras of these Prophets up to the emergence of Islam and deputation of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as the chosen Messenger.⁵

Many a time, Imām al-Ṭabarī will reproduce historical texts from correspondences⁶, orations⁷, sermons⁸, and especially poems⁹ in order to give credibility to historical

1 Ibid, vol. 8 pg. 313.

2 Ibid, vol. 5 pgs. 226-231.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 35, 37, and 178; vol. 8 pg. 254.

4 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 415.

5 Ibid, see vol. 1-2.

6 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 452 and 548.

7 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 500; vol. 5 pg. 74.

8 Ibid, vol. 5 pgs. 5 and 7.

9 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 423 and 564.

events or garner the reader's attention. He attempts to reproduce these texts verbatim to the extent of leaving many non-Arabic words in its native language.¹

In sourcing material, he does not generally mention the book name. rather he relies on mentioning the authors name saying, for example, al-Wāqidī said, or Abū Mikhnaf said² and so on. If he had heard the material directly, he will say, so and so narrated to me. If others had heard the same from his teacher he will say, so and so narrated to me and said... so and so together with so and so narrated... and so on till the source.³

At times he relies on Mursal⁴ narrations saying, Sariyy wrote to me — from Shu'ayb — from Sayf...⁵ Generally he has endeavoured to procure complete connected narrations, except in a few places when he will then say, It has been said... or It has been mentioned regarding so and so...⁶

He foreshadows the significant events under the chapter of a new year. He says, for example, 'Then was the thirty-fifth year'... he then indicates to the significant events of that year or reproduces texts that mention such events.⁷ Events that aren't heralded as so significant and do not take up more than a few lines are mentioned without any specific title dedicated to it. He will simply mention it under its corresponding year.⁸

1 Ibid, vol. 2 pgs. 51, 54, and 62.

2 Ibid, vol. 5 pgs. 105 and 125.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 369.

4 A mursal ḥadīth is when a transmitter cites someone or the Prophet ﷺ without actually having met him.

5 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 462.

6 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 417; vol. 5 pg. 172.

7 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 250 and 258.

8 Ibid, vol. 5 pg. 231.

Regarding the reliability of the narrators, Imām al-Ṭabarī did not adhere to the guidelines that the muḥaddithīn had adhered to in relation to the weak narrators. He included the traditions of narrators that were weak, and some, accused of lying and fabricating such as al-Kalbī, Hishām, al-Wāqidī, Sayf ibn ‘Umar, Abū Mikhnaf, and others. This was in line with the methodology of the scholars of ḥadīth in gathering and codifying all that reached them by including the chain of narration; a mechanism that allows the weak to be sifted from the authentic by placing the narrations on the barometer set out by the scholars of narrator criticism.

Thus, Imām al-Ṭabarī was not oblivious nor ignorant in compiling hundreds of narrations from the weak and discarded narrators. Rather, he was following a well-known method of compilation that was accepted by the scholars of narrator criticism which spoke of narrating aḥādīth of the weak and discarded narrators whilst at the same time not using them in legal discourse. They would use these narrations to analyse, and corroborate, at times explicitly allowing such only for the masters and only for analysis.¹

Regarding this al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar has stated whilst profiling al-Ṭabarānī², “The early masters of ḥadīth would relate fabricated narrations, not comment on its veracity but include the chain of narration. They believed that relating a narration with its chain of narrators frees one from responsibility, leaving the veracity to be checked against the chain.”³

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 3 pg. 17 and 666. See the annotations on *Al-Ḍu‘afā wa al-Matrūkīn* of al-Dāraqutnī, pg. 253.

2 He is Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad ibn Ayyūb ibn Muṭīr al-Lakhmī. Abū al-Qāsim al-Ṭabrānī. A Ḥāfiẓ of ḥadīth.

- Al-Dhahabī says, “He was the pinnacle of ḥadīth scholars in sheer amount and high chain of transmission.”

From amongst his books are, the three *Ma‘ājim*; *Al-Kabīr*, *Al-Awṣat* and *Al-Ṣaghīr*. He also written, *Al-Tafsīr*, *Al-Awā’il*, and *Dalā’il al-Nubuwwah*. He passed away the year, 360 A.H/839 A.D. His life has been recorded by, Ibn al-Jawzī: *Al-Muntaẓam fī Tārīkh al-Mulūk wa al-Umam*, vol. 7 pg. 45; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 1 pg. 215; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 7 pg. 45.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 3 pg. 75.

As established, Imām al-Ṭabarī was a scholar of ḥadīth¹ and as such treaded their path in his work. He does not simply relate views and opinions as done by other historians. He introduces, includes, and backs each statement with its chain of narrators thereby absolving himself of responsibility. Yes, the narrators are of different calibres and the academic significance of their narrations are worlds apart. Some are authentic, some are weak, and yet others are fabricated. This is all a result of their own competence or lack thereof. The truthfulness, reliability, integrity, and memory of the narrators have an impact on each narration. It is therefore imperative to study the sciences that pertain to the text and chain of narrations as set out by the scholars.

Based on the above discussion, it should be noted that by merely referencing the Tārīkh of Imām al-Ṭabarī or other such books without studying the text and chain goes against true academic integrity.

Consideration should be given too, to the reasons that Imām al-Ṭabarī did not stay within the bounds of accepted and reliable sources. He wished to convey to the reader different perspectives, take from weaker narrations and add details to the stronger ones, complete missing information, and strengthen the narrative itself.

Imām al-Ṭabarī and other erudite scholars of his calibre would approach relating weak narrations as a judge would when looking at a case. They would relate all the possible material, primary, authentic, corroborations, and such, that pertained to an event knowing well the differing levels of reliability of each relying upon compiling rather than verifying. And thus, Imām al-Ṭabarī would not disregard any information, no matter how weak. This was out of fear of discounting the benefit that may be gained from such information. However, he was sure to source every piece of information so that the reader would be able to verify the authenticity or inauthenticity based upon the reliable and weak narrators; thus passing on all that came his way. This methodology works wonders in placing

¹ See, pg. 125.

before the academic the different chains of narrations and their texts. Ibn Taymiyyah attests to the benefit of doing so. He says:

إن تعدد الطرق مع عدم الاتفاق في العادة يوجب العلم مضمون المنقول - أي بالقدر المشترك في أصل الخير - لكن هذا ينتفع به كثيرا في علم أحوال الناقلين - أي نزعاتهم والجهة التي يحتمل أن يتعصب لها بعضهم وفي مثل هذا ينتفع برواية المجهول والسيء الحفظ... ونحو ذلك، ولهذا كان أهل العلم يكتبون مثل هذا ويقولون: إنه يصلح للشواهد والاعتبار وما لا يصلح لغيره، وقال أحمد: قد أكتب حديث الرجل الأعتبره

Relating differing chains of narrations even though they may not generally agree, gives strength to the narrative itself. It also aids in profiling the narrators. One can glean from it their bias and prejudice. It also allows one to benefit from narrations of unknowns or those of weak memory and so on. It is for this reason that the scholars would relate such narrations and then say, 'It is permitted solely for corroboration (*Shahīd*) and consideration (*I'tibār*).' Imām Aḥmad says, 'Sometimes I write the ḥadīth of a man for consideration.'¹

It would be befitting here to note the academic integrity of the scholars of ḥadīth like Imām al-Ṭabarī in relating traditions of those that opposed their creed; the Shī'ah and such. This goes to prove their profound understanding and desire to relate every thread of information that came by them to the readers. This was done relying on the academic ability of the reader in recognising the prejudice and bias of narrators such as Abū Mikhnaf and Ibn al-Kalbī and thus being able to sift out the wheat from the chaff and come to conclusions that were authentic and true.

As for those who collate narrations in order to serve their own dubious ends or out of sheer ignorance, claiming the methodology of Imām al-Ṭabarī, or by merely referencing his work without authentication, thinking themselves to be absolved of responsibility, are in fact sewn from the same cloth as autocrats. Adopting such unscrupulous methods is akin to oppressing and maligning Imām

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, vol. 13 pg. 352.

al-Ṭabarī. He holds no sin after presenting his sources. It is up to them to sift through and profile the narrators of these sources in order to determine the veracity of the statement as per the reliability of its narrators.

This methodology cannot be assumed without a deep insight into the science of narrator criticism and accreditation (*‘ilm al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*) which provides the tools to appropriately profile narrators and help create a capacity to benefit from their narrations. It is also just as important to adhere to the barometers set out by the scholars in critiquing the text of narrations together with taking into consideration the broader outlines of the essence that permeated Islamic civilization. All the above are an essential requirement when taking up the study of Islamic history.¹

1 Due to the importance of this methodology in an academic study of Islamic history and in correctly understanding its purport, studying the Principles of Ḥadīth should be introduced and considered absolutely necessary as a foundation course for those wishing to study Islamic History.

Chapter Two : The First Fitnah



Module One: Defining the concept of Fitnah and examining the Saba'iyyah.

Section One: Defining Fitnah.

Section Two: The Saba'iyyah, fact or fiction?

Section Three: The cause of fitnah during the khilāfah of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه.



Module two: The personality of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه and the circumstances surrounding his assassination.

Section One: The personality of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān and his life.

Section Two: Answering the allegations against 'Uthmān.

Section Three: The circumstances surrounding the assassination of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه.



Module Three: The first Fitnah in Light of revelation and the stance of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and Tābi'īn

Section One: The Fitnah in Light of Revelation.

Section Two: The stance of the Ṣaḥābah in the Fitnah.

Section Three: The stance of the Tābi'īn in the Fitnah.



Module One: Defining the concept of Fitnah and examining the Saba'iyyah

Section One: Defining the concept of Fitnah.

I. The linguistic definition of Fitnah¹

Ibn al-'Arabī² says:

الفتنۃ الاختبار، والفتنۃ المحنة، والفتنۃ المال، والفتنۃ الأولاد، والفتنۃ الكفر، والفتنۃ اختلاف الناس بالآراء، والفتنۃ الإحراق بالنار

Fitnah has the connotations of test, trial by wealth, offspring, disbelief, difference of opinion, and burning in the fire.³

Al-Anbārī⁴ says:

1 Fitnah is an Arabic word with extensive connotations of trial, affliction, or distress. A word with important historical implications. It has also been defined as trial, testing, or temptation; and by extension, treachery, persecution, seduction, enchantment, or disorder resulting from these things.

2 He is Muḥammad ibn Ziyād al-Kūfī, Abū 'Abd Allāh. Famously known as Ibn al-'Arabī. He is amongst the scholars of linguistics and genealogy. He would narrate the poetry of tribes. His teachers are al-Kisā'ī, Ibn al-Sakayt, Tha'lab, and others. He is amongst the teachers of al-Aṣma'ī. From amongst his books are *Al-Nawādir*, *Tārīkh al-Qabā'il*, and *Ma'ānī al-Shi'r*. He passed away the year 231 A.H/846 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 5 pg. 282; Al-Nawawī: *Tahdhīb al-Asmā' wa al-Lughāt*, vol. 1 pg. 295; and Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 18 pg. 199.

3 Ibn Manẓūr: *Lisān al-'Arab*.

4 He is Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Bashshār al-Anbārī, Abū Muḥammad. A scholar of literature and historical traditions.

- Yaqūt says, "He was a scholar of ḥadīth and historical traditions. A master of the Arabic language."
- Ibn Khallikān says, "He was a scholar of literature and reliable in narrations. Truthful and trustworthy."

He has authored *Sharḥ al-Mufaḍḍalīyāt*, *Al-Mu'annath wa al-Mudhakkar*, *Al-Amthāl*, *Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, and *Khalq al-Insān*. He passed away the year 304 A.H 917 A.D His life has been recorded by Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 16 pg. 319; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 4 pg. 341; and Ṭāsh Kubra Zādah: *Miftaḥ al-Sa'ādah*, vol. 1 pg. 146.

قولهم فتنت فلانة فلانا أي أملته عن القصد ، والفتنة معناها المميلة عن الحق ، والفتنة العذاب ، نحو تعذيب الكفار ضعفى المسلمين في أول الإسلام لصددهم عن الإيمان ، والفتنة ما يقع بين الناس من القتال

The expression, she involved him in fitnah means, she averted him from his purpose. Fitnah means to be deterred from the truth. Fitnah also means torment, for example, in the context of the disbelievers tormenting the weak Muslims in the early Islamic period to deter them from īmān. Fitnah can also refer to clashes between people.¹

Ibn Fāris² says:

الفاء والتاء والنون أصل صحيح يدل على ابتلاء واختبار ، من ذلك الفتنة . يقال : فتننت افتن فتنا ، وفتنت بالنار إذا امتحنته ، وهو مفتون فتين .. والفتان : الشيطان ، يقال :

رخيم الكلام قطع القيام أضحى فؤادي به فاتنا

والفتن : الإحراق ، وشيء فتين : أي محرق ، ويقال للحررة فتين كأن حجارتهما محرقة . والفتان : جلدة الرجل . وقولهم : العيش فتنان أي لوانان : والعيش فتنان حلو ومر ، ويمكن أن يختبر ابن آدم بكل واحد منهما

Fā' Tā' Nūn is a sound root which indicates testing or trial. From this root comes the word fitnah. *Fattān* is used to refer to *Shayṭān*. It is said:

أضحى فؤادي به فاتنا

رخيم الكلام قطع القيام

1 Ibn Manẓūr: *Lisān al-'Arab*.

2 He is Aḥmad ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyyā al-Qazwīnī al-Rāzī, Abū al-Ḥusayn. Author of *Maqāyīs al-Lughah*. An authority in linguistics and literature. Greats such as Badī' al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī and Al-Ṣāhib ibn 'Ibād studied under his tutelage. He has written, amongst other books, *Al-Ṣāhibī*, *Tamām al-Faṣīḥ*, *Dhamm al-Khaṭa' fi al-Shi'r*, *Jāmi' al-Ta'wīl*, and *Awjaz al-Siyar li Khayr al-Bashar*. He passed away the year 395 A.H/1004 A.D His life has been recorded by Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 4 pg. 80; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 1 pg. 118; Al-Qaṭī: *Anbā' al-Ruwāt*, vol. 1 pg. 92 and Al-Suyūṭī: *Bughyah al-Wu'āh*, pg. 153.

Sweet words leave one unable to stand;

By it my heart remains trailed.

Fatan means to burn. Fatīn is what has been burnt. Empty plains are referred to as Fatīn as though its stones are on fire. The hide of the saddle is known as Fitān. It is said, life is Fitnān, i.e. polarized. It is either sweet or bitter with each being a trial for the Son of Adam.¹

Ibn Sīdah² says:

الفتنة الخبرة لقوله تعالى: **إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهَا فِتْنَةً لِلظَّالِمِينَ** أي خبرة ، ومعناه أنهم فتنوا بشجرة الزقوم وكذبوا أنها كائنة لما سمعوا أنها تخرج في أصل الجحيم فقالوا : الشجر يحترق في النار، فكيف ينبت الشجر في النار ! فصارت فتنة لهم

Fitnah is an experience. Allah **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** says:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهَا فِتْنَةً لِلظَّالِمِينَ

*Indeed, We have made it a torment for the wrongdoers.*³

The purport of this verse is that they were tormented by the experience of the tree of Zaqqūm after having denied its existence due to it being a tree issuing from the bottom of Hellfire. They said, “A tree burns in fire, how then could a tree grow in the fire.” It was thus made a tormenting experience for them.⁴

1 Ibn Fāris: *Mu'jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah*.

2 He is 'Alī ibn Ismā'īl Abū al-Ḥasan al-Mursī al-Andalusī. From amongst the masters of linguistics and literature. He was blind and had become famous by his books *Al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ* in linguistics and *Sharḥ ma Ashkal min Shi'r al-Mutanabbī*. He passed away the year 458 A.H/1066 His life has been recorded by Ibn 'Umayrah: *Bughyah al-Multamis*, pg. 405; Al-Qaffī: *Anbā' al-Ruwāt*, vol. 2 pg. 225; and Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3 pg. 330.

3 Sūrah al-Ṣāffāt: 63.

4 Ibn Manzūr: *Lisān al-'Arab*.

Al-Rāghib¹ says:

أن الفتنة تكون من الأفعال الصادرة من الله ومن العباد كالبلية والمعصية والقتل والعذاب وغيرها من المكروهات ، فإن كانت من الله فهي على وجه الحكمة ، وإن كانت من الإنسان بغير ما أمر الله فهي مذمومة . فقد ذم الله الإنسان بايقاع الفتنة كقوله : **وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ** (البقرة : ١٩١] وقوله : **إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ**

Fitnah can be attributed to the doings of Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ رَبِّيَ** or the doings of a servant. An example of the former is trails and punishments and of the latter killings and other such objectionable acts. If it is attributed to Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ رَبِّيَ** it is ascribed to his wisdom and if it emanates from a servant and is against the wishes of Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ رَبِّيَ**, it is reprehensible. Allah **سُبْحَانَكَ رَبِّيَ** has censured humans falling into fitnah. He says:

وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ

...and fitnah is worse than killing.²

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

*Indeed, those who have tortured the believing men and believing women.*³

Al-Zamakhsharī⁴ says:

1 He is Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad ibn Mufaḍḍal, Abū al-Qāsim. Famously known as al-Rāghib al-Aṣḥāhānī. Amongst the great scholars and literary experts. Amongst his books are, *Muḥaḍarāt al-Uḍabāʾ*, *Al-Mufradāt*, *Tahqīq al-Bayān*, *Afānīn al-Balāghah*, and *Al-Dharʾah ilā Makārim al-Sharʾah*. He passed away the year 502 A.H/1108 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-Bayhaqī: *Tārīkh Ḥukamāʾ al-Islām*, pg. 112; Al-Suyūṭī: *Bughyah al-Wuʾāh*, pg. 396; and Ḥājī Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 1 pgs. 36, 131, and 377.

2 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 191.

3 Sūrah al-Burūj: 10. Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fatḥ*, vol. 13 pg. 3.

4 He is Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd ibn ʿUmar ibn Muḥammad al-Khwarizmi al-Zamakhsharī. A scholar of linguistics and tafsīr.

- Al-Dhahabī says, “He was an authority in the Arabic language, rhetoric, and expression... He was also a proponent of the Muʿtazilah creed. May Allah forgive him.” *continued...*

وبينهم فتنة أي حرب ، وبنو ثقيف يتفانون أي يتحاربون والناس عبيد الفتانين وهما الدرهم والدينار ، وفي الحديث : ابتليتهم بفتنة الضراء فصبرتم ، وستتلون بفتة السراء ، أراد فتنة السيف وفتنة النساء

Saying between them is fitnah means war, for example, the Banū Thaqīf were involved in fitnah, i.e. in war. Saying people are slaves to the two fitnah means gold and silver coins. The ḥadīth states, “You have been tested by the fitnah of difficulty and you displayed patience. Soon you will be tested by the fitnah of prosperity.” The former referring to war and the latter to women.¹

The author of *Lisān al-‘Arab*² says:

إن جماع الفتنة في ما ذكر غير واحد : الابتلاء والامتحان والاختبار

Many have mentioned that fitnah comprises of tests, trials, and challenges.³

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He has written *Al-Mufaḍḍal*, *Mushtabah Asāmī al-Ruwāt*, and *Asās al-Balāghah*. He passed away the year 538 A.H/1143 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-Sam‘ānī: *Al-Ansāb*, vol. 6 pg. 296; Al-Qaḥṭī: *Anbā’ al-Ruwāt*, vol. 3 pg. 265; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 5 pg. 168; and Ibn al-Murtaḍā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mu’tazilah*, pg. 20.

1 Al-Zamakhsharī: *Asās al-Balāghah*, pg. 334. The ḥadīth is *mawqūf* (a narration attributed to a companion) as narrated from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf رضي الله عنه with the following wording:

ابتلينا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بالضراء فصبرنا ثم ابتلينا بالسراء بعده فلم نصبر

We were tested with difficulty in the era of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم and displayed patience.

We were tested with prosperity after him and did not exercise patience. See, Al-Tirmidhī:

Ḥadīth: 2366.

2 He is Muḥammad ibn Mukarram ibn ‘Alī ibn Abū al-Ḥaḍl Jamāl al-Dīn Manzūr al-Anṣārī al-Ifrīqī. From amongst the Imāms of linguistics and literature. He served at the Diwān al-Inshā’ institute in Cairo after which he was appointed as judge in Western Tripoli. Ibn Ḥajar says, “He was fond of abbreviating lengthy works of literature.” From amongst his books are, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, *Mukhtār al-Aghānī*, *Surūr al-Nafs bi-Madārik al-Ḥawās al-Khams*, and *Al-Muntakhab wa al-Mukhtār fi al-Nawādir wa al-Ash‘ār*. He passed away the year 711 A.H/1311 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-Ṣafḍī: *Fawāt al-Wafyāt*, vol. 2 pg. 265; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. 4 pg. 262; Al-Suyūṭī: *Ḥusn al-Muḥaḍarah fi Akhbār Miṣr wa al-Qāhirah*, vol. 1 pg. 219; and Al-Suyūṭī: *Bughyah al-Wu‘āh*, pg. 106.

3 Ibn Manzūr: *Lisān al-‘Arab*.

Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar says:

أن أصل الفتنة الاختبار ثم استعملت فيما أخرجته المحنة والاختبار إلى المكروه ، ثم أطلقت على كل مكروه أو آيل إليه كالكفر والإثم والتحريف والفضيحة والفجور وغير ذلك

The principle meaning of fitnah is trial. It was then used to denote any harm resulting from trials and difficulties. It was further taken to denote any harm or action that would result in harm such as disbelieve, sin, distortion, humiliation, immodesty etc...¹

It is narrated from Khalf ibn Ḥawshab² that people would recite the following couplets of ‘Amr ibn Ma’dī Karib³ at the time of fitnah (battle):

تبدو بزيتها لكل جهول	الحرب أول ما تكون فتية
ولت عجوزا غير ذات خليل	حتى إذا اشتعلت وشب ضرامها
مكروهة للشم والتقبييل	شمطاء ينكر لونها وتغيرت

The war in the beginning seemed very attractive, appearing with its beauty for every ignoramus.

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 13 pg. 3.

2 He is Khalf ibn Ḥawshab, Abū Yazīd al-Kufī al-Ābid. He narrates from a group of the senior Tābīʿīn and had the opportunity of meeting a few of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.

- Al-ʿIjlī has deemed him reliable.
- Al-Nasaʿī says, “*Lā baʿsa bihi* (there is no problem with him).”
- Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah and al-Rabʿī ibn Abī Rāshid have praised him.

Al-Dhahabī has recorded him being alive up to the year 140 A.H./757 A.D See, Al-ʿIjlī: *Al-Thiqāt*, pg. 144; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/1/193; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3 pg. 149; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 13 pg. 47.

3 He is ‘Amr ibn Ma’dī Karib ibn Rabʿah ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Zubaydī al-Yemeni. Poet and warrior. He was part of the Banū Zubayd delegation to Madinah in 9 A.H./630 A.D He proclaimed his conversion to Islam here in the presence of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم. After the passing of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم he turned away from Islam with those that turned apostate though he did revert to Islam thereafter. He took part in the battles of Yarmūk and Qādisiyyah. Incidents of his bravery are extensive. He passed away the year 21 A.H./652 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-Balādhurī: *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, pg. 257; Al-Marzubānī: *Muʿjam al-Shuʿarā*, pg. 207; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 3 pg. 18.

*But when it flared strongly, it became an old lady whom none accepts in marriage,
With grey hair and bad colour, disliked to be smelled or kissed.*

II. Fitnah as is in the Qur'ān

The word fitnah appears in the Qur'ān with fifteen different applications:

1. Polytheism:

وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ

*And fitnah is worse than killing.*¹

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً

*And fight them until there is no fitnah.*²

2. Disbelief:

اِبْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ

*Seeking discord.*³

وَلِكِنِّكُمْ فَتَنَّاكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ

*But you afflicted yourselves.*⁴

3. Trials and tests:

1 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 191.

2 Sūrah al-Anfāl: 39.

3 Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 7.

4 Sūrah al-Ḥadīd: 14.

أَحْسَبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ

*Do the people think that they will be left to say, "We believe" and they will not be tried?*¹

وَفْتَنَّاكَ فُتُونًا

*And tried you with a [severe] trial.*²

4. Punishment:

فَإِذَا أُذِي فِي اللَّهِ جَعَلَ النَّاسَ كَعَذَابِ اللَّهِ

*But when one [of them] is harmed for [the cause of] Allah, they consider the trial of the people as [if it were] the punishment of Allah.*³

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا فُتِنُوا

*Then, indeed your Lord, to those who emigrated after they had been compelled.*⁴

5. Being burnt by fire:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتِنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ

*Indeed, those who have tortured the believing men and believing women.*⁵

عَلَى النَّارِ يُفْتَنُونَ

*Tormented over the Fire.*⁶

1 Sūrah al-ʿAnkabūt: 2.

2 Sūrah Ṭāhā: 40.

3 Sūrah al-ʿAnkabūt: 10.

4 Sūrah al-Naḥl: 110.

5 Sūrah al-Burūj: 10.

6 Sūrah al-Dhāriyāt: 13.

6. Killing:

إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ يُفْتِنَكُمْ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

If you fear that those who disbelieve may disrupt [or attack] you. Indeed, the disbelievers are ever to you a clear enemy.¹

عَلَىٰ خَوْفٍ مِّنْ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنَهُمْ

For fear of Pharaoh and his establishment that they would persecute them.²

7. To Tempt:

وَإِخْذَرَهُمْ أَلَّا يُفْتِنُواكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ

And beware of them, lest they tempt you away from some of what Allah has revealed to you.³

وَإِنْ كَادُوا لَيَفْتِنُونَكَ عَنِ الَّذِي أُوحِيَٰ إِلَيْكَ

And indeed, they were about to tempt you away from that which We revealed to you.⁴

8. Misguidance:

وَمَنْ يُرِدْ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنْ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا

But he for whom Allah intends fitnah - never will you possess [power to do] for him a thing against Allah.⁵

1 Sūrah al-Nisā: 101.

2 Sūrah Yūnus: 83.

3 Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 49.

4 Sūrah al-Isrā': 73.

5 Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 41.

مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ بِفَاتِنِينَ

You cannot tempt [anyone] away from Him¹

Tha'labī says this means that you cannot misguide anyone away from him, the people of the Fire who are to remain misguided as in the knowledge of Allah سبحانه وتعالى.²

9. Excuse:

ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُنْ فِتْنَتُهُمْ

Then there will be no [excuse upon] examination.³

10. Insanity:

بِأَيِّكُمْ الْمَفْتُونُ

Which of you is the afflicted [by a devil].⁴

11. Sin:

أَلَا فِي الْفِتْنَةِ سَقَطُوا

Unquestionably, into trial they have fallen.⁵

12. Chastisement:

1 Sūrah al-ṣāffāt: 162.

2 Ibn Manzūr: *Lisān al-'Arab*.

3 Sūrah al-An'ām: 23.

4 Sūrah al-Qalam: 6.

5 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 49.

أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ

*Lest fitnah strike them.*¹

13. Illness:

يُمْتَحَنُونَ فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ مَرَّةً

*They are tried every year once.*²

14. Sentence:

إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا فِتْنَتُكَ

*This is not but Your trial.*³

15. Lesson/Heed:

Al-Dāmaghānī⁴ says, “Fitnah in the context of the verse (mentioned below) is a prayer that means ‘Do not lay upon us the enemies of Your faith by which they would theorise their superiority over us’ thus resulting in a lesson for us.”⁵

رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

*Our Lord, make us not [objects of] trial for the wrongdoing people.*⁶

1 Sūrah al-Nūr: 63.

2 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 126.

3 Sūrah al-A'rāf: 155.

4 He is al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad al-Dāmaghānī. A jurist and commentator of the Qur'ān. Perhaps he is the son of the famed jurist Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Dāmaghānī, chief justice in Baghdad and Shaykh of the Ḥanafīyyah in his era. He has authored *Iṣlāḥ al-Wujūh wa al-Nazā'ir fi al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*. See, Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 2 pg. 433 and *Qāmūs al-Qur'ān*, pg. 6 by 'Abd al-'Azīz Sayyid Ahl.

5 *Qāmūs al-Qur'ān* or *Iṣlāḥ al-Wujūh wa al-Nazā'ir fi al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*: pg. 349.

6 Sūrah Yūnus: 85.

رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

Our Lord, make us not [objects of] torment for the disbelievers.¹

III. Fitnah as in the Prophetic Traditions

1. Fitnah in the aḥādīth comes in the meaning of conflict. Al-Bukhārī has narrated on the authority of Usāmah ibn Zayd رضي الله عنه who says:

أشرف النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم - على أطم من أطام المدينة ، فقال: هل ترون ما أرى؟. قالوا: لا، قال: إني لأرى الفتن خلال بيوتكم؛ كمواقع القطر

Once Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم stood at the top of a fort amongst the forts of Madinah and said, “Do you see what I see?”

They replied, “No.”

He said, “I see trials between your homes (and these trials will be) as numerous as raindrops.”²

Al-Hāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar comments:

إنما اختصت المدينة بذلك ؛ لأن قتل عثمان رضي الله عنه كان بهاء ثم انتشرت الفتن في البلاد بعد ذلك ، والقتال بالجمل وبصفين كان بسبب قتل عثمان ، والقتال بالنهروان كان بسبب التحكيم بصفين وكل فتال وقع في ذلك العصر إنما تولد عن شيء من ذلك أو عن شيء تولد عنه

Madinah has been singled out here, as the assassination of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه would be in it; a prelude to the spread of fitnah in the other cities. The conflict at Jamal and Şiffīn was as a result of the assassination of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, whilst the fight at Naharwān was a result of the arbitration at Şiffīn.

1 Sūrah al-Mumtaḥinah: 5. For further reading see, Al-Dāmaghānī: *Iṣlāḥ al-Wujūh wa al-Nazā’ir fi al-Qur’ān al-Karīm* pg. 347; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Muntakhab Qurrah al-Uyūn al-Nawāẓir fi al-Wujūh wa al-Nazā’ir*, pg. 192; and Al-Suyūṭī: *Mu’tarak al-Aqrān fi I’jāz al-Qur’ān*, pg. 169.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pgs. 88-89.

In short, every conflict that arose in that era was either a direct or indirect result of the assassination.¹

2. Fitnah in the ḥadīth also comes in the meaning of internal strife. Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān رضي الله عنه reports:

بيننا نحن جلوس عند عمر إذ قال أيكم يحفظ قول النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في الفتنة قال فتنة الرجل في أهله وماله وولده وجاره تكفرها الصلاة والصدقة والأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر قال ليس عن هذا أسألك ولكن التي تموج كموح البحر قال ليس عليك منها بأس يا أمير المؤمنين إن بينك وبينها بابا مغلقا قال عمر أيكسر الباب أم يفتح قال بل يكسر قال عمر إذا لا يغلق أبدا قلت أجل قلنا لحذيفة أكان عمر يعلم الباب قال نعم كما يعلم أن دون غد ليلة وذلك أني حدثته حديثا ليس بالأعاليط فهبنا أن نسأله من الباب فأمرنا مسروقا فسأله فقال من الباب قال عمر

We were one day in the company of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and he said, “Who amongst you has preserved in his mind most perfectly the hadith of Allah’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم in regard to the fitnah?”

I said, “There would (first) be fitnah for a person in regard to his family, his property, his own self, his children, his neighbours (and the sins committed in their connection) would be expiated by fasting, prayer, charity, enjoining good and prohibiting evil.”

Thereupon ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said, “I do not mean (that turmoil on a small scale) but that one which would emerge like the mounting waves of the ocean.”

I said, “Commander of the Faithful, you have nothing to do with it, for the door is closed between you and that.”

He said, “Would that door be broken or opened?”

I said, “No, it would be broken.”

Thereupon he said, “Then it would not ever close.”

I said, “Yes.”

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 13 pg. 13.

We said to Ḥudhayfah, “Did ‘Umar رضي الله عنه know the door?”

Thereupon he said, “Yes, he knew it (for certain) just as one knows that night precedes the next day. And I narrated to him something in which there was nothing fabricated.”

We dared not ask Ḥudhayfah about that door. So we requested Masrūq to ask him. So he asked him and he said: (By that door, he meant) ‘Umar رضي الله عنه.¹

Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar commenting on this says:

وقول عمر : إذا كسر لم يغلق . أخذه من جهة أن الكسر لا يكون إلا غلبة والغلبة لا تقع إلا في الفتنة ، وعلم من الخبر النبوي أن بأس الأمة بينهم واقع ، وأن الهرج لا يزال إلى يوم القيامة كما وقع في حديث ثوبان مرفوعا : إذا وضع السيف في أمّتي لم يرفع عنها إلى يوم القيامة

The comment of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه ‘Then it would not close’ was an indication that breaking of the door would only happen in the event of being overpowered which in turn would only occur in the instance of fitnah. He knew from the prophetic traditions that internal strife was to occur in the Ummah and that killings would continue to the Day of Qiyāmah as inferred from the narration of Thawbān رضي الله عنه (narrating from Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم), “When conflict arises in my Ummah, it will not end till the Day of Qiyāmah.”²

3. Killing:

Sa‘īd ibn Zayd رضي الله عنه narrates:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 96.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 13 pg. 50. The ḥadīth has been recorded by al-Tirmidhī in his *Sunan*, vol. 3 pg. 332. He has classified it as authentic. *Ibn Mājah*, vol. 2 pg. 1304 and Aḥmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 5 pg. 278 have also recorded it. Al-Albānī has deemed it authentic in *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ*: 5406 as narrated on the authority of Shaddād ibn Aws as recorded by Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, vol. 4 pg. 123 and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*: 4570, with an authentic chain of narration.

كنا عند رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فذكر فتنة عظيم أمرها فقلنا أو قالوا يا رسول الله لئن أدركتنا لنهلكن فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كلا ان بحسبكم القتل قال سعيد فرأيت أخواني قتلوا

We were with Rasūlullāh ﷺ when he mentioned fitnah and expressed its gravity.

We, or the people, said, “O Prophet of Allah, if we were to witness it we would perish.”

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “No, it is enough for you that you would be killed.”

Sa’id says, “And so I saw my brethren were killed.”¹ (Meaning Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, and the other Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who were killed in the fitnah).

The narration of Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is also to this effect:

وتظهر الفتن ويكثر الهرج قالوا يا رسول الله أيما هو قال القتل القتل...

...afflictions will appear and there will be much ‘Al-Harj.’

They said, “O Allah’s Apostle! What is ‘Al-Harj?’”

He said, “Killing! Killing!”²

Ibn al-Athīr says:

الهرج الاختلاف والفتن ، وقد جاء في بعض الحديث أنه القتل ، والقتل إنما سببه الفتنة والاختلاف

Al-Harj is differences and fitnah. Some narrations indicate it to be killing. This is as killing is a result of fitnah and differences.³

1 Abū Dāwūd: *Sunan*, vol. 4 pg. 105. ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Arnā’ūt comments in the footnotes of *Jāmi’ al-Uṣūl* that the chain of narration is authentic, vol. 10 pg. 37.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 89.

3 Ibn al-Athīr: *Jāmi’ al-Uṣūl*, vol. 10 pg. 13.

4. The result of differences that stems from power struggles wherein one cannot discern the true from the false.¹

Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

ستكون فتن القاعد فيها خير من القائم والقائم فيها خير من الماشي والماشي فيها خير من الساعي من تشرف لها تستشرفه فمن وجد منها ملجأ أو معاداً فليعد به

There will be fitnah (in the near future) during which a sitting person will be better than a standing one, and the standing one will be better than a walking one, and the walking one will be better than a running one, and whoever will expose himself to these afflictions, they will destroy him. So whoever can find a place of protection or refuge from them, should take shelter in it.²

5. Though not explicitly mentioned in the narrations, fitnah comes in the meaning of differences and factions:

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is reported to have said:

ستكون هنات وهنات ، فمن أراد أن يفرق أمر هذه الأمة وهي جميع ، فاضربوه بالسيف كائنا من كان

Different evils will make their appearance in the near future. Anyone who tries to disrupt the affairs of this Ummah while they are united you should strike him with the sword whoever he be.³

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is also reported to have said:

1 Ibn Hajar: *Fath al-Bārī*, vol. 13 pg. 31.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pgs. 92.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 12 pg. 241; *Sunan al-Nasaī*, vol. 7 pg. 92.

وستفترق أمتي على ثلاث وسبعين فرقة

...and my Ummah will split into seventy-three sects.¹

This is with the knowledge that sectarianism and differences that would occur in this Ummah will be due to the fitnah.

Consider the following sayings of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as well:

ستكون بعدي أحداث وفتن واختلاف ...

There will be major events, fitnah, and differences after me.²

ستكون فتنة وفرقة

There will be fitnah and divisions.³

6. Imitating the disbelievers, internalising their way of thought and adopting their way of life.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ says:

لتتبعن سنن من كان قبلكم شبرا شبرا، وذراعا بذراع حتى لو دخلوا جحر ضب تبعتموهم، قلنا: يا رسول الله، اليهود، والنصارى، قال: فمن

You will follow the ways of those nations who were before you, span by span and cubit by cubit, so much so that even if they entered a hole of a lizard, you would follow them.

1 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 4 pg. 135. Al-Tirmidhī says, “It is sound, authentic.” Abū Dāwūd has recorded it in his *Sunan*: 4596; Ibn Mājah: *Sunan*: 3991/vol. 2 pg. 1321. Al-Albānī has deemed it authentic in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*: 203, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’*: 1083, and others.

2 Aḥmad: *Musnad*, vol. 5 pg. 292.

3 Aḥmad: *Musnad*, vol. 3 pg. 493; Ibn Mājah: *Sunan*, vol. 2 pg. 131. Muḥammad Fu’ād ‘Abd al-Bāqī says in *al-Zawā’id* of al-Haythamī, “This chain of narration is authentic if be established the hearing of Ḥammād ibn Salamah from Thābit al-Bunānī.”

We said, “O Allah’s Messenger ﷺ! The Jews and the Christians?”

He said, “Whom else?”¹

7. The trial of wealth:

Rasūlullāh ﷺ says:

فوالله ما الفقر أخشى عليكم ولكن أخشى عليكم أن تسبط عليكم الدنيا كما بسطت على من كان قبلكم فتنافسوها كما تنافسوها وتلهيكم كما ألهتهم

By Allah! I am not afraid that you will become poor, but I am afraid that worldly wealth will be given to you in abundance as it was given to those (nations) before you, and you will start competing each other for it as the previous nations competed for it, and then it will divert you (from good) as it diverted them.²

Umm Salamah رضى الله عنها says:

استيقظ رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ليلة فزعا يقول سبحان الله ماذا أنزل الله من الخزائن وماذا أنزل من الفتن

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ woke up one night in a state of terror and said, “Subhān Allah, how many treasures Allah has sent down! And how many afflictions have been sent down!”³

Ibn Baṭṭāl⁴ says:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 151; *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Muslim*, vol. 19 pg. 219.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 7 pg. 172.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 90.

4 He is ‘Alī ibn Khalf ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Qurṭubī al-Andalūsī, Abū al-Ḥasan, famously known as Ibn Baṭṭāl. From amongst the scholars of ḥadīth. He has authored, *Sharḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Sharḥ al-ʿIṭisām*. He passed away the year 449 A.H/1057 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Bashkwāl: *Al-Ṣilah*, vol. 2 pg. 414; and Ibn al-ʿImād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 3 pg. 283.

وفي هذا الحديث أن الفتوح في الخرائن تنشأ عنه فتنة المال بأن يتنافس فيه ، فيقع القتال بسببه وأن يبخل به ، فيمنع الحق أو يبطر صاحبه فيسرف

This ḥadīth points toward the fitnah of wealth and competing for it that would follow the conquest. Conflicts, miserliness, and wastage would rise as a result of it.¹

8. As a synonym for the tyranny and misguidance of the leaders:

Rasūlullāh ﷺ says:

وإنما أخاف على أمتي الأئمة المضلين، وإذا وضع السيف في أمتي لم يرفع عنها إلى يوم القيامة

I am afraid about my Ummah of those leaders who will lead astray. When the sword is used among my Ummah, it will not be withdrawn from them till the Day of Resurrection.²

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān says:

كان الناس يسألون رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عن الخير وكنت أسأله عن الشر مخافة أن يدركني فقلت يا رسول الله إنا كنا في جاهلية وشر ف جاءنا الله بهذا الخير فهل بعد هذا الخير شر قال نعم فقلت هل بعد ذلك الشر من خير قال نعم وفيه دخن قلت وما دخنه قال قوم يستنون بغير سنتي ويهدون بغير هديي تعرف منهم وتنكر فقلت هل بعد ذلك الخير من شر قال نعم دعاة على أبواب جهنم من أجابهم إليها قدفوه فيها فقلت يا رسول الله صفهم لنا قال نعم قوم من جلدتنا ويتكلمون بألسنتنا قلت يا رسول الله فما ترى إن أدركني ذلك قال تلزم جماعة المسلمين وإمامهم فقلت فإن لم يكن لهم جماعة قال فاعتزل تلك الفرق كلها ولو أن تعض بأصل شجرة حتى يدركك الموت وأنت على ذلك

The people used to ask Allah's Messenger ﷺ about the good but I used to ask him about the evil lest I should be overtaken by them.

So I said, "O Allah's Messenger ﷺ! We were living in ignorance and in an (extremely) worst atmosphere, then Allah brought to us this good (i.e., Islam); will there be any evil after this good?"

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Fatḥh al-Bārī*, vol. 13 pg. 23.

2 Abū Dāwūd: *Sunan*: vol. 4 pg. 98; Al-Tirmidhī: *Sunan*, vol. 3 pg. 342; Ibn Mājah: *Sunan*, vol. 2 pg. pg. 1304. Al-Albānī has deemed it authentic in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, vol. 3 pg. 801/3577.

He said, “Yes.”

I said, “Will there be any good after that evil?”

He replied, “Yes, but it will be tainted.”

I asked, “What will be its taint?”

He replied, “(There will be) some people who will guide others not according to my tradition and guidance. You will approve of some of their deeds and disapprove of some others.”

I asked, “Will there be any evil after that good?”

He replied, “Yes, (there will be) some people calling at the gates of the (Hell) Fire, and whoever will respond to their call, will be thrown by them into the (Hell) Fire.”

I said, “O Allah’s Messenger! Will you describe them to us?”

He said, “They will be from our own people and will speak our language.”

I said, “What do you order me to do if such a state should take place in my life?”

He said, “Stick to the group of Muslims and their Imam (ruler).”

I said, “If there is no group of Muslims?”

He said, “Then turn away from all those sects even if you were to bite (eat) the roots of a tree till death overtakes you while you are in that state.”¹

9. Sin, rebellion, and opposition:

Rasūlullāh ﷺ says:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 93.

من حمل علينا السلاح فليس منا

Whoever takes up arms against us, is not from us.¹

Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

منعت العراق درهمها وقفيزها ومنعت الشام مديها ودينارها ومنعت مصر إردبها ودينارها وعدتم من حيث بدأتكم وعدتم من حيث بدأتكم شهد على ذلك لحم أبي هريرة ودمه

Iraq would withhold its dirhams and *qafiz*²; Syria would withhold its *mudd*³ and dinar and Egypt would withhold its *irdab*⁴ and dinar and you would recoil to that position from where you started and you would recoil to that position from where you started and you would recoil to that position from where you started, the flesh and blood of Abū Hurayrah would bear testimony to it.⁵

This narration means that people would turn back on obeying. It gains strength from the statement of Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ as recorded by al-Bukhārī and Aḥmad:

كيف أنتم إذا لم تجتبا ديناراً ولا درهما فليل له وكيف ترى ذلك كأننا يا أبا هريرة قال إي والذي نفس أبي هريرة بيده عن قول الصادق المصدوق قالوا عم ذلك قال تنتهك ذمة الله وذمة رسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم فيشد الله عز وجل قلوب أهل الذمة فيمنعون ما في أيديهم

What will your state be when you can get no Dinar or Dirham (i.e. taxes from the Dhimmis)?

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 90.

2 The Iraqi *qafiz*; a unit of measurement for volume which amounts to 42.75 kg of wheat. *Al-Makāyil wa al-Awzān al-Islāmiyyah*, pg. 66.

3 The same as the Shāmī *mudd*: 2.84 kg of wheat or 3.673 litres. *Ibid*, pg. 75.

4 *Al-Irdab*: An Egyptian unit of measurement for volume amounting to 69.6 kg of wheat. See, *ibid*, pg. 85.

5 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 18 pg. 20; and *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, vol. 3 pg. 166.

Someone asked him, “What makes you know that this state will take place, O Abū Hurayrah?”

He said, “By Him in Whose Hands Abū Hurayrah life is, I know it through the statement of the true and truly inspired one.”

The people asked, “What does the statement say?”

He replied, “Allah and His Apostle’s asylum granted to Dhimmis, (i.e. non-Muslims living in a Muslim territory) will be broken, and so Allah will make the hearts of these Dhimmis so daring that they will refuse to pay what they were supposed to pay.”¹

Al-Bukhārī has narrated on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا that he heard Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, pointing towards the east, saying:

الا ان الفتنة ها هنا

Behold! Fitnah will emerge from here.²

This was as the signs of fitnah appeared from Kūfah, east of Madinah. The wickedness of its people and their ingratitude towards their governors are well known. It was from here that the first fitnah emerged during the era of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

10. The fitnah of women:

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ says:

ما تركت بعدي فتنة أضر على الرجال - وفي رواية على امتي - من النساء،

After me I have not left any trial more severe to men – and in some narrations, to my Ummah – than women.³

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 69; *Musnad Aḥmad*, vol. 2 pg. 332.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 95.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 6 pg. 124; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, vol. 2 pg. 325.

So beware of the beguilement of the world and those of women.¹

11. Separation between a man and his wife:

This is as in the ḥadīth recorded by Imām Muslim wherein Rasūlullāh

صلى الله عليه وسلم says:

إن عرش إبليس على البحر فيبعث سراياه فيقتنون الناس فأعظمهم عنده أعظمهم فتنة يجيء أحدهم ،
فيقول : فعلت كذا وكذا ، فيقول : ما صنعت شيئا ، قال : ثم يجيء أحدهم ، فيقول : ما تركته حتى فرقت
بينه وبين امرأته ، قال : فيدنيه منه ، ويقول : نعم أنت

Iblis places his throne upon water; he then sends detachments (for creating dissension); the nearer to him in rank are those who are most notorious in creating dissension.

One of them comes and says, “I did so and so.”

And he says, “You have done nothing.”

Then one amongst them comes and says, “I did not spare so and so until I sowed the seed of discord between a husband and a wife.”

The Satan goes near him and says, “You have done well.”²

12. *Fitnah al-Maḥyā*³, i.e. the temptations of life that present itself to a man throughout his life in the form of enticements and doubts.

13. *Fitnah al-Mamāt*⁴: Questioning by the two angels in the grave.

1 *Musnad Aḥmad*, vol. 2 pgs. 19-22; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, vol. 2 pg. 325.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 17 pg. 156.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 1 pg. 202; *Sunan al-Nasaʿī*, vol. 3 pg. 57.

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 2 pg. 102.

14. *Fitnah al-Dajjāl*¹: The trials of Dajjāl.
15. *Fitnah al-Ṣadr*²: The whisperings of the devil.
16. *Fitnah al-Ghinā*³: Malice, miserliness, arrogance, extravagance, and squandering.
17. *Fitnah al-Faqr*⁴: Being unable to remain patient, not being content with the decree of Allah سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ, and displaying resentment.
18. *Fitnah al-Nār*: Being questioned by the keeper of Hell with absolute ridicule.⁵
19. The fitnah of knowledge and being well versed:

Yazīd ibn ‘Umayrah⁶ narrating from the companions of Mu‘ādh ibn Jabal says:

كان معاذ بن جبل لا يجلس مجلسا للذكر إلا قال حين يجلس الله حكم قسط هلك المرتابون . وقال معاذ بن جبل يوما : إن من ورائكم يكثر فيها المال ويفتح فيه القرآن حتى يأخذه المؤمن والمنافق والرجل

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 2 pg. 103.

2 *Sunan al-Nasa’ī*, vol. 8 pg. 255.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 7 pg. 159.

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 17 pg. 28-29.

5 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 7 pg. 159.

6 He is Yazīd ibn ‘Umayrah al-Zubaydī al-Kindī al-Ḥimṣī. Abū Zur‘ah has counted him amongst the senior level of those after the Ṣaḥābah.

- Al-‘Ijlī says, “A Shāmī Tābi’ī. Reliable from amongst the senior Tābi’īn.
- Ibn Sa’d says, “He was reliable In Shā Allah.
- Ibn Ḥibbān has mentioned him in *Al-Thiqāt*.

See, Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 480; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 136; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 351.

والمرأة والصغير والكبير والحر والعبد ، فيوشك قاتل أن يقول : ما للناس لا يتبعونني وقد قرأت القرآن ؟
وما هم بمتبعي حتى أبتدع لهم غيره

Whenever Mu'adh ibn Jabal sat in a gathering to impart knowledge he would say: Allah is a Just Arbiter; those who doubt would perish. One day Mu'adh ibn Jabal said: In the times after you there would be trails in which riches would be abundant. During these trails the Qur'ān would be easy so much so that every believer, hypocrite, man, woman, young, grown up, slave and free man will learn it. Then a man might say: What happened with the people that they do not follow me while I read the Qur'ān? They are not going to follow me until I introduce an innovation for them other than it.¹

In summary, fitnah, in our discussion refers to those events of conflict, dissent, and discord that occurred between the Muslims in the early Islamic period. As the issues that surrounded the differences were sensitive and complex, the stances adopted were polar and the views assumed were split.

To differentiate between the differing events and fitnah in that era, the early scholars termed them as 'the first fitnah', 'the second fitnah', and so on.

Al-Zuhrī is recorded to have said:

قد هاجت الفتنة الأولى وأدركت رجالا ذوي عدد من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

The first fitnah arose and I encountered a large number of the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.²

1 Sunan Abū Dāwūd, vol. 4 pg. 202. The footnotes of *Jāmi' al-Uṣūl* have deemed the chain of narration as authentic, vol. 10 pg. 44. Al-Albānī has deemed it authentic in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, vol. 3 pg. 872/3855.

2 Al-Bayhaqī: *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol. 8 pg. 173; 'Abd al-Razzāq: *Al-Muṣannaḥ*, vol. 10 pg. 121.

And Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib¹ is recorded to have said:

ثم وقعت الفتنة الثانية ، فلم يبق من أصحاب الحديبية أحد ، ثم وقعت الثالثة ، فلم ترتفع للناس طباخ...

... Then the second fitnah occurred—the incident of Ḥarrah—and none of the Companions of Ḥudaybiyyah remained. Then the third civil strife took place and it did not subside till it had exhausted all the strength of the people.²

1 He is Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyib ibn Hazan ibn Abī Wahb al-Qurashī al-Makhzūmī. Amongst the great jurists of the Tābīʿīn.

- Qatādah says, “I have never seen anyone more knowledgeable about the permissible and impermissible than him.”
- Al-Maymūnī relates the statement of Aḥmad, “The *mursal* (A *mursal* narration is when a transmitter cites someone or the Prophet ﷺ without having actually met him) narrations of Saʿīd are authentic to the degree that no other *mursal* narrations are more authentic.”
- Al-ʿIjlī says, “He was a pious man with deep understanding. He would not accept handouts. He had goods by which he would trade in olive oil.”
- Abū Zurʿah says, “Reliable, an Imām.”
- Abū Ḥātim says, “There was none amongst the Tābīʿīn more noble than him.”

He passed away the year 90 A.H/709 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Saʿd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 119; Ibn Maʿīn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 3 pg. 207; Al-ʿIjlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 188; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʿdīl*, vol. 4 pg. 59; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 4 pg. 84.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 5 pg. 20; and Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, vol. 4 pg. 1274.

Section Two

The Saba'iyyah, fact or fiction?

Some contemporary academics have sought to question the reality of 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba', with others going on to further completely deny his existence; casting him as a figure of fiction. These are claims that aren't supported by any academic evidence nor are they reliant on any early reference material. They are conclusions based on individual conjecture and speculation arising from personal predispositions and inclinations.

It is safe to say that the deniers of the personality of Ibn Saba' comprise of a group of orientalists, Arab academics, and most contemporary Shī'ah.

The orientalists, Rawāfiḍ, and their likes who have sought to deny the existence of 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' and cast him as a figure of fiction, tethered on the brink of incredulity, impertinence, and ignorance. How can they not be, whereas the books of history and sects reference him repeatedly?

The historians, scholars of ḥadīth, authors of books on sects and creeds, Islamic biographical literature, language, and genealogy have all referenced the life and times of 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba'. This establishment of existence spans across the works of the Ahl al-Sunnah and the Shī'ah.

Thus, the events of the fitnah and discussions of Ibn Saba' aren't confined to the *Tārikh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī. Nor are they solely reliant on the narrations of Sayf ibn 'Umar al-Tamīmī. These incidents and events are spread throughout the narrations of the early scholars and books of Islamic history, together with

1 He is 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba', known as Ibn al-Sawdā'. A Jew from Ṣan'ā who outwardly portrayed his Islam during the era of 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān رضي الله عنه. He sought to create divisions amongst the Muslims and introduce rebellion by spreading his views and beliefs. His life has been recorded by Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārikh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 340; Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārikh Dimashq*, vol. 9 pg. 328; and Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 183.

forming an integral worldview of those who discuss sectarianism in that time period. Yes, the salient trait of the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī is that the same incidents which are mentioned elsewhere are furthered by extensive details and exhaustive specifics, not introductive of novel material.

Therefore, bringing into question these events without any evidence points towards a clear objective; one that seeks to destroy the legitimacy of the incidents, paint the scholars and historians who have narrated them as senseless, and misrepresent historical truths.

When intellectual theorization is pitted up against explicit texts and narrations that are referenced in early and later sources in order to disprove the historical reality of the existence of Ibn Saba', the only conclusion that can be drawn is one of a myopic and prejudiced methodology.

I. Ibn Saba' according to the Ahl al-Sunnah.

A'shā Hamdān¹ d. 83 A.H/702 A.D references the Saba'iyyah. He ridiculed al-Mukhtār and his collaborators from Kūfah after he fled with the nobles of the Kūfah tribes to Baṣrah with the following couplet:

شهدت عليكم أنكم سبئية وأني بكم يا شرطة الكفر عارف

*I bear witness that you are Saba'iyyah,
And I am aware of you, O guardians of disbelief.²*

1 He is 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥārith al-Hamdānī, famously known as A'shā Hamdān. Persian poet, scholar, and jurist. He is known by his poetry.

- Al-Dhahabī says, "Eloquent and famed poet. He was a great worshipper and noble. He took up arms against Ḥajjāj with the scholars. He was taken into custody and brought before him. Ḥajjāj gave the order and he was slain the year 83 A.H/702 A.D"

His life has been recorded by Al-Aṣḥāhānī: *Al-Aghānī*, vol. 6 pg. 41; Al-Mirzabānī: *Mu'jam al-Shu'arā*, pg. 14; Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 9 pg. 499; and Al-Dhahabī: *Tārīkh al-Islam*, vol. 3 pg. 242.

2 A'shā Hamdān: *Dīwān*, pg. 148; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 6 pg. 83.

Mention is made of the Saba'iyyah in Kitāb al-Irjā' of al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah¹ d. 95 A.H/713 A.D which he instructed to be read to the people. In it he writes:

ومن خصومة هذه السبئية التي أدركنا ، إذ يقولون هدينا لوحى ضل عنه الناس

Amongst the peculiarities of these Saba'iyyah which we encountered, is that they say we have been guided by revelation that has been lost to the people.²

Also consider the narration of al-Sha'bī d. 103 A.H/721 A.D which states:

اول من كذب عبد الله بن سبأ

The first to lie was 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba'.³

Farazdaq⁴ d. 116 A.H/734 A.D ridicules the noblemen of Iraq and those who colluded with Ibn al-Ash'ath and his revolt in the Battle of Dayr al-Jamājim. He says:

1 He is al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Hāshimī. There is consensus upon his reliability. He is the first that spoke against Irjā'.

- Ibn Sa'd says, "He was amongst the graceful and noble persons of the Banū Hāshimī."
- Ibn Ḥibbān says, "He was a well versed in the differences of people."
- Ibn Ḥajar says, "Reliable and a jurist."

He passed away the year 100 A.H/718 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 328; Al-'Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 117; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/305; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Majrūhīn min al-Muḥaddithīn*, vol. 4 pg. 122; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pg. 171.

2 Narrated by Abū 'Umar al-'Adnī in Kitāb al-Īmān, pg. 249.

3 Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 9 pg. 331.

4 He is Hammām ibn Ghālīb ibn Ṣa'sa'ah al-Tamīmī al-Baṣrī, Abū Firās, famously known as Farazdaq due to his scowl and harsh temperament. He was amongst the great poets of the Umayyad period. He had a measurable effect on the language, so much so that it is said, "If it wasn't for the poetry of Farazdaq, a third of the Arabians language would have been lost." He collected some of his poems in his *Dīwān*. He passed away in Baṣrah the year 110 A.H/728 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī al-Khaṭṭāb: *Ibid*: pg. 163; Ibn Sallām al-Jumaḥī: *Ṭabaqāt Fuḥūl al-Shu'arā*, pg. 75; Al-Aṣfahānī: *Al-Aghānī*, vol. 9 pg. 367; and Al-Mirzabānī: *Mu'jam al-Shu'arā*, pg. 486.

حصائد أو أعجاز نخل تقعرا
وتكره عينها على ما تنكرا
عليها تراب في دم قد تعفرا
بعيدين طرفا بالخيانة أحزرا
وإما زبيري من الذئب أعدرا
يهوديهم كانوا بذلك أعدرا

كان على دير الجماجم منهم
تعرف همدانية سبئية
رأته مع القتلى وغير بعلها
أراحوه من رأس وعينين كانتا
من الناكثين العهد من سبئية
ولو أنهم إذ نافقوا كان منهم

*It is as though upon the Dayr al-Jamājim,
Are yields or trunks of trees laying hollow.
The Hamdānīyyah and Saba'īyyah seem familiar to her,
Though her eyes are hostile to the unfamiliarity.
She sees him amongst the dead and replaced her master,
Upon her is soil soaked in blood.
Released from the head and eyes that were,
Wide and puzzled by the deception.
From those who broke their pacts, the Saba'īyyah,
Or the Zubayrī who are more treacherous than the wolf.
And perhaps when they displayed their hypocrisy,
Amongst them were their Jews by which they were absolved.¹*

One could infer from the wordings of the texts that the Saba'īyyah were a sect that had its own political policies and creedal identity that stemmed from 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' al-Hamdānī; the Jew and well-known cult leader.

1 Al-Farazdaq: Dīwān, pgs. 242-243.

Imām al-Ṭabarī has related the view of Qatādah ibn Di‘āmah al-Sadūsī¹ al-Baṣrī d. 117 A.H/735 A.D in his tafsīr under the commentary of the verse:

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ

As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unspecified, seeking discord.²

When Qatādah would recite the above portion of the verse he would say:

إن لم يكونوا الحرورية والسبئية فلا أدري

If this does not refer to the Ḥarūriyyah and the Saba’iyyah then I do not know.³

Abū Mikhnaf Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā al-Azdī (d. 157 A.H/773 A.D) relates that Mustawrid ibn ‘Ulfah al-Khārijī⁴ described Ma‘qal ibn Qays al-Riyāḥī⁵—a supporter of ‘Alī

1 He is Qatādah ibn Di‘āmah al-Sadūsī al-Baṣrī, the commentator. From amongst the reliable and prominent memorizers of the Tābī‘īn. His memory was a marvel. He would remember everything he heard.

- Abū Ḥātim says, “I heard Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal talking of Qatādah at length. He commented on his memory and jurisprudic abilities.”
- Ibn Sa’d says, “Reliable, trustworthy, a proof in ḥadīth.”
- Ibn Ma‘īn deemed him reliable.
- Sufyān al-Thawrī says, “Where would there be the like of Qatādah in the world!”

He passed away the year 117 A.H/735 A.D His life has been recorded by, Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 229; Al-‘Jlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 389; Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 484; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 1 pg. 122; and ad Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 8 pg. 351.

2 Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān: 7.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi‘ al-Bayan*, 3/3/119.

4 Amongst the leaders of the Khārijī movement. Al-Ṭabarī has profiled him in the section that deals with the year 43 A.H/663 A.D See, Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 5 pgs. 174, 175, 181, 182, 186, 208, and 209.

5 He is Ma‘qal ibn Qays al-Riyāḥī al-Tamīmī. Amongst the companions of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and was with him when he marched to fight the Khawārij at Naharwān the year 39 A.H/659 A.D Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah رضي الله عنه, governor of Kūfah the year 43 A.H/663 A.D, sent him to confront the Khawārij who were under the leadership of Mustawrid ibn ‘Ulfah. Both were killed in the battle. See, Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pgs. 565-574 and vol. 5 pgs. 55, 79, 124, 198, and 208.

ﷺ and the man chosen by Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah ﷺ, governor of Kūfah for Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ, to lead the fight against Mustawrid and his crowd—to be amongst the liars and fabricators of the Saba’iyyah. In another narration he also describes the nobles of Kūfah as Saba’iyyah due to their conflict with the companions of al-Mukhtār.¹

In the *Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Sa‘d (d. 230 A.H./844 A.D) there is mention of the Saba’iyyah and their leader, though he has not referenced him by his name; Ibn Saba’. ‘Amr ibn al-Aṣam says:

قيل للحسن ابن علي : إن ناسا من شيعة أبي الحسن علي يزعمون أنه دائة الأرض وأنه سبيعت يوم القيامة ، فقال : كذبوا ، ليس أولئك شيعته ، أولئك أعداؤه ، لو علمنا ذلك ما قسمنا ميراثه ولا أنكحنا نساءه ،

It was said to al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī, “Some supporters of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ﷺ say that he is the Dābbat al-Arḍ and will prompt Judgment Day.”

He replied, “They lie. Those are not his supporters. They are his enemies. If we knew it to be so, we would not have distributed his estate nor marry his women.”²

Note that what has been recorded in this text fits into the ambit of the views of Ibn Saba’. The scholars who are authorities on schisms and sects as well as the historians have attested to this in their books.³

Ibn Ḥabīb (d. 245 A.H./860 A.D) mentioned Ibn Saba’ and regarded him as one of the children of an Ethiopian women⁴. Abū ‘Āṣim Khushaysh ibn Aṣram⁵ (d. 253

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 5 pg. 193.

2 Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pg. 39.

3 See, Al-Ash‘arī: *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, vol. 1 pg. 86; Al-Qummī: *Al-Maqālāt wa al-Firaq*, pg. 119; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Majrūhīn*, vol. 2 pg. 253; and Al-Maqdisī: *Al-Bad’ wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 5 pg. 129.

4 Ibn Ḥabīb: *Al-Muḥabbar*, pg. 308.

5 He is Abū ‘Āṣim Khushaysh ibn Aṣram ibn al-Aswad Abū al-‘Āṣim al-Nasa’ī, al-Ḥāfiẓ. Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasa’ī, and others narrate from him.

continued ...

A.H/859 A.D) narrated a report about ‘Alī رضي الله عنه burning some of the companions of Ibn Saba’, in his book *al- Istiqāmah*.¹

Al-Jāhiz² (d. 255 A.H/868 A.D) is regarded as one of the first to refer to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’³, but his report is not the first, as opined by Dr. Jawād ‘Alī.⁴

The incident of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه burning a group of heretics is mentioned in sound reports as narrated in the books of ḥadīth.⁵

Imām al-Bukhārī (d. 256 A.H/869 A.D) has recorded in *Kitāb Istitābah al-Murtaddīn* in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* the following report on the authority of ‘Ikrimah⁶:

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- Al-Nasaī says, “Reliable.”
- Ibn Yūnus and Maslamah ibn Qāsim have deemed him reliable.

He has authored the book *Al-Istiqāmah fi al-Radd ‘alā Ahl al-Ahwā’*. He passed away the year 253 A.H/859 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 1 pg. 213; *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 551; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3 pg. 142; and Ibn al-‘Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 2 pg. 129.

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 1 pg. 7.

2 He is ‘Amr ibn Baḥr ibn Maḥbūb al-Kinānī al-Laythī, Abū ‘Uthmān. Famously known as al-Jāhiz. Amongst the authorities of literature and knowledge. He has authored many works, amongst them, *Al-Bayān wa al-Tibyān*, *Sīhr al-Bayān*, *Masā’il al-Qur’ān*, *Kitāb al-Mu’allimīn*, *Al-Tabṣirah bi al-Tijārah*, and *Al-Buldān*. He passed away the year 255 A.H/861 A.D His life has been recorded by, Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 12 pg. 212; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 3 pg. 470; and Yaqūt: *Mu’jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 5 pg. 83.

3 Al-Jāhiz: *Al-Bayān wa al-Tibyān*, vol. 3 pg. 81.

4 Jawād ‘Alī: ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’. *Majallah al-Majma’ al-‘Ilmī al-Iraqī*, 1378 A.H/1959 A.D vol. 6 pg. 67.

5 *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, vol. 5 pg. 126; *Sunan al-Nasaī*, vol. 7 pg. 104; *Mustadrak Ḥākim*, vol. 3 pg. 538. Al-Albānī has deemed it authentic in *Ṣaḥīḥ Abū Dāwūd*, vol. 3 pg. 822/3657.

6 He is ‘Ikrimah al-Barbarī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Madanī, mawlā of Ibn ‘Abbās.

- Ibn ‘Uyaynah says, “When ‘Ikrimah would talk of the battles, the one listening would say, ‘It is as though he is witnessing it with his eyes’.
- Ismā’īl ibn Abī Khālid says, “I heard al-Sha’bī saying, ‘There is no one left more knowledgeable regarding the Book of Allah than ‘Ikrimah.’”
- Sa’īd ibn Abī ‘Arūbah narrating from Qatādah says, “The most knowledgeable of the Tābi’in were four; viz. ‘Aṭā’, Sa’īd ibn Jubayr, ‘Ikrimah and al-Ḥasan.”

continued ...

اتي علي رضي الله عنه بزنادقة فأحرقهم فبلغ ذلك ابن عباس فقال لو كنت أنا لم أحرقهم لتهي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لا تعذبوا بعذاب الله ولقتلتهم لقول رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من بدل دينه فاقتلوه

Some heretics were brought to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and he burnt them. The news of this event, reached Ibn ‘Abbās who said, “If I had been in his place, I would not have burnt them, as Allah’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم forbade it, saying, ‘Do not punish anybody with Allah’s punishment (fire).’ I would have killed them according to the statement of Allah’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم, ‘Whoever turn apostate, then kill him.’”¹

There is nothing strange about using the word ‘heretic’ with regard to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ and his group. Ibn Taymiyyah says:

إن مبدأ الرفض إنما كان من الزنديق عبد الله بن سبأ

The Rāfiḍī ideas started with the heretic ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’.²

Al-Dhahabī says:

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- Al-‘Ijlī says, “A Makkī Tābīṭ who is absolved from those accusations the Ḥarūriyyah made against him.”
- Al-Bukhārī, “All in our fraternity provide evidence through ‘Ikrimah.”
- Al-Nasa’ī, Ibn Ḥibbān, and Abū Ḥātim deem him reliable.
- ‘Uthmān al-Dāramī narrating from Ibn Ma’īn says, “Reliable.”
- Ibn Mandah says in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, “The condition of the narrator ‘Ikrimah is such that the great authorities of the Tābīṭīn and those after them narrated from him and sought evidence through his exclusive narrations in the fields of beliefs, practices, and laws.”
- Ibn Ḥajar says, “Reliable, trustworthy. No innovation has been established from him.”

He passed away the year 107 A.H/725 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 339; Ibn Ma’īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 412; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/49; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 7 pg. 7; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 263; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 2 pg. 30.

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 50.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā*, vol. 28 pg. 483.

عبد الله بن سبأ من غلاة الزنادقة ، ضال مضل

‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ was one of the extreme heretics; he was misguided and misled others.¹

Ibn Ḥajar says:

عبد الله بن سبأ من غلاة الزنادقة ... وله أتباع يقال لهم السبئية معتقدين الإلهية في علي بن أبي طالب ، وقد أحرقتهم علي بالنار في خلافته

‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ was one of the extreme heretics ... he had followers who were called Saba’iyyah, who believed in the divinity of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام. ‘Alī عليه السلام burned them with fire during his khilāfah.²

He states at another juncture:

بأن أحد معاني الزندقة الادعاء بأن مع الله إلهها آخر

One of the meanings of heresy is to claim another God with Allah.³

Consequently, this is the meaning which Ibn Saba’ and his followers subscribe to as established by the scholars of schisms, muḥaddithīn, and historians.

Al-Jūzajānī⁴ (d. 259 A.H/873 A.D) says:

أن السبئية غلت في الكفر فزعمت أن عليا إلهها حتى حرقهم بالنار إنكارا عليهم واستبصارا في أمرهم حين يقول

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 2 pg. 426.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 3 pgs. 290, 389.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fatḥ*, vol. 12 pg. 270.

4 He is Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb ibn Ishāq al-Sa’dī al-Jūzjānī, muḥaddith, memorizer, author, reliable. He travelled in search of ḥadīth to Makkah, Baṣrah, and Ramallah, Palestine. Amongst his works are, *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* and *Al-Ḍu‘afā*. He passed away the year 259 A.H/873 A.D See, Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 2 pg. 31; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 11 pg. 31; and Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 549.

The Saba'iyyah were extreme in their disbelief and considered 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to be a God. Thus, he burnt them, rejecting their beliefs saying:

أججت ناري ودعوت قنبرا

لما رأيت الأمر أمراً منكراً

When I see matters of such evil,

I light my fire and call upon Qambar.¹

Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276 A.H/889 A.D) writes in *al-Ma'ārif*:

السبئية من الرافضة ينسبون إلى عبد الله بن سبأ

The Saba'iyyah are from the Rāfiḍah. They ascribe to 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba'.²

He further states in his *Ta'wīl Mukhtalaf al-Ḥadīth*:

أن عبد الله ابن سبأ ادعى الربوبية لعلي فأحرق علي أصحابه بالنار

'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' believed in the divinity of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Thus 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ burnt his followers.³

Al-Balādhurī⁴ (d. 279 A.H/892 A.D) mentions Ibn Saba' to be amongst those who approached 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ seeking his opinion regarding Abū Bakr and 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا. His incredulously replied to them, "Have you taken out time for this?" When 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ wrote a document and instructed it to be read to his supporters, a copy

1 Al-Jūzajānī: *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, pg. 37.

2 Ibn Qutaybah: *Al-Ma'ārif*, pg. 167.

3 Ibn Qutaybah: *Ta'wīl Mukhtalaf al-Ḥadīth*, pg. 73.

4 He is Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Jābir ibn Dāwūd, al-Balādhurī, al-Baghdādī. Historian, geographer, and genealogist. He kept the company of al-Mutawakkil al-'Abbāsī and has a poem wherein he extols the virtues of al-Ma'mūn. Amongst his works are, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, and *Kitāb al-Buldān al-Kabīr*. He passed away the year 279 A.H/898 A.D His life has been recorded by, Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 164; Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, vol. 5 pg. 89; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 1 pg. 322.

attained by ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ was distorted by him.¹

As for Imām al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 A.H/923 A.D) his *Tārīkh* is filled with mention of the incidents and plots of Ibn Saba’, relating on the authority of the historian Sayf ibn ‘Umar al-Tamīmī who narrated from his teachers.²

He writes in his *Tafsīr* under the commentary of the verse:

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ

*As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unspecified, seeking discord.*³

وهذه الآية وإن كانت نزلت فيمن ذكرنا أنها نزلت فيه من أهل الشرك ، فإنه معني بها كل مبتدع في دين الله ... كان من أهل النصرانية أو اليهودية أو المجوسية أو كان سيثا أو حرورا أو قدريا أو جهميا كالذي قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: فإذا رأيتم الذين يجادلون فهم الذين عني الله فاحذروهم

Though this verse had been revealed regarding the polytheists, it includes within its ambit every innovator in the Islamic creed. This includes the Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians. It further incorporates the Saba’iyyah, Ḥarūriyyah, Qadriyyah, Jahmiyyah, and all such sects. This is substantiated by the ḥadīth:

فإذا رأيتم الذين يجادلون فيه فهم الذين عني الله فاحذروهم

If you see those who dispute concerning it (the Qur’ān), they are those whom Allah has referred to here, so beware of them.⁴

1 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 3 pg. 382.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pgs. 283, 326, 331, 340, 349, 398, 493, 494, and 505.

3 Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān: 7.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi’ al-Bayān*, 3/3/121. The ḥadīth quoted above has been recorded by al-Bukhārī in *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. pg. .

Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī (d. 328 A.H/939 A.D) has emphasised the extremism of Ibn Saba’ and the Saba’iyyah by way of their statement, ‘He is Allah, our creator’. This is just as the Christians had done with ‘Īsā the son of Maryam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. Quoting al-Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī¹ he says:

وأجشموا أنفسا في حبه تعباً أن يكون ابن شيء أو يكون أباً	قوم غلوا في علي لا أباً لهم قالوا هو الله جل الله خالقنا
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Damned be those who adopted extremism with regards to ‘Alī,

Subjecting themselves to exhaustion in his love.

They say, ‘He is Allah’. Our Creator Allah is far more majestic,

To be begotten or to beget.²

Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī (d. 330 A.H/491 A.D) mentions that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ and his cronies were extremists, considering ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to have not passed away and citing his return with justice prevailing just as oppression had.³

Mention of Ibn Saba’ is found in the books of *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* (narrator discreditation and accreditation). Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 354 A.H/965 A.D) says:

كان الكلبي - محمد بن السائب الإخباري - سبياً ، من أصحاب عبد الله بن سبأ ، من أولئك الذين يقولون
: إن علياً لم يموت ، وإنه راجع إلى الدنيا قبل قيام الساعة وإن رأوا سحابة قالوا : أمير المؤمنين فيها

Kalbī—Muḥammad ibn al-Sā’ib—the historian, was part of the Saba’iyyah; companions of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’. He was amongst those who would

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Wuhayb al-Ḥumayrī al-Baghdādī, Abū Ja’far. The poet. He accompanied al-Ḥasan ibn Sahl, the minister of al-Ma’mūn. He ascribed to Tashayyū’. He has odes to the Ahl al-Bayt. He died the year 225 A.H/841 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-Aṣḥfahānī: *Al-Aghānī*, vol. 7 pgs. 224 and 271; Al-Mīrzabānī: *Mu’jam al-Shu’arā*, pg. 420; Al-‘Abbāsī: *Ma’āhid al-Tanṣīṣ ala Shawāhid al-Talkhīṣ*, vol. 1 pg. 220.

2 Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī: *Al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, vol. 2 pg. 405.

3 Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī: *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn*, vol. 1 pg. 85.

say that ‘Alī had not passed away and he will return to the world before Judgment Day. When they would see a cloud they would say, ‘Amīr al-Mu‘minīn is in it’.¹

The profile of Jābir ibn Yazīd al-Ju‘fī pegs him as part of the Saba‘iyyah and a companion of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’. He would say:

ان عليا عليه السلام يرجع إلى الدنيا

‘Alī is to return to this world.²

Al-Jūzajānī writes in *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl* that amongst the constructs of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ was that the Qur’ān we have is one of nine parts and the knowledge of it remains with ‘Alī. ‘Alī عليه السلام thus had him banished.³

However, there isn’t much detail of Ibn Saba’ in the books of *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl* as he has not narrated any ḥadīth, whilst these books chiefly deal with the narrators of ḥadīth.

Al-Maqdisī⁴ (d. 355 A.H/965 A.D) notes in his book *Al-Bad’ wa al-Tārīkh*:

إن عبد الله بن سبأ قال للذي جاء ينعي إليه موت علي بن أبي طالب : ولو جئتنا بدماعه في صرة لعلمنا أنه لا يموت حتى يسوق العرب بعصاه

‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ said to the one who brought the news of the passing of ‘Alī ibn Ṭālib to him, “If you were to bring his brain to us in a bag, we would

1 Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Majrūḥīn*, vol. 2 pg. 253.

2 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 208.

3 Al-Jūzajānī: *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, pg. 38.

4 He is Muṭāhhir ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī al-Bastī. Historian and author of *Al-Bad’ wa al-Tārīkh*. Originating from Bayt al-Maqdis thereafter settling in Bist, Sijistān where he passed away the year 355 A.H/966 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Wardī: *Kharīdah al-‘Ajā‘ib wa Faridah al- Gharā‘ib*, pg. 249; and Ḥājī Khalīfah: *Kashf al-Zunūn*, vol. 1 pg. 227.

In the book, *Mafātīḥ al-'Ulūm* authored by, al-Khawārizmi¹ (d. 387 A.H/997 A.D) is the following:

السبئية أصحاب عبد الله بن سبأ

The Saba'iyyah are the companions of 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba'.²

Al-Baghdādī³ (d. 429 A.H/1037 A.D) mentions that the Saba'iyyah sect asserted their innovations in the era of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He thus burnt some of them whilst exiling Ibn Saba' to Sibāt, al-Madā'in, as Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا cautioned him against killing him when the extent of his extremism reached him. Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا counselled him to exile him to al-Madā'in so that his companions would not have communication with him. This was especially so since he had intentions of fighting the people of Shām once again.⁴

Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456 A.H/1063 A.D) relates that those who advocated for the possibility of prophethood after Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ were the Saba'iyyah. They are the ones who further promoted the divinity of 'Alī. He states in this regard:

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf, Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Balkhī al-Khawārizmi, a scholar of Khurāsān. He has authored *Mafātīḥ al-'Ulūm* which is amongst the earliest encyclopedic works. He had authored it for Abū al-Ḥasan the minister of Nūḥ ibn Maṣṣūr al-Sāmānī. Al-Maqrīzī says, "It is a remarkable book." He passed away the year 387 A.H/997 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-Maqrīzī: *Al-Mawā'iz wa al-I'tibār*, vol. 1 pg. 258; Ḥājī Khalīfah: *Kashf al-Zunūn*, vol. 2 pg. 175; and Sarkis: *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt*, pg. 839.

2 Al-Khawārizmi: *Mafātīḥ al-'Ulūm*, pg. 22.

3 He is 'Abd al-Qāhir ibn Ṭāhir al-Baghdādī al-Tamīmī. A scholar of theology and principles of jurisprudence. He was an authority in the sciences during his era. He taught many sciences. From amongst his works are, *Uṣūl al-Dīn*, *Al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh*, *Faḍā'ih al-Mu'tazilah*, *Al-Mīlal wa al-Niḥāl*, *Al-Taḥṣīl fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, *Al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*, and *Al-Ṣifāt*. He passed away the year 429 A.H/1037 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3 pg. 203, Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 3 pg. 107238, Al-Suyūṭī: *Inbā' al-Ruwāt*, vol. 2 pg. 185; and Sarkis: *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt*, pg. 144.

4 Al-Baghdādī: *Al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*, pgs. 15-225.

والقسم الثاني من الفرق الغالية الذين يقولون بالإلهية لغير الله لك فأولهم قوم من أصحاب عبد الله بن سبأ الحميري لعنه الله ، أتوا إلى علي بن أبي طالب فقالوا مشافهة : أنت هو ، فقال لهم : ومن هو - قالوا : أنت الله ، فاستعظم الأمر وأمر بنار فأججت وأحرقهم بالنار

The second type of extremist sects are those who consider the divinity of a being besides Allah سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ. The first to advocate such were the people of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ al-Ḥimyarī-May Allah’s curse be upon him.

They came to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and said to him, “You are him.”

He asked them, “And who am I?”

They said, “You are Allah.”

He deemed the matter perilous and instructed a fire be burnt. He went on to burn them therein.¹

He further states:

... وهذه الفرقة باقية إلى اليوم فاشية ، عظيمة العدد ، منهم كان إسحاق بن محمد النخعي الأحمر الكوفي ... ويقولون : إن محمدا رسول علي

... this sect continues to exist today in large numbers. Iṣḥāq ibn Muḥammad al-Nakhaṭī al-Aḥmar al-Kūfī was one of them. These people say, “Muḥammad was the messenger of ‘Alī.”²

Al-Isfirāyīnī (d. 471 A.H/1078 A.D) says:

إن ابن سبأ قال بنوة علي في أول أمره ، ثم دعا إلى ألوهيته ، ودعا الخلق إلى ذلك فأجابته جماعة إلى ذلك في وقت علي

Ibn al-Saba’ initially asserted the prophethood of ‘Alī. He then went on to proclaim his divinity. He called people towards this and a group took his message on during the era of ‘Alī.³

1 Ibn Ḥazm: *Al-Faṣḥ fi al-Mīl wa al-Niḥal*, vol. 4 pg. 186.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 186.

3 Al-Isfirāyīnī: *Al-Tabṣīr fi al-Dīn*, pg. 108.

Al-Sharastanī¹ (d. 471 A.H/1078 A.D) speaking of Ibn Saba’ says:

ومنه انشعبت أصناف الغلاة

And from him extremist sects grew.²

Furthermore, he states:

إبن سبأ هو أول من أظهر القول بالنص بإمامة علي

Ibn Saba’ was the first to advocate the doctrine of Imāmah and Naṣṣ (the divine appointment of the Imams) in relation to ‘Alī.³

Similarly, the books of genealogy also establish the affiliation of the Saba’iyyah to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’. For example al-Sam’ānī⁴ (d. 562 A.H/1167 A.D) references this in his book *Al-Ansāb*⁵.

1 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn Aḥmad Abū al-Faṭḥ al-Sharastanī. He was a scholar of theology and of the philosophical schools of thought.

- Yaqūt says, “Theologian, philosopher, and author. A worthy scholar. He had excellent penmanship and was eloquent. His speech was distinct and he was mild mannered. If it wasn’t for his futilities in belief systems he would have been an Imām. This was as he pursued philosophy to a greater degree than the blessed sciences of the Sharī‘ah.”

Amongst his works are, *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, *Tārīkh al-Ḥukamā’*, and *Al-Irshād ilā ‘Aqā’id al-‘Ibād*. He passed away the year 1153 A.D His life has been recorded by Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 3 pg. 377; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 4 pg. 273; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 5 pg. 263.

2 Al-Sharastanī: *Al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, vol. 5 pg. 263.

3 Ibid, vol. 1 pg. 155.

4 He is ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Maṣṣūr al-Tamīmī al-Sam’ānī al-Marwazī, Abū Sa’id. A historian and memorizer of ḥadīth.

- Al-Dhahabī says, “Reliable, Ḥāfiẓ, authority, widely travelled, impartial, religious, of noble lineage, pleasant company, and one who had memorized a great amount.”

From amongst his books are, *Al-Ansāb*, *Tārīkh Marw*, *Tabayīn Ma’ādin al-Ma’ānī*, *Fi Laṭā’if al-Qur’ān al-Karīm*, *Tadhayīl Tārīkh Baghdad li al-Khaṭīb*, *Tārīkh al-Wafāt li al-Muta’akḥkhirīn min al-Ruwāt*, and *Ādāb al-Imlā wa al-Istīmlā’*. He passed away the year 562 A.H/1167 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 3 pg. 209; Ibn Taghrībirdī: *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, vol. 5 pg. 563; Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fi tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 1 pg. 9; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 4 pg. 1316; and Sarkis: *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt*, pg. 1048.

5 Al-Sam’ānī: *Al-Ansāb*, vol. 7 pg. 24.

Ibn ‘Asākir (d. 571 A.H/1176 A.D) profiles Ibn Saba’ with the following:

عبد الله بن سبأ الذي نسب إليه السبئية ، وهم الغلاة من الرافضة ، أصله من اليمن ، كان يهودا وأظهر الإسلام

‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ is the individual to whom the Saba’iyyah affiliate themselves to. They are an extreme sect of the Rawāfiḍ. He was a Jew hailing from Yemen who later appeared as a Muslim.¹

‘Uthmān ibn Abī ‘Uthmān² says:

جاء أناس إلى علي بن أبي طالب من الشيعة - يعني السبئية - فقالوا : يا أمير المؤمنين أنت هو - قال : من أنا - قالوا : أنت هو ، قال : ويلكم من أنا - قالوا : أنت ربنا ! أنت ربنا ! قال : ارجعوا ، فأبوا ، فضرب أعناقهم ثم جثاهم في الأرض ثم قال : يا قنبر . اتتني بحزم الحطب ، فأحرقهم بالنار

Some people of the Shī‘ah—the Saba’iyyah—came to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and said, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn you are him.”

He asked, “And who am I?”

They said, “You are him.”

He repeated, “Woe to you! Who am I?”

They said, “You are our Lord.”

He told them to retract their statement. They refused. He thus had them killed and laid their bodies on the ground.

He then said, “O Qambar, bring me a bundle of wood.”

He then had them burnt.³

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 9 pgs. 328-329.

2 I could not find his profile in the readily available sources.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 12 pg. 371.

It should be noted that Sayf ibn ‘Umar is not the only source for the narrations that deal with ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’. Ibn ‘Asākir has sourced narrations in his *Tārīkh* that are not transmitted from Sayf. This further establishes and emphasizes the case of Ibn Saba’.

‘Ammār ibn Mu‘āwiyah al-Dahnī¹ says, I heard Abū al-Ṭufayl² saying:

رأيت المسيب ابن نجبة أتى به ملبيه يعني ابن السوداء ، وعلي على المنبر فقال علي : ما شأنه ؟ فقال :
يكذب على الله ورسوله

I saw Musayyib ibn Najabah³ come grabbing him, i.e. Ibn al-Sawdā’ by the collar whilst ‘Alī was on the pulpit.

‘Alī عليه السلام said, “What is the issue with him?”

He replied, “He attributes lies to Allah and His Messenger.”⁴

وجاء من طريق زيد بن وهب أن عليا رضي الله عنه قال : مالي ولهذا الحميت الأسود ، يعني عبد الله بن
سبأ ، وكان يقع في أبي بكر وعمر

The narration of Zayd ibn Wahab states that ‘Alī عليه السلام said, “What is there for me with this dark skinned man?” Meaning ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’. He would speak ill of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar عليه السلام.⁵

1 He is ‘Ammār ibn Mu‘āwiyah al-Dahnī al-Bajalī al-Kūfī, Abū Mu‘āwiyah. He narrated from Abū al-Ṭufayl, Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr, and others. Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah, Sufyān al-Thawrī, and others.

• Aḥmad, Ibn Ma‘īn, Abū Ḥātim, al-Nasa‘ī, and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable.

He passed away the year, 130 A.H/747 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 424; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 4 pg. 390; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 406.

2 A Ṣaḥābī.

3 He is Musayyib ibn Najabah ibn Rab‘āh al-Kūfī. A Mukhaḍram Ṭābī‘ī. He narrates from Ḥudhayfah and ‘Alī عليه السلام. Ibn Sa‘d has placed him amongst the first level of the Ṭābī‘īn of Kūfah. He took part in al-Qādisiyyah and fought alongside ‘Alī عليه السلام in the battles. He went to battle alongside Sulayman ibn Ṣurad seeking vengeance for al-Ḥusayn and was killed the year 65 A.H/684 A.D in the battle of ‘Ayn al-Wardah. See, Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 3 pg. 129; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10 pg. 154.

4 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 9 pg. 331.

5 Ibid, vol. 9 pg. 331.

Ḥujayyah ibn ‘Adī al-Kindī¹ says that he say ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ on the pulpit saying:

من يعذرني من هذا الحميت الأسود الذي يكذب على الله ورسوله ؟ يعني ابن السوداء

“Who will absolve me of this dark skinned man who attributed falsities to Allah and His Messenger.” This was referring to Ibn al-Sawdā’.²

It has been narrated from Abū al-Jallās who says that he heard ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ saying to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’:

ويلك ! والله ما أفضى إلي بشيء كتمته أحدا من الناس ، ولقد سمعته يقول : إن بين يدي الساعة ثلاثين كذابا وإنك لأحدهم ،

“Woe to you! By Allah! Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not give me anything that he hid from the people. I heard him saying, ‘Verily before the Day of Judgment there will be thirty great liars.’ And you are one of them.” Meaning Ibn Saba’.³

Nishwān al-Ḥimyarī⁴ d. 573 A.H/1178 A.D says:

1 He is Ḥujayyah ibn ‘Adī al-Kindī al-Kūfī. He narrates from ‘Alī and Jābir. Ḥakam ibn ‘Utaybah, Abū Ishāq al-Sabīṭ, and others narrate from him.

- Al-‘Ijlī says, “A Tābīṭ. Reliable.”
- Al-Būshanjī says, “Reliable and trustworthy.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has counted him amongst the reliable Tābīṭn.

His life has been recorded by, Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 110; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 4 pg. 192; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 1 pg. 151; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2 pg. 216.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 9 pg. 331.

3 Ibid, vol. 9 pg. 332.

4 He is Nishwān ibn Sa‘īd al-Ḥimyarī al-Yemeni, Abū Sa‘īd. He hails from a royal family. Yaqūt mentions that he came into control of a few forts and castles at the ranges of Taizz, Yemen till pronounced King. He was well versed in the sciences and literature. Amongst his works are, *Khulāṣah al-Sīrah al-Jāmi‘ah li ‘Ajā‘ib Akhbār Mulūk al-Tabābī‘ah*, *Al-Tadhkirah fi Ahkām al-Jawāhīr wa al-‘Arāḍ*, *Al-Tibyān fi Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān*, *Al-Ḥūr al-‘Ayn*, and *Kitāb al-Qawāfī*. He passed away the year 573 A.H/1178 A.D His life has been recorded by Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, vol. 19 pg. 217; *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 5 pg. 336; Al-Suyūfī: *Bughyah al-Wu‘āh*, pg. 403; and Sarkis: *Mu‘jam al-Maṭbū‘āt*, pg. 1857.

فقال السيئبة إن عليا حي لم يموت ، ولا يموت حتى يملأ الأرض عدلا كما ملئت جورا ، ويرد الناس على دين واحد قبل يوم القيامة

The Saba'iyyah say that 'Alī did not pass away and will not pass away until he spreads justice on the land just as it is filled with oppression. And he will gather all of humanity onto one faith before the Day of Qiyāmah.¹

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī² (d. 606 A.H/1210 A.D) has corroborated the incident of the Saba'iyyah immolation. The authors of books dealing with sects and factions corroborate the incident as well.³

Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630 A.D/1232 A.D) has cited in *al-Lubāb* the connection between the Saba'iyyah and 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' and their origin as from him.⁴

Al-Saksakī⁵ (d. 683 A.H/1284 A.D) has mentioned that Ibn Saba' and his group were the first to believe in reincarnation.⁶

1 Al-Ḥimyarī: *Al-Ḥūr al-'Ayn*, pg. 154.

2 He is Muḥammad ibn 'Umar ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Taymī, Abū 'Abd Allāh Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. Imām and mufasssīr. He was an ocean of knowledge in the transmitted and philosophical sciences. An eloquent lecturer in the Arabic and Persian languages. People took to studying his books during his lifetime. Amongst his works are, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, *Asrār al-Tanzīl*, *Al-Maṭālib al-'Āliyah*, *Nihāyah al-Ījāz fi Dawlah al-I'jāz*, *Kitāb al-Handasah*, and others. He passed away the year 606 A.H/1210 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 4 pg. 248; Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 5 pg. 33; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 13 pg. 55; and Sarkis: *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt*, pg. 915.

3 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī: *I'tiqādāt Firaq al-Muslimīn wa al-Mushrikīn*. Pg. 57.

4 Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fi tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 2 pg. 98.

5 He is 'Abbās ibn Maṣūir ibn 'Abbās, Abū al-Faḍl al-Saksakī al-Shafīī. A scholar of theology and principles. He has written *Al-Burhān fi Ma'rifah 'Aqā'id ahl al-Adyān*. He passed away the year 683 A.H/1284 A.D See Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fi tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 3 pgs. 9-10; Al-Baghdādī: *Hadiyyah al-'Ārifīn*, vol. 1 pg. 437.

6 Al-Saksakī: *Al-Burhān fi Ma'rifah 'Aqā'id ahl al-Adyān*, pg. 50.

Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 A.H/1327 A.D) states that the origins of Rafḍ lies in hypocrisy and heresy as it began at the hands of Ibn Saba'; the heretic. He sought to introduce extremism regarding 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ by promoting the doctrine of Imāmah and infallibility.¹

Hāfiẓ al-Dhahabī (d. 748 A.H/1347 A.D) says:

عبد الله بن سبأ من غلاة الشيعة ، ضال مضل

'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' is from the extreme Shī'ah. He was astray and led others astray.²

Al-Ṣafḍī³ (d. 764 A.H/1363 A.D) profiles him in the following terms:

عبد الله ابن سبأ راس الطائفة السبئية ... قال لعلي رضي الله عنه أنت الإله ، فنفاه إلى المدائن ، فلما قتل علي زعم ابن سبأ أنه لم يمت ؛ لأن فيه جزءا إلهيا وأن ابن ملجم قتل شيطاناً تصور بصورة علي ، وأن عليا في السحاب ، والرعد صوته ، والبرق سوطه ، وأنه سينزل الى الارض

'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' is the head of the Saba'iyyah sect. They said to 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, 'You are the Lord.' He thus had them exiled to Madā'in. When 'Alī was killed, Ibn Saba' concluded that he did not in fact die as he had within him a divine existence whilst Ibn Muḷjīm had killed a Shayṭān that took on the features of 'Alī. He also claimed that 'Alī was in the clouds, the thunder his voice, the lighting his whip, and that he will descend to the earth.⁴

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, vol. 4 pg. 435.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mughnī fi al-Ḍu'afā'*, vol. 1 pg. 339.

3 He is Khalīl ibn Aybak ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Ṣafḍī. Literary, historian, and writer. He ascended the post as Chancery of the court in Ṣafd, Damascus, and Egypt. Amongst his works are, *Al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, *Diwān al-Fuṣṣahā'*, *Tuḥfaḥ Dhawī al-Albāb fi Man Ḥakam Dimashq min al-Khulafā'* wa al-Mulūk wa al-Nawāb, and others. He passed away the year 764 A.H/1363 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. 2 pg. 87 and Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, vol. 6 pg. 94.

4 Al-Ṣafḍī: *Al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 17 pg. 20.

Al-Kirmānī¹ (d. 786 A.H/1384 A.D) has recorded in *Al-Firaq* that when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was killed, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ purported that he did not die and that a part of him was in fact divine.²

Al-Shāṭḥbī³ (d. 790 A.H/1388 A.D) indicates that the Saba’iyyah innovation is a creedal one that partners a second divine entity to Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ. It thus fundamentally different from other innovations.⁴

Al-Jurjānī⁵ (d. 816 A.H/1413 A.D) profiles ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ as the leader of the Saba’iyyah sect. He further states that when his followers hear thunder, they say “Salām to you O Amīr al-Mu’minīn”.⁶

Al-Maqrīzī (d. 845 A.H/1441 A.D) mentions in his works that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ emerged during the era of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. He initiated the doctrines of *Waṣiyyah*

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn ‘Alī ibn Sa’īd Shams al-Dīn al-Kirmānī. A commentator on ḥadīth and principles of fiqh. He lived in Baghdad and Makkah. Amongst his works are: *Al-Kawkab al-Darārī fi Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Damā’ir al-Qur’ān*, and *Sharḥ Mukhtaṣar ibn al-Ḥājjib*. He passed away the year 786 A.H/1384 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. 4 pg. 310; Al-Suyūṭī: *Bughyah al-Wu’āḥ*, pg. 120; and Ṭāsh Kubra Zādah: *Miftaḥ al-Sa’ādah*, vol. 1 pg. 170.

2 Al-Kirmānī: *Al-Firaq al-Islāmiyyah*, pg. 34.

3 He is Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsa ibn Muḥammad al-Ghirnāṭī al-Andalūsī al-Mālikī, famously known as Ibn Ishāq al-Shāṭḥbī. Amongst the scholars well versed in the principles and a memorizer of note. Amongst his books are, *Al-I’tiṣām*, *Al-Muwāfaqāt*, *Al-Ifādāt wa al-Irshādāt*, *Al-Ittifāq fi ‘Ilm al-Ishtiqāq*, *Uṣūl al-Naḥw*, *Al-Maqāṣid al-Shāfiyyah fi Sharḥ Khulāṣah al-Kāfiyyah* and *Al-Jumān fi Mukhtaṣar Akhbār al-Zamān*. He passed away the year 790 A.H/1388 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Timbuktī: *Nayl al-Ibtihāj*, pgs. 46-50; Al-Kattānī: *Fahras al-Fahāris*, vol. 1 pg. 134; Sarkis: *Mu’jam al-Maṭbū’āt*, pg. 1090.

4 Al-Shāṭḥbī: *Al-I’tiṣām*, vol. 2 pg. 197.

5 He is ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Jurjānī, famously known as Al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī. Amongst the scholars of philosophy and logic. He had a share in the other sciences as well. Amongst his works are, *Al-Ta’rīfāt*, *Taḥqīq al-Kulliyāt*, *Marātib al-Mawjūdāt*, *Risālah fi Taqṣīm al-‘Ulūm* and *Risālah fi Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth*. He passed away the year 816 A.H/1413 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Sakhāwī: *Al-Ḍaw’ al-Lāmi’*, vol. 5 pg. 328; Al-Laknawī: *Al-Fawā’id al-Bahiyyah*, pg. 125; Al-Suyūṭī: *Bughyah al-Wu’āḥ*, pg. 351; and Sarkis: *Mu’jam al-Maṭbū’āt*, pg. 678.

6 Al-Jurjānī: *Al-Ta’rīfāt*, pg. 79.

(appointment by bequest), *Raj'ah* (returning to the world after death), and *Tanāsukh* (metempsychosis).¹

Al-Hāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar (d. 852 A.H/1448 A.D) has compiled various accounts regarding Ibn Saba' in his book *Lisān al-Mīzān*, sourcing from narrators other than Sayf ibn 'Umar. He concludes the discussion by saying:

وأخبار عبد الله بن سبأ شهيرة في التواريخ ، وليس له رواية ، والحمد لله

And the accounts of 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' are well documented in historical sources. He does not have any narrations, praise be to Allah.²

Al-'Aynī (d. 855 A.H/1451 A.D) mentions in *'Iqd al-Jumān* that Ibn Saba' went to Egypt and roamed its districts, portraying a persona of inviting to good. He spoke of the doctrine of *Raj'ah* and established its purport in the hearts of the Egyptians.³

Al-Suyūṭī (d. 911 A.H/1505 A.D) establishes the affiliation of the Saba'iyyah to 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' in his book *Lubb al-Lubāb fi Taḥrīr al-Ansāb*.⁴

Al-Zabīdī⁵ (d. 1205 A.H/1790 A.D) indicates that the person Saba' who is mentioned

1 Al-Maqrīzī: *Al-Mawā'iz wa al-I'tibār*, vol. 2 pgs. 356-357.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pg. 290.

3 Al-'Aynī: *'Iqd al-Jumān fi Tārīkh Ahl al-Zamān*, 9/1/168.

4 Al-Suyūṭī: *Lubb al-Lubāb fi Taḥrīr al-Ansāb*, vol. 1 pg. 132.

5 He is Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Abū al-Fayḍ al-Ḥusaynī al-Hindī al-Zabīdī al-Yemeni, known as Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī. Originally from Wāsiṭ, Iraq, born in India, and brought up in Zabīd, Yemen. A scholar of language, ḥadīth, Rijāl, and, genealogy. Well versed in the Turkish and Persian languages. A prolific author. Amongst his works are, *Tāj al-'Urūs fi Sharḥ al-Qāmūs*, *Asānīd al-Kutub al-Sittah*, *Raf' al-Shakwā wa Tarwīḥ al-Qulūb fi Dhikr Mulūk Banī Ayyūb*, *Jadhwah al-Iqtibās fi Nasab Banī al-'Abbās*, and *'Iqd al-La'ālī al-Mutanāthirah fi Ḥifẓ al-Aḥādīth al-Mutawātirah*. He passed away the year 1205 A.H/1790 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-Jabartī: *'Ajā'ib al-Āthār fi al-Tarājim wa al-Akḥbār*, vol. 2 pg. 196; Al-Kattānī: *Fahras al-Fahāris*, vol. 1 pg. 398; Sarkis: *Mu'jam al-Maṭbū'āt*, pg. 1726.

in the ḥadīth of Farwah ibn Musayk al-Murādī رضي الله عنه—a ṣaḥābī—is the father of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’, leader of the extremist Saba’iyyah.¹

It is important to note it would be of gross ineptitude to disregard the latter sources that discuss the Saba’iyyah. This is because the authors of these latter day works such as Ibn Kathīr, Al-Dhahabī, Ibn Ḥajar, Al-Suyūṭī, and other such authoritative scholars obtained their information from early sources, some of which are lost to us today. Similarly, their wide and deep knowledge of events, sources, and individuals remains unparalleled. It never ceases to leave one, researching their books, astounded.

For example, one is confounded when faced with the sheer amount of transmissions and differences thereof as presented by Ibn Ḥajar when recounting historical events. This wonder is furthered upon realizing him sourcing from exceptionally early sources such as the *Akhbār al-Baṣrah*² of Ibn Shabbah, *Kitāb al-Ṣiffīn*³ of Yaḥyā ibn Sulaymān al-Ju’fī⁴—a teacher of al-Bukhārī, *Al-Ma’rifah wa al-Tārīkh*⁵ of Al-Fasawī, *Tārīkh*⁶ of Abū Zur’ah al-Dimashqī, and other such books of

1 Al-Zabīdī: *Tāj al-‘Urūs*, vol. 1 pg. 75-76. The view of al-Zabīdī is not acceptable and as can be determined from the narration of Farwah ibn Musayk. See, *Sunan Abū Dāwūd*, ‘*Awn al-Ma’būd*, vol. 11 pg. 18 Ḥadīth: 3969; *Ṣaḥīḥ Abū Dāwūd*, vol. 2 pg. 754 Ḥadīth: 3373; *Al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 8 pg. 356 Ḥadīth: 3220. In the ḥadīth there is detail and explanation that Saba’ an Arab who had ten sons. Six resided in Yemen and four in Shām. They are the fathers of the Arab tribes. This shows that Saba’ was an early historical figure of the earliest Arabs. There is thus no connection between him and Saba’ the father of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’. [Publisher].

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 13 pg. 54.

3 Ibid, vol. 13 pg. 86.

4 He is Yaḥyā ibn Sulaymān ibn Yaḥyā al-Ju’fī al-Kufī, Abū Sa’īd.

- Abū Ḥātim says, “Shaykh.”
- Maslamah ibn al-Qāsim says, “*La ba’sa bihī* (There is no problem with him).”
- Ibn Ḥibbān, al-Dāraquṭnī, and al-Uqaylī have deemed him reliable.

See, Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 9 pg. 154; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/2/280; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 227; and Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 4 pg. 382.

5 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 13 pg. 65.

6 Ibn Ḥajar: Ibid, vol. 13 pg. 72.

history. This is without mentioning the ḥadīth sources employed in contributing to historical events such as *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal*¹, *Musnad al-Bazzār*², and *Muṣannaf ibn Abī Shaybah*³ amongst other ḥadīth books.

II. Ibn Saba' according to the Shī'ah.

Al-Nāshī' al-Akbar⁴ (d. 293 A.H/905 A.D) profiles Ibn Saba' and his adherents with the following:

وفرقه زعموا أن علا رضي الله عنه حي لم يموت ، وأنه لا يموت حتى يسوق العرب بعصاه ، وهؤلاء هم السبئية أصحاب عبد الله بن سبأ ، وكان عبد الله بن سبأ رجلاً من أهل صنعاء ، يهودياً .. وسكن المدائن

The sect that believes 'Alī عليه السلام to not have passed away. They say he will not die until he drives the Arabs with his stick. They are the Saba'iyyah, the adherents of 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba'. 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' was a man from Ṣan'ā', a Jew, who settled in Madā'in.⁵

Al-Qummī⁶ (d. 301 A.H/913 A.D) mentions that 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' was the first

1 Ibid, vol. 13 pg. 86.

2 Ibid, vol. 13 pg. 85.

3 Ibid, vol. 13 pg. 75.

4 He is 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad al-Anbārī, Abū al-'Abbās, famously known as Al-Nāshī' al-Akbar. He is counted amongst the great poets of the Abbasid era. A grammarian, poet, and logician. He has many poems in hunting and the hunter's tools.

- Ibn Khallikān says, "Due to his command over language he would critique the grammarians. He also introduced scales into poetry besides those established by al-Khalīl. A product of his keen mind and sharp intellect."

His life has been recorded by, Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 10 pg. 92; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, vol. 3 pg. 91; and Al-Qaffī: *Anbā' al-Ruwāt*, vol. 2 pg. 128.

5 Al-Nāshī' al-Akbar: *Masā'il al-Imāmah*, pgs. 22-23.

6 He is Sa'd ibn 'Abd Allāh, Abū al-Qāsim. A Shī'ah, Imāmiyyah jurist and scholar of ḥadīth. He travelled much in pursuit of ḥadīth. Amongst his books are, *Manāqib Ruwāt al-Ḥadīth*, *Mathālib Ruwāt al-Ḥadīth*, *Al-Maqālat wa al-Firaq*, and *Faḍl al-'Arab*. He died the year 301 A.H/913 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Najāshī: *Al-Rijāl*, pg. 126; Al-Ṭūsī: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 75.

to insult Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and the Ṣaḥābah. He absolved himself of them and claimed that ‘Alī has instructed him so.¹

Al-Nawbakhtī² (d. 310 A.H/922 A.D) mentioning incidents of Ibn Saba’ says that when the news of the passing of ‘Alī reached him in Madā’in he said to the one who brought the news, “You have lied. If you bring his brain to us in seventy bags with seventy just witnesses to his death, we would still be convinced that he has not died nor has he been assassinated. He will not die till he rules over the earth.”³

Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī⁴ (d. 322 A.H/933) says that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ and his adherents of the Saba’iyyah believe that ‘Alī is the God and that he revives the dead. They claim him to have gone into hiding after his death.⁵

Al-Kashshī (d. 340 A.H/951 A.D) narrates through his chain from Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad al-Bāqir:

أن عبد الله بن سبأ كان يدعى النبوة ، ويزعم أن أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام هو الله ، تعالى عن ذلك علوا
كبيرا

1 Al-Qummī: *Al-Maqālāt wa al-Firaq*, pg. 20.

2 He is al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsa ibn al-Ḥasan al-Nawbakhtī, Abū Muḥammad. Philosopher and astronomer from Baghdad. He was a Shī‘ī. He has written *Firaq al-Shī‘ah*, *Al-Nukat ‘alā ibn al-Rāwandī*, and *Al-Juz’ al-ladhī la Yatajazza’*. He died the year 310 A.H/922 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 251; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 15 pg. 327; Ibn al-Murtaḍā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mu‘tazilah*, pg. 126; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 2 pg. 258.

3 Al-Nawbakhtī: *Firaq al-Shī‘ah*, pg. 23.

4 He is Aḥmad ibn Hamdān al-Laythī al-Rāzī. A great amongst the Ismā‘īliyyah sect; a break away sect of the Shī‘ah. Ibn Ḥajar says, “Ibn Bābawayh has profiled him in *Tārīkh al-Rayy*. He says, ‘He was a man of virtue and well versed in language. He heard much ḥadīth. He was a prolific author. Then they began the call to *Ilḥād* (Heresy that distorts the fundamental teachings of Islam). He became a proponent of the Ismā‘īliyyah and misled a group of the seniors. Amongst his works are, *A‘lām al-Nubuwwah*, *Al-Zīnah fi al-Kalimāt al-Islāmiyyah*, and *Al-Jāmi‘ fi al-Fiqh*. He died the year 322 A.H/923 A.D. His life has been recorded by, Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 1 pg. 164 and Muṣṭafā Ghālib: *Tārīkh al-Da‘wah al-Islāmiyyah*, pgs. 114-125.

5 Al-Rāzī: *Al-Zīnah fi al-Kalimāt al-Islāmiyyah*, pg. 114-125.

‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ claimed prophethood and believed that the Amīr al-Mu‘minīn is Allah. Allah is far greater than such a comparison.¹

He also narrates from Abān ibn ‘Uthmān who quotes Abū ‘Abd Allāh Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq saying:

لعن الله ابن سبأ ، إنه ادعى الربوبية في أمير المؤمنين ، وكان والله أمير المؤمنين عبدا لله طائعا ، الويل لمن كذب علينا ، وإن قوما يقولون فينا ما لا نقوله في أنفسنا ، نبرأ إلى الله منهم ، نبرأ إلى الله منهم

May the curse of Allah be upon Ibn Saba’. He claimed divinity for Amīr al-Mu‘minīn. By Allah Amīr al-Mu‘minīn was an obedient slave of Allah. Woe unto those who bring falsities against us. They are a people who say things about us that we do not say regarding ourselves. We disassociate ourselves, by Allah, from them. We ask Allah to disassociate us from them.²

Al-Kashshī also narrates through his chain of transmission to ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn:

لعن الله من كذب علينا ، إني ذكرت عبد الله بن سبأ فقامت كل شعرة في جسدي ، لقد ادعى أمرا عظيما ، ما له ، لعنه الله ،

May the curse of Allah be upon those who caste lies unto us. I think of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ and every hair on my body stands on end. Indeed, he made a great claim. What is the matter with him? May Allah curse him!³

The great Shī‘ah scholar of ḥadīth, Abū Ja‘far al-Ṣadūq ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī⁴

1 Al-Kashshī: *Al-Rijāl*, pgs. 98-99.

2 Al-Kashshī: *Ma‘rifah Akhbār al-Rijāl*, pg. 70.

3 Al-Kashshī: *Al-Rijāl*, pg. 100.

4 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, famously known as Al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq. Scholar of ḥadīth and adherent of the Shī‘ah Imāmiyyah sect. He has many works. Amongst them are, *Ma‘ānī al-Akḥbār*, *Al-Tārīkh*, *Al-Shi‘r*, *Al-Sulṭān*, *Man Lā Yaḥḍurhu al-Faqīh*, *‘Ilal al-Sharā‘ī wa al-Aḥkām*, and *Al-Maṣābiḥ*. He died the year 381 A.H/991 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Nadīm: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 277; Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭūsī: *Al-Fihrist*, pg. 156; Al-Najāshī: *Al-Rijāl*, pg. 276; and Agha Bozorg Tehrani: *Al-Dharī‘ah ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī‘ah*, vol. 1 pg. 213.

(d. 381 A.H/991 A.D) mentions the stance of Ibn Saba', criticizing 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ for lifting his hands to the sky whilst in Du'ā'.¹

In the book *Sharḥ 'Aqā'id al-Ṣadūq* of Shaykh al-Mufīd² (d. 413 A.H/1022 A.D) the extremist hypocrites are mentioned, referring to the Saba'iyyah who ascribe to Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī and the Imāms of his progeny, divinity and prophethood. Amīr al-Mu'minīn thus instructed they be killed and burnt.³

Abū Ja'far al-Ṭūsī⁴ (d. 460 A.H/1067 A.D) says that Ibn Saba' turned apostate and adopted extremism.⁵

Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd (d. 655 A.H/1257 A.D) writes in in *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*:

1 Ibn Bābawayh: *Man Lā Yaḥḍurhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 1 pg. 213.

2 Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Nu'mān ibn 'Abd al-Salām al-'Ukbarī al-Qaḥṭānī, Abū 'Abd Allāh. Famously known as Shaykh al-Mufīd. He was the authority of the Shī'ah in his era.

- Al-Dhahabī says, "He cursed the pious predecessors much. He was influential during the era of 'Aḍud al-Dawlah of the Buyid Dynasty."

He has many works in uṣūl, theology, and jurisprudence. Amongst them are, *Al-'Alām fī mā Ittafaqt 'alayhī al-Imāmiyyah min al-Aḥkām*, *Awā'il al-Maqālāt fī al-Madhāhib wa al-Mukhtārāt*, *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, *Al-Kalām fī Wujūh I'jāz al-Qur'ān*, and *Waq'ah al-Jamal*. He died the year 413 A.H/1022 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 3 pg. 231; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar 'Alām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 17 pg. 344; and Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 4 pg. 26.

3 Al-Shaykh al-Mufīd: *Sharḥ 'Aqā'id al-Ṣadūq*, pg. 257.

4 He is Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī al-Baghdadi, famously known as Abū Ja'far al-Ṭūsī. He is counted amongst the Shī'ah scholars and jurists. He has written on the topics of tafsīr, fiqh, and 'aqā'id. Amongst his works are, *Al-Tibyān al-Jāmi'* li 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān, *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Mutakallimīn*, *Fihrist Kutub al-Shī'ah*, and *Al-Istibṣār fī mā Iktalaf fīhi min al-Akhbār*.

- Al-Dhahabī says, "The great memorizers did not pay him attention due to his innovations. His books were burnt many a time in the courtyard of Jāmi' al-Qaṣr. He went into hiding when his cursing of the predecessors came to the fore."

He died the year, 460 A.H/1067 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn al-Jawzī: *al-Muntaẓam fī Tārīkh al-Mulūk wa al-Umam*, vol. 8 pg. 252; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar 'Alām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 18 pg. 334; Al-Suyūṭī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, pg. 29; and Agha Bozorg Tehrani: *Al-Dharī'ah ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī'ah*, vol. 2 pg. 14.

5 Abū Ja'far al-Ṭūsī: *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 2 pg. 322.

فلما قتل أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام أظهر ابن سبأ مقالته ، وصارت له طائفة وفرقة يصدقونه ويتبعونه

When Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī was assassinated, Ibn Saba' promoted his doctrine. He amassed a group, a sect who believed in and followed him.¹

Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī al-Ḥillī² (d. 740 A.H/1339 A.D) counts Ibn Saba' amongst the weak narrators.³

Ibn al-Murtaḍā⁴ (d. 840 A.H/1436 A.D) an authority amongst the Shī'ah Zaydiyyah sect opines that the origin of Shī'ah creed is Ibn Saba' as he was the first to innovate the doctrine of Naṣṣ (the divine appointment of the Imāms).⁵

'Abd al-Ardabīlī⁶ (d. 1100 A.H/1689 A.D) says that Ibn Saba' was an accursed extremist who believed in the prophethood and divinity of 'Alī.⁷

1 Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd: *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, vol. 2 pg. 99.

2 He is al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ibn Dāwūd al-Ḥillī Taqī al-Dīn, Abū Muḥammad. From the scholars of tafsīr, fiqh, uṣūl, language, and logic. Amongst his books are, *Tahṣīl al-Manfa'ah*, *Aḥkām al-Qaḍīyyah*, *Mukhtaṣar al-Īdāh*, and *Kitāb al-Rijāl*. He died the year 740 A.H/1339 A.D. His life has been recorded by Muḥsin al-Amīn: *A'yān al-Shī'ah*, vol. 22 pg. 335; Al-Khāqānī: *Shu'arā' al-Ḥillah*, vol. 1 pg. 278; and Al-Māmaqānī: *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl fi Ahwāl al-Rijāl*, pg. 293.

3 Al-Ḥillī: *Al-Rijāl*, vol. 2 pg. 71.

4 He is Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn 'Alī al-Yamānī 'Izz al-Dīn, Abū 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Murtaḍā known as Ibn al-Wazīr. From the scholars of ḥadīth, tafsīr, and 'Aqīdah. Amongst his works are, *Tanqīḥ al-Anzār fi 'Ulūm al-Āthār*, *Al-'Awāṣim wa al-Qawāṣim fi al-Dhabb 'an Sunnah Abī al-Qāsim*, *Al-Burhān al-Qāṭi' fi Ithbāt al-Sāni'*, *Qawā'id al-Tafsīr*, and *Tarjīḥ Asālib al-Qur'ān 'alā Qawānīn al-Mubtada'ah wa al-Yūnān*. He died the year 840 A.H/1436 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Sakhāwī: *Al-Ḍaw' al-Lāmi'*, vol. 6 pg. 272; Al-Shawkānī: *Al-Badr al-Ṭāli'*, vol. 2 pg. 81; Al-Wāsi'ī: *Al-Durr al-Farīd al-Jāmi' li Mutafarriqāt al-Asānīd*, pg. 41.

5 Ibn al-Murtaḍā: *Tāj al-'Urūs* pgs. 5-6.

6 He is Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Gharawī al-Ḥā'irī al-Ardabīlī. A Shī'ah Imāmiyyah scholar who has written on the subject of biographies. He has written a book entitled, *Jāmi' al-Ruwāt*. He died the year 1100 A.H/1689 A.D. His life has been recorded by Agha Bozorg Tehrani: *Al-Dharī'ah ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī'ah*, vol. 4 pg. 193; and Al-Zarkalī: *Al-'Ālām*, vol. 6 pg. 295.

7 Al-Ardabīlī: *Jāmi' al-Ruwāt*, vol. 1 pg. 485.

In the book *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl* of al-Māmaqānī¹ (d. 1323 A.H/1905 A.D) there is mention of Ibn Saba' under quotations that the author has gathered from earlier Shī'ah sources.²

Al-Khūwānasarī has mentioned Ibn Saba' quoting the curse of Ja'far al-Ṣādiq against him due to his fabrications and lies.³

Iḥsān Ilāhī Ṣāhīr—who has deep insight into the Shī'ah books both in Arabic and Persian—says:

وقد أقر بوجوده - ابن سبأ - من أعلام الشيعة المتأخرين المظفري في كتابه « تاريخ الشيعة » ، وكذلك كبير القوم السيد محسن الأمين في موسوعته ، وغيرهم الكثيرون الكثيرون

The existence of Ibn Saba' has been determined by the authoritative latter day Shī'ah scholar al-Muẓaffarī in his book *Tārīkh al-Shī'ah*. Al-Sayyid Muḥsin al-Amīn has also determined this in his encyclopedia. Besides the above mentioned, countless others have done so as well.⁴

III. Ibn Saba' in the works of contemporary orientalist and researchers; Arab and Shī'ah.

The persona of Ibn Saba' is an undoubted historical fact established in the Sunni and Shiite sources, old and new alike.

Likewise, (it is an established fact) amongst most Orientalists, the likes of Julius

1 Muḥammad Ḥasan ibn 'Abd Allāh al-Māmaqānī, a jurist of the Imāmiyyah. He has authored, *Bushrā al-Wuṣūl ilā Asrār 'Ilm al-Uṣūl*, *Ghāyah al-Āmāl*, and *Dharā'ī al-Aḥlām fi Sharḥ Sharā'ī al-Islām*. He died the year 1323 A.H/1905 A.D. His life has been recorded by Muḥsin Amīn: *Fajr al-Islām*, vol. 22 pg. 161; Agha Bozorg Tehrani: *Al-Dharā'ī ilā Taṣānīf al-Shī'ah*, vol. 3 pg. 120; and Al-Khūwānasarī: *Aḥsan al-Wadā'ah*, pg. 169.

2 Al-Mamāqānī: *Tanqīḥ al-Maqāl fi Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, vol. 2 pg. 183.

3 Al-Khūwānasarī: *Rawḍāt al-Jannāt*, vol. 3 pg. 141.

4 Iḥsān Ṣāhīr: *Al-Shī'ah wa al-Tashayyu'*, pg. 64.

Wellhausen¹, Van Fulton², Levi Dela Vida³, Ignác Goldziher⁴, Reynold Allen Nicholson⁵, Dwight Ronaldson⁶, and others.

At the same time, the existence of Ibn Saba' is a matter of doubt or a mere myth to a few Orientalists, such as Caetani⁷, Bernard Lewis⁸, and the indecisive Friedlaender⁹.

Similarly, the ḥadīth scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah form a consensus that the persona of Ibn Saba' is factual and true.

This is true but for a handful who are few and far in between. These outlying scholars adopting this fringe view is based on several differing reasons. It is either due to them having being influenced by orientalism¹⁰ or due to being unable to ascertain the truth under the façade of ambiguity that has been shrouded over the persona of Ibn Saba' which results in rejection¹¹, doubt¹², or wavering views which leaves them hovering between the opposing ends of acceptance and rejection.¹³

1 Julius Wellhausen: *Al-Khawārij wa al-Shī'ah*, pg. 170.

2 Gerlof van Vloten: *Al-Siyādah al-'Arabiyyah wa al-Shī'ah wa al-Isrā'īliyyāt*, pg. 80.

3 Levi Dela Vida: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 1 pg. 51.

4 Ignác Goldziher: *Al-'Aqīdah wa al-Sharī'ah fi al-Islam*, pg. 229.

5 Nicholson: *Tārīkh al-'Arab al-Adabī fi al-Jāhiliyyah wa Ṣadr al-Islam*, pg. 335.

6 Ronaldson: *'Aqīdah al-Sharī'ah*, pg. 58.

7 Leone Caetani: *Hawliyyāt al-Islām*, vol. 8 pg. 42. As established by Dr 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badwī in *Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyīn*, vol. 2 pgs. 30-31.

8 Bernard Lewis: *Uṣūl al-Islāmīyyah*, pg. 86.

9 See, 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badwī in *Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyīn*, vol. 2 pgs. 22-23.

10 For instance, Ṭāhā Ḥusayn: *Al-Fitnah al-Kubrā 'Alī wa Banūhū*, pgs. 90-91.

11 For instance, 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Hilābī: *'Abd Allāh ibn Saba'*, pg. 73.

12 For instance, 'Alī al-Nashshār: *Nash'ah al-Fikr al-Falsafī fi al-Islam*, pg. 28; and Muḥammad 'Umārah: *Al-Khilāfah wa Nash'ah al-Aḥzāb al-Islāmiyyah*, pg. 155.

13 For instance, Jawād 'Alī who displays inconsistencies when speaking of the Saba'iyyah. At times, he admits to their existence and effect on historical event. Taking this view, he states: *continued ...*

The contemporary Shī'ah, by and large, mention Ibn Saba' in their writings as a point of a persona of non-existence. He is to some of them, a figure closer to delusion than reality¹, whilst to others closer to fiction than fact.²

As for the orientalist, well, their intent in creating an environment of uncertainty or rejection was to institute a claim that the fitnah was a result of the actions of the Ṣaḥābah themselves. It was also to further claim that any affiliation of fitnah to the Jews or heretics was a ploy by Muslim historians and narrators to defend the Ṣaḥābah so that their blunders may be condemned to external elements.

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والظاهر أن السبئية كانت من أكثر الكتل السياسية التي ظهرت في أيام عثمان نظاما

And it is apparent that during the era of 'Uthmān, the Saba'iyyah were amongst the most politically charged coalitions. [*Majallah al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Irāqī*, vol. 6 pg. 84].

He also says that the Saba'iyyah were—in his opinion—responsible for the assassination of 'Uthmān [Ibid, pg. 100]. And yet at times, he seems to relegate them to mere fiction and underestimates their impact. In this regard he criticizes al-Imām al-Ṭabarī and his narrators for amplifying the role of Ibn Saba' in Egypt and his hand in inciting fitnah therein. He says:

إن أحدا من الرواة غير « يزيد الفقعسي ، لم يذكر هذه الآثار لابن سبأ في مصر ، وقد غاب عنه رواية الحافظ ابن عساكر في « تاريخ دمشق ، التي لم يكن رواياها هو يزيد الفقعسي . بل جاءت من طريق أبي حارثة وأبي عثمان قالا : « لما قدم ابن السوداء مصر عجمهم واستخلاهم واستخلوه ، وعرض لهم بالكفر فأبعدوه ، وعرض لهم بالشقاق فأطمعوه ، فبدأ بالظعن على عمرو ابن العاص وقال : ما باله أكثركم عطاء ورزقا

None of the narrators besides Yazīd al-Faq'asī mentioned these traditions of Ibn Saba' in Egypt. And the narration of al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn 'Asākir in *Tārīkh Dimashq* has been lost on him which is not narrated by way of Yazīd al-Faq'asī. Rather it is narrated by way of Abū Ḥārithah and Abū 'Uthmān who say, "When Ibn al-Sawdā' came to Egypt, he tested them and then withdrew from them and they from him. He displayed disbelief and they distanced him. He proposed disunity and they emboldened him. He then began criticizing 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ and said, "Why is it that he receives a greater stipend than you?" [*Tahdhīb Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 7 pg. 423.]

1 For instance, 'Alī al-Wardī: *Wu'āz al-Ṣalāṭīn*, pg. 273; and Kāmil Muṣṭafā al-Shībī: *Al-Ṣīlah Bayn al-Taṣawwuf wa al-Tashayyū'*, pgs. 41-43.

2 For instance, 'Abd Allāh al-Fayāq: *Tārīkh al-Imāmiyyah*, pg. 95; and Murtaḍā al-'Askarī: *'Abd Allāh ibn Saba'*, vol. 1 pg. 148.

Moreover, their rejection of the persona of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ is due to their desire to arrive at the following conclusion:

There was no need for a saboteur to walk amongst the Ṣaḥābah as they themselves were possessed by self-indulgence, materialism, and greed for power. They thus fought each other in a premediated and deliberate fashion.

Furthermore, they would say:

Ibn Saba’ was a figment of imagination dreamt up by Sayf in order to distance the Ṣaḥābah from the events of the fitnah and attribute it to a Jew who feigned Islam.¹

The intent in drawing this conclusion was to harm the cause of Islam and the Muslims. It would serve to propagandize a theme of religious inability in guidance; since Islam was unable to maintain the character of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ after the passing of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, it is implausible that Islam would be able to guide and reform in the present era.

In pursuit of this methodology of the orientalists in casting doubt onto the persona of Ibn Saba’ and trivialising the presence of diversionists, some Arab academics have underplayed the role of Ibn Saba’ whilst others have gone to reject his existence, relegating him to a fictional character.

One of these cynics states:

أراد خصوم الشيعة - يقصد أهل السنة - أن يدخلوا في أصول هذا المذهب عنصرا يهوديا إمعانا في الكيد
لهم والنيل منهم ،

1 Friedlaender: sourced from an article he had written regarding Ibn Saba’. Published in the Assyrian Journal in Almaniac circa. 1909.

The opponents of the Shī'ah—referring to the Ahl al-Sunnah here—purposefully introduce within their creed elements of Judaism in order to incriminate them and use them as a stooge.¹

He further asks:

أكان لابن سبأ أن يجد مجالاً لبيت أفكاره بين من هم أكثر منه علماً ودراية بأحكام الإسلام؟

How was it possible for Ibn Saba' to promulgate his ideas in the midst of those who were more knowledgeable than him with regards to Islam laws?²

These cynical ideas of his are based on two unsubstantiated reasons:

1. He believes that the events pertaining to Ibn Saba' have been contrived by the Ahl al-Sunnah in order to vilify the Shī'ah. Before casting doubts and accusations—as he does—it was essential for him to at least establish that such traditions solely emanate from sources within Ahl al-Sunnah with Shī'ah sources being silent regarding it. Yet we find that he has not troubled himself with such research as the methodology he adopts in his books are based upon doubt, mistrust, and wholesale defamation with no thought given to factual study.

The belief that the Ahl al-Sunnah have contrived such incidents is simply implausible as Shī'ah sources have related them too, as has been recounted above. Thus, the Shī'ah concur with the Ahl al-Sunnah that 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' was the one who ignited the fire of fitnah against 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, who promoted enmity towards the Companions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, who developed extremist ideas regarding 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ citing his divine appointment of Imāmah, and so on and so forth.

1 Ṭāhā Ḥusayn: *Al-Fitnah al-Kubrā 'Alī wa Banūhū*, pg. 90.

2 Ṭāhā Ḥusayn: *'Uthmān*, pgs. 132-134.

Considering the above mentioned factors, the objections of Ṭāhā Ḥusayn in believing such to be fabrications of the Ahl al-Sunnah fall away to incredulity. It is impossible for all the sources of the Ahl al-Sunnah to have lied. This is further cemented when considering that its reliable scholars are renowned for their acute scrupulousness and in what they wrote and narrated.

2. His second reasoning rests upon hailing the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. He thus rejects the notion that Ibn Saba' could have done what he did. In reality though this is no critical acclamation, it is rather a ploy to push the agenda that it was the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who gave rise to the fitnah against 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه. He is well aware that Ibn Saba' spread his ideas amongst the common and illiterate masses, not amongst the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. These ignorant ones played an unfortunate role in the assassination of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه, in the Battle of Jamal, and in other catastrophes that followed.

As for the Shī'ah, their reasoning in denying the existence of Ibn Saba' is due to the doctrinal baggage he brings along with him, which incidentally made ways and roads into mainstream Shī'ah beliefs; beliefs that clash with core Islamic principles thus placing them in the precarious position of liability and suspicion. Another reason they have taken the route of denying his existence is so that they may place the blame of the fitnah upon the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم; a product of their animosity towards the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.

Furthermore, those Shī'ah who bring into question the existence of Ibn Saba' by extension wish to bring into question their books which relate the curses of the infallible Imāms—according to them—upon this devious Jew. This is to demonstrate the implausibility of curses from an infallible upon a non-existent, as the Shī'ah deem it impossible for an infallible one to have lied.

In conclusion, it becomes abundantly clear after having studied sources old and new, Sunnī and Shī'ah, that the existence of 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' is a factual reality supported by historical narrations. Evidence of his existence is found in books of 'aḳā'id, ḥadīth, *Rijāl* (biographies of ḥadīth narrators), *Ansāb* (genealogy), *Ṭabaqāt* (biographical literature), *Adab* (Arabic literature), and *Lughah* (Language studies). This position has been adopted by many contemporary researchers and academics.¹

It seems that the first to doubt the existence of Ibn Saba' were some orientalists. Later, some Arab researchers, influenced by the views of the Orientalists and the works of modern Shī'ī authors, also adopted this view. However, all of the above mentioned do not have anything to support their doubts and their denial except doubt itself and the reliance on mere whims, fancies, and assumptions.

1 For instance, Maḥmūd Shākīr: *Al-Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn*, pg.225; Yūsuf al-'Ish: *Al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah*, pgs. 66-69; 'Ammār al-Ṭālibī: *Ārā' al-Khawārij*, pgs. 66-67; Sa'īd al-Afghānī: *Ā'ishah wa al-Siyāsah*, pg. 60; Maḥmūd Qāsim: *Dirāsāt fi al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyyah*, pg. 109; 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badwī: *Madhāhib al-Islāmiyyīn*, vol. 2 pgs. 17-24; Iḥsān Ilāhī Ḍahīr: *Al-Shī'ah wa al-Sunnah*, pgs. 29-31; Sa'd al-Hāshimī: *Ibn Saba'*, an article published in the Majallah al-Jāmi'ah al-Islāmiyyah in Madinah Munawwarah, circa. 1398 A.H/1978 A.D pg. 201; 'Izzah 'Aṭīyyah: *Al-Bid'ah*, pg. 73; Anwar al-Jundī: *Ṭāhā Ḥusayn wa Fikrihi fi Mīzān al-Islam*, pg. 171; Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb: *Ḥāshiyah al-'Awāṣim*, pgs. 4-57; and Ibrāhīm Sha'waṭ: *Abāṭil Yajib an Tumḥā min al-Tārīkh*, pg. 147.

Section Three

The cause of fitnah during the khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.

The origins of the fitnah as outlined by Books of Traditions.

Concrete causes of the fitnah.

- I. The effect of the Saba’iyyah in giving rise to the fitnah.
- II. The effect of the Bedouins in giving rise to the fitnah.
- III. The nature of social change during the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.
- IV. Prosperity and its effect on the society during the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.
- V. ‘Uthmān coming after ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and their difference in disposition.
- VI. Tribalism: Some tribes finding it difficult to swallow the leadership of the Quraysh.

The origins of the fitnah as outlined by Books of Traditions

Studying the causes of the fitnah from a range of narrations as found in the books of traditions, **regardless of its authenticity or lack thereof**, does not give detailed explanations of the evolvement of the fitnah nor does it provide a complete list of the underlying causations behind the fitnah. Hereunder is a brief outline of such causes that the narrations do suggest.

During the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه there was a group who begrudged him as he was vigilant of the doings of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and others and he would question them with regards to it. For instance, we see ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir and ‘Abbās ibn ‘Utbah ibn Abī Lahab bringing a matter of dispute between them to him. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه disciplines both of them and so ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir becomes angry.¹ Similarly,

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 399.

we find Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr and Muḥammad ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah differing with him and bearing unpleasantness towards him.¹ Also there was a group of people involved in useless entertainment activities who bore resentment towards him. Types of entertainment and pastime pleasures increased during his era in response to which ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ banished those involved in such from Madinah. They developed ill-feelings towards him.²

Then we have the ascetics who saw the magnitude of wealth the Muslims were being flooded with due to the conquests. In the forefront of this group we find Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī who held a strong opinion on hoarding wealth³, an indication to the verse:

وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يَنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

*And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah - give them tidings of a painful punishment.*⁴

Add to this those governors whom he had recalled with the likes of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ who was angry with ‘Uthmān.⁵ Similarly, there were many envious ones who spited him due to the close relationship the Banū Umayyah enjoyed by him; criticising the appointments of his family.⁶

Together with this the historians mention that people were upset over certain novel actions of ‘Uthmān such as his reading the full ṣalāh in Mīnā⁷, granting

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 399-400.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 399.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 283.

4 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 34.

5 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 256.

6 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 347; Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāṣim*, pg. 62. [Narrations such as these need to be sifted through, separating the authentic from the weak. They also need further explanation. Thus one should not bear any resentment to the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and Ṭābi‘īn based on these narrations.] (Publisher).

7 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pgs. 267/347; Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāṣim*, pg. 62.

people the permission to discharge their own zakāt¹, granting certain lands to his people², gathering the Ummah on one manuscript of the Qur'an³, reserving the pastures⁴, and allegedly granting his family from the Muslim treasury⁵.

This is a summary of what has been recorded in the traditions that signify the cause of the fitnah. However, do you think that these issues were sufficient to cause the fitnah that occurred and go on to result in the catastrophic end that it led to? Never!

The events during the era of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه occurred in a similar pattern throughout the era of 'Umar رضي الله عنه. Not everyone was pleased with 'Umar. He was much stricter than 'Uthmān, had introduced novel aspects, and had metred our punishments without any laxity. This sterner conduct of 'Umar did not result in the fitnah during his era and no one rebelled against him.

Some have considered the revolt against 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه to be due to his leniency and feebleness in dealing with the rebels. In reality, **even though he was advanced in age, he was not feeble nor weak when it came to the commands of Allah**. Yes, his disposition was not like that of 'Umar and neither did he command such awe. In this regard 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه says:

لقد عتبوا على عثمان اشياء لو فعلوها عمر لما عتبوا عليه

They criticised 'Uthmān for things, had 'Umar done so they would not have criticised him.⁶

1 Al-Bayhaqī: *Al-Sunan*, vo. 4 pg. 114.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 384.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 347; Ibn al-'Arabī: *Al-'Awāṣim*, pg. 61.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 347; Ibn al-'Arabī: *Al-'Awāṣim*, pg. 61.

5 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 347.

6 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 141.

Consider the fact that difference in disposition and awe cannot quell a rebellion. Thus, if the factors the historians have mentioned were in fact what led to the rebellion during the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, the same would have occurred during the era of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, notwithstanding his stern nature.

These factors cannot be considered as the true causes of the rebellion. These were standalone incidents or, if one were to overstate their impact, secondary causes that could not result in what had occurred, on the level that it occurred.

If one were to accept the supposed missteps and mistakes of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه as presented by the statements of the rebels that have reached us through authentic texts and narrations, then too it would prove insufficient to validate a revolt against the khalīfah.

Besides, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was capable of defending his governors and justifying their appointment.

He had sent ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to the Egyptians who asked them, “Why do you resent him?”

They said, “We resent him as he effaced the Book of Allah—referring to his gathering the people onto one manuscript of the Qur’ān, reserved the pastures, appointed his family to positions, gave Marwān one hundred thousand, and ill-treated the Companions of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم.”

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه issued the following reply:

أما القرآن فمن عند الله إنما نهيتكم عن الاختلاف فيه ، فاقروا على أي حرف شئتم . وأما الحمى فوالله ما حميته لإبلي ولا لغنمي وإنما حميته لإبل الصدقة . وأما قولكم أنني أعطيت مروان مائة ألف ، فهذا بيت مالهم فليستعملوا عليه من أحبوا وأما قولكم تناولت أصحاب رسول الله ، فإنما أنا بشر أغضب وأرضى ، فمن ادعي قبلي حقا أو مظلمة فيها آنذا ، فإن شاء قودا وإن شاء عفوا فرضي الناس واصطلحوا ودخلوا المدينة

As for the Qur’ān, it is from Allah. I only stopped you from contradictions within it. Read in whichever dialect you please. As

for the pastures, by Allah! I did not reserve them for my camels or sheep, I reserved them for the camels of sadaqah. You people say that I gave Marwān one hundred thousand, well this is their treasury, they may appoint whomsoever they wish. You people also say that I have ill-treated the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ; I am only human, I get angry and I get happy. Whoever claims a right over me or claims oppression from me, I am here. If he wishes he may take his revenge and if he wishes he may forgive. The people were pacified, came to terms, and entered Madinah.¹

The people of Kūfah brought forward their objections which ‘Uthmān ﷺ readily accommodated. Ibn Sīrīn says:

إن عثمان بعث إليهم عليا ، تعطون كتاب الله وتعتبون من كل ما سخطتم، فأقبل معه ناس من وجوههم فاصطلحوا على خمس : على أن المنفي يقلب ، والمحروم يعطى ، ويوفر الفيء ، ويعدل في القسم ، ويستعمل ذو الأمانة والقوة ، كتبوا ذلك في كتاب ، وأن يرد ابن عامر على البصرة وأبو موسى الأشعري على الكوفة

‘Uthmān sent ‘Alī ﷺ to them. The influential people came and an accord was drawn up over five issues. Those banished will be returned, those deprived will be given, the war spoils will be spread, dividing it will be done fairly, and men of trust and strength will be appointed. They drew up this charter. They further sought that Ibn ‘Āmir² be returned to govern over Baṣrah and Abū Mūsa al-Ash‘arī over Kūfah.³

Both the above texts clearly demonstrate what the rebels wanted from ‘Uthmān. These are demands the like of which every era has seen. Yet, they do not result

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Tārīkh al-Islam*, vol. 7 pg. 141.

2 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir ibn Kurayz al-Qurashī al-‘Abshamī. Governor of Baṣrah during the era of ‘Uthmān ﷺ. He was generous and brave. Conqueror of Khurāsān and the outlying areas of Fāris as well as Sijistān, Kirmān, and others reaching up to Ghaznah. Persian Emperor Yazdegerd III was killed in his reign. He was the first to introduce ponds at ‘Arafah, laying streams therein. He passed away the year 58 A.H/677 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 44; Ibn Qutaybah: *Al-Ma‘ārif*, pg. 110; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 5 pg. 272.

3 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 169.

in rebellion or fitnah. If there weren't ulterior motives behind these demands spliced with divergent desires led by elements that desired division, the revolt would not have been possible.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance that the *true causes* of the fitnah be determined. Not taking into consideration these true causes leaves one incapable of understanding how minor demands—which were tabled and dealt with successfully—led to the assassination of the khalīfah in broad daylight. What then were the true causes that led to the fitnah?

I. The effect of the Saba'iyyah in giving rise to the fitnah

In the early books of Islamic history there are many narrations that refer to the clandestine mobilization of individuals and groups of the mawālī who outwardly accepted Islam whilst holding on to their old beliefs. This was done as a ploy to make inroads and destroy the Islamic Empire from within by causing fitnah and instigating dissention amongst the Muslims by way of spreading corrupt beliefs motivated by racial and personal objectives. This was resorted to after these groups failed in openly opposing Islam. The Jews were in the forefront of these elements within the Islamic society; a result of their deep seeded and deceitful resentment towards the Muslims and Islam. The rise of and support for Islam had left them bitter.

Before discussing the active role played by one of these Jews , 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba', in instigating and provoking the fitnah and to whom the Saba'iyyah sect affiliate themselves to, it would be appropriate to understand the mechanisms behind this conflict and the stance of the Jews; the enemies of the Muslims from the inception of Islam.

Allah ﷻ says:

لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا

You will surely find the most intense of the people in animosity toward the believers [to be] the Jews and those who associate others with Allah.¹

This animosity has been reinforced by the Jews themselves. Ḥuḡayy ibn Akḡḡab, Jewish leader said looking at Rasūlullāh ﷺ:

أما والله ما لمت نفسي في عداوتك ، ولكن من يخذل الله يخذل

By Allah! I have never blamed myself for my enmity towards you. But whoever forsakes Allah will be forsaken.²

Amongst the shows of their animosity was their role in promoting hypocrisy in Madinah Munawwarah. Allah ﷻ says:

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ

And when they meet those who believe, they say, “We believe”; but when they are alone with their evil ones, they say, “Indeed, we are with you; we were only mockers.”³

This also extends to their efforts to cause doubts amongst the Muslims:

وَقَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ آمِنُوا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَجِهَ النَّهَارِ وَاکْفُرُوا الْآخِرَةَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

And a faction of the People of the Scripture say [to each other], “Believe in that which was revealed to the believers at the beginning of the day and reject it at its end that perhaps they will abandon their religion.”⁴

1 Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 82.

2 Ibn Hishām: *Al-Sīrah*, vol. 3 pg. 261.

3 Sūrah Baqarah: 14.

4 Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 72.

Add to this their breaking of the accords and promises they made, besides the treatise that Rasūlullāh ﷺ enacted with them. Their mocking of the Muslims, criticizing Islam, and other schemes and plans of theirs which caused Rasūlullāh ﷺ to banish them from Madinah.¹

Their voices quietened during the era of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا when Islam grew in strength. ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ even had them banished from Arabia complying with the instruction of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to which end he advised towards the end of his worldly life. He ﷺ said:

لأخرجن اليهود والنصارى من جزيرة العرب حتى لا أدع فيها إلا مسلما

I will most definitely remove the Jews and the Christians from the Arabian Peninsula until I leave only Muslims in it.²

أخرجوا المشركين من جزيرة العرب

Remove the polytheists from the Arabian Peninsula.³

During the concluding years of the reign of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ elements of turmoil began to strike up within the Islamic society due to certain evolving factors that will be discussed at a later stage. Some Jews began looking for opportunities

1 Ibn Hishām: Ibid, vol. 3 pgs. 191-199.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 12 pg. 92.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 31. The ‘Arabian Peninsula’ in this ḥadīth has been outlined by Ibn Ḥajar in *al-Fath*:

و لكن الذي يمنع المشركون من سكناه ، منها الحجاز خاصة وهو مكة ، والمدينة والبيامة وما والاها ، لا فيها سوى ذلك مما يطلق عليه اسم جزيرة العرب ، لاتفاق الجميع على أن اليمن لا يمنعون منها مع أنها من جملة جزيرة العرب ، هذا مذهب الجمهور

This refers to barring the polytheists from living in Ḥijāz; Makkah, Madinah, Yamāmah, and its surrounds specifically. It does not include the other areas that are considered as part of the Arabian Peninsula. This is due to the consensus that they are not barred from Yemen even though Yemen falls under the Arabian Peninsula. This is the view of the majority. (vol. 6 pg. 171)

to exploit this turmoil by outwardly accepting Islam and adopting *Taqiyah* (subterfuge).

Amongst these was a man by the name of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’, known as Ibn al-Sawdā’. A Jew from Ṣan‘ā’ who outwardly accepted Islam during the era of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān. He attained greater fame than others as he accepted Islam at much later stage and showed noticeable activity in Shām, Iraq, and Egypt. He also held the presence of the Khawārij and the resentful ones drawing up plans and stating his destructive views.

The majority of the early historians make mention of this in their books including Imām al-Ṭabarī who deems him to be the source of the fitnah and foundation of evil.¹

Although the role of Ibn Saba’ in the fitnah should not be inflated as done by some extremists², his role in the fitnah should not be diminished or doubted³. He was undoubtedly amongst the leading and most perilous catalysts of the fitnah, if not the most as the climate of fitnah had paved the way for him and other elements had abetted his cause.

Ibn Saba’ introduced views and beliefs that he fashioned himself, relying on spiteful Jewish sentiment. He began promoting these views to ends he desired and goals he hoped to accomplish. However, he did not attribute it to Rasūlullāh ﷺ and dared not promote it as such. He introduced these sentiments in order to poison the Islamic society with ideas that undermined its unity, fueled the fire of fitnah, and sowed the seeds of dissention amongst its persons. These were

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 340.

2 Such as Sa‘īd al-Afghānī in his book *‘Ā’ishah wa al-Siyāsah*. He has inflated the role of Ibn Saba’ in the fitnah and has attributed every conspiracy and fitnah to him that occurred during the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. This is quite evident when he profiles him as ‘Ibn Saba’, the fearsome invisible man’. Pg. 60.

3 As done by some orientalist and Arab academics. See the previous discussion in this book.

amongst the factors that led to the assassination of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and split the Ummah into factions and sects.¹

Ibn Saba' did not dare attribute his beliefs to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. How could he when the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ were on the lookout, refuting his every lie and stopping him in his place.

To summarize what he did, he began quoting correct ideas, but then he leapt to wrong conclusions that found acceptance among the simple-minded, the extremists and those who were swayed by whims and desires. In attaining this he embarked upon a convoluted path covered by a façade that duped those around him and kept them close to him. He then took to misinterpreting the Qur'ān according to his crooked beliefs. In this regard he claimed the return of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying:

لعجب ممن يزعم أن عيسى يرجع ، ويكذب بأن محمدا يرجع ، وقد قال الله : إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لَرَأْدُكَ إِلَيَّ مُعَادٍ فمحمدا أحق بالرجوع من عيسى

It is strange that those who believe in the return of 'Īsā deny the return of Muḥammad when Allah ﷻ has said: *Indeed, [O Muhammad], He who imposed upon you the Qur'ān will take you back to a place of return. Say, "My Lord is most knowing of who brings guidance and who is in clear error."*² Thus Muḥammad is likelier to return than 'Īsā.³

He also resorted to false analogy in claiming the existence of Waṣīyyah (appointment by bequest) with regards to 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ saying:

انه كان ألف نبي ، ولكل نبي وصي ، وكان علي وصي محمد ثم قال : محمد خاتم الأنبياء وعلي خاتم الأوصياء

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 340; Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 9 pg. 328; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 183; Al-Maqrīzī: *Al-Mawā'iz wa al-I'tibār*, vol. 2 pgs. 356.

2 Sūrah Qaṣaṣ: 85.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 340.

There were a thousand prophets and every prophet had an heir. And ‘Alī is the heir of Muḥammad. He then says ‘Muḥammad is the seal of prophets and ‘Alī is the seal of the heirs.’¹

When these ideas settled into the mind of his followers, he continued onto his intended objective which was inciting a revolt against the khalīfah ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. That matched the prejudice that lay in the hearts of some when he said to them:

من أظلم ممن لم يجز وصية رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ووثب على وصي رسول الله وتناول أمر الأمة

Who can be more oppressive than he who did not carry out the instruction of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, went above the rightful heir of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, and took control of the Ummah.

He then said to them:

إن عثمان أخذها بغير حق ، وهذا وصي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فانهضوا في هذا الأمر فحركوه ، وابدؤوا بالظعن على أمرائكم ، وأظهروا الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر تستميلوا الناس ، وادعوهم إلى هذا الأمر

‘Uthmān took the leadership unjustly and here is the waṣī of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم. Stand and rise for this cause. Begin by criticizing your leaders. Make a show of instructing good and forbidding evil, people will gravitate towards you. Then invite them to this cause.²

Sayf ibn ‘Umar al-Tamīmī relates his narration on the origins of the fitnah. He says:

فبث دعائه - يقصد ابن سبأ - وكاتب من كان استفسد في الأمصار وكاتبوه ودعوا في السر إلى ما عليه رأيهم ، وأظهروا الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر ، وجعلوا يكتبون إلى الأمصار بكتب يضعونها في عيوب ولاتهم ، ويكاتيبهم إخوانهم بمثل ذلك ، ويكتب أهل كل مصر منهم إلى مصر آخر بما يصنعون ،

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 340.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 340.

فيقرأه أولئك في أمصارهم وهؤلاء في أمصارهم حتى تناولوا بذلك المدينة ، وأوسعوا في الأرض إذاعة ، وهم يريدون غير ما يظهرون ، ويسرون غير ما يريدون ، فيقول أهل مصر : إننا لفي عافية مما ابتلى به هؤلاء ، إلا أهل المدينة فإنهم جاءهم ذلك عن جميع الأمصار فقالوا : إننا لفي عافية مما فيه الناس

He—Ibn Saba’—sent his supporters and wrote to those seeking corruption in the cities secretly inviting them to their cause. They made a show of calling towards good and forbidding evil. They began writing to the cities detailing the flaws of its governors, circulating this amongst themselves. Each city would apprise other cities of their activities thus linking the cities together with their letters till this phenomenon reached Madinah as well. They spread their false propaganda all over, aiming for something other than what they appeared to be seeking; they even sent letters to Madinah. The people in the regions said: We are free of what others are suffering from,” but the people of Madinah received letters from all over and said: “We are better off than the rest of the people.”¹

From this, we can see the methods followed by Ibn Saba’. He wanted to give the impression that there was a rift between two of the senior Sahabah by showing one as a champion of truth—‘Alī—and portraying the other as a usurper; ‘Uthmān.

He then made efforts to provoke and trigger people, especially the residents of Kūfah, against their governors under the guise of instructing good and forbidding evil. These people thus began protesting against their leaders for the slightest of reasons. He knew well that in instituting such an environment amongst the Bedouins, he had a demographic that would sway to his ends and carry out his aims. As for the religious, he won them over through the guise of instructing good and forbidding evil. Similarly, he won the support of those with worldly ambitions by spreading fabrications regarding ‘Uthmān such as his inequity in appointing his relatives, spending the wealth of the Muslim treasury on them, reserving the pastures for himself, and other such accusations and criticism which brought about sentiments of opposition within the hearts of the dregs of society against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 341.

He then began encouraging his adherents to send letters relaying terrible news of their city to other cities. The people of Baṣrah would be under the impression the conditions prevailing in Egypt was worse whilst the Egyptians would be under the impression that the people of Kūfah were living under a delinquent governor and so on and so forth. The people of Madinah would receive letters from the adherents of Ibn Saba' emanating from various cities depicting a horrifying situation.

In this manner, people in all regions would think that the situation everywhere had gotten so bad that it could not get any worse. Those who benefited from this situation were the Saba'iyyah, because when the people believed their propaganda, they would be able to light the spark of fitnah in the Muslim society. In the midst of this 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ understood that something truly wicked was being orchestrated in the cities and that the Ummah were hurtling towards evil. He thus said:

والله إن رحى الفتنة لدائرة ، فطوبى لعثمان إن مات ولم يحركها

By Allah! The quern of fitnah is rotating. Glad tidings for 'Uthmān if he dies and does not agitate it.¹

The base of operations of Ibn Saba' was Egypt. It was here that he mapped out his plan against 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ inciting people to head towards Madinah and provoke fitnah there based on claims that 'Uthmān had taken the khilāfah unjustly and had pushed aside the rightfully appointed successor of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ; 'Alī.²

He deceived them with letters which he claimed had come from senior Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. Thus when the people from the outlying areas arrived in Madinah Munawwarah and met the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, they disassociated themselves and denied having any hand with those letters that had pitted people against

1 Al-Ṭabarī: Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 343.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 340-341.

‘Uthmān.¹ The Bedouins did not receive any encouragement from them. They found that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه paid attention to the rights of others, and he debated with them concerning the accusations against him. He refuted their lies and explained that these deeds were based on sincere intentions, until one of these Bedouins, Mālik ibn al-Ashtar al-Nakhaī said:

لعله مكر به وبكم

Perhaps it is a plot that has been drawn up against him and you.²

Sayf narrated from his teachers how the Saba’iyyah came to Madinah for the first time intending to implement their plans in phases. In the first phase they intended to spread the mention of mistakes that ‘Uthmān had made, supposedly admitted to, had not recanted from, and had not sought forgiveness for. Thus allowing them to claim impunity in killing him.³

After their debate with ‘Uthmān, they returned to their lands and promised that they would return in the month of Shawwāl of the same year; 35 A.H/655 A.D.⁴

Sayf then mentions their return to Madinah as pilgrims in Shawwāl of that year. A summary of what he says follows:

لما كان شوال سنة خمس وثلاثين خرج أهل مصر في أربع رفاق على أربعة أمراء المقلل يقول ستمائة والمكثر يقول ألف .. ولم يجترئوا أن يعلموا الناس بخروجهم إلى الحرب ، وإنما خرجوا كالحجاج ومعهم ابن السوداء ... وخرج أهل الكوفة في عدد كعدد أهل مصر ، وكذا أهل البصرة . ولما اقتربوا من المدينة شرعوا في تنفيذ مرحلة أخرى من خطتهم ، فقد اتفق أمرهم أن يبعثوا اثنين منهم ليطلعوا على أخبار المدينة ويعرفوا أحوال أهلها . وذهب الرجلان فلقيا أزواج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وعلي وطلحة والزبير ، وقالوا : إنما جئنا نستعفي عثمان من بعض عمالنا ، واستأذنا لرفاقهم بالدخول ، فأبى الصحابة ، وقال علي رضي الله عنه : لا أمركم بالإقدام على عثمان ، فإن أبيتم فيبض سيفرخ

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 355.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 383.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 346.

4 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 348.

In the month Shawwāl of the 35th year, the Egyptians came in four groups, each with its leader. Conservative estimates put them at six hundred with others putting them at a thousand. They did not dare inform people that they were heading to fight, they thus appeared as pilgrims and with them was Ibn al-Sawdā'. From Baṣrah and Kūfah similar numbers appeared. When they drew close to Madinah they began implementing the next phase of their plan. They decided to send two individuals to assess the situation of Madinah and ascertain the condition of its folk. Two men went and met with the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, 'Alī, Ṭalḥah, and Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

The two men said to them, “We have come to request ‘Uthmān depose some of our governors.”

They asked for approval of their groups to enter. The Ṣaḥābah refused their request.

'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “I do not permit you to approach ‘Uthmān. If you do not abide then the egg will hatch.”¹

As a result of this failure they had to formulate another plan. A group from Egypt approached 'Alī, a group from Baṣrah approached Ṭalḥah, and a group from Kūfah approached al-Zubayr and spoke with them. However, these Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ promptly turned them away saying:

لقد علم الصالحون أن جيش ذي المروة وذی خشب ملعونون علی لسان محمد صلی الله علیه وسلم
فارجعوا لا صحبکم الله

All pious people know that the armies that would setup camp in Dhū al-Marwah and Dhu al-Khashab² have been cursed by Muḥammad ﷺ. Be Gone, may Allah ruin you.³

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 348; Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, vol. 1 pg. 560.

2 Names of places, the first at Wādī al-Qurā see, *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 5 pg. 116. The second a valley a nights travel from Madinah Munawwarah, see Ibid, vol. 2 pg. 372.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 350.

In the narration of Ibn ‘Asākir the following has been recorded from ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib:

لقد علمت عائشة أن جيش المروءة وأهل النهروان ملعونون على لسان محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم قال أبو بكر بن عياش : جيش المروءة قتلة عثمان

‘Ā’ishah knew that the armies of al-Marwah and those of al-Naharwān were cursed by Muḥammad ﷺ. Abū Bakr ibn ‘Ayyāsh says, “The army of al-Marwah assassinated ‘Uthmān.”¹

In the third phase this group left under the guise of returning though they had ulterior motives that was hidden from the people. A plan they had formulated in the form of forging a letter and falsely attributing it to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. This letter was used as grounds to permit taking his life which they acted upon by surrounding his home until they murdered him, may Allah be pleased with him.

The narration of Abū Sa’īd, the mawlā of Abū Usayd al-Anṣārī, which is the most authentic narration² in this regard, details the return of this group from Madinah in the following words:

فبينما هم في الطريق إذا راكب يتعرض لهم ثم يفارقهم ثم يرجع إليهم ثم يفارقهم ويسبقهم . قالوا له : ما لك - إن لك لأمرًا ! ما شأنك - فقال : أنا رسول أمير المؤمنين إلى عامله بمصر ، ففتشوه ، فإذا هم بكتاب على لسان عثمان ، عليه خاتمه إلى عامله بمصر : أن يصلبهم او يقتلهم او يقطع ايديهم وأرجلهم من خلاف ، فأقبلوا حتى قدموا المدينة ، فأتوا عليا ، فقالوا ألم تر إلى عدو الله - إنه كتب فينا بكذا وكذا ، وإن الله قد أحل دمه ، قم معنا إليه ، قال على : والله لا أقوم معكم ، فقالوا : فلم كتبت لنا - فقال : والله ما كتبت إليكم كتابا قط . فنظر بعضهم إلى بعض ثم قال بعضهم لبعض . ألهذا تقاتلون ، أو لهذا

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, profile of ‘Uthmān, pg. 454.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 345. Al-Ṭabarī says, “Ya’qūb ibn Ibrāhīm narrated to me [Abū Yūsuf al-Dawraqī, Thiqaḥ, see *al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1 pg. 281] — from Mu’tamir ibn Sulaymān al-Taymī [Thiqaḥ, see *al-Taqrīb*, vol. 2 pg. 263] — from my father [Sulaymān ibn Ṭarkhān Abū al-Mu’tamir al-Baṣrī, Thiqaḥ ‘Ābid, see *al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pg. 326] — from Abū al-Naḍrah [Al-Mundhir ibn Mālik ibn Qaṭ’ah Abū Naḍrah al-‘Abdī, Thiqaḥ, see *al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10 pg. 302] — from Abū Sa’īd the mawlā of Abū Usayd al-Anṣārī [who witnessed the incident].

تغضبون - فانطلق علي فخرج من المدينة إلى قرية ، فانطلقوا حتى دخلوا على عثمان فقالوا : كتبت فينا بكذا وكذا . فقال : إنهما اثنتان : أن يقيموا رجلين من المسلمين أو يميني بالله الذي لا إله إلا هو ما كتبت ولا أملت ولا علمت ، وقد يكتب الكتاب على لسان الرجل وينقش الخاتم على الخاتم . قالوا : قد أحل الله دمك ونقضت العهد والميثاق ، وحصروه في القصر - الدار رضي الله عنه

As the Egyptian delegation was travelling homeward, they saw someone riding who repeatedly approached them then moved away.

So they said to him, "What is the matter with you?"

He said, "I am the envoy of the Amīr al-Mu'minīn to his governor in Egypt."

They examined him and found a letter that bore the seal of 'Uthmān addressed to his governor. It contained orders to crucify them or kill them, or cut off their hands and feet. They went back to Madinah and came to 'Alī and said, "Do you not see the enemy of Allah has written such and such instructions regarding us! Definitely Allah has made his blood permissible. Come with us to him."

'Alī said, "By Allah, I will not go with you."

They said, "Then why did you write to us?"

He replied, "By Allah, I have never written a letter to you!"

They began looking at each other and said amongst themselves, "Is it for this you are fighting? Or is it over this you are angry?"

'Alī then left Madinah and went to a village. They went to 'Uthmān and said to him, "You have written such and such instructions regarding us."

He replied, "There are two ways you can prove me guilty; either bring two Muslim men to testify or accept my oath by Allah, besides Whom there is no other god, that I did not write it or dictate it or have any knowledge of it. A letter may be attributed to a man and a seal may be put on it."

They said, “Allah has made your blood permissible and you have broken the treaty”

And then they surrounded his home.¹

Many peculiarities would strike one reading this book with regards to this text.

Firstly, the carrier of the forged letter approached this group then ran away, and he did that repeatedly. He only did that to attract their attention and make them suspicious so that they may catch him and question him.

Secondly, him telling them that he is the messenger of the Amīr al-Mu’minīn to the governor of Egypt whereas they had just left ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. What work would he then have with the governor of Egypt.

Thirdly, the question ‘Alī رضي الله عنه posed to the delegates of Kūfah and Baṣrah who claimed to have come to assist their brothers. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه asked them:

وكيف علمتم يا أهل الكوفة ويا أهل البصرة بما لقي أهل مصر، وقد سرتهم مراحل ثم طويتم نحونا

O people of Kūfah and Baṣrah, how did you know what had happened to the people of Egypt, when you had travelled a long distance, then you came back?²

In fact, ‘Alī was certain about that and said:

بل إن عليا يجزم : هذا والله أمر أبرم بالمدينة

By Allah, this was a plan that was drawn up in Madinah.³

1 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 169; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 354.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 351.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 351.

Furthermore, ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, truthful and trustworthy, emphasised that the letter was falsely attributed to him and that his seal was forged. The honest believed him and the liars belied him.¹

Above all of this, the rebels revealed their true goal by saying:

ضعوه على ما شئتم ، لا حاجة لنا في هذا الرجل ، ليعترلنا ونحن نعتزله

Blame whoever you want for it. We do not want this man. We will depose him.²

This cursed letter was not the first letter fabricated by these rebels, rather they also fabricated letters that were attributed to the Ṣaḥābah, ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was accused of having written to the people, telling them to rebel against ‘Uthmān, but she denied it and said:

لا والذي آمن به المؤمنون وكفر به الكافرون ما كتبت لهم سوداء في بيضاء حتى جلست مجلسي هذا

No, by the One in Whom the believers believe, and in Whom the disbelievers disbelieve, I never wrote anything to them until I sat here where I am.³

Al-A‘mash commented:

فكانوا يرون أنه كتب على لسانها

They thus knew that it had been falsely attributed to her.⁴

The delegates accused ‘Alī of having written to them, telling them to come to Madinah, but he denied that and swore:

1 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 191.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 351.

3 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 195. Ibn Kathīr says, “This is an authentic chain of transmission to her.”

4 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 169.

By Allah, I did not write any letter to you.¹

Letters to people in other regions, telling them to come to Madinah because the religion of Muḥammad had been corrupted and abandoned, and jihad in Madinah was better than staying in remote outposts, were also attributed to the Ṣaḥābah.²

Ibn Kathīr commented on this report by saying:

وهذا كذب على الصحابة ، وإنما كتبت كتب مزورة عليهم ، فقد كتب من جهة علي وطلحة والزبير إلى الخواريج - قتلة عثمان - كتب مزورة عليهم أنكروها . وكذلك زور هذا الكتاب على عثمان أيضا ، فإنه لم يأمر به ، ولم يعلم به

This is a lie against the Ṣaḥābah, and the letters were fabrications against them. Fabricated letters that were attributed to ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr, which they denied, were sent to the rebels—the killers of ‘Uthmān. This letter was also falsely attributed to ‘Uthmān; he did not tell anyone to write it for him and he was not aware of it.³

The words of Ibn Kathīr are confirmed by the report of al-Ṭabarī and Khalīfah, which says that the senior Sahabah themselves—‘Alī, ‘Ā’ishah and al-Zubayr—denied these letters, according to the soundest reports.⁴

Perhaps through the above observations it may be possible to identify who had written the letter. The following statement hits the mark:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 355.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 336-337. Al-Bāqillānī: *Al-Tamhīd fī al-Radd ‘alā al-Mulḥidah al-Mu‘aṭṭilah wa al-Rāfiḍah wa al-Khawārij wa al-Mu‘tazilah*, pg. 216.

3 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 175.

4 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 169; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 355.

إن الكتاب لا يعدو أن يكون مسرحية مثلت في الطريق الغربي الذي كان فيه المصريون وحدهم

The letter was nothing more than a performance on the western road where the Egyptians were, unaccompanied.¹

The narration of Sayf states that Ibn al-Sawdā' was with them.² This is referring to 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba' who constantly lured people's hearts against 'Uthmān. He played a huge role in the events that led to the fitnah.

This was a hand that was laid out clandestine ploys to create dissention amongst the Muslims. Falsely attributing letters to the Ṣaḥābah was to this end. Also to this end was the devious plan of sending a letter to the governor of 'Uthmān over Egypt. Exploiting matters in order to raise dissention in this manner can only be the act of that evil Jew. The same one who Sayf identifies as the propagandists, together with his adherents, in fueling the fitnah.

Authentic narrations illustrate their outline but do not clearly identify them. The narration of Sayf thus gains strength when considered together with the authentic narrations³ as the two do not clash. They have the same subject matter, one with greater details. Historical methodology is accepting of such narrations as they do not differ with authentic narrations.

Since Sayf is in agreement with the events based on the framework provided by the authentic narrations, it should be possible to rely on him and attach the details of his narrations to the authentic ones. As he sticks to the primary material and further explains the ambiguities found therein.⁴

It should be noted that there are scattered accounts in the works of famous historians and scholars that identify the effect of Ibn Saba' and his supporters

1 Muḥibb al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb: *Dhū al-Nūrayn 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān* راجع، pg. 31.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 349.

3 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pgs. 168-169; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 383.

4 See, pgs. 263-265.

in the fitnah. This also goes to strengthen and reinforce the above mentioned narration of Sayf.

Al-Qummī mentions that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ was the first to criticize Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān¹. Al-Nawbakhtī concurs with al-Qummī. Mentioning the events of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ he states that he criticized and disparaged Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنهم.²

Ibn ‘Asākir narrated many reports that mention ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’, and these reports do not include Sayf ibn ‘Umar as one of the narrators. This goes to emphasize his role in fueling the fitnah. Before mentioning the narrations, he says:

طاف بلاد المسلمين ليلفتهم عن طاعة الأئمة ويدخل بينهم الشر ، وقد دخل دمشق لذلك زمن عثمان
بن عفان

He travelled the Muslim cities trying to turn people away from obedience to the leaders and to incite evil. He travelled to Damascus for this very reason during the era of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān.³

Ibn al-Athīr agrees with Imām al-Ṭabarī. He reproduces his narrations regarding Ibn Saba’ without the chain of transmission.⁴

Al-Māliqī says:

وفي سنة ثلاثا وثلاثين تحرك جماعة في شأن عثمان رضي الله عنه وكانوا جماعة منهم مالك الأشتري،
وعبد الله بن سبأ المعروف بابن السوداء، وسودان بن حمران

1 Al-Qummī: *Al-Maqālāt wa al-Firaq*, pg. 20.

2 Al-Nawbakhtī: *Ibid*, pg. 44.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 8 pg. 328.

4 Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 3 pgs. 114 and 147.

In the year 33 A.H a group was readied in view of the matter of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Amongst this group was Mālik al-Ashtar¹, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’, known as Ibn Sawdā’, and Sawdān ibn Ḥamrān.²

Al-Dhahabī is of the view that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ started the fitnah in Egypt, where he planted the seeds of grudges and criticism against the governors first, then against the ruler ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.³

Ibn Kathīr narrated that among the causes of the incitement against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was the emergence of Ibn Saba’, who went to Egypt and spread rumours

1 He is Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Sa’d al-Ash’arī al-Māliqī al-Andalūsī. Ibn al-Khaṭīb profiling him states, “He was a learned scholar and a noble person. He possessed deep insight, was on a clear path, and impartial. Knowledgeable in the fields of law and Qirā’ah. A master in ḥadīth, its history, chain of transmission, and reliability of narrators. A memorizer of names, teknonym, and affiliations. He was also well versed in the Arabic language, principles, laws, poetry, inheritance, and arithmetic. He was appointed as the judge of Gharnāṭah for short while after which he resigned due to the difficulty in speaking the truth. He then spread his knowledge, teaching the Qur’an, Arabic, fiqh, and uṣūl. He would have gatherings wherein he would narrate and explain ḥadīth.” He passed away the year 741 A.H/1340 A.D. His life has been recorded by Lisān al-Dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb: *Al-Iḥāṭah fi Akhbār Gharnāṭah*, vol. 2 pg. 125; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. 4 pg. 284; and Al-Suyūṭī: *Bughyah al-Wu’āh*, pg. 114.

2 He is Mālik ibn al-Ḥārith ibn ‘Abd Yagūth al-Nakhaṭī, well known as Ashtar. He had lived through the Jāhiliyyah period and then through Islam. The earliest recollection of him is his attendance at Jābiyah at the khuṭbah of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه.

- ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salamah al-Murādī says, “‘Umar looked at Ashtar and approved. He then said, ‘The Muslims will have a hard time with this one, one day.’”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “A Ṭābi’ of Kūfah, reliable.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has listed him amongst the reliable narrators.
- Al-Dhahabī says, “He was chivalrous, obedient, and fierce. He was eloquent and well spoken. He was with ‘Alī at Jamal and Ṣiffīn. ‘Alī had him instated over Egypt but he passed away on the way there.”

He passed away the year 37 A.H/657 A.D as a result of being poisoned. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 213; Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 148; Ibn Ḥabīb: *Ibid*, pg. 233; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 417; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 399; and Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 4 pg. 34.

3 Al-Dhahabī: *Tārīkh al-Islam*, vol. 2 pgs. 122-123.

among the people that he fabricated himself, by which many people in Egypt were deceived.¹

Ibn Khaldūn says:

إن عبد الله بن سبأ يعرف بابن السوداء ، كان يهوديا فهاجر أيام عثمان ، فلم يحسن إسلامه ، فأخرج من البصرة ، فلحق بالكوفة ، ثم بالشام ، فأخرجوه ، فلحق بمصر ، وكان يكثر الطعن على عثمان ويدعو في السر إلى أهل البيت ... ويحرض الناس على القيام بذلك ، والطعن على الأمراء ، فاستمال الناس بذلك في الأمصار ، وكاتب به بعضهم بعضا

‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ was known as Ibn al-Sawdā’. A Jew who migrated in the days of ‘Uthmān. He was not sincere in his acceptance of Islam. He left Baṣrah and went to Kūfah then to Shām for where he was evicted. He thus travelled to Egypt. He would criticize ‘Uthmān a lot and call to a cause of the Ahl al-Bayt in secrecy. He encouraged people to rise for this cause and to criticize their governors. People were swayed by this in the different regions and wrote to each other about it.²

Al-Maqrīzī says regarding Ibn Saba’:

المثير للفتنة المنتهية بقتل عثمان

The one who fueled the fitnah that led to the murder of ‘Uthmān.³

Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar relates the incidents of Ibn Saba’ and says:

وأخبار عبد الله بن سبأ شهيرة في التواريخ

And the accounts of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ are well documented in historical sources.⁴

1 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pgs. 167-168.

2 Ibn Khaldūn: *Al-‘Ibar*, vol. 2 pg. 1027.

3 Al-Maqrīzī: *Al-Mawā’iẓ wa al-‘Iṭbār*, vol. 2 pg. 290.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pg. 290.

Al-Suyūṭī speaking of Egypt recalls that initially the Egyptians opposed Ibn Saba'. He then says:

ثم افتتن به بشر كثير منهم ، وكان ذلك مبدأ تأليبهم على عثمان

Then many of them got embroiled in his fitnah. This was the beginning of them being pitted against 'Uthmān.¹

The famous historians and scholars of both the earlier and later generations of this Ummah are agreed that Ibn Saba' appeared among the Muslims with ideas, plans, and plots aimed at diverting the Muslims from their faith and from obeying their ruler, and spreading division and disputes among them. The thugs rallied around him, leading to the formation of the Saba'iyyah group, which was one of the factors in the fitnah that ended with the murder of the khalīfah 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān رضي الله عنه.

It seems that the Saba'iyyah plots were very well organized. They were very skilled in directing their 'missionaries' and spreading their ideas, as they had the means of propaganda to influence the thugs and dregs of society. They were also active in forming branches in Baṣrah, Kūfah and Egypt, exploiting tribal sentiments and exploiting the weaknesses of the Bedouins, slaves, and freed slaves, appeasing them with what they wanted to hear.

II. The effect of the Bedouins in giving rise to the fitnah

Together with the Saba'iyyah elements of the Bedouins were instrumental in giving rise to the fitnah. These were those Bedouins who had not sincerely accepted Islam and were quite hard hearted. They were from various tribes of Muḍar, Rabī'ah, and Yemen. They were dessert dwellers with unending squabbles in the pre-Islamic period. When the message of Islam came they entered into its fold.

1 Al-Suyūṭī: *Ḥusn al-Muḥaḍarah fi Akhbār Miṣr wa al-Qāhirah*, vol. 2 pg. 165

These Bedouins fall into a few categories:

Amongst them were those who wholeheartedly accepted the faith and were true believers. Regarding them Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

وَمِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَتَّخِذُ مَا يُنْفِقُ قُرْبَاتٍ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَصَلَوَاتِ الرَّسُولِ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّهَا قُرْبَةٌ لَهُمْ ۗ سَيُدْخِلُهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

*But among the Bedouins are some who believe in Allah and the Last Day and consider what they spend as means of nearness to Allah and of [obtaining] invocations of the Messenger. Unquestionably, it is a means of nearness for them. Allah will admit them to His mercy. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.*¹

Amongst them were those too, who entered into Islam due to fear, hypocrisy, and greed over war spoils. These fall under the following declaration of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى:

الْأَعْرَابُ أَشَدُّ كُفْرًا وَنِفَاقًا وَأَجْدَرُ أَلَّا يَعْلَمُوا حُدُودَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

*The Bedouins are stronger in disbelief and hypocrisy and more likely not to know the limits of what [laws] Allah has revealed to His Messenger. And Allah is Knowing and Wise.*²

The third category of Bedouins were ascetics, engaged in constant worship, and had adopted undue strictness in religious practice. They were biased, had adopted extremism in faith, and had misinterpreted texts according to their whims and fancies. Their rational was feeble whilst their emotions were strong. They had but a superficial understanding of matters.³

1 Sūrah Tawbah: 99.

2 Sūrah Tawbah: 97.

3 This is quite evident in the issue they raised of *Tahkīm* (arbitration). They said, “There is no law except that of Allah’s”. They believed that no man should arbitrate in matters concerning the faith.
continued

These religious fanatics are the early Khawārij regarding whom Rasūlullāh ﷺ has said:

يخرج قوم من أمتي يقرؤون القرآن ليس قراءتكم إلى قراءتهم شيئاً ولا صلاتكم إلى صلاتهم شيئاً ، ولا صيامكم إلى صيامهم شيئاً ، يقرؤون القرآن يحسبون أنه لهم وهو عليهم ، لا تجاوز صلاتهم تراقيهم يمرقون من الإسلام كما يمرق السهم من الرمية

There would arise from my Ummah a people who would recite the Qur’ān, and your recital would seem insignificant as compared with their recital, your prayer as compared with their prayer, and your fast, as compared with their fast. They would recite the Qur’ān thinking that it supports them, whereas it is an evidence against them. Their prayer does not get beyond their collar bone; they would swerve through Islam just as the arrow passes through the prey.¹

It should be noted that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was forced to incorporate the Bedouins in the Muslim army as the Empire grew. However, with time they shaped a toxic group who contributed in preparing an environment conducive to the fitnah. This group was the apostate Bedouins.

Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه, with great prudence, strongly opposed utilizing them in any military campaign. He would write to his governors:

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News of this reached ‘Alī. He called for the public to demonstrate the superficial understanding and stupidity of the Khawārij. He called for a huge manuscript and began striking it with his hand saying, “O manuscript, talk to the people.”

They said, “This is not a human! It is merely ink and leaves. We talk of what is contained within it.”

‘Alī رضي الله عنه then said, “The book of Allah is between me and these people. Allah سبحانه وتعالى says regarding a couple:

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا

And if you fear dissension between the two, send an arbitrator from his people and an arbitrator from her people.

And the ummah of Muḥammad صلوات الله عليه وآله is greater than a couple.” Aḥmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 23 pg. 159. Al-Haytamī has recorded it. Abū Ya’lā has recorded it and its chain is authentic.

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 7 pg. 171.

Do not seek assistance on any military campaign by anyone who had apostatized.¹

Al-Sha'bī says:

كان أبو بكر لا يستعين في حروبه بأحد من أهل الردة حتى مات ، ولذلك كان بعض من ارتد وحسن إسلامه بعد ذلك يستحي من مواجهة أبي بكر ، فطليحة الأسدي - مثلا - يذهب إلى مكة معتمرا وما استطاع مقابلة أبي بكر حتى مات ويكتب الصديق إلى خالد بن الوليد وطليحة يشهد القتال معه « أن استشره في الحرب ولا تؤمره

In his wars, Abū Bakr never sought the help of any of those who had apostatized, until he died.² Hence some of those who had apostatized but then became good Muslims felt too shy to meet Abū Bakr. For example, Ṭulayḥah ibn al-Asadī³ went to Makkah for 'umrah, but he was never able to meet Abū Bakr, until he died⁴. Abū Bakr would write to Khālīd ibn Walīd when Ṭulayḥah was joining in the military campaigns, “Seek his counsel but give him no authority.”⁵

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 341.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 25.

3 He is Ṭulayḥah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadī. He was part of the Banū Asad delegation that came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ the ninth year of hijrah and accepted Islam. When they returned Ṭulayḥah turned apostate and claimed prophethood. Rasūlullāh ﷺ sent Ḍirār ibn al-Azwar to fight him. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away, Abū Bakr ﷺ sent forth Khālīd ibn Walīd to fight the apostates. The apostates were defeated in Najd. They then fled to Shām. He stayed here until his clan accepted Islam. He came with a delegation to 'Umar ﷺ and pledged allegiance at his hand. He became a good Muslim and was martyred at Nahāwand the year 21 A.H/642 A.D His life has been recorded by Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 253; Al-Nawawī: *Tahdhīb al-Asmā'*, 1/1/254; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 2 pg. 234.

4 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 6 pg. 318.

5 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 6 pg. 318.

During the caliphate of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, he started to ease off on this policy towards the former apostates, and he urged them to go and join the fighting in Shām and Iraq.¹

In the army of Yarmūk there was Qays ibn Hubayrah,² a former apostate³. He was also in the army of Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqās that went to al-Qādisiyyah.⁴ But this easing off on Abu Bakr’s policy at the time of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was accompanied by a kind of caution; there were always conditions and guidelines before they were allowed to join, and a former apostate could never be appointed over a company of one hundred men. Hence Sa‘d sent Qays ibn al-Makshūḥ with seventy men only to pursue the non-Arabs who attacked them on the night of al-Harīr.⁵

Furthermore, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه only utilized the former apostates in a limited capacity after having exhausted the number of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and Tābi‘īn available for a campaign.⁶ The following is a letter that ‘Umar sent to Salmān رضي الله عنه:

سلام عليك . أما بعد، فقد بلغني صنعك بعمر و - ابن معدي كرب - وأنت لم تحسن بذلك ، ولم تجمل ، فإذا كنت بمثل مكانك من دار الحرب ، فانظر عمرا وطليحة وذويهم ، فقربهم منك واستمع منهم ، فإن لهم علما بالحرب وتجربة ، فإذا وصلت إلى دار الإسلام ومصرهم ، فأنزلهما منزلتهما التي أنزلها أنفسهما ، وقرب منك أهل الفقه والقرآن

I have heard what you did to ‘Amr, and that was not right. If I was in your position in a situation of war, I would look at ‘Amr and Ṭulayḥah and bring

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 347

2 He is Qays ibn Hubayrah, known as Qays ibn Makshūḥ al-Murādī al-Bajalī, Abū Shaddād. Chief, and prominent Arab notable for his bravery. He played an important role in the conquests during the eras of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr says, “Qays was valiant, brave, and a poet. He was with ‘Alī at Ṣiffīn and was martyred there the year 37 A.H./657 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 525; Ibn Ḥabīb: *Ibid*, pg. 261; Al-Ṭabarī: *Dhayl al-Mudhayyal*, vol. 11 pg. 545; Al-Mirzabānī: *Mu‘jam al-Shu‘arā*, pg. 323; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *Al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 3 pg. 448.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 448.

4 *Ibid*, vol. 3 pg. 575.

5 *Ibid*, vol. 3 pg. 558.

6 *Ibid*, vol. 4 pg. 25.

them close and listen to them, for they have knowledge and experience of war. Then when you reach the Muslim lands you may regard them as they regard themselves, and draw close to the people of fiqh and Qur'ān.

Then 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه came and waived all these restrictions that had been imposed by the two previous Khulafā' on the former apostates due to several reasons. Amongst his reasons was that he thought that enough time had elapsed since the time of apostasy for anyone to have gotten rid of any of its influence. Similarly, the conquests and growth that followed was not possible with the Ṣaḥābah and tribes that accepted Islam in true faith alone. He thus had no option but to utilize them in these conquests.

In this manner 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه decided to appoint some of the former apostates to do work for the state as a means of strengthening their faith, but that had no such effect on them, rather it made them even more corrupt and resulted in their opposition to the khalīfah. These effects can clearly be seen in the fitnah that resulted in the murder of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه. When we look at the names of those who were accused of 'Uthmān's murder, we see men who belonged to tribes that were among the former apostates¹, such as Sawdān ibn Ḥamrān, Mālik ibn al-Ḥārith al-Nakha'ī, and others.²

Due to the Bedouins being unoccupied, they began meddling in the affairs of the state; political, social, and others regarding which they had no inkling of. This would lead them to develop negative sentiments regarding the khalīfah. For instance, when there was a lull in the conquest the end of the era of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه because of insurmountable natural or human barriers, especially in Persia, northern Syria and North Africa, a lull in arrival of war spoils followed. These Bedouins began asking, "Where is all the earlier war spoils? Where has the conquered lands gone to?" They considered this their right.³

1 Such as the tribes of Sukūn and Nakha'; a branch of the Madhḥaj tribe. See, Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 334; and Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 6 pg. 352.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 348.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 348.

The conquered lands were divided into three:

1. The lands of those who accepted Islam. They retained its ownership whilst discharging the *Ushr* (religious tithe). They had no other dues to pay.
2. The lands that were acquired through an agreement. They were liable for what they had agreed upon.
3. The lands that were conquered outright. The Muslims had a difference of opinion regarding such lands. Some opined that it should be considered as *Ghanīmah* (war spoils); taking a fifth and distributing it. Others said that the Imām would use his discretion in deciding its outcome. He could either deem it *ghanīmah*, take a fifth and distribute it as Rasūlullāh ﷺ had done at Khaybar, or he could deem it as *Fay'* (wealth taken peaceably from an enemy, either under the terms of a peace settlement or after fighting has ended.) which would be mortmain property endowed to the general Muslim populous as done by 'Umar رضي الله عنه with *al-Sawād* ("black land" - in contrast to the Arabian desert refers to the fertile lowlands of Iraq west of the Tigris).¹

Most of the Ṣaḥābah were of the opinion that the lands acquired would not be distributed. Rather, it would be mortmain property. The resulting income from the said lands would be spent in the interests of the Muslims such as funding the military, constructing bridges, dams, Masjids, and the likes. This would apply unless the Imām considered it in the general interest to distribute it. In such an event, he would be permitted to distribute the land. The above system was employed by the rightly guided Khulafā'.²

Ḥārithah ibn Muḍarrib³ relates that 'Umar رضي الله عنه intended to distribute the land of *al-Sawād* between the Muslims. He thus instructed that it be quantified. It

1 Ibn Sallām: *Kitāb al-Amwāl*, pgs. 69-70.

2 See, *Kitāb al-Kharāj*.

3 He is Ḥārithah ibn Muḍarrib al-'Abdī al-Kūfī, a Tābi'ī. He narrates from a group of Ṣaḥābah. *continued*

came to the fore that a Muslim would receive three farms. He then consulted the Companions of Nabī ﷺ regarding it. ‘Alī said to him, “Leave it be. It shall remain an investment for the Muslims.”¹

‘Abd Allāh ibn Qays al-Hamdānī² relates that ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ came to al-Jābiyah in Shām. He intended to distribute the lands amongst the Muslims. Mu‘āz said to him, “By Allah the outcome of it would be a negative one. If you distribute it, it will become a huge income to people until it is consolidated to by one man or women. After them people would come who would ascribe to Islamic principles but would not attain anything. Thus decide in a manner that would benefit the society; present and future.”³

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- Aḥmad says, “Ḥasan al-Ḥadīth (his narrations are good)”.
- ‘Uthmān al-Dāramī relating from Ibn Ma‘īn says, “*Thiqah* (reliable)”.
- Ibn Ḥibbān has listed him in *Al-Thiqāt*.
- Ibn Ḥajar says, “Those who relate from Ibn Madīnī that he is matrūk are mistaken.”

His life has been recorded by Al-Dāramī: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 91; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 4 pg. 127; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2 pg. 166.

1 Al-Qurashī: *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, pg. 47.

2 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Qays al-Kindī al-Hamdānī al-Kufī, Abū Baḥriyyah al-Ḥimṣī. He was present at the sermon of ‘Umar at al-Jābiyah. He narrates from Mu‘āz ibn Jabal, Abū ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāh and others.

- Ibn Ma‘īn and Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr has deemed him reliable.
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Shāmī Tābi‘ī. Reliable.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has listed him in *Al-Thiqāt*.
- Al-Wāqidī says, “‘Uthmān wrote to Mu‘āwiyah that he should send a trustworthy man on the summer raids. He thus sent Abū Baḥriyyah. He was a devout worshipper and a jurist. Ḥadīth was narrated from him.”

He passed away the year 77 A.H./696 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 327; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 272; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 45; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 5 pg. 374.

3 Ibn Sallām: *Kitāb al-Amwāl*, pg. 75,

Zayd ibn Aslam¹ narrated from his father² the following statement of ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه as recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*:

أما والذي نفسي بيده لولا أن أترك آخر الناس بيانا ليس لهم شيء ما فتحت علي قرية إلا قسمتها كما قسم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم خيبر ولكنني أتركها خزائنة لهم يقتسمونها

By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, were I not afraid that the other Muslims might be left in poverty, I would divide (the land of) whatever village I may conquer, as Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم divided the land of Khaybar. But I prefer to leave it as a source of a common treasury for them to distribute its revenue amongst themselves.³

لولا آخر المسلمين ما فتحت لكم قرية إلا قسمتها كما قسم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم خيبر

‘Umar said, “But for the future Muslim generations, I would have distributed the land of the villages I conquer among the soldiers as the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم distributed the land of Khaybar.”⁴

1 He is Zayd ibn Aslam al-‘Adawī, Abū Usāmāh al-Madanī, jurist and freed slave of ‘Umar. He narrates from his father, Ibn ‘Umar, Abū Hurayrah, ‘Ā’ishah and others.

- Aḥmad, Abū Zur‘ah, Abū Ḥātim, Al-Nasa’ī, and Ibn Khirāsh have deemed him reliable.
- Ibn Sa’d says, “He was reliable, narrated many ḥadīth.”
- Ya’qūb ibn Shaybah says, “Reliable. A jurist and scholar. He was well versed in the tafsīr of the Qur’ān.”

He passed away the year 136 A.H/753 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, pg. 314 (concluding chapter of the Tābī’in of Madinah); Ibn Ma’in: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 181; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/1/387; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 3 pg. 454; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3 pg. 394.

2 He is Aslam al-‘Adawī, Abū Zayd al-Ḥabshī. He narrates from Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and Mu‘āz ibn Jabal.

- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Madanī, reliable. Amongst the senior Tābī’in.
- Abū Zur‘ah says, “Reliable.”
- Ya’qūb ibn Shaybah says, “Reliable. Amongst the great freed slaves of ‘Umar. He would revere him.”

He passed away the year 80 A.H/699 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 10; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/24; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 63; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 4 pg. 45; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1 pg. 266.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 5 pg. 81.

4 *Ibid*, vol. 5 pg. 81.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه adopted the same method of administering the Kharāj lands. However, some biased people have accused him of having demarcating from the al-Sawād lands for people. Ibn Sallām¹ says in this regard:

وأما إقطاع عثمان من أقطع من الصحابة وقبولهم إياه ، فإن قوما قد تأولوا أن هذا من السواد ، وقد سألت
 قبيصة هل كان فيه ذكر السواد - فقال : لا

As for ‘Uthmān fixing² lands for the Ṣaḥābah and their accepting it. Some have

1 He is al-Qāsim ibn Sallām al-Baghdādī. Judge and author. He was proficient in the sciences of language. A seeker of ḥadīth and fiqh. He was appointed as the judge of Tarsus and authored many books.

Aḥmad ibn Kāmil al-Qāḍī says, “Abū ‘Ubayd was highly regarded for his faith and knowledge. A master in the Islamic sciences. A good and authentic narrator. I do not know of anyone that criticised him.” Ibn Darastūyah says, “Abū ‘Ubayd was noble, faithful, and principled. People have narrated his books on the subjects of Qur’ān, fiqh, dictionary of terms, and others which amount to twenty odd books. His books are sought after in every city.”

- Aḥmad says, “Abū ‘Ubayd was a teacher.”
- Ibn Ma‘īn, Al-Ājurrī, and al-Dāraquṭnī have deemed him reliable.
- Ibn Ḥibbān says in *Al-Thiqāt*, “One of the Imāms of the world. Renowned for ḥadīth, fiqh, faith, scrupulousness, and knowledge of language and history. He authored, gathered, and defended the ḥadīth.”

He passed away the year 224 A.H/838 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 479; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 12 pg. 403; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 8 pg. 315.

2 It should be noted that the Islamic concept of demarcating and giving land differs vastly from the European concept. The Islamic method as understood through the prophetic era and that of the rightly guided Khulafā’ is one that is governed by the following principles: The khalīfah demarcating land for an individual. The land ought to be in no one’s possession and is not being currently cultivated. It will be given under the obligation of cultivating it. The following lands are not permitted to be demarcated for anyone: Public lands, public roads, mines, farms, market lands, and lands that are owned by a Muslim or those accorded a protected status. Further, the distribution of the said land should not result in the harm of any Muslim or Dhimmī. Investment has to be made into the land or else it would be taken back. In essence the goal of demarcating such lands under Islamic rule was to empower Muslims; especially the needy. Further, it was to cultivate lands that were not producing anything and thereby giving back to the Muslim populous. The European concept on the other hand was a ploy that rested upon oppression, evil, power, and sweeping state control. A Lord distributing land would claim ownership of lands far and wide including its farmers. continued

thought it to be of al-Sawād. I asked Qabīṣah¹ if it was of al-Sawād. He replied in the negative.²

Abū Yūsuf says, “Umar رضي الله عنه selected ten categories of lands in al-Sawād. Land of those killed in war, land of those who fled from the Muslims, land owned by the Persian king, land owned by the relatives of the Persian king, every cistern, and every Dayr Barīd.”³

Ibn Sallām says:

فهذه كلها أرضون قد جلا عنها أهلها فلم يبق بها ساكن ولا عامر فكان حكمها إلى الإمام ، كما ذكرنا في عادي الأرض فلما قام عثمان رأى أن عمارتها أرد على المسلمين وأوفر لخراجهم من تعطيها ، فأعطاهم من رأي إعطاءه إياها على أن يعمرها كما يعمر غيرهم ، ويؤدوا عنها ما يجب للمسلمين عليهم ... ومما يثبت أن عثمان إنما كان إقطاعه مما أصغى عمر : أنه يروى في غير حديث سفيان تسمية القرى التي كان

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In this manner they would hold practical influence in policy even when the Kingdom would be weak. See, *Ibrāhīm Ṭarkhān, Al-Niẓām al-Iqtā'ī al-Islāmī fī al-'Aṣr al-Nabawī wa 'Aṣr al-Khulafā al-Rāshidīn*. He presented this for al-Nadwah al-'Ālimiyyah al-Thālithah which took place at Riyadh the year 1402 A.H/1982 A.D.

1 He is Qabīṣah ibn 'Uqbah ibn Muḥammad al-Kufi, Abū 'Āmir. He narrates from al-Thawrī, Shu'bah, Ḥammād ibn Salamah, Ḥamzah al-Zayyāt, and others. Al-Bukhārī, Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal, al-Dūrī, Ibn Sallām, and others narrate from him.

- Aḥmad says, “Qabīṣah was a pious and reliable man. There is no issue with him.”
- Ibn Abī Khaythamah relating from Ibn Ma'īn says, “*Thiqah* (reliable).”
- Ibn Abī Ḥātim says, “I asked my father regarding Qabīṣah and Abū Ḥudhayfah. He said, ‘Qabīṣah is better in my sight. He is *ṣadūq* (truthful).’”
- Šālīḥ ibn Muḥammad says, “He was a pious man. They have difference on his having heard from Sufyān.”
- Al-Nawawī says, “He was reliable, truthful, and narrates many ḥadīth from Sufyān al-Thawrī.”

He passed away the year 213 A.H/828 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma'īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 248; Al-'Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 388; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol. 7 pg. 126; Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 12 pg. 474; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 8 pg. 347.

2 Ibn Sallām: *Kitāb al-Amwāl*, pg. 259.

3 Abū Yūsuf: *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, pg. 57.

أقطع صعنبي والنهرين وقرية هرمز - وكان هرمز أحد الأكاسرة - فهذا مفسر لما قلنا : إنه إنما قطع من تلك الأرضين التي لم يبق لها رب - يعني مالك

The people of these lands were all banished. It thus remained without any resident or investor and thus any implications of the land rested with the Imām as we have mentioned regarding the uninhabited and unowned lands (*al-Arḍ al-‘Ādī*). ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه took note that investing into these lands and cultivating them would prove more beneficial than leaving them bare. He thus gave whom he saw fit to cultivate as others had done. They would then pay their dues from the land. It has also been established that ‘Uthmān distributed solely from those lands that were selected by ‘Umar. In besides the ḥadīth of Sufyān there is mention of the distribution of the villages, Ṣa‘nabī², al-Nahrayn³, and Hurmuz⁴ – Hurmuz was a Persian King – we thus understand that he only distributed those lands that had no owner.⁵

Mūsa ibn Ṭalḥah⁶ relates that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه gave ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه at al-Nahrayn, ‘Ammār رضي الله عنه at Istīnyā, Khabbāb رضي الله عنه at Ṣam‘ā-Ṣa‘nabī, and Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqās at Hurmuz.⁷

1 Land that had residents in the time gone by. They died out and thus came into the possession of the Imām. See, Ibn Sallām: *Al-Amwāl*, pg. 354.

2 Ṣa‘nabī, a village at Yamāmah. See Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 3 pg. 407.

3 I did not find mention of it in the Books of Cities that I referred to.

4 A village in the Persian lands. See, Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 5 pg. 402.

5 Ibn Sallām: *Al-Amwāl*, pgs. 360-361.

6 He is Mūsa ibn Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubayd Allah al-Qurashī al-Tamīmī, Abū ‘Īsā or Abū Muḥammad al-Muzanī, resident of Kūfah. He is a TābīṬ who narrates from a group of Ṣaḥābah.

- Ibn Sa‘d says, “He was reliable and narrated man ḥadīth.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “A TābīṬ, reliable and outstanding.”
- Ibn Khirāsh says, “He was from the great Muslims. He took part at Jamal with his father. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه released him after he had been captured.”

He passed away the year 103 A.H/721 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 161; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 444; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10 pg. 350.

7 Ibn Rajab: *Al-Istikhrāj li Aḥkām al-Kharāj*, pg. 106.

Ibn Sallām says:

وأما إقطاع عثمان بن أبي العاص بالبصرة الأرض التي تعرف بشط عثمان ، فإن أرض البصرة كانت يومئذ كلها سباخا وآجاما - يعني غير صالحة للزراعة - فأقطع عثمان بن عفان عثمان بن أبي العاص الثقفى بعضها ، فاستخرجها وأحياها - يعني أنها في حكم أرض الموات

As for ‘Uthmān ibn Abī al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه receiving land at Baṣrah which was known as Shaṭṭ ‘Uthmān, well the lands of Baṣrah at the time were made up of grasslands and jungles—unusable for cultivation. Thus ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān gave ‘Uthmān ibn Abī al-‘Āṣ al-Thaqafī some portion of it. He invested and cultivated it, which indicates that it was under the law of dead lands.¹

Al-Qāḍī Abū Ya‘lā mentions confirming the statement of al-Māwardī² that the distribution of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was from the selected lands. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه gave from it and made a condition that whoever receives it will discharge its dues. Thus it was given as rental or as easement not as ownership as he opined this to be of greater value. The Kharāj at the time of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was nine million Dirhams whilst in the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه it increased to fifty million Dirhams.

Abū Ya‘lā further states:

الضرب الثاني من العامر ، ما لم يتعين مالكوه ، ولم يتميز مستحقوه ، فهو على ثلاثة أقسام : أحدها : ما اصطفاه الأئمة لبيت المال من فتوح البلاد ، إما بحق الخمس فيأخذه باستحقاق أهله له ، وإما بأن يصطفيه باستطابة نفوس الغانمين له ، فقد اصطفى عمر به من أرض السواد أموال كسرى وأهل بيته ، وما هرب عنه أربابه أو هلكوا ، فكان مبلغ غلتها تسعة آلاف ألف درهم كان يصرفها في مصالح المسلمين ولم يقطع

1 Ibn Sallām: *Al-Amwāl*, pg. 361.

2 He is ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb al-Māwardī, al-Baṣrī al-Shafī‘ī, chief justice and prolific author.

- Al-Khaṭīb has deemed him reliable.
- Abū al-Ḥaḍl ibn Khayrūn says, “He was a man of great worth. He held a high status at the Sulṭān. One of the Imāms. He has written excellent books in every science.”

Amongst his works are *Al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah*, *Qānūn al-Wazarah wa Siyāsah al-Mulk*, *Naṣīḥah al-Mulūk*, *Tashīl al-Naẓr*, *Adab al-Dunyā wa al-Dīn*, and *Al-Ḥāwī*. He passed away the year 450 A.H/1056 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 12 pg. 102; Al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā*, pg. 131; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, vol. 3 pg. 282; and Al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyyah*, vol. 3 pg. 303.

شينا منها . ثم إن عثمان نه أقطعها ، لأنه رأى إقطاعها أوفر لغتها من تعطيلها ، وشرط على من أقطعها إياه أن يأخذ منه حق الفيء ، فكان ذلك منه قطاع إمارة لا إقطاع تمليك ، فتوفرت غلتها حتى بلغت على ما قيل خمسين ألف درهم ، فكان منها صلته وعطاياه ، ثم تناقلها الخلفاء بعده ، فلما كان عام الجماجم سنة اثنتين وثمانين في فتنة ابن الأشعث أحرق الديوان ، وأخذ كل قوم ما يليهم .

فهذا النوع من العامر ... السلطان فيه بالخيار على وجه النظر في الأصلاح بين أن يستغله لبيت المال كما فعل عمر ، وبين أن يتخير له من ذوي القدرة والمكثنة والعمل من يقوم بعمارة رقبته بخراج يوضع عليه مقدرا ، ويكون الخراج أجرة يصرف في وجوه المصالح - كما فعل عثمان

The second type of land. The titleholders of which wasn't specified and rights of which wasn't identified are of three types. The first, that which was selected by the Imāms for the Muslim treasury from the conquered lands. These lands were either taken as a fifth right or with the compliance of the ones in whose right it came to. 'Umar رضي الله عنه had in this manner selected the Persian Kings lands, his family's lands, and the lands of those whose owners fled or were destroyed. The sum total from these lands received was nine million Dirhams which were spent on the necessities of the Muslims. None of it was distributed. 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه, in his era distributed it as he opined it would yield a greater amount. He made conditions with the receiving parties that dues would be taken from them. From this we understand it was a distribution of managing the lands, not owning it. The yield increased to an amount recorded as fifty million Dirhams. Ownership of these lands succeeded with the Khulafā' until 'Ām al-Jamāj in the year 82 A.H, where the records were burnt during the fitnah of Ibn al-Ash'ath. People then took what was in their proximity.

These types of lands were at the discretion of the Sulṭān. He could either keep it as part of the Muslim treasury as done by 'Umar, or he could distribute it to those who were able to cultivate it and pay dues which would be spent upon various projects and necessities as done by 'Uthmān.¹

Abū Yūsuf mentions that the narrations state that Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم distributed lands for certain people and the Khulafā' did the same. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم saw the need for what he did in bringing people closer to Islam and cultivating lands.

1 Abū Ya'īlā: *Al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah*, pgs. 230-231.

Similarly, the Khulafā' only distributed lands when they saw it being a boon for the Islamic cause and a source of spite for the enemies. They deemed it to be the best course of action. If it wasn't for this, they would not have approached the topic nor distributed rights of Muslims or those afforded protection.¹

Aḥmad has explicitly stated the validity of the lands distributed by the Ṣaḥābah. He has refrained from commenting on the distributions of those besides the Khulafā' as there were some who had done so with lands, distributing of which were not permissible.²

Ibn Rajab³ says:

ولم يزل أمر السواد على الخراج إلى دولة بني العباس ، فجعله المنصور مقاسمة حيث رخصت الأسعار ، فلم تف الغلات بخراجها ، وخرّب السواد

The Sawād continued to be subject to the kharāj until al-Mansur, during the 'Abbāsīd era, changed the system from the kharāj back to the muqāsamah, because the sale-price of the produce did not cover the amount of the kharāj and the Sawād was failing.⁴

Al-Muḥib al-Ṭabarī reasons the distribution of conquered lands by 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه for people was twofold.

1 Abū Yūsuf: *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, pg. 62.

2 Abū Ya'īlā: *Al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah*, pg. 227.

3 He is 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn Rajab al-Sulāmī al-Baghdādī al-Dimashqī al-Ḥanbalī, Abū al-Farj. Ḥāfiẓ and scholar.

Ibn Ḥajar says, "He listened to much ḥadīth and was consciously engaged in knowledge until he attained mastery and authored."

Amongst his books are, *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm wa al-Ḥikam*, *Al-Istikhrāj li Aḥkām al-Kharāj*, *Kashf al-Kurbah fi Waṣf Ahl al-Ghurbah*, *Al-Tawḥīd*, and *Risālah fi Ma'nā al-'Ilm*. He passed away the year 795 A.H. His life has been recorded by Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Durar al-Kāminah*, vol. 2 pg. 321; Ibn al-'Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 6 pg. 339; Al-Nu'aymī: *Al-Dāris fi Tārīkh al-Madāris*, vol. 2 pg. 76; Al-Kattānī: and *Al-Risālah al-Mustaṭrafah*, pg. 147.

4 Ibn Rajab: *Al-Istikhrāj li Aḥkām al-Kharāj*, vol. 3 pg. 178.

Firstly, this was permission from him to cultivate what the people were able to in the dead lands of Iraq, bringing into practice the ḥadīth:

من أحيا أرضا ميتة فهي له

Whoever cultivates a barren land, it will be for him.¹

Secondly, the historians mention that the noble people of Yemen came to Madinah having left their cities and wealth. He gave them an equal amount to what they left, opining it to be beneficial. This was done either as overseers to land as with the case of the Sawād or as owners to other lands given to them.²

It thus becomes quite clear that the false rumours that spread, accusing ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه of having disposed of the lands that had been given as endowment to the Muslims according to his own whims and desires, and having allocated them to whomever he wanted are not true.

These rumours upset and disturbed the Bedouin, especially since most of them had no work and were spending half of their time eating and sleeping, and the other half discussing the policies of the state and talking about the conduct of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, which the Saba’iyyah were dramatizing.

One of the governors of ‘Uthmān—‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir—understood what was going on and he advised the khalīfah, when he sought the advice of his workers, governors and advisors, that he should tell the people to engage in jihād and send them away on campaigns, so that the main concern of any one of them would be dealing with the lice on his head and taking care of his mount.³

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 3 pg. 70; *Al-Tirmidhī: Al-Sunan*, vol. 2 pg. 419; *Abū Dāwūd: Al-Sunan*, vol. 3 pg. 178.

2 *Al-Muḥib al-Ṭabarī: Al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah fī Manāqib al-‘Asharah*, vol. 3 pg. 93.

3 *Al-Ṭabarī: Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 333.

In this atmosphere, where people who were used to going out on campaign but did not have much understanding of Islam were talking about serious matters, bad consequences were possible and it was sufficient to stir up these Bedouin and manipulate them into revolting and causing troubles and turmoil. And this is what actually happened. Due to the cessation of conquest, the Bedouin—with intentions good and evil—played a role in the emergence of the first fitnah, and they were one of its main causes. The superficially religious innovators with good intention believed that ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was mistaken. And the greedy with evil intention believed that they were entitled to further rights from the Muslim treasury which they *had* to attain.

From these incidents we understand that there was a group of people who were unable to differentiate between truth and falsehood and another who were overtaken by greed. The Saba’iyyah took advantage of the simple mindedness of the former and the greed of the latter in inciting the fitnah.

The narrations paint a picture of the Bedouins as a formidable group who were heavily involved with the Saba’iyyah in the fitnah. Consider this factuality in the statements provided below.

The words of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in his letter to the cities:

أغاروا علينا في جوار رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وحرمه وأرض الهجرة، وثابت إليهم الأعراب

They have attacked us in the vicinity of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, in his sanctified place, in the land of migration. Now the Bedouins have returned to them.¹

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا states:

إن الغوغاء من أهل الأمصار ونزاع القبائل غزوا حرم رسول الله عل وأحدثوا فيه الأحداث وأووا المحدثين... مع ما نالوا من قتل إمام المسلمين بلا ترة ولا عذر

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 462.

The scum of the cities and the disputed tribes attacked the sanctified city of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. They have caused havoc and have afforded protection to the ones causing such. They have killed the Imām of the Muslims for which they have no defense nor excuse.¹

When the Banū Umayyah, Ya'ālā ibn Umayyah², Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, and 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا came together and decided they would seek to avenge the blood of 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and fight the Saba'iyyah, a call was made:

إن عائشة تريد البصرة وليس في ستمائة بعير ما تغنون به غوغاء وجلبة الأعراب وعبيدا قد انتشروا
وافترشوا أذرعهم مسعدين الأول واعية

'Ā'ishah intends going to Baṣrah and six hundred camels are not enough in facing the riffraff, the Bedouins, and slaves who have spread out and extended their power ready to join forces at a moment's notice.³

'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said to the people of Madīnah after the assassination of 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

يا أيها الناس ! أخرجوا الأعراب عنكم ، وقال : يا معشر الأعراب ! الحقوا بمباهكم ، فأبت السبئية -
الطاعة ، وأطاعهم الأعراب

“O people! Remove the Bedouins. O Bedouins! Return to your places.” The Saba'iyyah refused to obey. The Bedouins obeyed.

When Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا sought to mete out the punishment against the killers of 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, he said to them:

يا إخوتاه إني لست أجهل ما تعلمون ، ولكني كيف أصنع بقوم يملكونا ولا نملكهم ! ها هم هؤلاء قد
ثارت معهم عبدانكم وثابت إليهم أعرابكم

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 454.

2 A ṣaḥābī.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 438.

My brothers! I am not unaware of what you know. However, how do I deal with a people who own us and we do not own them. Your slaves and the Bedouins have joined forces with these people.¹

The statement of Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām رضي الله عنه when asked about the assassination of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه also makes this quite clear. He said:

عدي على أمير المؤمنين ، فقتل بلا نرة ولا عذر ، قيل : ومن - قال : الغوغاء من الأمصار ونزاع القبائل وظاهرهم الأعراب والعيبد

An attack was carried out against the Amīr al-Mu‘minīn. He was killed an innocent man. It was said to him, “Who”? He replied, “The scum of the cities and the disputed clans. They were assisted by the Bedouins and the slaves.”²

III. The nature of social change during the era of ‘Uthmān

The khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه saw perilous changes occur in the Islamic Empire. Initially having a relatively small footprint with its headquarters in Madīnah Munawwarah, it went on to rule over the Arabian Peninsula and eventually becoming a global Empire. By this time, it held within its power the lands of Iraq, Shām, Egypt, parts of Africa, Armenia, the Persian lands, and Islands across the Mediterranean Sea.³

The changes in the nature of the state and introduction of individuals from demographics far and wide brought about a new wave of Muslims who as a general trend were far less impactful than the earlier Muslims upon whose shoulders the Empire was erected. The earlier Muslims were defined by the strength of their faith, their clear understanding of the Islamic creed, and their overarching ability in supressing the self in subjugation to the Islamic code as outlined by the Qur’ān and Sunnah.

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 437.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 461.

3 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 157- 168.

These defining characteristics were found to a lesser degree amongst the new wave of adherents who were a consequence of the wide spread conquests. Novel sentiments of individual greed, tribalism, fanaticism, and remnants of the old ways flourished within them. They had not received the same Islamic guidance in so far as Islamic creed goes compared to what the earlier Muslims, the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, had received from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The reason for the diluted guidance they received was their sheer numbers and constant involvement in the wars and conquests. These new Muslims were thus influenced by what they heard on one hand whilst on the other hand they continued to regurgitate their ideologies of old.

This phenomenon has been aptly described in a letter ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ sent to his governors:

أما بعد ، فإن الرعية قد طعنت في الانتشار ، ونزعت إلى الشر ، وأعداها على ذلك ثلاث : دنيا مؤثرة وأهواء متشرعة ، وضغائن محمولة

The public has split and have taken to evil. This is due to three principle reasons, preference of the world, following of desires, and sentiments of hatred.¹

The narration of al-Madā’inī relates the words of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that indicates to the change of conditions after the new adherents had come into the fold:

يا ابن عدي والله إني مظلوم منعي علي لقد أسلمت وصحبت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فما خالفته ولا غششته ثم صحبت أبا بكر ثم عمر رضی الله عنهما فما خالفتهما ولا غششتهما حتى ماتا أفما ترون لي مثل ما رأيت لمن قبلي

O Ibn ‘Adī. By Allah I am oppressed and being barricaded. I accepted Islam and enjoyed the company of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. I never disobeyed him and

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 240.

2 He is ‘Ubayd Allah ibn ‘Adī ibn al-Khiyār al-Qurashī al-Madanī. Amongst the jurists and scholars of the Tābi‘īn.

• Al-‘Ijlī says, “A Tābi‘ī, reliable. From the great Tābi‘īn.”

continued ...

never cheated him. I then enjoyed the company of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما. I never disobeyed them and never cheated them until they passed away. Do you then not consider me as you considered those before me?¹

The reality of change within the Islamic society becomes quite clear from the contents of a letter sent by Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ², the Amīr of Kūfah, to ‘Uthmān. He says:

إن أهل الكوفة قد اضطرب أمرهم وغلب أهل الشرف منهم والبيوتات والسابقة والقدمة والغالب على تلك البلاد روادف ردف وأعراب لمحتت حتى ما ينظر إلى ذي شرف ولا بلاء من نازلتها ولا نابتها

The people of Kūfah are in a bad way and the people of honour and those who became Muslim early on and served Islam are suppressed. Those who are prevailing in this land are the lowest class of people and the ignorant Bedouins so you hardly see anyone there who is noble or who has a history of Islam and Jihad.³

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- Ibn Ḥibbān has listed him amongst the reliable.
- Ibn Sa‘d ranks him amongst the first category of the Tābi‘īn of Madinah.

He passed away the year 90 A.H/709 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 4 pg. 49; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 318; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 64; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 36.

1 Ibn Shabbah: *Al-Muṣannaf*, vol. 3 pg. 971; al-Bukhārī has narrated a similar narration, vol. 4 pg. 202.

2 He is Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ al-Umawī al-Qurashī. Governor and leader in the conquests.

- Al-Dhahabī says, “He was a noble, brave, tolerant, praiseworthy, dignified, and intelligent leader. Worthy of the post of governor. As leader of Kūfah during the era of ‘Uthmān, he invaded and conquered Ṭabaristān. He is also one of those who wrote the muṣḥaf for ‘Uthmān.”
- Sa‘īd ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Dimashqī says, “The Arabic of the Qur’ān was written according to the dialect of Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ as he bore the closest resemblance to the dialect of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم.”

He passed away the year 59 A.H/679 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 30; Al-Fasawī: *Al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 1 pg. 292; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Mashāhīr ‘Ulamā’ al-Amṣār*, pg. 66; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 3 pg. 444; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 2 pg. 47.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 279

Furthermore, the mixing in the conquered lands and the intermingling of the Arab tribes led to creating a society that held specific attitudes and outlooks, to them. Taking a look at Kūfah for instance, one would clearly see such intermingling. The southern tribes were to be found in the northern regions and the tribes of Muḍar and Rabīʿah were inflated by people from the tribes of Ḥijāz and Najd, and so on and so forth.¹

And the people of the conquered lands did not get a big share of Islamic education and did not become infused with the Islamic spirit as had been the case with the Ṣaḥābah, the Muhājirīn and Anṣār; the same was also true of the Arab tribes who mixed with the people of the conquered lands. Islam had managed to fuse many tribes in a single melting-pot for a while. But it should be taken into account that the process of teaching and education that was led by a solid base of the Muhājirīn and Anṣār was not able to encompass these huge numbers of people, so the non-Arabs were unable to get rid of all the ideas and customs that they had followed during their Jāhiliyyah. This was due to a lack of balance between the expansion of the conquests and the extension in teaching people in order to enable them to understand the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger ﷺ.

Yet, the jihad was invariably accompanied by callers to the faith and teachers who sought to teach the people their religion so as to keep pace (with the conquests) and avoid any weakness in the Muslim ranks and avoid any widening of the gap between the conquerors and the inhabitants of the conquered lands, which would result in many negative consequences and affect the political and ideological unity of the Muslim ranks.

It was not possible to avoid these negative consequences despite the enthusiastic efforts in the field of teaching Islam, the reason being that the spread of Islam was so swift and far-reaching. Iraq and the regions beyond it, as well as Shām, were conquered within a few short years, and it was not humanly possible for education efforts to reach and encompass the huge numbers of people in those regions.

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 45.

Similarly, there was not enough time to consolidate the teachings of Islam in the hearts of many people which, along with other factors, led to confusion and negative consequences against the Islamic ethos. This was clearly manifested in the last years of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه reign.

IV. Prosperity and its effect on the society during the era of ‘Uthmān

The riches of the world fell at the feet of the Muslims as a result of the conquests and the multitudes of influxes of war booty into the Muslim treasury, besides the personal gains of the soldiers. For instance, the share for each of the cavalry regiment at Madā’in¹ was twelve thousand² and at the conquest of Tustar³ was three thousand while the infantry received a thousand dirhams each.⁴

It is obvious that these blessings and this income from the conquests would have a great impact on society, as prosperity resulted in the pre-occupation with wealth. Moreover, it would also become a cause of competition and hatred, especially among those whose faith was not strong enough to purify their hearts and who were not disciplined by piety, such as the desert Arabs, the riff-raff, those who converted as the result of conquest, and the members of prosperous nations who entered Islam at a superficial level, who had been living a life of luxury and competing in those things.

This became abundantly clear during the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, who understood this phenomenon and warned how this would change the Ummah in his letter to the people:

1 Yaqūt says, “Whenever a new King of the Sasanian Empire came to be, he would build a city next to the one previously built. It was thus called Madā’in (lit. cities). It is situated in Iraq. See, Yaqūt: *Mu’jam al-Buldān*, vol. 5 pg. 74.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 20.

3 Tustar is a city of Iran in the province of Khuzestan. See, Yaqūt: *Mu’jam al-Buldān*, vol. 2 pg. 29. Today it is known as Shooshtar.

4 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 87.

فإن أمر هذه الأمة صائر إلى الابتداع بعد اجتماع ثلاث فيكم تكامل النعم ويبلغ أولادكم من السبايا وقرائة الأعراب والأعاجم للقرآن

The affairs of this Ummah will drift into innovation after three things happen to you: when prosperity becomes widespread, when your children from female prisoners of war reach puberty, and when the Bedouin and non-Arabs start to read Qur'ān.¹

As for widespread prosperity, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī—who was an eyewitness—spoke of the state of society, the abundance of goods and the accumulation of wealth, and how the people changed and became extravagant and ungrateful. He said:

ادركت عثمان على ما تقدموا عليه ، فلما يأتي على الناس يوم إلا وهم يقتسمون فيه خيرا يقال لهم : يا معشر المسلمين اغدوا على أعطياتكم فيأخذونها وافرة ، ثم يقال لهم اغدوا على السمن والعسل ، الأعطيات جارية ، والأرزاق دارة ، والعدو متقى ، وذات البين حسن ، والخير كثير ... والأخرى كان السيف مغمدا عن أهل الإسلام فسلوه على أنفسهم فوالله ما زال مسلولاً إلى يوم الناس هذا ، وايم الله إنني لأراه سيفاً مسلولاً إلى يوم القيامة

I saw why people got upset with 'Uthmān. Hardly a day went by without provisions being shared out among the people, it would be said to them: O Muslims, come and take your stipends, and they would take a lot. Then it would be said to them: Come and take purified butter and honey. The stipends were regular, the provisions were plentiful, the enemy was defeated, relationships were good and there was plenty. What is more, the sword was never unsheathed against the people of Islam, then they unsheathed it against themselves, and by Allah it has remained unsheathed until today, and by Allah it will continue like that until the Day of Resurrection.²

As for the Muslims' children from the female prisoners of war reaching puberty, this manifested itself in their lifestyle of ease and luxury. The first evil that

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 245.

2 Ibn Shabbah: *Al-Muṣannaf*, vol. 3 pgs. 1023-1024; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 214.

appeared in Madinah when prosperity became widespread was when the people started to race pigeons and shooting with slingshots. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه appointed a man from Banū Layth in the eighth year of his caliphate to clip the wings of the birds and break the slingshots.¹

People began to get intoxicated from drinking nabīdh, so ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه sent a man to go around among the people with a stick to prevent that. When it got worse, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه complained to people, and they agreed to flog people for drinking nabīdh. He caught some of them and they were flogged. Then if ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه caught anyone doing evil or unsheathing his weapon, he would banish him from Madinah, and their fathers started raising a hue and cry.²

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه stood up in Madinah and said:

ان الناس تبلغني عنهم هنات وهنات ، وإنني لا أكون أول من فتح بابها ولا أدار راحتها (أي الفتنة) ألا وإنني زام نفسي بزمام وملجمها بلجام ، فأقودها بزمامها وأكبعها بلجامها ، ومنا ولكم طرف الحبل ، فمن اتبعني حملته على الأمر الذي يعرف ، ومن لم يتبعني فمن الله خلف منه وعزاء منه ، ألا وإن الكل نفس يوم القيامة سائقا وشهيدا ، سائق يسوقها على أمر الله وشاهد يشهد عليها بعملها ، فمن كان يريد الله بشيء فليبشر ، ومن كان إنما يريد الدنيا فقد خسر

I am hearing news about wrong-doing that the people are committing, and I am not going to be the first one to open the door to fitnah or initiate it. I am reining myself in and restraining myself. I will rein and restrain by the bridle. Whoever follows me, I will lead him in the path that he knows, and whoever does not follow me, for every soul there is a Day of Resurrection and an angel to drive and an angel to bear witness to his deeds. Whoever seeks the pleasure of Allah, glad tidings for him, but whoever seeks worldly gain will be a loser.³

Thus when ‘Uthmān, the pious man and rightly guided khalīfah, carried out his duties, and introduced disciplinary actions against the sons of the rich who had

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 398.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 399.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 241.

started to lead a life of luxury and corruption, those deviants joined with others who resented him.

With regard to the Bedouin and non-Arabs studying the Qur'ān, this emerged clearly with the formation of a class in the Muslim society which learned Qur'ān not for the sake of reward in the Hereafter, but for payments offered as encouragement and to soften people's hearts.¹

In circumstances such as these, when prosperity was widespread and the Muslims were living a life of ease and plenty, and the people had free time after conquering the regions and they felt safe and secure, they started to criticize and feel resentment against their khalīfah.²

Hence we can see the effect of prosperity in creating fitnah, and we can understand the advice 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ gave to 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Rabī'ah—a Ṣaḥābī—when he was besieging al-Bāb³:

إن الرعية قد أبطر كثيرا منهم البطنة ، فقصر بهم ولا تقتحم بالمسلمين فإني خاش أن يبتلوا

Many of the people have become heavy (from eating too much), so take it easy with them and do not expose the Muslims to risk, for I am worried lest they be tested.⁴

Concluding the sermon, 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, whilst advising the Muslims after the riches of the world had opened up to them, said:

ألا لا تبطنكم الفانية ولا تشغلنكم عن الباقية ... واحذروا أحداث الدهر المغير ، والزموا جماعتكم ، ولا تفرقوا شيئا وأحزابا

1 Muḥammad Ḥamīd Allah: *Majmū'ah al-Wathā'iq al-Siyāsiyyah fī al-'Ahd al-Nabawī wa al-Khilāfah al-Rāshidah*, pg. 392 quoting from *Al-Amwāl* of Ibn Zanjawayh.

2 Al-Dhabābī: *Duwal al-Islam*, vol. 1 pg. 12.

3 What is meant by al-Bāb is a region in Azerbaijan which is called al-Durr al-Bund. See, Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 1 pg. 303; vol. 2 pg. 449. Present day Qafqaz.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 304.

Do not let this transient life tempt you and do not let it distract you from that which is eternal. Beware of what may happen, adhere to the main body (of Muslims) and do not be divided into groups and factions.¹

VII. ‘Uthmān coming after ‘Umar and their difference in disposition

The fact that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه came directly after ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and the differences in their natures led to changes in the way in which people were dealt with. Whereas ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was a strong character who was strict both with himself and with those who were under his authority, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was softer in nature and kinder in his dealings with others, and he was not as strict with himself or others as ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه himself said:

يرحم الله عمر ، ومن يطبق ما كان عمر يطبق

May Allah have mercy on ‘Umar; who can do what ‘Umar used to do?²

Although the people were happy with ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه during the first part of his reign, because he was lenient with them where ‘Umar رضي الله عنه had been strict, and love of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه became widespread attaining proverbial status:

أحبك والرحمن حب قريش عثمان

By Allah, I love you as the Quraysh love ‘Uthmān.³

Later on they began to criticize him. This had to do with ‘Uthmān’s رضي الله عنه upbringing, as he was kind, easy-going, soft-natured, tactful and diplomatic, which influenced the way things developed and changed during his reign from how they had been during the reign of his predecessor ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه understood that when he said to some people whom he imprisoned:

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 384.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 401.

3 Ibn Qutaybah: *Al-Ma‘ārif*, pg. 83.

أُتَدْرُونَ مَا جَرَأَكُمْ عَلَيَّ - مَا جَرَأَكُمْ عَلَيَّ إِلَّا حِلْمِي

Do you know why you are daring to challenge me? Nothing made you do so but my forbearance.¹

When the intentions of some of the rebels became apparent, after ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had proven them to be wrong with evidence that refuted all criticisms they presented to him in front of a group of Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and other people, the Muslims insisted on killing them but ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ insisted on letting them go because of his forbearance and gentleness, saying:

بَلْ نَعْفُو وَنَقْبَلُ ، وَنَبْصِرُهُمْ بِجَهْدِنَا ، وَلَا نَحَاءُ أَحَدًا حَتَّى يَرْكَبَ حِدَا أَوْ يَبْدِيَ كَفْرًا

We shall pardon and not kill; we will try to explain to them and we will not punish anyone unless he commits an offence that requires a punishment or makes a blatant show of disbelief.²

In this manner the law in the hands of Fārūq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was absolute and swift whilst in the hands of Dhū al-Nūrayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ it was gentle and forgiving. And in both was goodness.

V. Difference of political opinion between ‘Uthmān and ‘Umar in permitting the departure of the Ṣaḥābah

‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had prevented the prominent people of Quraysh of the Muhājirīn from leaving to other regions, except with permission for a short period.³ ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was afraid for these Ṣaḥābah if they scattered in the conquered lands they would become involved in acquiring property and wealth and that people would be trialed by them. However, ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ allowed them to go out and was easy-going with them. Al-Sha‘bī says:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 251.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 346.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 396.

فلما ولي عثمان خلى عنهم فاضطربوا في البلاد وانقطع إليهم الناس ، فكان أحب إليهم من عمر

When ‘Uthmān became khalīfah, he let them go and they went all over, and the people gathered around them, so he was dearer to them than ‘Umar.¹

What though was the fear of ‘Umar that he put in place such policies which ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then went on to relax? The result of relaxing this policy was that men of the Quraysh took to wealth in the cities and people took to them. For seven years each group continued to campaign to whom they took to.²

Then Ibn al-Sawdā’ came into the faith and spread his dialogue whilst riches flowed. Evil incidents then began to roll out due to him throughout the life of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.³

One report states:

فلما ولي عثمان لم يأخذهم بالذي كان يأخذهم عمر فانساحوا في البلاد ، فلما رأوها ورأوا الدنيا ورآهم الناس انقطع إليهم من لم يكن له طول ولا مزية في الإسلام ، فكان مغموما (مغمورا) في الناس ، وصاروا أوزاعا إليهم وأملوهم ، وتقدموا في ذلك فقالوا : يملكون فنكون قد عرفناهم ، وتقدمنا في التقريب والانتطاع إليهم فكان ذلك أول وهن دخل على الإسلام ، وأول فتنة كانت في العامة ليس إلا ذلك

When ‘Uthmān rose to the khilāfah and proved not to be strict with them as ‘Umar had been, they spread all over. When they saw this world and the people saw them, those who had no virtue and nothing to offer Islam and were not known among the people at all gathered around them, and thus different groups formed.

That was the first weakness that appeared in Islam, and the first fitnah that affected the masses.⁴

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 397.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 398.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 398.

4 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 397.

VI. Tribalism: Some tribes finding it difficult to swallow the leadership of the Quraysh

Ibn Khaldūn says regarding this:

لما استكمل الفتح واستكمل للملة الملك ، ونزل العرب بالأمصار في حدود ما بينهم وبين الأم من البصرة والكوفة والشام ومصر ، وكان المختصون بصحبة الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم والافتداء بهديه وآدابه المهاجرين والأنصار و قریش وأهل الحجاز ، ومن ظفر بمثل ذلك من غيرهم ، وأما سائر العرب من بني بكر ابن وائل عبد القيس وسائر ربيعة والأزد وكندة وتميم وقضاة وغيرهم فلم يكونوا من تلك الصحبة بمكان إلا قليل منهم . وكانت لهم في الفتوحات قدم فكانوا يرون ذلك الأنفسهم مع ما يدين به فضلًاؤهم من تفضيل أهل السابقة ومعرفة حقهم . وما كانوا فيه من الدهول والدهش الأمر النبوة وتردد الوحي وتنزل الملائكة . فلما انحصر ذلك العباب ، وتنوسي الحال بعض الشيء ، وذلل العدو واستفحل الملك ، كانت عروق الجاهلية تنبض ، ووجدوا الرياسة عليهم من المهاجرين والأنصار و قریش وسواهم ، فأثنت نفوسهم منه ، ووافق ذلك أيام عثمان فكانوا يظهرن الطعن في ولاته بالأمصار ، والمؤاخذة لهم بالخطوات ، والاستبطاء عليهم الطاعات ، والتجني بسؤال الاستبداد منهم والعزل ، ويفضون في النكير على عثمان ، وفشت المقالة في ذلك في أتباعهم ، وتنادوا بالظلم من الأمراء في جهاتهم ، وانتهت الأخبار بذلك إلى الصحابة بالمدينة ، فارتابوا وأفاضوا في عزل عثمان وحمله على عزل أمرائه ، وبعث إلى الأمصار من يأتيه بالخبر فرجعوا إليه فقالوا : ما أنكرنا شيئًا ولا أنكره أعيان المسلمين ولا عوامهم

When the conquests were complete and the Muslims gained full control and power, and the Arabs settled in the regions on the border between them and other nations, in Baṣrah, Kūfah, Syria, and Egypt, there were those who had been Companions of the Rasūlullāh ﷺ and were adhering to his guidance, the Muhājirīn, Anṣār, Quraysh and people of the Ḥijāz, as well as others who were like them. As for the rest of the Arabs, such as the tribes of Banū Bakr ibn Wā'il, 'Abd al-Qays, Rabī'ah, al-Azd, Kindah Quḍā'ah and others, only a few of them attained that level, but they played a major role in the conquests so they saw themselves as deserving of respect, but the people of wisdom showed greater respect to the earlier generation and recognized their rights, as they were still in a state of awe at the issue of Prophethood and the coming of the revelation and the angels. But when the influence of that awe waned, and when the enemy was humiliated and the Muslims' power grew stronger, ideas of old began to re-emerge. When they realized that their leaders were from among the Muhājirīn

and Anṣār, from Quraysh and other tribes, they began to resent that, and this happened to be at the time of ‘Uthmān. They started to criticize the governors openly in the various regions, picking on everything they did and blaming them for that. They made unfair demands for governors to be dismissed and replaced, and they started to criticize ‘Uthmān a great deal, and this criticism became widespread among their followers, along with rumors that spoke of injustice in various areas. News of that reached the Ṣaḥābah in Madinah, so they grew suspicious and began to speak of dismissing ‘Uthmān or telling him to dismiss his governors. He sent people to the regions to check on this news, and they came back to him and said: We did not find anything to be denounced and neither the prominent Muslims nor the ordinary Muslims denounced the governors.¹

Furthermore, tribalism was a force that provoked emotions which led to differences in areas such as Kūfah. This can be understood from the following narration of Sayf:

أن سعيد بن العاص جلس يوماً للناس فدخل عليهم جمع فيهم الأشر وصعصعة وخنيس بن حبيش وابنه عبد الرحمن وغيرهم ... وبينما هم يتحدثون قال خنيس : ما أجود طلحة بن عبيد الله ! فقال سعيد : إن من له مثل النشاستج لحقيق أن يكون جوادا ، والله لو كان لي مثلها لأعاشكم الله منها عيشا رغدا ، فقال عبد الرحمن بن خنيس - وهو صغير - : والله لو ددت أن هذا الملطاط لك - يعني ما كان لآل كسرى على جانب الفرات مما يلي الكوفة - فثار عليه الأشر ومن معه وقالوا : فض الله فاك ، والله لقد هممنا بك ، فقال أبوه : حدث لا تؤاخذوه . فقالوا : يتمنى له من سوادنا - ... أنت أمرته بذلك ، وثاروا عليه ، فحاول أبوه منعهم ، فضربوهما حتى غشي عليهما ، وجعل سعيد يناشدهم ويأبون ، وتأثر أهل الكوفة عامة بالحادثة ، وبنو أسد خاصة ، وكتب أشرفها وصلحاؤها إلى عثمان بإخراجهم ،

فكتب إليهم : إذا اجتمع ملاكم على ذلك فألحقوهم بمعاوية ،

وكتب إلى معاوية : « إن أهل الكوفة قد أخرجوا إليك نفرا خلقوا للفتنة ، فارعمهم وقم عليهم ، فإن أنست منهم رشدا فاقبل منهم ، وإن أعيوك فارددهم عليهم

Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ once held court for the people. Some men gathered by him,

1 Ibn Khaldūn: *Al-ʿIbar*, vol. 2 pgs. 1026-1027.

amongst them al-Ashtar, Ṣaṣa'ah¹, Khunays ibn Ḥubaysh², his son 'Abd al-Raḥmān, and others. Whilst conversing, Khunays said, "How generous is Ṭalḥah ibn 'Ubayd Allāh!"

Sa'īd said, "Indeed one who owns the likes of al-Nashāstaj³ it is only right that he be generous. By Allah, if I possessed anything like it, Allah would provide you all with a life of ease."

Then 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Khunays, who was a young man, said, "By Allah, I wish that this al-Milṭāṭ were yours"—that is, the Sasanian crown lands alongside the Euphrates adjacent to Kūfah. Al-Ashtar and those with him leapt up and said, "May Allah seal your mouth! By Allah, we have something in mind for you!"

Then Ḥubaysh said, "He is only a boy, don't argue with him."

They said, "He desires part of our Sawād for himself. As you have instructed him"

Then they rose up in fury against him. His father went to his defense, but they beat both of them unconscious. Sa'īd began pleading with them to stop, but they refused.

1 Ṣaṣa'ah ibn Ṣoḥān al-'Abdī. Resident of Kūfah. A senior Tābī'ī; a Mukhaḍram. He formed part of the group of 'Alī. Both his brothers were killed at Jamal and he took the flag.

- Ibn Sa'd has deemed him reliable.
- Al-Dhahabī says, "He was noble and obedient. He spoke eloquently and distinctly."

He passed away the year 60 A.H./679 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 221; Khalīfah: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, pg. 144; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, vol. 4 pg. 446; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām an-Nubalā'*, vol. 3 pg. 528.

2 He is Khunays ibn Ḥubaysh al-Asadī. Imām al-Ṭabarī has mentioned him in the events of the 16th year. He fought at Qādisiyyah under the command of Sa'd ibn Abī al-Waqqās رضي الله عنه. He was the one who gave 'Umar رضي الله عنه the glad tidings victory after having being defeated. He then mentions him in the 35th year. 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه had appointed him over Māsabdān. See, Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pgs. 22 and 422.

3 Ṭalḥah ibn 'Ubayd Allāh رضي الله عنه bought this land from the people of Kūfah residing in Ḥijāz in exchange for his properties in Khaybar. See, Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 5 pg. 285.

The people of Kūfah were taken aback by this incident and more so the Banū Asad. The nobles and pious wrote to ‘Uthmān to remove them.

He replied, “If all of you agree on this then send them to Mu‘āwiyah.”

And he wrote to Mu‘āwiyah, “The Kūfans have expelled and sent to you certain innately rebellious individuals. If you observe decency within them, then receive them but if they prove burdensome to you, then return them.”¹

The narration of al-Wāqidī goes as follows:

أن الأشتر وجماعة من وجوه أهل الكوفة سهروا ليلة عند سعيد بن العاص ، فقال سعيد : إنما هذا السواد بستان لقریش ، فقال الأشتر : أتزعم أن السواد الذي أفاءه الله علينا بأسيافنا لك ولقومك ، والله ما يزيد أوفاكم فيه نصيباً إلا أن يكون كأحدنا ، فاستنكر عليهم عبد الرحمن الأسدي - وكان على شرطة سعيد - وقال : أتردون على الأمير مقاتله - وأغلظ عليهم ، فلم يتحملوه ، ووثبوا عليه ، ووطئوا عليه حتى غشي عليه

One night, the prominent men of Kūfah were holding conversation at the residence of Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ. Among them were al-Malik al-Ashtar.

Sa‘īd said, “This Sawād is but a garden for Quraysh.”

Al-Ashtar replied, “Do you claim that the Sawād, which Allah made booty for us by our swords, is a garden for you and your tribe? Allah gives no additional share in it even to the most deserving of you; on the contrary, he should be like one of us.”

‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Asadī who was in command of Sa‘īd’s guard, said, “Do you dispute the governor’s statement?” He berated them harshly.

They could not bear it and they jumped on him and trampled him until he passed out.²

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 317-318.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 322-323.

Al-Sha'bī says that this incident was the beginning of the fitnah in Kūfah. It was the first incitement of evil from Shayṭān between the Muslims.¹

If the incident related by Imām al-Ṭabarī regarding the 'Garden of the Quraysh' is deemed authentic then the condemnation would be justified as the Sawād was truly not a garden of the Quraysh.

Thus, even though the incident was impactful upon the people of Kūfah, Shayṭān had incited evil by way of ill words and physical assault. Such behavior goes against the praiseworthy teachings of Islam which seeks to inculcate forbearance, patience, and forgiveness in favour of one committing a blunder. It is necessary for a Muslim to advise the ruler when he is mistaken as he is not infallible. This advice should be in a most favorable manner with wisdom and positive words.

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 251.

Module two: The personality of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and the circumstances surrounding his assassination.

Section One: The personality of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān and his life.

I. His character and virtues.

He is, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān ibn Abī al-‘Āṣ ibn Umayyah ibn ‘Abd al-Shams ibn ‘Abd Manāf ibn Quṣay ibn Kilāb ibn Murrah ibn Luway ibn Ghālib ibn Fahr ibn Mālik, Abū ‘Amr al-Qurashī al-Umawī. Leader of the faithful, possessor of the two lights, and one who traversed both migrations.¹

He is one of the earliest Muslims, one of the Ten given glad tidings of paradise, and one of the six appointed by ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه as council on the shūra having said that Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم passed away being pleased with them. He is the third of the rightly guided Khulafā’. Leader of the Islamic conquests, and the one who gathered people onto a principle manuscript.

From the time he accepted Islam, his virtues and character were a tall beacon to be followed. He was in his faith resolute, guiding, gentle, patient, forgiving, benevolent, kind, and generous. He consoled the believers, assisted the weak, and overlooked the hurtful until he met his end as a martyr, may Allah be pleased with him.

The most famous characteristic of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه is that noble quality which Allah had beautified him with. By virtue of it he was a centre of goodness, gentleness, and kindness to those around him; the quality of modesty. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم held this quality of his in high esteem and praised him due to it. The narration of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* relates that ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها says:

كان رسول الله جل مضطجعا في بيتي كاشفا عن فخذيهِ - أو ساقيه - فاستأذن أبو بكر فأذن له وهو على تلك الحال فتحدث ، ثم استأذن عمر فأذن له وهو كذلك فتحدث ، ثم استأذن عثمان فجلس رسول الله

1 See, Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pg. 53; Khalīfah: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, pg. 10; Al-Dūlābī: *Al-Kunā*, vol. 1 pg. 8; and Ibn Ḥazam: *Jamharah Ansāb al-‘Arab*, pg. 75.

عل وسؤى ثيابه فدخل فتحدث ، فلما خرج قالت عائشة : دخل أبو بكر فلم تهتش له ولم تباله ، ثم دخل عمر فلم تهتش له ولم تباله ، ثم دخل عثمان فجلست وسؤيت ثيابك ؟ فقال : ألا أستحي من رجل تستحي منه الملائكة

Rasūlullāh ﷺ was reclining in his house with his thighs or calves uncovered. Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ requested entry and was permitted while the Prophet ﷺ remained in his position. He then conversed with the Prophet ﷺ. ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then requested entry and was also permitted while the Prophet ﷺ was in the same position. He also conversed with the Prophet ﷺ. ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ requested entry, upon his request, the Prophet ﷺ sat up, straightened his clothing and permitted him to enter. He then entered and conversed with the Prophet ﷺ.

After he left, ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا remarked, “Abū Bakr entered and you did not shy away nor did you pay attention to the situation, ‘Umar entered and you did not shy away nor did you pay attention to the situation. When ‘Uthmān entered you sat up and straightened your clothing.”¹

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Should I not be bashful of a man around whom the angels are bashful?”

Ibn ‘Asākir narrates in the authority of Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

عثمان حبي تستحي منه الملائكة

‘Uthmān is so modest, the angels are bashful around him.²

Aḥmad narrates with his chain of transmission to Rasūlullāh ﷺ:

أرحم أمتي أبو بكر ، وأشدّها في دين الله عمر وأصدقها حياء عثمان ، وأعلمها بالحلال والحرام معاذ بن جبل ، وأقرؤها لكتاب الله أبي وأعلمها بالفرائض زيد بن ثابت ، ولكل أمة أمين ، وأمين هذه الأمة أبو عبيدة بن الجراح

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 15 pgs. 168-169; Abū Nu‘aym: *Ma‘rifah al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 266.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 86.

The most merciful of my Ummah is Abū Bakr. The one who adheres most sternly to the religion of Allah is ‘Umar. The one who possesses the highest level of modesty is ‘Uthmān. The most knowledgeable in matters pertaining to permissible and impermissible is Mu‘āz ibn Jabal. The most proficient reciter is Ubay. The most knowledgeable in the science of inheritance is Zayd ibn Thābit and every Ummah has a trustworthy individual and the trustworthy man of this Ummah is Abū ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāh.¹

It is unfortunate that many academics confuse modesty with shyness. They opine that his modest disposition led ‘Uthmān to overlook much of what he was opposed to. However, this fits the definition of shyness not modesty. Modesty as defined by the scholars is, ‘constricting of the self from abominable acts fearing blame’. Another definition given is, ‘a characteristic that falls between insolence which leads one to brazen distasteful acts and between complete inattention to it’. On the other hand, shyness is defined as ‘the self being opposed to any action at all’.²

It is well documented that the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ were all modest. The authentic narration states:

ان الحياء من الايمان

Modesty is part of faith³

It is a praiseworthy characteristic in Islam. ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ has been specifically applauded for it due to his intense modesty and that he is the sincerest of the Ummah in it. The fact that the angels were bashful around him, as in authentic narration, goes to further emphasise his virtue over the rest.

1 Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 5 pg. 330; Aḥmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 22 pg. 188. The chain of narration is authentic and its narrators are reliable.

2 Al-Tabānī al-Maghribī: *Ifādah al-Akḥbār*, vol. 1 pg. 324.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 1 pg. 11.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was of the most generous of the Ummah. He had carried out actions to this end that are forever imprinted into Islamic history. Generosity was an innate characteristic of his. He would continuously console and uplift the believers.

Consider the following narration:

أنه كان له على طلحة بن عبيد الله - وكان من أجود الناس - خمسون ألفاً ، فقال له طلحة يوماً : قد تهيأ مالك فاقبضه ، فقال له عثمان : هو لك معونة على مروءتك

Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh was owing him a sum of fifty thousand.

One day Ṭalḥah said to him, “Your money is ready for collection”.

‘Uthmān replied. “It is for you to help you on your valour.”¹

Imām al-Bukhārī has narrated the following on the authority of Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī²:

أن عثمان - رضي الله عنه - حيث حوصر أشرف عليهم من الدار ، وقال : أنشدكم ، ولا أنشد إلا أصحاب النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم - تعلمون أن رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - قال من جهز جيش العسرة فله الجنة ، فجهزتهم ، - قال - اي الراوي - فصدقوه بما قال

When ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was circled by the rebels, he looked upon them from his home and said, “I ask you, and I ask nobody but the Companions of the

1 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 216.

2 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Rabī‘ah, Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī al-Kūfī.

- Al-‘Ijlī, “A Kūfī, Ṭābiṭ, reliable.”
- Al-Nasaī says, “Reliable.”
- Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr says, “He is considered reliable according to all of them.”
- Ibn Ḥajar says, “Reliable, trustworthy.”

He passed away the year 72 A.H 691 A.D His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 301; Khalīfah: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, pg. 153; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 253; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 5 pg. 183.

Prophet ﷺ, do you not know that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, ‘Whoever equips the *Jaysh al-‘Usrah* (the Army of Distress) will be granted Paradise’, and I equipped it.” They attested to what he said.¹

The narration of al-Nasa’ī has the addition:

فجهزتهم حتى لم يفقدوا عقالا ولا خطاما

I equipped them to the extent of the hobbles and halters.²

It has been narrated a drought befell the people during the era of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. When conditions got worse, they came to him and said:

يا خليفة رسول الله، إن السماء لم تمطر، والأرض لم تنبت، وقد توقع الناس الهلاك فما نصنع - قال : انصرفوا واصبروا فإنني أرجو الله ألا تمسوا حتى يفرج الله عنكم، فلما كان آخر النهار ورد الخبر بأن عيزا لعثمان جاءت من الشام، فلما جاءت خرج الناس يتلقونها، فإذا هي ألف بعير موسوعة برا وزيتا وزبيبا، فأناخت بباب عثمان هه فجاءه التجار فقال لهم : ما تريدون - قالوا : إنك تعلم ما نريد، بعنا من هذا الذي وصل إليك، تعلم ضرورة الناس . قال حبا وكرامة، كم تريحوني على شرائي - قالوا : الدرهم در همين وقال : أعطيت زيادة على هذا، قالوا : أربعة، قال : أعطيت زيادة على هذا، قالوا : خمسة، قال : أعطيت أكثر من هذا، قالوا : يا أبا عمرو، ما بقي في المدينة تجار غيرنا وما سبقنا إليك أحد ! فمن ذا الذي أعطاك - قال : إن الله أعطاني بكل درهم عشرة، أعندكم زيادة - قالوا : لا، قال : فإني أشهد الله أنني جعلت ما حملت هذه العير صدقة لله على المساكين وفقراء المسلمين

“O Khalīfah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, the sky no longer brings down rain and the land no longer brings up plants and the people fear a disaster, what are we going to do?”

Hearing this, he said to them “Go now and be patient, and I hope that Allah will have brought His subsistence by the evening.”

In the evening news came that the caravan of ‘Uthmān had come from Shām. When it arrived people went to see it. They saw one thousand

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 3 pg. 198.

2 *Al-Nasa’ī: Al-Sunan*, vol. 5 pg. 46.

camels laden with corn, oil and flour, and stood near the house of ‘Uthmān, who put them in his house. When the merchants heard of the convoy, they came along to him to buy goods.

“What do you see?” He asked them.

They replied by saying that “You know what we want.”

Then he asked them, “How much profit will you give me?”

They replied, “One or two dirhams.”

He said, “I was offered more than that.”

They said, “Four.”

He said, “I was offered more.”

They said, “Then five.”

He said, “I was offered more.”

They said, “We are the only merchants in the town, so who offered you more than we did?”

He countered, “Allah offered me ten dirhams for every single dirham; do you have more than that?”

They replied, “No.”

He said, “Then you bear witness that I give all that camels along with the goods to be a charity for the cause of Allah for the sake of the poor and the needy Muslims.”¹

Those that slander and accuse ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ unjustly are greatly in need of opening their ears and hearts to these monumental actions, revere him as he

1 Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 243-244.

ought to be revered, and deal with this accused khalīfah with impartiality. The Muslim Ummah on the other hand are greatly in need of inculcating within themselves the spirit of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ thereby attaining mutual love, respect, and honour.

Amongst his acts of generosity is his having equipped the Jaysh al-‘Usrah at the Battle of Tabūk.

Imām Aḥmad records the following in *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*:

أن عثمان جاء بألف دينار في ثوبه فصبها في حجر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم حين جهز جيش العسرة ، فقال النبي عل : « ما ضر عثمان ما عمل بعد هذا أبدا

When the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was preparing Jaysh al-‘Usrah, ‘Uthmān came with a thousand dinars held in his clothes and poured it into the lap of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then said, “Nothing that ‘Uthmān does will ever affect him after this.”¹

He also narrates on the authority of Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī:

أن عثمان به حمل في غزوة تبوك على تسع مائة وأربعين بعيرا ثم جاء بستين فرا فأنتم بها الألف

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ donated nine hundred and forty camels to the Tabūk expedition. He then brought sixty horses thereby making it a thousand.²

Amongst his acts of generosity is that he purchased the Rūmah³ well for the Muslims.

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 516. The researcher, Waṣī Allah ‘Abbās says, “The chain is authentic.”; Al-Ḥākim: *Al-Mustadrak*, vol. 3 pg. 102. He says, “A narration with an authentic chain.” Al-Dhahabī concurs with him.

2 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 516. The researcher says, “Its narrators are reliable.”

3 It is currently known as the well of ‘Uthmān. It is situated in a garden that is said to be from the endowments of Masjid Nabawī. It was almost dried up when two other wells were dug close to it. It is within a five-mile radius from the sacred mosque on the Sulṭānah road.

Al-Baghawī¹ says:

أن المهاجرين لما قدموا المدينة استنكروا الماء ، وكان لرجل من بني غفار عين يقال لها رومة ، وكان يبيع القرية منها بمد ، فقال له النبي صل الله عليه وسلم بعينيها بعين في الجنة - فقال : يا رسول الله ! ليس لي ولعالي غيرها ، فبلغ ذلك عثمان و فاشتراها بخمسة وثلاثين ألف درهم ، ثم أتى النبي صل الله عليه وسلم فقال أتجعل لي ما جعلت له - قال : نعم ، قال عثمان : قد اشتريتها وجعلتها للمسلمين

When the Muhājirīn came to Madinah, they did not take to its water. There was a well that belonged to a man from the Banū Ghifār² that was named Rūmah. He would sell a qurbah from it for a mudd.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said to him, “Sell it to me in lieu of a well in Jannah.”

He replied, “O Messenger of Allah! My family and I have no other source of income.”

News of this exchange reached ‘Uthmān رضى الله عنه and he thus purchased it for thirty-five thousand Dirhams.

He then came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “Will you offer me the same that you offered him?”

The Prophet replied, “Yes.”

‘Uthmān said, “I have purchased it and made it over to the Muslims.”³

1 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn al-Mirzabān, Abū al-Qāsim al-Baghawī. A ḥāfiẓ of ḥadīth and muḥaddith of Iraq in his era. He has authored, *Mu’jam al-ṣaḥābah* and *Ma’ālim al-Tanzīl*. He passed away the year 317 A.H/929 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 10 pg. 111; Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fī tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 1 pg. 163; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, vol. 2 pg. 337.

2 A branch of Kinānah. They lived at the valley of al-Ṣafrā’ between Makkah and Madinah. See, Ibn al-Athīr; *Al-Lubāb fī tahdhīb al-Ansāb*, vol. 2 pg. 132.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 1 pg. 970.

Al-Tirmidhī narrates on the authority of Thumāmah ibn Ḥazn al-Qushayrī¹ who says:

شهدت الدار حين أشرف عليها عثمان فقال : أنشدتكم بالله وبالإسلام ، هل تعلمون أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قدم المدينة ، وليس بها ماء يستعذب غير بئر رومة فقال : من يشتري بئر رومة يجعل دلوه مع دلاء المسلمين بخير له منها في الجنة ، فاشتريتها من صلب مالي ، فأنتم تمنعوني اليوم أن أشرب من ماء البحر . فقالوا : اللهم نعم

I was present at the house when ‘Uthmān appeared above them and said, “I ask you by Allah and Islam! Do you know that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to Madinah and there was no water in it that was sweet except the well of Rūmah?”

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Who will purchase this well of Rūmah and place his bucket alongside the buckets of the Muslims, in exchange for better than that in Paradise?”

“So I bought it with the core of my wealth, and today you prevent me from drinking from it, so that I would have to drink brackish water?”

They said: “O Allah! Yes!”²

Amongst his virtues رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was that he was the first to expand the Masjid of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as it began to prove small for the people. This was in conformity to the wish of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Al-Tirmidhī narrates:

1 He is Thumāmah ibn Ḥazn ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Qushayrī al-Baṣrī. Tābi‘ī, Mukhaḍram. He attained the era of Rasūlullāh ﷺ but did not see him. He then came to ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

- Al-Dāramī relates the statement of Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn, “Reliable.”
- Al-Ājurrī relates the statement of Abū Dāwūd, “Reliable.”

His life has been recorded by Al-Dāramī: *Al-Tārikh*, pg. 83; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārikh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/176; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 2 pg. 465; Al-Ājurrī: *Su’ālāt Abī ‘Ubayd al-Ājurrī Abā Dāwūd al-Sijistānī*, pg. 250.

2 Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 5 pgs. 290-291. He says, “This ḥadīth is sound and has been recorded by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*. See, *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, vol. 5 pg. 37. It has also been narrated by Al-Bayhaqī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 6 pg. 168. It has been deemed authentic by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 3 pg. 209 and in *Irwā’ al-Ghalīl*, 1594.

أن عثمان لما حوَّصر أشرف على الناس فقال : أنشدكم بالله والإسلام ، هل تعلمون أن المسجد ضاق بأهله ، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: من يشتري بقعة آل فلان فيزيدها في المسجد بخير له منها في الجنة ، فاشتريتها من صلب مالي ، وأنتم تمنعوني أن أصلي فيه ركعتين - قالوا اللهم نعم

When ‘Uthmān was barricaded he appeared above them and said, “I ask you by Allah and Islam! Do you know that the Masjid, was insufficient for its people, so the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Who will purchase the land of the family of so-and-so, and add it to the Masjid in exchange for better than that in Paradise?’ So I bought it with the core of my wealth, and today you prevent me from praying two Rakā‘ah in it?”

They said, “O Allah! Yes.”¹

Ibn ‘Asākir narrates from Ṣa‘ṣa‘ah ibn Mu‘āwiyah al-Taymī رضي الله عنه who said:

أرسل عثمان وهو محصور إلى علي وطلحة والزبير وأقوام من الصحابة فقال : احضروا غدا فكونوا حيث تسمعون ما أقول لهذه الخارجة ، ففعلوا وأشرف عليهم فقال : أنشد الله من سمع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : و من يشتري هذا المرید ويزيده في مسجدنا وله الجنة وأجره في الدنيا ما بقي درجات له ، فاشتريته بعشرين ألفنا وزدته في المسجد ، قالوا : اللهم نعم ، وقال الخوارج : صدقوا ، ولكنك غيرت ... وعدد أشياء - أي من مناقبه - قال : الله أكبر ، ويلكم خصمتم والله ، كيف يكون من يكون له هذا مغيرا

‘Uthmān sent for ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, and other Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم when he was barricaded in his home.

He said, “Present yourselves tomorrow and listen to what I say to these rebels.”

They arrived and he ascended the house and said to them, “I ask you by Allah! Who heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying, ‘Who will purchase this land and add it to our Masjid? For him will be Jannah and in this world as long as it remains his status will continue increasing.’ I thus purchased it for twenty thousand and added it to the Masjid.”

1 Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 5 pgs. 290-291. He says, “This ḥadīth is sound” It has been deemed authentic by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 3 pg. 209 and in *Irwā‘ al-Ghalīl*, 1594.

They said, “O Allah yes.”

The Khawārij said, “They have attested correctly but you changed ...” they enumerated some things – which was of his virtuous deeds .

He said, “Allah is the greatest. May your arguments come to peril. How could you say to the one with such virtue that he has changed.”¹

Amongst the virtues of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه is that he was one of the earliest believers. He was the third person to accept the faith. He is of the most virtuous and best of people after Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, amongst those who were the forerunners in spreading da‘wah, raising the pillars of the pure faith, laying the foundations of the Islamic Empire, and fighting in the path of Allah. He was of the closest of people to Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم and held a special place by him.

Ibn ‘Asākir narrates from different chains—from Fāṭimah bint ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Yashkuriyah²—from her mother who says:

أنها سألت عائشة ، وأرسلها عمها فقال : إن أحد بنيك يقرئك السلام ويسألك عن عثمان بن عفان ، فإن الناس قد أكثروا فيه ، فقالت : لعن الله من لعنه ، فوالله لقد كان قاعدا عند نبي الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وإن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مسند ظهره إلي ، وأن جبريل عليه السلام اليوحى إليه القرآن وأنه ليقول : اكتب عثمان ، فما كان الله لينزل تلك المنزلة إلا كريما على الله ورسوله

She asked ‘Ā’ishah—and it was her uncle who sent her—she said, “One of your sons sends greetings to you and asks you regarding ‘Uthmān, for people are abusing him.”

‘Ā’ishah said, “May Allah curse whoever curses him. I was seated with the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم leaning against his back and Jibrīl was revealing Qur’ān to him. He was saying, ‘Write, O ‘Uthmān.’”

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 336.

2 I could not find her profile amongst the sources available to me.

Allah would not give him such a position except if he was a man of honour in the sight of by Allah and His Messenger.¹

The Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ were cognisant of his virtue, seniority, and of difficulties he bore. Abū Ḥāzim² says:

كنت عند عبد الله بن عمر بن الخطاب فذكر عثمان ، فذكر فضله ومناقبه وقرابته حتى تركه أنقى من الزجاجه ، ثم ذكر علي بن أبي طالب ، فذكر فضله وسابقته وقرابته حتى تركه أنقى من الزجاجه ، ثم قال : من أراد أن يذكر هذين فليذكرهما هكذا أو فليدع

I was with ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and he mentioned ‘Uthmān and his virtues, his attributes and his relationship to Rasūlullāh ﷺ so that he depicted him as purer than glass. Then he mentioned ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and mentioned his virtues, his seniority in Islam and his relationship to Rasūlullāh ﷺ until he depicted him as purer than glass. Then he said: “Whoever wants to talk about these two let him talk about them in this manner or else not speak at all.”³

Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ used to also say:

لا نسبوا عثمان فإننا كنا نعده من خيارنا

Do not revile ‘Uthmān, for we used to regard him as one of the best of us.⁴

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 92; Aḥmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 23 pg. 95; vol. 6 pg. 250, 261.

2 He is Salamah ibn Dīnār Abū Ḥāzim al-A’raj al-Madanī. From amongst the senior Tābī‘īn.

- Aḥmad, Abū Ḥātim, al-‘Ijlī, and al-Nasa’ī say, “Reliable. There was none like him in his era.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has listed him in *Al-Thiqāt*.

He was a judge in Madinah and an ascetic. Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd al-Malik sent for him. He said, “If he has a need then he should come to me. As for me, I do not have any need for him.” He passed away during the khilāfah of Abū Ja‘far al-Manṣūr the year 140 A.H/757 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 424; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/2/78; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 196; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 4 pg. 159; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 4 pg. 143.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 507.

4 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 461. Its chain is authentic.

Muḥammad ibn Ḥātib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ—a Ṣaḥābī—says:

قيل لعلي : إن هؤلاء يسألوننا عن عثمان غدا ، فماذا نقول لهم ؟ قال علي : كان عثمان من الذين آمنوا
وعملوا الصالحات ثم اتقوا وآمنوا ، ثم اتقوا وأحسنوا

‘Alī was asked, “These people are to ask us regarding ‘Uthmān tomorrow. What shall we say to them?”

‘Alī said, “‘Uthmān was of those who believed, did good actions and feared Allah, then feared Allah and did righteous deeds.”¹

He also says:

I heard ‘Alī say:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِّنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ

Verily, those for whom the good has preceded from Us, they will be removed far therefrom [Hell].

‘Uthmān is one of them.²

Ibn ‘Asākir narrates in his *Tārīkh*:

أن جرير بن عبد الله البجلي وحنظلة وعدي بن حاتم - وهم من الصحابة - تحولوا من الكوفة إلى
قرقيسياً وقالوا : لا نقيم ببلد يشتم فيها عثمان

Jarīr ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Bajalī, Ḥanzalah, and ‘Ādī ibn Ḥātim—all Ṣaḥābah—left Kūfah for Qirqisiyā³ saying, “We dare not live in a city wherein ‘Uthmān is reviled.”⁴

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 475; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 474. Its chain is authentic.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 475; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 475. Its chain is authentic.

3 City in Shām on the banks of the Khābūr river on the Euphrates. See, Al-Ḥimyarī: *Al-Rawḍ al-Mi‘tār*, pg. 455.

4 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 518.

Aḥmad narrates from—Umm ‘Umar bint Ḥassān ibn Yazīd ibn Abī al-Ghuṣn [He says, “A truthful old woman] from — her father who said:

دخلت المسجد الأكبر - مسجد الكوفة - وعلي بن أبي طالب على المنبر يخطب الناس وينادي بأعلى صوته ثلاث مرات : يا أيها الناس ! يا أيها الناس ! يا أيها الناس ! إنكم تكثرون في عثمان ، فإن مثلي ومثله كما قال الله وَتَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَابِلِينَ

I entered the big Masjid—the Masjid of Kūfah—whilst ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib was on the pulpit addressing the people. He said at the top of his voice three times, “O people! O people! O people! You are excessive regarding ‘Uthmān. The likes of him and I is what Allah described in the Qur’ān, *And We will remove whatever is in their breasts of resentment, [so they will be] brothers, on thrones facing each other.*¹

Al-Nu‘mān ibn Bashīr رضي الله عنه—a Ṣaḥābī—says:

كنا مع علي بن أبي طالب في مسجد الكوفة ، وهو مجتئح لشقه ، فخضنا في عثمان وطلحة والزبير ، فاجتئح لشقه الآخر فقال : فيما خضتم - قلنا : خضنا في عثمان وطلحة والزبير ، وحسبناك نائما ، فقال علي إن الذين سبقت لهم منا الحسنى أولئك عنها مبعدون وإن ذاك عثمان وطلحة والزبير ، وأنا من شيعة عثمان وطلحة والزبير ، ثم قال : الله وَتَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَىٰ سُرُرٍ مُّتَقَابِلِينَ ذاك عثمان وطلحة والزبير ، وأنا من شيعة عثمان وطلحة والزبير

We were with ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib in the Masjid of Kūfah whilst he was lying on his side. We began talking about ‘Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr. He turned over and asked, “What are you discussing?”

We replied, “We are discussing ‘Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr. We thought you were sleeping.”

‘Alī said, “*Verily, those for whom the good has preceded from Us, they will be removed far therefrom [Hell].*² Those are ‘Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr. I am from the group of ‘Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr. *And We will remove*

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 516453. Its chain is authentic.

2 Sūrah al-Ambiyā’: 101.

whatever is in their breasts of resentment, [so they will be] brothers, on thrones facing each other.¹ Those are ‘Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr. I am from the group of ‘Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr.²

Another narration states that a man stood up and said

الله أعدل من ذلك يا أمير المؤمنين ، قال : - أي الراوي - فصاح به علي صيحة ثم قال : من هم إذا لم نكن نحن هم؟

Allah is more just than that O Amīr al-Mu’minīn. The narrator says, ‘Alī let out a cry and said, “Who are they then if we are not them?”³

Due to Rasūlullāh ﷺ holding ‘Uthmān in high esteem, he brought him into his family. He married his daughter Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا to him and after her passing her sister Umm Kulthūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. When Umm Kulthūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا passed away Rasūlullāh ﷺ said:

ألا أبو أيم ، ألا أحو أيم ، ألا ولي أيم يزوح عثمان ، فإني قد زوجته ابنتين ، ولو كان عندي ثالثة لزوجته وما زوجته إلا بوحى من السماء

O father of a widow, O brother of a widow, O guardian of a widow, who will marry ‘Uthmān. I had given him two daughters in marriage and if I had a third I would have married her to him. I did not marry them to him except through the instruction of revelation.⁴

This is a virtue that is specific to ‘Uthmān, even amongst the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. It is for this reason that he was given the title *Dhū al-Nūrayn* (Possessor of the Two Lights). Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aynī⁵ states in his commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*:

1 Sūrah al-Ḥijr: 47.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 472; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 2 pg. 628. Its chain is authentic.

3 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 2 pg. 748. Its chain is authentic. Imām al-Ṭabarī has narrated in his *Tafsīr*, vol. 7 pg. 25-26.

4 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 481. Its chain is weak.

5 He is Maḥmūd ibn Aḥmad ibn Mūsa, Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aynī al-Ḥanafī, Abū Muḥammad. *continued ...*

أنه قيل للمهلب بن أبي صفرة لم قيل لعثمان ذو النورين - فقال : لأننا لا نعلم أحدا أرسل سترأ على بنتي نبي غيره

It was asked of al-Muhallab ibn Abī Ṣufrah¹, “Why is ‘Uthmān called Dhū al-Nūrayn?” He replied, “Because we do not know of anyone else having married two daughters of a prophet besides him.”²

Al-Nazzāl ibn Sabrah al-Hilālī³ says:

قلنا - يعني لعلي : يا أمير المؤمنين حدثنا عن عثمان بن عفان ، فقال : ذاك امرؤ يدعي في الملأ الأعلى ذا النورين ، كان ختن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم على ابنتيه ، ضمن له بيتا في الجنة

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Scholar of history ḥadīth and fiqh. He was appointed a judge and was in charge of the ḥisbah and overseeing the prisons in the Mumlūk Dynasty. He has authored many books. Amongst these are, *Ma‘ānī al-Akḥbār fī Rijāl Ma‘ānī al-Āthār*, ‘*Umdah al-Qārī fī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Al-Durar al-Zāhirah fī Sharḥ al-Biḥār al-Zākhirah*, and ‘*Iqd al-Jumān fī Tārīkh Ahl al-Zamān*. He passed away the year 855 A.H/1851 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Sakhāwī: *Al-Ḍaw’ al-Lāmi’*, vol. 10 pg. 131; Al-Qurashī: *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, vol. 2 pg. 165; Ibn al-‘Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 7 pg. 286.

1 He is Muhallab ibn Abī Ṣufrah al-Azdī al-‘Aqlī. Championed leader. Khalīfah says, “The year 44 A.H, Muhallab led an expedition to India during the khilāfah of Mu‘āwiyah. He governed al-Jīzyah for Ibn Zubayr. He fought the Khawārij during the era of ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān. He was the governor of Khurāsān the year 79 A.H. His fame emanates from his war against the Khawārij where he continued to fight them for nineteen years until eventually he defeated them. It is said that Ḥajjāj revered him greatly when he conquered the Azāriqah.”

He passed away the year 83 A.H/702 A.D. See, Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pgs. 206-262; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 5 pg. 350; Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 4 pg. 383.

2 Al-‘Aynī: ‘*Umdah al-Qārī fī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 16 pg. 201.

3 He is Nazzāl ibn Sabrah al-Hilālī al-Kufī. Amongst the senior Tābī‘īn.

- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Kufī, Tābī‘ī, reliable.”
- Ibn Sa’d lists him amongst the first level of Tābī‘īn of Kūfah.
- Ibn Ḥibbān mentions him in *Al-Thiqāt*.
- Al-‘Ijlī and Abū Ḥātim have deemed him reliable.
- Ibn Ma‘īn says, “Al-Nazzāl is reliable. He should not be asked about him.”

His life has been recorded by, Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 84; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 448; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 8 pg. 498; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 482; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10 pg. 423.

Once, we said to ‘Alī: “O Amīr al Mu‘minīn, tell us about ‘Uthmān ibn رضي الله عنه”

He replied, “He was that special individual, known as *Dhū al-Nūraqn* (the possessor of two lights) in the *al-Mala’ al A‘lā* (the Highest Heaven). He was the son-in-law of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم for two of his daughters. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم guaranteed a house for him in Jannat.”¹

Ibn ‘Asākir narrates:

أن رجلا قال لعلي بن أبي طالب : إن عثمان في النار . قال : ومن أين علمت - قال : لأنه أحدث أحداثا ، فقال له علي : أتراك لو كانت لك بنت أكنت تزوجها حتى تستشير - قال : لا ، قال : أفأرى هو خير من رسول الله عنه لا بنته؟! وأخبرني عن النبي ع أكان إذا أراد أمرا يستخير الله أو لا يستخيره قال : لا ، بل كان يستخيره ، قال : أفكان الله لا يخير له أم لا - قال : بل كان يخير له ، قال أخبرني عن رسول الله علي أأخار الله له في تزويجه عثمان أم لم يخير له؟! ثم قال له : لقد تجردت لك لأضرب عنقك فأبى الله ذلك ، أما والله لو قلت غير ذلك ضربت عنقك

A man said to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, “‘Uthmān is in Hell-Fire.”

‘Alī said, “And how do you know this?”

The man replied, “Because he had started many new practices.”

‘Alī said to him, “If you had a daughter, would you marry her without consultation?”

The man said, “No.”

‘Alī continued, “Do you think there could be an opinion better than the opinion Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم had concerning his daughters? Tell me, when Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم intended to do something would he or would he not ask Allah for the best course to take?”

The man replied, “Of course he would ask Allah for the best course to take.”

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pgs. 42-23.

‘Alī said, “Would Allah then choose the best course for Rasūlullāh ﷺ or not?”

He said, “He would choose the best course for him.”

‘Alī concluded, “Now tell me this about Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Did Allah not select ‘Uthmān to marry the daughters of Rasūlullāh ﷺ? I have thought about having you executed but Allah has decided otherwise. Remember this well! I swear by Allah, if you say anything else I shall have you executed.¹

Bashīr Abū Naṣr² says:

أتيت الحسن البصري فقلت : إني أحب الله ورسوله وأحب عليا ، وأقوام عندنا يقولون : إن لم تسب عثمان لم يغن عنك حب علي فقال : يا بني ! إن الذي يأمرك بهذا لعثمان خير منه ومني ومنك ، وزوجه النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ابنته رقية ، أفترى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم كان جاهلا أن يزوج خبيثا ؟ فماتت عنده ، ثم زوجه ابنته أم كلثوم ، فلو كان جهل أمره أيجهل الثانية ؟ وجهاز جيش العسرة من ماله ، وكان مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم حتى فارق الدنيا ، أفينبغي لك أن تسب رجلا كانت هذه الأشياء له من المناقب والمكرمات

I came to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and said to him, “I love Allah and His Messenger and I love ‘Alī. Some people by us say, ‘If you do not revile ‘Uthmān, your love for ‘Alī is worthless.”

Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said, “My son. The one who has instructed the love of ‘Uthmān is better than him, me, and you. Rasūlullāh ﷺ married his daughter Ruqayyah to him. Do you think Rasūlullāh ﷺ was ignorant that he marries his daughter to an evil man? She passed away and the Prophet ﷺ married his daughter Umm Kulthūm to him. If, for arguments sake he was unaware the first time, do you think he would be unaware the second time? ‘Uthmān equipped the army of distress from his own wealth. He was with Rasūlullāh ﷺ till he left the world. Now tell me, does it behove you to revile a man with such virtues and honour?”³

1 Ibid, 43-44.

2 I did not find his profile amongst the available sources.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 523.

Similarly, the incident of the shūra council attests to the status held by ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in the hearts of the Ummah, the love they had for him, and their desire for his leadership. This desire was shared by all, the general populous and the influential. During the shūra process in electing a new khalīfah after the assassination of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf رضي الله عنه consulted the public extensively. He sought the views of the Muhājirīn, the Anṣār, and others. During consulting the influential people and asking the others as to who they opined the khalīfah should be, all answered in a singular manner; they all wanted ‘Uthmān to ascend to the seat of khilāfah. When he saw the consensus of people on ‘Uthmān, he pledged allegiance at his hands and the rest of the people did so as well.¹

Imām al-Bukhārī relates the following statement of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما:

كنا زمن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لا نعدل بأبي بكر أحدا ، ثم عمر ، ثم عثمان ، ثم نترك أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لا نفاضل بينهم

During the era of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم we would not hold anyone equal to Abū Bakr, then ‘Umar, and then ‘Uthmān. We would not differentiate between the other Companions of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم.²

Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه says:

بايعنا خيرا ولم نأل

We pledged allegiance to the best of us and we did find anyone better.³

According to another narration he states:

أمرنا خيرا من بقي ولم نأل

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 13 pg. 196.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 203.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 2 pg. 463; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *Al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 3 pg. 72.

We have appointed the best of those who remained behind, and we did not find anyone better.¹

Muṭarrif² says:

قلت لحذيفة رضي الله عنه : أرأيتم حين بايعتم عثمان نصحتم الله ورسوله والمؤمنين أو خنتموهم - قال
نصحتناهم :

I asked Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه, “When you all pledged allegiance to ‘Uthmān, do you believe you were sincere to Allah, His Messenger, and the believers; or do you believe you betrayed them?”

He replied, “We were sincere.”³

Muḥammad ibn Yūnus⁴ narrates—from Ḥaḥṣ ibn Ghayāth⁵— from Sharīk ibn ‘Abd Allāh who said:

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 462. Its chain is authentic.

2 He is Muṭarrif ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Shikhkhīr al-Ḥarashī al-‘Āmirī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Baṣrī.

- Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable, noble, pious, and a man of etiquette.”
- Al-‘Ijlī said, “He was reliable.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has listed him in *al-Thiqāt*

It is said that he passed away in the plague the year 89 A.H/708 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 141; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/396; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 431; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 5 pg. 429; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10 pg. 173.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 197.

4 He is Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Jamāl al-Baghdādī. He narrated from Ḥaḥṣ ibn Ghayāth and ‘Abd Allāh al-Thaqafī.

- Ibn Ḥajar said, “Weak, from the tenth category.”

See, Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 2 pg. 221.

5 He is Ḥaḥṣ ibn Ghayāth Abū ‘Amr al-Nakhaṭ al-Kufī al-Qāḍī. One of the reliable authorities.

- Ibn Ma’in and al-‘Ijlī have deemed him reliable.
- Ya’qūb ibn Shaybah said, “Reliable and trustworthy. Be careful of some of his memorised narrations. However, when he narrated from his book it is reliable.”
- Al-Dhahabī said, “He passed away the year 194 A.H/809 A.D.”

See, Ibn Ma’in: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pgs. 121-122; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/370; and Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 125.

مرض رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فأمر أبَا بكر أن يصلي بالناس ، فلو علم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن في أصحابه أحدا أفضل من أبي بكر الأمر ذلك الرجل وترك أبَا بكر ، فلما احتضر أبو بكر استخلف عمر ابن الخطاب ، فلو علم أبو بكر أن في أصحاب محمد علي أحدا أفضل من عمر لما قدم عمر وترك ذلك الرجل ، لقد كان غش أصحاب محمد ، فلما احتضر عمر بن الخطاب فصير الأمر شورى ، فوَقعت الشورى بعثمان بن عفان ، فلو علم أصحاب محمد أن في القوم أحدا أحق بها من عثمان ، ثم نصبوا ، وتركوا ذلك الرجل لقد كانوا غشوا هذه الأمة ، فأُتيت - أي محمد بن يونس - عبد الله بن إدريس فقلت له : يا أبَا محمد ! كلاما سمعته الساعة من حفص بن غياث ، قال : فأَسند ثم قال : هات ، قال : فحدثته بالحديث ، قال : أنت سمعته - قلت : الساعة ، وكتبته في ألواحِي ، قال الحمد لله الذي أنطق بذلك لسانه ، فوالله إنه الشيعي وإن شريكا لشيعي ، قال : قلت له : يا أبَا محمد ! ما تقول في الوقوف عنه : علي وعثمان ، قال : لا ، بل نضعه حيث وضعه أصحابه ، يعني يقال : عثمان وعلي ، ولقد قتل يوم قتل - أي عثمان - وهو عندنا أفضل منه

Rasūlullāh ﷺ fell ill and appointed Abū Bakr to lead the people in prayer. If Rasūlullāh ﷺ knew anyone else amongst his Companions more virtuous than Abū Bakr, he would have appointed him and left Abū Bakr.

When Abū Bakr was on his death bed, he appointed ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb as his successor. If Abū Bakr knew anyone else amongst the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ more virtuous than ‘Umar and yet appointed ‘Umar instead of that man, he would have surely betrayed the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ.

When ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb was on his death bed he handed the matter over to the shūra council. The shūra council elected ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān. If the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ knew of a man more rightful to it than ‘Uthmān and yet appointed him instead of that man, they would have betrayed this Ummah.

Muḥammad ibn Yūnus says, “I then went to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Idrīs¹ and I said

1 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Idrīs ibn Yazīd ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Awdī, Abū Muḥammad al-Kufī. Jurist, reliable, ascetic.

- Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable, trustworthy, narrated many aḥādīth. And authority and ascribed to the creed of the Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamā’ah.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān said in *al-Thiqāt*, “He firmly adhered to the sunnah.” continued

to him, O Abū Muḥammad, would you like to know what I just heard from Ḥafṣ ibn Ghayāth”

He sat up and said, “Tell me.”

He says, “I narrated the words to him.”

He asked. “Is it you that heard it?”

I said, “Right now, and I wrote it on my tablet.”

He said, “Praise be to Allah who compelled him to say this. By Allah he is a Shīʿī and Sharīk is a Shīʿī.”

I said, “O Abū Muḥammad, what do you think of adopting silence regarding ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān?”

He replied, “No. We will afford them the status afforded to them by each other. ‘Uthmān was assassinated and he was more virtuous than him.”¹

Sufyān al-Thawrī is narrated to have said:

من قدم عليا على عثمان فقد أزرى على اثني عشر ألفا ، قبض رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو عنهم راض ، الذين أجمعوا على بيعه عثمان

Whoever gives preference to ‘Alī over ‘Uthmān has opposed twelve thousand whom Rasūlullāh ﷺ was pleased with when he left this world; the one’s that pledged allegiance to ‘Uthmān.²

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- Al-‘Ijlī said, “Reliable, a man of sunnah, ascetic, and pious.”
- Al-Khalīlī said, “Reliable whom everyone agrees on.”

He passed away the year, 192 A.H./807 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 89; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 2 pg. 269; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 249; Ibn Ṭahmān: *Min Kalām Abī Zakariyyā Yahyā ibn Maʿīn fi al-Rijāl*, pg. 35.

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 198.

2 Ibid, p. 514.

‘Abd Allāh ibn Dāwūd¹ said:

من قدم عثمان على علي فحجته قوية ؛ لأن الخمسة اختاروه - يعني أهل الشورى

Whoever gives preference to ‘Uthmān over ‘Alī has strong evidence to the claim as the five appointed him. [referring to the five shūra council members].²

‘Abd Allāh ibn Ayyub³ said:

قال رجل عند محمد بن عبيد- الطنافسي -: أبو بكر وعلي وعثمان ، قال له : وملك : من لم يقل أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان وعلي فقد أزرى على أصحاب رسول الله على

A man, in the presence of Muḥammad ibn ‘Ubayd⁴ al-Ṭanāfasī said, “Abū Bakr, ‘Alī, and ‘Uthmān.”

He said to the man, “Woe to you, whoever does not say Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and ‘Alī, has opposed the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.”⁵

1 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Dāwūd ibn ‘Āmir ibn al-Rabī al-Hamdānī al-Kufī.

- Ibn Sa’d says, “He was reliable, ascetic, and a worshipper.”
- Mu’āwiyah ibn Ṣāliḥ narrating from Ibn Ma’in says, “Reliable, truthful, trustworthy.”
- Abū Ḥātim and al-Nasa’ī say, “Reliable.”
- Al-Dāraqūṭnī says, “Reliable and an ascetic.”

He passed away the year 213 A.H/828 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 2 pg. 303; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 2 pg. 324; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 5 pg. 47; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 5 pg. 199.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 515.

3 I could not find his profile in sources available to me.

4 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Ubayd ibn Abī Umayyah al-Ṭanāfasī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Kufī al-Aḥḍab.

- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Kufī, reliable.”
- Al-Nasa’ī says, “Reliable.”
- Ibn Sa’d says, “He was reliable, narrated much ḥadīth, and was a man of sunnah.”
- Ibn Ma’in and Abū Ḥātim have deemed him reliable.
- Ya’qūb ibn Shaybah says, “I heard ‘Alī ibn al-Madīnī saying, ‘He was intelligent.’”

He passed away the year 204 A.H/819 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Dāramī: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 156; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 410; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 8 pg. 10; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Al-Thiqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 441; and Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 3 pg. 639.

5 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 515.

Ḥarmalah said, I heard al-Shafi‘ī saying:

أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان وعلي ، يعني في الفضل والخلافة

Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and ‘Alī, i.e. the order of virtue and khilāfah.¹

‘Amr ibn ‘Uthmān al-Ḥimṣī² said:

قلت : يا أبا عبدالله - يعني أحمد ابن حنبل - ما تقول في الخلافة - فقال : أقول : أبو بكر ثم عمر ثم عثمان ثم علي ، ومن فضل عليا على عثمان فقد أزرى بأصحاب الشورى ؛ لأنهم قدموا عثمان

I said “Oh Abū ‘Abd Allāh—Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal—what do you say regarding the khilāfah?”

He replied, “I say, Abū Bakr, then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmān, then ‘Alī. Whoever gives preference to ‘Alī over ‘Uthmān has opposed the shūra council members as they preferred ‘Uthmān.”³

Ibn ‘Asākir narrated with his chain of transmission to Abū al-Ḥasan al-Dāraquṭnī who said:

اختلف قوم من أهل بغداد من أهل العلم ، فقال قوم : عثمان أفضل ، وقال قوم : علي أفضل ، فتحاكموا إلي فيه ، فسألوني عنه فأمسكت عنه ، وقلت : الإمساك عنه خير ، ثم لم أر لديني السكوت ، قلت : دعهم يقولوا في ما أحبوا ، فدعوت الذي جاءني مستفتيا وقلت : ارجع إليهم وقل : أبو الحسن يقول : عثمان بن عفان أفضل من علي بن أبي طالب باتفاق جماعة أصحاب رسول الله ، وهو أول عقد يحل في الرفض

Some scholars of Baghdad had a difference of opinion. some opined that ‘Uthmān was more virtuous whilst others opined ‘Alī to be more virtuous.

1 Ibid, pg. 515.

2 He is ‘Amr ibn ‘Uthmān ibn Sa‘īd ibn Kathīr Abū Ḥafṣ a-Qurashī al-Ḥimṣī.

- Abū Ḥātim says, “Truthful.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has listed him in *Al-Thiqāt*.
- Al-Nasa‘ī has deemed him reliable in the names of his teachers.

He passed away the year 250 A.H/864 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 2 pg. 391; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 6 pg. 249; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 8 pg. 76.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 516.

They brought the issue to me to resolve. They asked me and I reserved my opinion.

I said to them, “Refraining from such is better.”

I then thought it not good for my faith to remain silent. I said, let them say regarding me what they wish and I called the one who had posed the question to me.

I said, “Return to them and tell them that Abū al-Ḥasan says, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān is more virtuous than ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib by the consensus of the Companions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and this is the first knot untied through the ideology of Rafḍ.’”¹

Ibn Taymiyyah says in this regard:

فمن فضل عليا على عثمان خرج من السنة إلى البدعة ، لمخالفته الإجماع الصحابة . ولهذا قيل : من قدم عليا على عثمان فقد أزرى بالمهاجرين والأنصار ، يروي ذلك عن غير واحد ، منهم أيوب السختياني وأحمد بن حنبل والدارقطني

Whoever gives preference to ‘Alī over ‘Uthmān has left the way of the sunnah to the path of innovation due to him opposing the consensus of the Ṣaḥābah. That is why it is said, ‘whoever gives preference to ‘Alī over ‘Uthmān has opposed the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār.’ Statements of this kind have been narrated from Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī², Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal, al-Dāraqṭnī, and others.³

1 Ibid, pg. 517.

2 He is Ayyūb ibn Abī Tamīm al-Sakhtiyānī. Amongst the great jurists and ardent worshippers.

- Ibn Sa’d says, “He was reliable and trustworthy in ḥadīth. An authority. He possessed great knowledge.”
- Al-Dāraqṭnī says, “Ayyūb is from the reliable memorizers.”
- Al-Nasa’ī says, “Reliable, trustworthy.”
- Abū Ḥātim says, “Reliable. The likes of him are not questioned.”
- Ibn Ma’in says, “Ayyūb, Yūnus ibn ‘Ubayd, and Ibn ‘Awn are the best of people.”

He passed away the year 131 A.H/748 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 246; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/409; Ibn Ṭahmān: *Min Kalām Abī Zakariyyā Yahyā ibn Ma’in fi al-Rijāl*, pg. 81; Al-Ājurri: *Al-Su’ālāt*, pgs. 267-268; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1 pg. 357.

3 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā*, vol. 4 pg. 436.

Amongst the virtues of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ is that through him Allah ﷻ granted conquests of many cities and regions. In his era the Islamic Empire reached far off lands in the east and the west. Islamic rule spanned from Sindh in the east to Qafqaz in the north. The Muslim armies reached west Africa and its surrounds. They reached the Mediterranean Islands and Abyssinia towards the south. And thus the meaning of following verse became apparent to the people:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۗ يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا

Allah has promised those who have believed among you and done righteous deeds that He will surely grant them succession [to authority] upon the earth just as He granted it to those before them and that He will surely establish for them [therein] their religion which He has preferred for them and that He will surely substitute for them, after their fear, security, [for] they worship Me, not associating anything with Me.¹

Ibn Kathīr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said:

وهذا كله تحقق وقوعه وتأكده وتوطده في زمن عثمان

All of this was realised during the era of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.²

Al-Khalīfah has listed the cities that were conquered during the khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in his *Tārīkh* which shows the incredible military advancement and prowess. Amongst these cities were, Hamdhān, Rayy, Sābūr, Arjān, Aṣbahān, Jurjān, Kabul, Sijistān, Ṭabaristān, Armenia, Abyssinia, Qubrus, Malta, and others.³

1 Sūrah al-Nūr: 55.

2 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 201.

3 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pgs. 156-168.

No doubt the generals of these armies that were chosen by ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was done so with divine assistance. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was the first to conduct Islamic naval warfare. He allowed Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān to head a naval expedition.¹ ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه has removed the fear regarding naval expeditions that had plagued some Muslims who were unaware of its realities.² The naval fleet that was sanctioned by ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه had attained major victories in the naval battles.³ This fleet defeated the naval world power of the time; the Byzantine navy.⁴ It was also instrumental in conquering the islands of the Mediterranean.⁵

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was distinguished by noble character that reflected that of the Leader of Prophets who had the noblest of character. Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه says:

دخلت على رقية بنت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم امرأة عثمان بن عفان وفي يدها مشط فقالت : خرج من عندي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أنفا رجلت رأسه فقال كيف تجدان أبا عبد الله ؟ ، قلت : كخير الرجال ، قال : «أكرميه فإنه من أشبه أصحابي بي خلقا

I came to Ruqayyah, the daughter of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, wife of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān and she had a comb in her hand.

She said, “Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم departed from here a short while ago, I combed his hair:”

He said to me, “How do you find Abū ‘Abd Allāh?”

I replied, “Like the best of men.”

He said, “Treat him well as he is the closest in character to me amongst my Companions.”⁶

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 260.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 259.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 288; Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 160.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 299.

5 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 258; Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 167.

6 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 510. Its chain is authentic.

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was forgiving in his business dealings and soft in his dealings with people. Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn ‘Asākir narrates the following in his *Tārīkh* through the chain of ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Ḥusayn¹:

أن عثمان نه ابتاع حائط من رجل فساومه حتى قاومه على الثمن الذي رضي به البائع ، فقال : أرنا يدك - قال الراوي - : وكانوا لا يستوجبون البيع إلا بالصفقة ، فلما رأى ذلك الرجل قال : لا أبيعك حتى تزدي عشرة آلاف ، فالتفت عثمان إلى عبد الرحمن ابن عوف قال : إني سمعت رسول الله عنه يقول : إن الله أدخل الجنة رجلا كان سمحا بائعا ومبتاعا ، قاضيا ومقتضيا ، اذهب فقد زدتك العشرة آلاف الأستوجب بها الكلمة التي سمعتها من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ purchased a garden from a man for a price agreed to by the seller. He said to him, “Show us your hand.” [the narrator states, they would conclude a deal by shaking hands].

The man said, “I will not sell it to you until you give me ten thousand more.”

‘Uthmān turned to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf and said, “I heard Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say, ‘Verily Allah سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ عَلَّمَ will enter a man into paradise who is forgiving when he buys, sells, gives loans, and collects loans.² Go I have added ten thousand to it due to these words I heard from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.³

Amongst his virtues is that divine revelation attested to him passing as a martyr. Imām al-Bukhārī narrated in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority of Anas ibn Mālik رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who said:

1 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Ḥusayn ibn al-Ḥārith al-Makkī al-Nawfalī. Reliable and well versed in the laws of Ḥajj. He is from the fifth category. Abū Zur‘ah and al-‘Ijlī have deemed him reliable. See, Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/1/133; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 267; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 5 pg. 97; Al-Khazrajī: *Khulāṣah al-Tahdhīb*, pg. 204.

2 Aḥmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 1 pg. 58. This narration is supported by others with the like meaning in *Al-Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī, vol. 3 pg. 9.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 224.

صعد رسول الله من أحدا ومعه أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان فرجف ، وقال : اسكن أحد - أظنه ضربه برجله -
فليس عليك إلا نبي وصديق وشهيدان

Rasūlullāh ﷺ ascended Mount Uḥud together with Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān. The mountain trembled. He said, “Be calm Uḥud—I think the Prophet hit it with his foot adding—For upon you there are none but a Prophet, a Ṣiddīq, and two martyrs.”¹

Al-Tirmidhī has narrated on the authority of Thumāmah ibn Ḥazn al-Qushayrī who says:

شهدت الدار - يعني الحصار حين أشرف عليهم عثمان ... قال : أنشدكم بالله والإسلام هل تعلمون أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان على ثبير مكة ومعه أبو بكر وعمر وأنا ، فتحرك الجبل حتى تساقطت حجاراته بالحضيض ، قال : فركضه برجله فقال : اسكن ثبير ، فإنما عليك نبي وصديق وشهيدان ، قالوا : اللهم نعم ، قال : الله أكبر شهدوا لي ورب الكعبة أني شهيد

I was present at the house when ‘Uthmān appeared above them and said, “I ask you by Allah and Islam! Do you know that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was on Mount Thabīr of Makkah, and with him was Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and myself? The mountain began shaking until its rocks fell to the bottom.”

He said, so he hit it with his foot and said, “Be still O Thabīr! For there is none upon you except a Prophet, a Ṣiddīq and two martyrs?”

They said, “O Allah! Yes!”

He said, “Allah is Great! Bear witness by the Lord of the Ka’bah that I am a martyr!”²

Abū Nu‘aym states his virtues in *Ma‘rifah al-Ṣaḥābah*:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 204; Al-Nasa’ī: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, pg. 71.

2 Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 5 pg. 291. He says, “This ḥadīth is sound” It has been deemed sounds by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 2921 and in *Irwā’ al-Ghalīl*, 1594.

أنه كان ممن صلى القبلتين ، وهاجر الهجرتين ، وكان اسمه ذو النورين ، وقتل مظلوما فأوتي من الأجر كفلين ... كان يسمى : اللين الرحيم ، المتعفف العفيف ، أمير البرة ، وخير الخيرة ، وقتيل الفجرة .. سل سيف الفتنة لقتله ولم يعمد بعد ... كانت الخيل البلق إلى أيامه مشهودة ، فلما قتل عثمان مظلوما صارت مفقودة

He was from amongst those who prayed in the direction of both Qiblah. He migrated in both migrations. His name was Dhū al-Nūrayn. He was killed unjustly and awarded a twofold reward. He was known as, the soft the merciful, the chaste the pure, the leader of the pious, the best of the best, and the one murdered by the evil. The sword of fitnah was unsheathed to kill him and was not sheathed after that. The Balq horses too disappeared after his unjust murder.¹

Ibn Ḥazm says in *Al-Mufaḍḍalah Bayn al-Ṣaḥābah*:

ثم انفرد عثمان بأن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بايع بيساره المقدسة عن يمين عثمان في بيعة الرضوان فألحقه الله بأجره التام وسهمه ... ثم كانت له فتوحات عظيمة .. وسيرة في الإسلام هادية ، ولم يتشبث بسفك دم مسلم ، وجاءت فيه آثار صحيحة : إن الملائكة تستحي منه ، وأنه من اتبعه على الحق

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه is further distinguished as the only one for whom Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم took his allegiance at Bay‘ah al-Riḍwān by placing his left hand in his right. Thus Allah سبحانه وتعالى gave him the full reward and share... He also had conquered many lands during his era... His life in Islam is one full of guidance. He did not permit the blood of a Muslim to be spilt. Authentic narrations regarding him state, “The angels are bashful of him” and “Whoever follows him will be on the truth.”²

Ibn Taymiyyah states:

والمعلوم من فضائل عثمان رضي الله عنه ومحبة النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم له ، وثناؤه عليه ، وتخصيصه بابنتيه ، وشهادته له بالجنة ، وإرساله إلى مكة ومبايعته له عنه لما أرسله إلى مكة ، وتقديم الصحابة له باختيارهم في الخلافة ، وشهادة عمر وغيره له بأن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مات وهو عنه راض ، وأمثال ذلك مما يوجب العلم القطعي بأنه من كبار أولياء الله المتقين الذين رضي الله عنه ورضوا عنه

1 Abū Nu‘aym: *Ma‘rifah al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 242-247.

2 Ibn Ḥazm: *Al-Mufaḍḍalah Bayn al-Ṣaḥābah*, pg. 264.

What is known of the virtues of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, the love Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم had for him, the Prophet praising him, marrying his daughters to him, giving him the glad tidings of Paradise to him, sending him as an envoy to Makkah, taking the pledge for him when he sent him to Makkah, the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم giving him preference in the matter of khilāfah, the attestation of ‘Umar and others that Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم had left this world being pleased with him, and other such virtues leaves absolutely no doubt that he is of the great pious friends of Allah رضي الله عنهم with whom Allah was pleased with and they too were pleased with Him.¹

This was the personality of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, a manifestation of human nobility per excellence. Mercy was embedded within him. His life spoke of love. His character was imbued with forbearance. Modesty was an innate quality never lost. With such character, this dignified personality fits into the core of Islam. The Muslims loved ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه so deeply, a profound love that is found scarcely amongst the pages of history. The only one that would bear ill towards him is an evil hypocrite or an ignorant one that has no knowledge of his status and virtue.

II. His politics and his life

When the pledge of khilāfah was given to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه he addressed them and outlined his political method. He impressed upon them that he would abide by the Qur’ān, the Sunnah, and the lives of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما. He also indicated in his sermon that he would govern with forbearance and wisdom expect in matters that are already determined by punishment. He cautioned them against inclining towards the world and amassing its riches fearing hate and jealousy would overcome them which would lead to factions in the Ummah. It was as though ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه had his gaze on the fitnah that would come about in this Ummah due to egocentrism and the chaos and destruction it would leave in its wake.

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Minhāj*, vol. 3 pg. 196-197.

‘Awn ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Utbah¹ narrates the sermon of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ after the allegiance was pledged to him. He said:

خطب عثمان الناس بعدما بوع فقال : « أما بعد ، فإنني كلفت وقد قبلت ، ألا وإني مع ولست بمبتدع ، ألا وإن لكم علي بعد كتاب الله وسنة نبيه صلى الله عليه وسلم ثلاثا : اتباع من كان قبلي فيما اجتمعتم عليه وسننتم ، وسوء أهل الخير فيما تستوا عن ملا ، والكف عنكم إلا فيما استوجبتم العقوبة . وإن الدنيا خضرة وقد شهيت إلى الناس ومال إليها كثير منهم ، فلا تركنوا إلى الدنيا ولا تثقوا | بها ، فإنها ليست بثقة ، واعلموا أنها غير تاركة إلا من تركها ،

I have been burdened, and I have accepted it. Verily I will be a follower, not an innovator. Indeed, you may demand three things from me, beyond my obedience to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Firstly, that I follow those who preceded me in matters that you have agreed upon and established. Secondly, that I adhere to the path laid out by pious and virtuous men in matters that you have not established by general consensus. Thirdly, that I avoid coercion against you save in cases where you have deemed it necessary. Verily, this world is a lush meadow that has been made to seem desirable to the people and toward which many among them incline. Do not incline to this world and put no trust in it, for it is not a thing to be trusted. Know that it leaves nothing behind save him who has left it behind.²

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ retained the governors of ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He did not recall any one of them for a complete year in accordance to the advice of ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Studying the letters he sent to the governors, tax collectors, and army generals impresses upon one the idea of his methodology in leading the Ummah. He wrote the same letter to all the governors in which he stated:

1 He is ‘Awn ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Utbah ibn Mas‘ūd al-Hudhalī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Kufī. A Tābi‘ī.

- Ibn Sa‘d, Aḥmad, Ibn Ma‘īn, and al-‘Ijlī have deemed him reliable.
- Ibn Ḥibbān says, “He was an ardent worshipper and scholar of Kūfah.”

He passed away between the years 110 and 120 A.H. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 316; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*,/1/13; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 377; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 6 pg. 384; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 8 pg. 171.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 422.

أما بعد ، فإن الله أمر الأئمة أن يكونوا رعاة ، ولم يتقدم إليهم أن يكونوا جباة ، وإثر صدر هذه الأئمة خلقوا رعاة ولم يخلقوا جباة ، وليوشك أئمتكم أن يصيروا جباة ولا يكونوا رعاة ، فإذا عادوا كذلك انقطع الحياء والأمانة والوفاء ، ألا وإن أعدل السيرة أن تنظروا في أمور المسلمين وفيما عليهم ، فتعطوهم الذي لهم وتأخذوهم بما عليهم ، ثم تشنوا بالذمة فتعطوهم الذي لهم ، وتأخذوهم بالذي عليهم ، ثم العدو الذي تتباون فاستفتحوا عليهم بالوفاء

Allah has commanded the leaders to be shepherds; He did not direct them to be tax collectors. Indeed, the inception of this Ummah was made as shepherds and not as tax collectors. But your leaders are surely on the verge of becoming tax collectors rather than shepherds. If they turn out thus, then modesty of manners, integrity, and good faith will be at an end. Verily, the most just conduct is for you to examine the affairs and obligations of the Muslims, so that you may give them what is properly theirs and take from them what they owe. Do likewise as regards those afforded protections. Give to them what is theirs and take from them what they owe. As to the enemy whom you encounter, faithfully seek the aid of Allah against them.¹

It is of note that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه emphasised in this letter that was sent to his governors in the various cities their responsibilities to their constituents. He impressed upon them that their aim was not to amass wealth, it was to consider the needs of the general public. In this manner he outlined the political mindset that the Ummah should adopt. Taking that which was obligatory from the people and giving back to them their rights. He explained that if they adopted this methodology, the Ummah would remain prosperous and moral and if they merely became tax collectors only worried of gathering wealth, modesty, integrity, and good faith would be a thing of the past.

He then wrote another letter specifically to the tax collectors in which he said:

أما بعد ، فإن الله خلق الخلق بالحق ، فلا يقبل إلا بالحق ، خذوا الحق وأعطوا الحق به ، والأمانة الأمانة قوموا عليها ، ولا تكونوا أول من يسلبها فتكونوا شركاء من بعدكم إلى ما اكتسبتم ، والوفاء الوفاء ، ولا تظلموا اليتيم ولا المعاهد ، فإن الله خصم لمن ظلمهم

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 244.

Indeed, Allah created mankind in truth, and he accepts naught but the truth. Take what is right and give for it what is right. Strive for integrity! Uphold it and be not the first to violate it, otherwise you will have a part with those who do the same after you. Keep faith, keep faith! Do not wrong the orphan nor one with whom you have made a pact, for Allah is the opponent of him who wrongs them.¹

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ sent this letter specifically to the tax collectors instructing them to take and give with complete integrity as they were charged with the difficult, important, and mammoth task of collecting revenue fairly together with spending the revenue in the avenues that benefited the public the most. He thus cautioned them against oppression in taxation and misuse of funds. He also singled out two categories to be extra cautious of as they are weak; the orphans and those who have been afforded protection. He was emphatic in this warning by turning their attention to the fact that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Himself, would protect them.

He also wrote to the army generals at the borders and in the far off cities:

أما بعد ، فإنكم حماة المسلمين وذادتهم ، وقد وضع لكم عمر ما لم يغيب عنا ، بل كان عن ملأ ما ، ولا يبلغني عن أحد منكم تغيير ولا تبديل فغير الله بكم ويستبدل بكم غيركم ، فانظروا كيف تكونون ، فإني أنظر فيما ألزمني الله النظر فيه والقيام عليه

Indeed, you are the guardians and protectors of the Muslims, and ‘Umar laid down for you instructions that were not hidden from us; on the contrary, they were in accordance with our counsel. Let me hear of no change or alteration on the part of any one of you, lest Allah change your situation and replace you with others. So examine your conduct, for I shall examine what Allah has required me to examine and watch over.²

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ dispatched this letter to the leaders of his armies so that they may realise the burden they carry upon their shoulders in the form of protecting and

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 245.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 245.

defending the Islamic posts. He also included within it his intention to continue adopting the policies implemented by ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه. He warned them of change in their attitudes lest Allah should change His manner of dealing with them. He reminded them that he is well aware of their situations and will not continue keeping a close eye on them.

His kindness and praiseworthy character in relation to his subjects shines through in an incident narrated by Khalīfah and Ibn Abī Shaybah through the chain of Ḥanẓalah ibn Qinān¹. He says:

أشرف علينا عثمان فقال : أفیکم ابنا محدود - فقال : أنشد كما الله ألتما تعلمان أن عمر قال : إن ربيعة فاجر أو غادر ، وإنني والله لا أجعل فرائضهم وفرائض قوم جاءوا عن مسيرة شهر ، وإنما مهر أحدهم عند طنبه وإنني زدتهم في غداة واحدة خمس مائة - درهم - حتى ألحققتهم بهم - قالوا : بلى . قال : أذكر كما الله ألتما تعلمان أنكما أتيتما في قلتما إن كندة أكلة رأس ، وإن ربيعة الرأس ، وإن الأشعث ابن قيس قد أكلهم فنزعتهم واستعملتكما . قالوا : بلى ، قال : اللهم إن كانوا كفروا معروفا وبذلوا نعمتي فلا ترضهم عن إمامهم ولا ترضي إماما عنهم

‘Uthmān approached us and said, “Are the two sons of Maḥdūj amongst you?”

He then said, “I ask you by Allah! Do you two not know that ‘Umar said, ‘Verily Rabī’ah have acted immorally or treacherously.’ By Allah I shall not equate their shares and the shares of those who have travelled for a month. Their dowry amounts remain at their tents and I have also given them five hundred–Dirhams–more.”

They said, “Yes definitely.”

He continued, “I remind you by Allah! Do you two not know that you two came to me and said that Kindah are oppressors and Rabī’ah are the

1 He is Ḥanẓalah ibn Qinān, Abū Muḥammad. From the Tābī’īn. He narrates from ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and Sammāk ibn Ḥarb narrates from him. See, Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/1/41; and Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 3 pg. 240.

oppressed. And that al-Ash‘ath ibn Qays has oppressed them. So I expelled him and appointed you two.”

They said, “Yes.”

He said, “O Allah, if they took advantage of my good nature and manipulated my benevolence then do not make their leader happy with them and do not make them happy with their leader.”¹

As for his justice and impartiality, al-Bukhārī and Aḥmad have narrated through the chain of ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn ‘Adī ibn al-Khiyār who says:

أنه دخل على عثمان هه وهو محصور فقال له : إنك إمام العامة وقد نزل بك ما ترى ، وهو ذا يصلي بنا إمام فتنة - عبد الرحمن بن غديس البلوي - وأنا أخرج من الصلاة معه . فقال له عثمان : إن الصلاة أحسن ما يعمل الناس ، فإذا أحسن الناس فأحسن معهم ، وإذا أساءوا فاجتنب إساءتهم

I went to ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān while he was besieged, and said to him, “You are the Imām of the Muslims you see what has befallen you. We are led in the ṣalāh by a leader of the fitnah—‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ghudays al-Balawī—and I wish to not join him in ṣalāh.” ‘Uthmān said. “Ṣalāh is the best of all deeds so when the people do good deeds do the same with them and when they do bad deeds, avoid those bad deeds.”²

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was loving and caring. He would ask about the conditions of the Muslims, identify their problems, pacify them regarding those away, give solace to those returning, and ask after the sick. Imām Aḥmad narrates from Mūsa ibn Ṭalḥah who says:

رأيت عثمان ابن عفان وهو على المنبر ، وهو يستخير الناس يسألهم عن أخبارهم وأسعارهم

I saw ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān on the pulpit, consulting people and asking them about their lives and businesses.³

1 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pgs. 171-172; Ibn Abī Shaybah: *Al-Muṣannaf*, vol. 15 pg. 205

2 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 2 pg. 188; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 526.

3 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 498.

Ibn Sa'd narrates from him in *al-Ṭabaqāt*:

رأيت عثمان بن عفان ، يخرج يوم الجمعة عليه ثوبان أصفران ، فيجلس على المنبر ، فيؤذن المؤذن ، وهو يتحدث يسأل الناس عن أسفارهم وعن قدامهم وعن مرضاهم

I saw 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān coming out on Friday wearing two yellowish garments. He sat on the pulpit and the Muadhhdhin called out the Adhān. He spoke to the people, asking them of their travels, returns, and their sick.¹

'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ took a keen interest in the affairs of his constituents. He would assist the needy and stipulate an allowance for infants from the treasury.

'Urwah ibn Zubayr is narrated to have said:

أدرکت زمن عثمان وما من نفس مسلمة إلا لها في مال الله حق - يعني بيت المال

I was present in the era of 'Uthmān. Every single Muslim had a share of the wealth of Allah, i.e. from the treasury.²

Ibn 'Asākir narrates in his *Tārīkh*:

أن امرأة كانت تدخل على عثمان بن عفان ، وفقدتها يوما ، فقال لأهله : مالي لا أرى فلانة ؟ فقالت امرأته : يا أمير المؤمنين ولدت غلاما ، قالت - أي المرأة - فأرسل إلي بخمسين درهما وشقيقة سنبلانية ، ثم قال : هذا عطاء ابنك ، وهذه كسوته ، فإذا مرت به سنة رفعناه إلى مائة

A woman would come to 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān. One day, he did not see her.

He asked his wife, "Why is it that I do not see so and so."

She replied, "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn she has given birth to a child."

1 Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 2 pg. 59.

2 Ibn Shabbah: *Al-Muṣannaf fi al-Ḥadīth*, vol. 3 pg. 1023

The woman says, “He sent fifty Dirhams and some garments.”

He then said, “This is an allowance for your child and this is his garments.
When he reaches a year, we will increase it to a hundred.”¹

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ led a life of asceticism. Not due to ignorance and nor due to poverty. This was done as a result of understanding the temporary nature of this world, giving preference to that which will go on forever. No doubt, coming to this realisation is reaching the plateau of self-restraint. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī says:

رأيت عثمان بن عفان وهو يومئذ خليفة يقيم في المسجد ويقوم وأثر الحصى بجنبه ، فقيل : هذا أمير المؤمنين ! هذا أمير المؤمنين

I saw ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, who was at that time the Khalīfah, taking a siesta in the Masjid. He would stand up and have imprints of the stones on his sides. It would be said, “This is the Amīr al-Mu‘minīn! This is the Amīr al-Mu‘minīn!”²

He also says:

رأيت عثمان بن عفان نائما في المسجد في ملحفة ليس حوله أحد، وهو أمير المؤمنين

I saw ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān sleeping in the Masjid in a wrap with no one around him. He was then the Amīr al-Mu‘minīn.³

His good nature extended to his family and his servants as well. Consider the following narration of Ibn ‘Asākir from ‘Abd Allāh al-Rūmī⁴ who states:

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 219.

2 Ibid, pg. 219.

3 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 493. Its chain is authentic.

4 He is ‘Abd Allāh al-Rūmī al-Baṣrī. From the Tābi‘īn. He narrates from ‘Uthmān and Abū Hurayrah.

• Al-‘Ijlī and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable.

His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/1/133; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 284; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6 pg. 90.

أن عثمان كان يأخذ وضوءه إذا قام من الليل ، فقيل له : لو أمرت الخادم فكفنتك ؟ قال : لا ، الليل لهم يستريحون فيه

‘Uthmān used to fetch his own water for ablution when he would arise at night. It was said to him, “Why don’t you instruct your servant to do so?”

He replied, “No, the night is for them to rest.”¹

His humility can be understood from the following incident.

The slave of Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah got married. He invited some people as well as ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān. When he arrived place was made for him and it was said, “Amīr al-Mu‘minīn!” He held the veil on the door and said, “I am fasting, however, I wished to accept the invitation and pray for blessings.”²

A case worthy of scrutiny is what has plagued the minds of many, due to good or evil intentions, that ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه was weak in facing the challenges that threatened the Muslim Empire and that he was influenced due to weakness. This is a historical fallacy regarding the third Companion of Rasūlullāh صلی الله علیه وسلم. It is obligatory on every Muslim with correct beliefs to correct this belief and take strides in correcting the misconception.

The orientalist and those Arab researches who adopt their method have exploited this issue through fabricated narrations that paint ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه as a weak-willed man. They have focused on this issue and made it a subject of research in order to serve their own interests which is nothing more than tarnishing the image of Islam and attacking the honour of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.

They have also taken advantage of the well-known characteristics of love and mercy ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه showed the people to instill doubts of him having a weak

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 229.

2 Ibn Shabbah: *Al-Muṣannaf*, vol. 3 pg. 1019.

personality and further not being able to appropriately deal with the issues of the Empire. They have taken this to the extent of saying:

وليس من شك في أن أعضاء المجلس - مجلس الشورى - آثروا اختياره رغبة منهم في أن يروا على رأس المسلمين رجلا يستطيعون توجيهه والتعامل معه في سهولة ويسر

There is no doubt that the shūra council members gave him preference so that the Muslim leader would be man capable of manipulation and who would deal with them with ease.¹

This claim though falls with no evidence to back it up. It is mere conjecture. Furthermore, the context of the narrations that deal with the shūra council that appear in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* together with the steps taken by the shūra council leaves a clear impression that the appointment of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه as the khalīfah was based on the fact that they all agreed him to be the best leader for the people. They were of the opinion that he is the most suited to undertake this responsibility in the sight of Allah and in the sight of the people! This outlook was present well before the appointment of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Consider the following quotations.

Imām al-Bukhārī relates from Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما:

كنا زمن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لا نعدل بأبي بكر أحدا ، ثم عمر ، ثم عثمان ، ثم نترك أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لا نفاضل بينهم

During the era of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم we would not hold anyone equal to Abū Bakr, then ‘Umar, and then ‘Uthmān. We would not differentiate between the other Companions of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم.²

Ibn Abī Shaybah narrates from Ḥārithah ibn Muḍarrīb who said:

1 Carl Brokelmann: *Tārīkh al-Shu’ūb al-Islāmiyyah*, pg. 86.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 203.

حججت في خلافة عمر فلم أراهم يشكون - أي الناس - أن الخليفة بعده عثمان

I performed Ḥajj during the khilāfah of ‘Umar and saw that people assumed the khalīfah after him would be ‘Uthmān.¹

Ya‘qūb ibn Shaybah narrates with an authentic chain from Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه who says:

قال لي عمر : من ترى قومك يؤمرون بعدي - قلت : قد نظر الناس إلى عثمان وشهره لها

‘Umar asked to me, “Who do you think your people will appoint after me?”

I replied, “People have their eye on ‘Uthmān and his reputation.”²

Al-Baghawī narrates in his *Mu‘jam* and Khaythamah³ in *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah* with an authentic narration from Ḥārithah ibn Muḍarrib who said:

حججت مع عمر فكان الحادي يحدو أن الأمير بعده عثمان

I performed Ḥajj with ‘Umar and did not doubt that ‘Uthmān would be the Amīr after him.⁴

With the consent of the shūra council ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf رضي الله عنه took to being the deciding figure. The council would decide as he opted through his intelligence and noble personality with him giving preference to the greater

1 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *Al-Muṣannaf*, vol. 14 pg. 588.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 13 pg. 198.

3 He is Khaythamah ibn Sulaymān ibn Ḥaydarah al-Qurashī al-Tarābulusī al-Shāmī, Abū al-Ḥasan. Ḥāfiẓ and great traveller. He was the muḥaddith of Shām in his era.

• Al-Khaṭīb says, “Reliable, reliable. He has gathered the virtues of the Ṣaḥābah.”

He has authored *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah* and *Al-Raqā’iq wa al-Ḥikāyāt*. He passed away the year 343 A.H/955 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 5 pg. 347; Al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāẓ*, vol. 3 pg. 858; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, vol. 2 pg. 411; Al-Kattānī: *Risālah al-Mustaṭrafah*, pg. 44.

4 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pgs. 178-179; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 13 pg. 198.

good of the Muslims in unifying them under one leader. He carried this great responsibility with patience, strong will, and resourcefulness. Hereunder are the steps he took in fulfilling his task:

1. He clarified his method of undertaking in the first meeting of the shūra council in the time frame ‘Umar رضي الله عنه had afforded them. In this manner he was able to take the opinions of the shūra council and note their inclinations thereby gaining a holistic view.¹
2. He recused himself and gave up his right to the khilāfah in order to dispel any doubts regarding himself and emphasize his only concern of unifying the Muslims.²
3. He began identifying the preference of each member coming to the conclusion that the individual preference as supported by the opinions of Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh and Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqās was in favour of ‘Uthmān. This sentiment extended to the majority of the members.³
4. He attempted to impress the status of ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to each other and their status in relation to the other members. Thus, each one of them realized that none would be equal to the other if he is not elected.⁴
5. He began seeking the views of the influential and general population. He came to the realization that people do not hold anyone in the same lofty position that they do ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. He thus pledged allegiance to him and the people followed in a general pledge, with pleasure and a choice in the matter.⁵

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 234.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 123.

3 *Ibid*, vol. 4 pg. 206.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 231; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 7 pg. 69.

5 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 123.

Ibn Kathīr says regarding this:

ثم نهض عبد الرحمن بن عوف رضي الله عنه يستشير الناس فيهما - أي في علي وعثمان - ويجمع رأي المسلمين برأي رؤوس الناس وأقيادهم جميعا وأشتاتا ، مثنى وفرادى ومجتمعين ، سرا وجهرا ، حتى خلص إلى النساء المخدرات في حجابهن ، وحتى سأل الولدان في المكاتب ، وحتى سأل من يرد من الركبان والأعراب إلى المدينة في مدة ثلاثة أيام بلياليها ، فلم يجد اثنين يختلفان في تقدم عثمان بن عفان إلا ما ينقل عن عمار والمقداد أنهما أشارا بعلي بن أبي طالب ، ثم بايعا مع الناس

‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf رضي الله عنه thus began consulting people regarding them two—‘Alī and ‘Uthmān—taking note of the opinions of the general people and the influential. He did this with groups and individuals, secretly, and in public. He sought the opinions of the veiled women in their seclusions, the children in their places of learning, and even the riders and the Bedouins who came into Madinah within those three days and nights. He did not find any two persons differing in opining for ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, besides that which has been related of ‘Ammār and Miqdād who had opined for ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. He then took the pledge with the people.¹

Imām al-Ṭabarī says:

ولم يكن في أهل الإسلام أحد له من المنزلة في الدين والهجرة والسابقة والعقل والعلم والمعرفة بالسياسة ما للسنّة الذين جعل عمر الأمر شورى بينهم ، فإن قيل كان بعض هؤلاء السنّة أفضل من بعض ، وكان رأي عمر أن الأحق بالخلافة أرضاهم ديناً . وأنه لا تصح ولاية المفضول مع وجود الفاضل فالجواب أنه لو صرح بالأفضل منهم لكان قد نص على استخلافه ، وهو قصد أن لا يتقلد العهدة في ذلك ، فجعلها في سنّة متقاربين في الفضل ، لأنه يتحقق أنهم لا يجتمعون على تولية المفضول ولا يألون المسلمين نصحا في النظر والشورى ، وأن المفضول منهم لا يتقدم على الفاضل ولا يتكلم في منزلة وغيره أحق بها منه ، وعلم - أي عمر - رضا الأمة بمن رضي به السنّة ، ويؤخذ منه بطلان قول الرافضة - الشيعة - وغيرهم أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم نص على أن الإمامة في أشخاص بأعيانهم ، إذ لو كان كذلك لما أطاعوا عمر في جعلها شورى ، ولقال قائل منهم : ما وجه التشاور في أمر كفيتهما ببيان الله لنا على لسان رسوله ، ففي رضا الجميع بما أمرهم به - عمر - دليل على أن الذي كان عندهم من العهد في الإمامة أوصاف من وجدت فيه استحقتها ، وإدراكها يقع بالاجتهاد ، وفيه أن الجماعة الموثوق بديانتهم إذا عقدوا عقد الخلافة لشخص بعد التشاور والاجتهاد لم يكن الغيرهم أن يحل ذلك العقد ، إذ لو كان العقد لا يصح إلا باجتماع

1 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 146.

الجميع لقال قائل : لا معنى لتخصيص هؤلاء الستة ، فلما لم يعترض منهم معترض بل رضوا وباعوا ،
دل ذلك على صحة ما قلناه

There was no one amongst the Muslims who were of the status in faith, migration, precedence, knowledge, and political acumen then the six appointed by ‘Umar as the shūra.

If one raises the objections that some of the six were more virtuous than others whilst ‘Umar knew that the one most suited for khilāfah was the most virtuous and further, it is not permissible for one of lesser virtue to be appointed as a leader in the presence of one more virtuous. The answer would be, if he had verbalized the most virtuous, that would have been an appointment to the khilāfah, a route he did not wish to adopt. He therefore placed the matter between six such people who were close to each other in virtue as he knew that they would not agree on appointing one of lesser virtue and that they would keep the greater good of the Muslims in their decisions. Furthermore, he understood that one of lesser virtue would not give himself preference to one of higher virtue and would not take on a position that someone else has more of a right to. ‘Umar also knew that the Ummah would be pleased with whom the six are pleased with.

This refutes the incorrect view of the Rāfiḍah—the Shī‘ah—and others who say that Rasūlullāh ﷺ had specified leadership position for specific individuals. If this was the case, they would have not agreed with ‘Umar in making an electoral council.

Another objection would be, why consult in a matter that has been decreed by Allah ﷻ on the tongue of His Messenger ﷺ? The fact that all were content with what ‘Umar had instructed them to do is evidence that those who he had appointed were worthy of it and it was a matter to be decided through ijtihād. Furthermore, when a group who are deemed worthy and reliable appoint someone to the khilāfah after consultation and ijtihād make a binding decision that cannot be broken by anyone thereafter. And since no one opposed their decision, our point remains.¹

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fathḥ*, vol. 13 pg. 198.

It is also worthy of note that even though ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was soft natured and kind towards people—traits of a just ruler—this did not make him weak in implementing the punishments set out by Allah. He would write to his governors, “Seek assistance through patience in prayer when faced by people and difficulties.”¹ And “Do not impose on them as long as they do not distort the faith, overlook their nature, be good to them, and do not be irresponsible in the religion of Allah.”²

There is nothing more evident in this matter than the fact that he had the rebellious sons of wealthy executed which led them to dislike him.³ He instructed people to adhere to the laws of Islam and took them to task in fulfilling the rights of Allah.

To this end ‘Amr ibn ‘Āsim al-Tamīmī says:

فظم اللصوص بمحكم القرآن
في كل عنق منهم وبنان

إن ابن عفان الذي جريتم
ما زال يعمل بالكتاب مهيمنا

For Ibn ‘Affān, whom you have put to the test,

Has cut off thieves by the law of the Qur’ān.

Without fail he acts in accordance with the Book,

*Keeping close watch over every neck and fingertip among them.*⁴

He was not afraid of blame in fulfilling the commands of Allah even with those who were close to him. When it had been established that Walīd ibn ‘Uqbah—his maternal brother—had drunk alcohol, he removed him from office and had him lashed as found in the authentic narrations.⁵

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 240.

2 Ibid, pg. 240.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 398.

4 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 272.

5 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 203; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 11 pg. 216.

Similarly, ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ followed the policies of ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in taking reviews of his governors from the pilgrims, asking them about their leaders. He would write to people in the cities to come before him during the days of Ḥajj and put forth any complaints they had. They would approach him with their complaints together with the leaders and he would decide between them with impartiality.

أما بعد ، فإنني آخذ العمال بموافاتي في كل موسم ، وقد سلطت الأمة منذ ولت على الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر ، فلا يرفع على شيء ولا على أحد من عمالي إلا أعطيته

I require the governors to appear before me during the Pilgrimage season every year, and I have enjoined the Ummah to command the good and forbid the evil ever since I took office. Nothing has been demanded from me or from any of my governors that I have not granted.¹

He was exhaustive in keeping a check on his governors and he would direct them to deal with the public in a merciful and kind manner. He would instruct them to come before him during the days of Ḥajj for this. In contrast to this, he instilled within the hearts of the public to be vocal and not to fear with the truth. Thus they became ever watchful over their governors to fulfill their duties entrusted to them by Allah with integrity.

Sālim ibn ‘Abd Allāh² says:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 342.

2 He is Sālim ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb al-‘Adawī, Abū ‘Amr al-Madanī al-Faqīh. Amongst the senior Tābī‘īn and one of the even jurist of Madinah.

- Ibn Sa’d says, “He was reliable and narrated many aḥādīth.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Madanī, Tābī‘ī, reliable.”
- Aḥmad ibn Rahwayh says, “The most authentic chain of transmission is Zuhrī — from Sālim — from his father.”
- Mālik says, “There was no one else in the era of Sālim ibn ‘Abd Allāh that was like the pious of the past in asceticism and virtue.”

His life has been recorded by, Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 195; Khalīfah: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, pg. 246; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 352-353; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3 pg. 436.

لما ولي عثمان ، حج سنواته كلها إلى آخر حجة حجها ... فكتب في الأمصار أن يوافيه العمال في كل موسم ومن يشكوهم ، وكتب إلى الناس في الأمصار : أن اتتمروا بالمعروف وتناهوا عن المنكر ، ولا يذلل المؤمن نفسه ، فإني مع الضعيف على القوي ما دام مظلوماً إن شاء الله ، فكان الناس كذلك . ففجر ذلك إلى أن اتخذهم قوم وسيلة لتفريق الأمة

When ‘Uthmān became the khalīfah, he went to every pilgrimage right to the last year. He wrote to the cities that the governors were to come before him at every pilgrimage season with those who had laid complaints against them. And he wrote to the people in the cities, “Enjoin good and forbid evil. No believer should humiliate himself as I am with the weak against the strong as long as he is oppressed, if Allah wills.” People acted in accordance to this. And then they took it to levels by which they caused factions to arise in the Ummah.¹

Further, relieving governors on the insistence of the people does not signal weakness, it signals his aptitude to instill justice. At the same time, it resulted in those seeking unrest to have no case against him.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه says in this regard:

أما بعد فقد أمرت عليكم من اخترتم وأعفيتكم من سعيد - أمير الكوفة - فوالله لأفرشكم عرضي ولأبذل لكم صبري ، ولأستصلحكنكم بجهدني ، فلا تدعوا شيئاً أحببتموه لا يعصي الله فيه إلا سألتموه ، ولا شيئاً كرهتموه لا يعصي الله فيه إلا استعفتيم منه ، أنزل فيه عندما أحببتم حتى لا يكون لكم علي حجة

I have named as your governor the one whom you have chosen, and I have relieved you of Sa‘īd. By Allah, I will surely expose my honour to your abuse, wear out my patience, and use every effort to seek reconciliation with you. So do not fail to ask for whatever you desire, so long as it does not involve rebellion against Allah. Nor should you fail to demand relief from whatever you dislike, so long as it does not involve rebellion against Allah. Thus, I will comply with whatever you desire until you have no argument against me.²

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 300.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 336.

‘Abbās al-Aqqād has hit the mark on this subject. He says:

وللسائل في أمثال هذه المأزق أن يسأل : فعل عثمان هذا أو ذلك فسخطوا عليه ، فهل يرضون عنه لو لم يفعل هذا وذاك – واليقين في رأينا أن الرضى عنه في أمثال ذلك المأزق مطمع لا يرام ، لأن أساس البلاء كله سهولة الشكوى من الدهماء ، ومتى سهلت الشكوى فالإعراض عنها محنة ، واستجابتها محتنان ، لأنها تغري بالشكوى من جديد ، وتزيد البلاء بزيادة السهولة ، طمعا في دوام الإصغاء

One considering this predicament may ask, “Whether ‘Uthmān did this or that, they turned against him. Would they have been content if he hadn’t done so?” We believe that in such predicaments, there is an ulterior motive that cannot be satisfied as the basis of such dilemmas was criticisms of the mob. Not giving in to them would prove disastrous whilst giving in would prove doubly so as it would entice them to bring forth more criticism. Every agreement with them would only increase negative consequences.¹

Was ‘Uthmān then unable to pursue a totalitarian system in order to quell the uprising? Or was he incapable of meting out sentences that would result in the implosion of the uprising and it being restricted amongst the early rebels who had no precedence in Islam, no virtue of migration, and no great feats in jihād – merely devils in human skin suites, Ibn Saba’ and his ilk? This was most definitely not the case. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was not unable nor incapable of assuming such a stance. Neither was he weak or suppressed. Rather, he was a rightly guided khalīfah who bound himself by justice against adopting the practices of dictatorial kings.

Yes, if ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه had adopted measures as done by other oppressive rulers by employing others to do his dirty work, beating people and spilling their blood, his post would have been safe as the oppressive kings had remained safe. If he had taken the decision of a full out war against the rebels he would have killed them off and lived in comfort as those rulers who would come after him had done. And if he lived according to the wants of the ill aspired, he would have lived an easy life just as they would with the wealth of the Ummah.

1 Al-Aqqād: ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān Dhū al-Nūrayn, pg. 153.

It would not have been difficult for ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه to adopt policies that others would go on to adopt, taking on governors such as ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād or Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf who squashed uprising through brutal force laying waste to men and cities until the world bent their necks to their kings.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه though, was not an oppressive ruler as the ignorant assume, nor was he weak as the falsifiers portray. He was a rightly guided khalīfah; leader who dealt with people with justice, kindness, mercy, and good will.

The life of ‘Uthmān and his policies illustrate him to be one of the greatest leaders of Islam. He did not stray from the truth in his life, he did not wander from justice in his rule, and his judgments were never against the Islamic principles. But oh! The souls of man were blinded by misguidance, clouded by the luxuries of life, and were not channeled by the light of faith. With murky vision and absent minds, these men thus fell into opposition and rebellion in a shadowy fitnah.

Qa‘qā‘ ibn ‘Amr states:

لا والله لا تسكن الغوغاء إلا المشرفية ويوشك أن تنتضي ثم يعجون عجيج العتدان ويتمنون ما هم فيه - أي من النعم والخير والعدل والحرية - فلا يرده الله عليهم أبدا

No, by Allah, only swords will silence the mob, and they are on the point of being drawn. Then they will bawl like goats and long for their present situation—of ease, justice freedom, and goodness. Allah will never restore it to them.¹

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was not weak when he saw the uprising of the fitnah. He only wished to amicably resolve the situation by way of kindness and wisdom. Imām al-Ṭabarī narrates through the chain of Sayf ibn ‘Umar that ‘Uthmān gathered his governors and sought their opinions regarding the matter of the people. He heard what they had to say and then said:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 332.

وقد سمعت كل ما أشرت به ، ولكل أمر باب يؤتى منه ، إن هذا الأمر الذي يخاف على هذه الأمة كائن ، وإن بابه الذي يعلق عليه ليفتح ، فنكفكه باللين والمواتاة إلا في حدود الله ، فإن فتح فلا يكون لأحد علي حجة ، وقد علم الله أني لم آل الناس خيرا ، وإن راحى الفتنة دائرة ، فطوبى لعثمان إن مات ولم يحركها ، سكنوا الناس وهبوا لهم حقوقهم ، فإذا تعوطيت حقوق الله فلا تدهنوا

I have heard everything that you have advised me to do. Every affair has a door to come through. And the matter which was feared for this Ummah will become a reality. The door out of this affair which is shut will surely open. We will face it with leniency and generous treatment except where the punishment of Allah is manifest. Then there will not be against me any proof, and Allah knows that I have not neglected any good for the people. By Allah, the mill of fitnah is turning; blessed will 'Uthmān be if he dies without having set it in motion. Restrain the people and bestow their rights upon them. But where the rights of Allah are concerned, do not be lax.¹

In the external front, as soon as the news of the assassination of 'Umar رضي الله عنه and the ascension of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه to the khilāfah spread amongst the nations that were subjugated to Islamic rule, the fire of fitnah and rebellion began igniting. The Persians tribes in Azerbaijan proclaimed mutiny and refused to pay the taxes by which they had entered into a treaty with the Muslims.² Alexandria broke their treaty and sought the assistance of the roman naval power which amounted to three hundred ships loaded with men and weapons.³ As this news continued spreading amongst the Armenians, Turks, and Khazars, they began searching for avenues to break their treaties as well.⁴

However, these incidents did not deter the Muslims and neither did it diminish the determination of the khalīfah who was primed for it. He faced it with purpose, swiftly changing the current of affairs by deploying reinforcements and appointing the worthiest to posts suitable to them. All this becomes quite

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 343.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 246.

3 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 158; *Al-Ṭabarī: Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 250.

4 *Al-Balādhurī: Futūh al-Buldān*, pg. 200; *Al-Ṭabarī: Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 248.

clear from studying the occurrences as laid out in the History of Imām al-Ṭabarī. This leaves no doubt that that those who were deployed by ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in suppressing this uprising was done so appropriately. This was done knowing well the gravity of the situation in deploying troops who would take decisive actions faced by the plethora of evils and distance between cities.

The steps taken by ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه after his ascension to the khilāfah in facing the difficulties with swift, appropriate, and firm action lays bare his resilient personality and absolute wisdom. In this he attained the great virtue of stabilizing the regions under Muslim control after it had suffered uncertainties subsequent to the assassination of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. The result of his actions were as follows:

1. Suppressing the rebels and asserting Islamic rule once again in their regions.¹
2. Expanding the Islamic Empire to lands beyond those of the rebels in order to stifle their influence.²
3. Setting into place regulations of guarding the borders whereby the Muslims would retain their rule in such areas.³
4. Instituting a naval force to combat naval incursions and to further conquer islands that were in areas under Muslim rule.⁴

Consider, could these colossal conquests, decisive political moves, and preservation of regions be possible if ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was weak and unable to be resolute as some assume?

In conclusion, there is no khilāfah in Islam after Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما who established Islamic law in far off and close regions, upon the affluent and

1 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pgs. 157,158, and 163; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pgs. 247 and 250.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pgs. 247-248.

3 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 265-266.

4 Ibid, vol. 4 pgs. 258, 260, and 288; Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 160 and 167.

underprivileged, and upon the rich and the poor with no consideration of position or wealth as ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه had done.

The honour of being a part of the rightly guided Khulafā is sufficient as an honor for him. A style of leadership that had not been seen before. One that was based upon consultation¹ in a world that was ruled by individual emperors and monarchs. One that was based upon the principles of equality and justice² in a world that was subject to oppression, tyranny, and elitism. Furthermore, the economic structure in the era of the rightly guided Khulafā was just as unique. It was an economy based on distributing the wealth of the Ummah on all its individual subjects.³

Above all of this, his leadership shone bright with his asceticism and humility. He stood in front of the conspirators against the khilāfah in his modest dwelling, behind no ornate walls, army or police protecting him. A unique virtue of the Khulafā al-Rāshidīn who championed justice and sacrificed their comforts for that of their subjects. Truly, an inspiring role-model for every era!

1 ‘Abd al-Razzāq narrates in his Muṣannaf, from ‘Umar رضي الله عنه who states:

الإمارة شورى

Leadership is based on consultation. [vol. 5 pg. 446]

He also said:

من دعا إلى إمارة نفسه أو غيره من غير مشورة من المسلمين فلا يجزى لكم إلا أن تقتلوه

Whoever campaigns to elect himself or another without consulting the Muslims, it is permitted for you to kill him. [vol. 5 pg. 445]

2 Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazrī narrates from Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه who said:

يا أيها الناس قد وليت عليكم ولست بخيركم ، فإن أحسنت فأعني ، وإن أسأت فقوموني

O people! I have been appointed over you but I am not the best of you. If I serve well, assist me and if I deviate, set me straight. [*Mināl al-Ṭālib fi Sharḥi Ṭiwāl al-Gharā’ib*, pg. 273]

3 Ibn Sa’d narrates that ‘Umar رضي الله عنه wrote to his governor of Kūfah saying:

أما بعد ، فأعلم يوما من السنة لا يبقى في بيت المال درهم حتى يكسح اكتساحا حتى يعلم الله أني أتيت لكل ذي حق حقه

Distribute the wealth of the treasury to the extent that not one Dirham remains in it once a year and it is swept out so that Allah would know that I have given each his right. [Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pg. 303.]

Section Two: Answering the allegations against ‘Uthmān.

- I. Accusations of familial preference.
- II. Accusations of innovation.
- III. Accusations in dealing with those Ṣaḥābah who conflicted with him.
- IV. Accusations against his personality.

I. Accusations of familial preference

Conditions were quite calm and peaceful during the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and people became complacent living in ease under the shadow of the Rightly Guided Khulafā’. The calls to fitnah and attempts in causing division by the Saba’iyyah and Bedouins were made at this time. They began attributing lies to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and his governors. Whenever something negative would come to light, they brought about accusations and slanders against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Every accusation that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was wrongly accorded, was part of the plan of the Khawārij to either oust him or kill him. Imām al-Ṭabarī narrates from Sayf ibn ‘Umar:

نريد أن نذكر له أشياء قد زرعناها في قلوب الناس، ثم نرجع إليهم فنزعم لهم أننا قررناه بها، فلم يخرج منها ولم يتب، ثم نخرج كأننا حجاج حتى نقدم فنحيط به فنخلعه فإن أبي قتلناه

We wished to mention to (‘Uthmān) certain misdeeds that we have planted in the hearts of the people. Afterwards we shall go back to them and claim that we compelled him to confess these things, but that he did not abandon them or repent. Then we will set out in the guise of pilgrims until we reach Madinah. We will surround him and depose him, and if he refuses we will kill him.¹

These accusations can be categorised into the following:

Accusations against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in giving preference to individuals of his family by appointing them to posts. This category of accusations also includes:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 346.

1. His removing some senior Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ from leadership posts whilst appointing juniors,
2. Recalling his uncle al-Ḥakam after Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had exiled him,
3. Giving Marwān the proceeds of Fadak as well as one hundred thousand dirhams,
4. Giving Ibn Abī Sarḥ one fifth of the booty of Ifrīqiyyah.¹

1. Allegation: He appointed his young relatives in place of Senior Ṣaḥābah

The first accusation in this category levelled against him is that he removed senior Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and replaced them with those beneath them in status and virtue of his own family with the likes of Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir, Ibn Abī Sarḥ, and Mu‘āwiyah. These accusations need to be contextualised within the parameters of political prudence and prophetic precedence. Policies enforced by Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, Abū Bakr, and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا.

An authentic narration outlines the incident of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ having appointed ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ at the head of the army in the expedition of Dhāt al-Salāsīl. This was whilst within the ranks of the army were the likes of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا. This preference of leadership had ‘Amr asking Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

من أحب الناس إليك؟ قال: «عائشة»، قال: من الرجال؟ قال: «أبوها»، قال: ثم من؟ قال: «عمر بن الخطاب»

Who amongst people are dearest to you?

He said, “‘Ā‘ishah.”

He then asked, “Who amongst men?”

1 All of these accusations against ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ have been recorded by the early historians in their books. This includes the likes of Abū Mikhnaf, al-Wāqidī, Ibn Qutaybah, al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Ṭabarī, Ibn A‘tham, al-Mas‘ūdī, Ibn Kathīr, and others.

He said, “Her father”.

He said, “And who next?”

He said, “Umar.”

Rasūlullāh ﷺ thus enumerated many men and did not mention ‘Amr amongst them.¹

It has also been established that Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not allow Abū Dharr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ any position of leadership knowing that he would not be able to withstand the gravities of leadership. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said to him:

يا أبا ذر ، أراك ضعيفا ، وإني أحب لك ما أحب لنفسي لا تأمرن على اثنين ولا تولين مال يتيم

O Abu Dharr, I see that you are weak and I like for you what I like for myself. Do not rule over (even) two persons, and do not manage an orphan’s property.²

This was notwithstanding the renowned status and virtue held by Abū Dharr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said regarding him:

ما أقلت الغبراء ولا أظلت الخضراء من رجل أصدق من أبي ذر

There is no one more truthful, that the sky has shaded and the earth has carried, than Abū Dharr.³

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 5 pg. 113.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 12 pg. 210.

3 *Musnad Ahmad*, vol. 3 pg. 163; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 5 pg. 334. This narration is corroborated by the narration of Abū Dharr himself as recorded in *Al-Mustadrak*, vol. 3 pg. 342 with the wording:

ما تقل الغبراء ولا تظل الخضراء من ذي لهجة أصدق ولا أوفى من أبي ذر شبيه عيسى ابن مريم

There is no one more truthful in speech, nor in fulfilling of promises, that the sky has covered and the earth has carried, than Abū Dharr, the likeness of ‘Īsā ibn Maryam...

Al-Ḥākim says, “Authentic according to the stipulation of Muslim. He has not recorded it.” Al-Dhahabī has concurred with him. Al-Albānī has authenticated it in *Al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*: 2343 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*: 2990, vol. 3 pg. 229.

In a similar vein Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ refused to remove Khālid ibn Walīd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ from his post even at the insistence of ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. He reasoned to keep him at his post due to his strength and tactical skill in the military setting. Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ would say:

لا أشييم سيفاً سلّه الله على المشركين

I will not sheath a sword that Allah has drawn against the polytheists.¹

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ would appoint a man whilst disregarding another who held greater virtue and precedence amongst the Companions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. This decision was made based on the formers ability in carrying out tasks, insight, and political acumen.

People would say to ‘Umar:

مالك لا تولي الأكابر من أصحاب رسول الله

Why do you not appoint the senior Companions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to posts?

He would reply:

إني لأتحرّج أن أستعمل الرجل وأنا أجد أقوى منه

I find it difficult to appoint a man when I find another better suited to the task.

Another narrations records him saying:

ولو علمت أن أحدا من الناس أقوى عليه مني - أمر الولاية - لكنت أقدم فتضرب عنقي أحب إلي من أن أليه

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 279.

If I knew of anyone more suited to this post—of leadership—I would avail myself and love for my neck to be struck rather than taking on this duty.¹

Rasūlullāh ﷺ and his Khulafā' that came after him were adherents to the following political philosophy:

التقي الضعيف له تقاء وللخليفة ضعفه ، والقوي الفاجر للخليفة قوته وفجوره على نفسه ، لأن التقي الضعيف تقواه لنفسه وضعفه للمسلمين والقوي الفاجر فجوره لنفسه وقوته للمسلمين

A pious weak man benefits himself by way of his piety though he represents weakness to the khalīfah and the Muslims and strong sinner is by himself liable for his sin whilst his strength an asset to the khalīfah and the Muslims.²

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ lived his political life according to this designation. Since Rasūlullāh ﷺ and al-Shaykhayn (Abū Bakr and ‘Umar) had adopted the same political ideology, which has been accepted by the ummah as the most suitable and definitive, how can condemnation be then the lot of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ? Is it not so that Rasūlullāh ﷺ and al-Shaykhayn were his role models? Did he not have the executive rights of khilāfah that were afforded to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar? What would the meaning of him being the leader be if he were barred from relieving one from a post while appointing another all the while taking into consideration the welfare of the Islamic empire; a responsibility of the khalīfah which the masses are unaware of and do not understand! His statement at his inauguration to the office of khilāfah reflects these sentiments. He said:

أما بعد ، إني مع ولسـت بمبتدع

I am a follower and not an innovator.³

1 Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pg. 257 and 305; *Al-Muttaqī al-Hindī: Kanz al-‘Ummāl*, vol. 5 pg. 738.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Siyāsah al-Sharī‘ah*, pgs. 18-24.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 322.

It is astounding that ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is considered culpable in appointing his family persons whilst ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is not censured by anyone when he had done the same. He appointed ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās over Baṣrah¹, ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās over Yemen², Qutham ibn ‘Abbās over Makkah and Ṭā’if³, Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr—his foster child—over Egypt⁴, and Thumāmah ibn ‘Abbās over Madinah⁵.

Ibn Taymiyyah says in this regard:

إذا كان كذلك ظهرت حجة عثمان ، فعثمان يقول : إن بني أمية كان رسول الله يستعملهم في حياته ، واستعملهم بعده من لا ينهم فيهم ، أبو بكر الصديق رضي الله عنه وعمر رضي الله عنه ولا نعرف قبيلة من قبائل قريش فيها عمال لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أكثر من بني عبد شمس - بنو أمية - لأنهم كانوا كثيرين وكان فيهم شرف وسؤدد ، فاستعمل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في عزة الإسلام على أفضل الأرض « مكة » بعد افتتاحها سنة ثمان عتاب بن أسيد ابن أبي العاص ، وهو شاب في نحو العشرين من العمر ، واستعمل على نجران أبا سفيان بن حرب بن أمية ، واستعمل أيضا خالد بن سعيد بن العاص - له صحبة - على صدقات بني مذحج وعلى صنعاء اليمن ، فلم يزل حتى مات رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم واستعمل عثمان بن سعيد بن العاص - له صحبة - على تيماء وخيبر وقرى عرينة ، واستعمل أبان بن سعيد بن العاص - له صحبة - على بعض السرايا ، ثم استعمله على البحرين ، فلم يزل عليها بعد العلاء الحضرمي حتى توفي النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم... فيقول عثمان : أنا لم أستعمل إلا من استعمله النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ومن جنسهم ومن قبيلتهم . وكذلك أبو بكر وعمر بعد ، فقد ولي أبو بكر يزيد بن أبي سفيان بن حرب - له صحبة - في فتوح الشام وأقره عمر ، ثم ولي عمر بعده أخاه معاوية . وهذا النقل في استعمال هؤلاء ثابت مشهور عنه بل متواتر عند أهل العلم

Since this is the case, ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is in the clear. ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is reported to have said, “Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ appointed individuals of the Banū Umayyah to leadership positions in his life and subsequently by those who cannot be accused of favoring them because of blood-ties; Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ appointed from them as well. We do not know of any tribe of Quraysh that had more people employed by the Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ than

1 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 200.

2 Ibid, pg. 200.

3 Ibid, pg. 201.

4 Ibid, pg. 201.

5 Ibid, pg.201.

the Banū ‘Abd Shams, i.e. the Banū Umayyah, as they were numerous and they were known to be people of leadership and status. Rasūlullāh ﷺ appointed ‘Itāb ibn Usayd ibn Abī al ‘Āṣ as governor of Makkah a year after the conquest when he was just twenty, Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb ibn Umayyah over Najrān, Khālīd ibn Sa‘īd in charge of the zakāt of Banū Madhij and over Ṣan‘ā, Yemen, and Abān ibn Sa‘īd in charge of some campaigns then as governor of Bahrain.” So ‘Uthmān ﷺ only appointed people of the same people and clan as Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ﷺ had done. Abū Bakr ﷺ appointed Yazīd ibn Abī Sufyān in charge of the conquests in Syria and ‘Umar ﷺ left him in that post, then after Yazīd died he appointed his brother Mu‘āwiyah. The narratives in appointing these people are established and famous; rather they reach the level of undeniability as attested to by the scholars.¹

It is safe to say that the most prominent governors whom ‘Uthmān ﷺ appointed from among his relatives are proven to have been qualified and capable in running the affairs of their constituents. Allah granted many conquests at their hands, and they treated the people justly and kindly. Some of them had been appointed as governors previously, during the reign of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar ﷺ.

Amongst these are:

- Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān ﷺ in Shām.

‘Umar ﷺ had appointed him in place of his brother Yazīd who had passed away in the ‘Amwās plague the year 18 A.H.²/639 A.D. He then appointed him over the entire area of Shām.³ Prior to being appointed as governor by ‘Umar or ‘Uthmān ﷺ he was one of those whom Rasūlullāh ﷺ relied upon by taking him on a scribe of revelation as established in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.⁴

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Minhāj*, vol. 3 pg. 175-176.

2 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 138.

3 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāsim*, pg. 84.

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 16 pg. 62.

The life of Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in relation to his constituent’s remains an example of great leadership by virtue of which the people loved him. It has been established in an authentic narration from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ who said:

خيار أئمتكم - حكامكم - الذين تحبونهم ويحبونكم وتصلون عليهم - تدعون لهم - ويصلون عليكم ،
وشرار أئمتكم الذين تبغضونهم ويبغضونكم وتلعنونهم ويلعنونكم

The best of your leaders are those whom you love and who love you, whom you pray for and who pray for you. And the worst of your leaders are those whom you hate and who hate you, whom you curse and who curse you.¹

- ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sa‘d ibn Abī Sarḥ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in Egypt.

Ibn Hishām says regarding him:

وقد حسن إسلامه بعد ذلك وولاه عمر بعض أعماله ثم ولاه عثمان

After this his reversion Islam was sincere, ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ appointed him to a post and ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ did the same.²

Ibn Ḥajar has related in his historical work from Ibn al-Barqī³ who sources from Layth ibn Sa‘d who said:

كان ابن أبي سرح على الصعيد في زمن عمر ، ثم ضم إليه عثمان مصر كلها ، وكان محمودا في ولايته ،
وغزا ثلاث غزوات : إفريقية وذات الصواري والأساود

1 Ibid, vol. 12 pg. 244.

2 Ibn Hishām: *Al-Sīrah*, vol. 3 pg. 563.

3 He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm, Abū ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Barqī al-Miṣrī. Imām, muḥaddith, and reliable historian. He is known as ibn al-Barqī or as al-Barqī as he would trade to Barqah (Cyrenaica).

• Ibn Yūnus says, “Reliable, a narrator of the historical battles.”

He has authored *Al-Ḍu‘afā’ fi al-Ḥadīth* and a book on the genre of Islamic History and Biographical Literature. He passed away the year 249 A.H./863 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 7 pg. 301; *Al-Dhahabī: Al-Tadhkirah*, vol. 2 pg. 569; *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā*, vol. 13 pg. 46; Ibn Farḥūn: *Al-Dībāj*, pg. 233; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 9 pg. 263.

Ibn Abī al-Sarḥ was appointed over al-Saʿīd (Upper Egypt) during the era of ʿUmar. ʿUthmān then had him govern the whole of Egypt. His rule was exemplary. He launched three campaigns, in Ifrīqiyyah, Dhāt al-Ṣawārī, and al-Asāwid.¹

He held a commendable position throughout his governorship, especially in the area of conquests. Many Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم fought under his flag in the campaign on Ifrīqiyyah. Amongst these Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿUmar, ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbbās, ʿAbd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr, and ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAmr رضي الله عنهم.²

Imām al-Dhahabī says regarding him:

ولم يتعد ولا فعل ما ينقم عليه ، وكان أحد عقلاء الرجال وأجوادهم ، وروى البغوي بإسناد صحيح عن يزيد بن أبي حبيب قال : خرج ابن أبي سرح إلى الرملة ، فلما كان الصبح قال : اللهم أجعل آخر عملي الصبح ، فتوضأ ، ثم صلى ، فسلم عن يمينه ، ثم ذهب بسلم عن يساره ، فقبض الله روحه ، وذكره البخاري من هذا الوجه

He did not go beyond the bounds, nor did he do actions worthy of condemnation. He was a man of intelligence and generosity. Al-Baghwāī has related with an authentic chain of transmission from Yazīd ibn Abī Ḥabīb³ who said, “Ibn Abī al-Sarḥ travelled to Ramlah⁴. At the time of the

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 2 pg. 317.

2 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 159.

3 He is Yazīd ibn Abī Ḥabīb Abū Rajāʾ al-Miṣrī. He is known as Suwayd al-Azdī, from amongst the Tābiʿīn.

- Ibn Saʿd says, “He was reliable, forbearing, and intelligent. He was the Muftī of the Egyptian people in his era.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has recorded him in *al-Thiqāt*.
- Al-ʿIjlī says, “Egyptian, Tābiʿī, reliable.”
- Abū Zurʿah says, “Reliable.”

He passed away the year 128 A.H./745 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Saʿd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 513; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 2 pg. 11; Al-ʿIjlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 478; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʿdīl*, vol. 9 pg. 267; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 319.

4 A city in Palestine. See, Yaḳūt: *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, vol. 3 pg. 69.

morning prayer he said, ‘O Allah, make the last action of mine the Fajr prayer.’ He thus performed ablution and performed the Fajr prayer. He made salām to his right and as he went to make salām to his left, Allah took away his soul.” Al-Bukhārī has narrated it in this manner.¹

- Al-Walīd ibn ‘Uqbah رضي الله عنه in Kūfah.

He was one of those who were appointed by Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رضي الله عنه. In the twelfth year of the hijrah (633 A.D) al-Walīd was the runner between the khalīfah and Khālīd ibn al-Walīd, responsible for carrying messages during the Battle of al-Madhār.² Similarly, Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه sent him with reinforcements to his commander ‘Iyād ibn Ghanam³. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه then appointed him to collect the zakāt from the Banū Taghlib⁴ and further as the governor over the Arabs of Jazīrah.⁵

Al-Walīd was gallant, valiant, and fought in many battles. Al-Sha‘bī praised his military campaigns and his governorship when the campaigns of Maslamah ibn ‘Abd al-Malik⁶ were mentioned to him. He said:

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 2 pg. 318.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 351. Al-Madhār is an area to the south of Baṣrah where the battle took place between the Muslims and the Persians.

3 A ṣaḥābī. See, Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 377.

4 Ibn Qutaybah: *Al-Ma‘ārif*, pg. 139.

5 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 271.

6 He is Maslamah ibn ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān. One of the brave leaders and conquerors. He marched on Constantinople during the era of his brother Sulaymān (d. 102 A.H/720 A.D). His brother Yazīd appointed him over Iraq and Khurāsān. During the era of Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik he launched campaigns against the lands of Turkey and Sindh.

- Imām al-Dhahabī says regarding him, “He was better suited for the khilāfah compared to his brothers.”

He passed away the year 120 A.H/738 A.D. His life has been recorded by Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 301; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 6 pg. 429; Al-Dhahabī: *Tārīkh al-Islam*, vol. 4 pg. 302; and *Siyar A‘lām an-Nubalā*, vol. 5 pg. 341.

كيف لو أدرتكم الوليد وغزوه وأمارته ، إنه كان ليغزو فينتهي إلى كذا وكذا ، ما نقص ولا انتقص عليه أحد حتى عزل عن عمله

If only you had seen al-Walīd and his campaigns and his governorship, for he would go out on campaign and reach such and such a place, and he never fell short or was accused of falling short by anyone until he was dismissed from his post.¹

Al-Walīd رضي الله عنه was one of the most beloved of people to the people, and one of the kindest to them. Five years went by with no door at his house.²

With regard to the drinking of al-Walīd whilst he was appointed by ‘Uthmān as governor over Kūfah, even as proven, is not a stain against ‘Uthmān. Rather it is one of the virtues of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه that he carried out the *ḥadd* (punishment) on him and dismissed him from his post in Kūfah. Al-Bukhārī has narrated this incident under the chapter heading, ‘The Virtues of ‘Uthmān’.³

‘Alī رضي الله عنه would say:

إنكم وما تعيرون به عثمان كالطاعن نفسه ليقتل رده ما ذنب عثمان في رجل قد ضربه بفعله وعزله عن عمله! وما ذنب عثمان فيما صنع عن أمرنا!

When you criticize ‘Uthmān, it is like someone who stabs himself in order to kill someone behind him. What fault is it of ‘Uthmān if he carried out the *ḥadd* on a man because of his deeds and dismissed him from his post? What fault is it of ‘Uthmān for what he did following our advice.⁴

Ibn Taymiyyah notes:

1 Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 40.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 271.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 202.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 277.

وهذا علي تبين له من عماله ما لم يكن يظنه فيهم ما لا يقدح في عثمان ولا غيره

We find ‘Alī رضي الله عنه explaining that which he had no inkling of from his governors. This does not reflect badly on ‘Uthmān nor on anyone else.¹

Moreover, this did not happen only during the reign of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه there was a similar incident at the time ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, as it was stated that Qudāmah ibn Maz‘ūn—ṣaḥābī—drank alcohol when he was the governor for ‘Umar رضي الله عنه in Bahrain. He carried out the ḥadd on him and dismissed him.²

- Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه appointed him as governor of Kūfah after having dismissed al-Walīd. He was from the most eloquent of the Quraysh and amongst those who were selected to write the Qur’ān. Ibn Abī Dāwūd states in *al-Maṣāḥif*:

إن عربية القرآن أقيمت على لسان سعيد بن العاص ؛ لأنه كان أشبههم لهجه برسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

The Arabic of the Qur’ān was based on the dialect of Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ, as it resembled the dialect of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم the most.³

After being placed as governor of Kūfah, he launched a campaign on Ṭabaristān and conquered it. He also attacked Jurjān and in this army of his was Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān رضي الله عنه and other Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.⁴

He was famous for his kindness and generosity, to such an extent that if beggar asked him for something at a time when he did not have anything,

1 *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 3 pg. 187.

2 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāṣim Min al-Qawāṣim*, pg. 93.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 2 pg. 48.

4 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *Al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 2 pg. 9.

he wrote down what he wanted to give him to later reference.¹ He fed the masses during a drought from the public treasury until it was empty.² Imām al-Dhahabī states regarding him:

وكان أميراً شريفاً ، جواداً ، ممدحاً ، حليماً ، وقوراً : ذا حزم وعقل ، يصلح للخلافة – الولاية

He was a noble and generous governor, praiseworthy, forbearing, dignified, decisive and wise, a man who was fit to be a governor.³

On the other hand, there are those who opine that after Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ was appointed as governor of Kūfah certain acts of his came to light which led the people of Kūfah to drive him out.⁴ The answer to their contention is that the mere driving him out of Kūfah does not constitute a blunder on his part that led them to such drastic measures. Those that know of Kūfah and the conditions of its people will testify to their incessant complaints of their leaders with no sharʿī justification and for the slightest of reasons. This led ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه to pass the following comment regarding them:

أعياني وأعضل بي أهل الكوفة ما يرضون أحداً ولا يرضى بهم ، ولا يصلحون ولا يصلح عليهم

I am very tired and no longer know what to do with the people of Kūfah; they are not pleased with anyone and no one is pleased with them; they are not good to any governor and no governor could be good for them.⁵

According to another report he said:

أعياني أهل الكوفة ، فإن استعملت عليهم لئنا استضعفوه ، وإن استعملت عليهم شديداً شكوه

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 2 pg. 49.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar Aʿlām an-Nubalāʾ*, vol. 3 pg. 447.

3 Ibid, vol. 3 pg. 445.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pgs. 331-332.

5 Al-Fasawī: *Al-Maʿrifah wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 754.

I am tired of the people of Kūfah. If I appoint a lenient man over them they will take advantage of him, and if I appoint a strict man over them they will complain about him¹

In fact, he prayed against them and said:

اللهم إنهم قد لبسوا عليّ فلبس عليهم

O Allah, they have made me confused so make them confused.²

- ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir ibn Kurayz

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه appointed him over Baṣrah. He conquered the entire Khurāsān, the surrounds of Persia, Sijistān, Kirmān, and other cities reaching Ghaznah.³ Yazdegerd III, the last Sasanian King was killed during his reign.⁴

He is the one dug the channels of Baṣrah⁵ and was the first to build cisterns at ‘Arafāt and direct water to them⁶. He is the man who did so many good deeds and was so loved by the people that no one can deny it, as attested to by Ibn Taymiyyah.⁷ Al-Dhahabī said concerning him:

وكان من كبار أمراء العرب وشجعانهم وأجوادهم ، وكان فيه رفق وحلم

He was one of the great Arab leaders and one of the most courageous and generous, and he was kind and forbearing.⁸

1 Ibn al-Jawzī: *Manāqib Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb*, pg. 118; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 89.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Minhāj*, vol. 3 pg. 188.

3 Ibn al-Athīr: *Uṣd al-Ghābah*, vol. 3 pg. 288.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 3 pg. 61.

5 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *Al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 2 pg. 360.

6 Ibn Qutaybah: *Al-Ma‘ārif*, pg. 140.

7 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 3 pg. 18.

8 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām an-Nubalā’*, vol. 3 pg. 18.

Anyone who studies the books of history will come to the realisation that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه did not appoint his family members over all the cities and states. Only five of his governors were related to him. From these five he dismissed two, al-Walīd ibn ‘Uqbah and Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ. Thus there remained three governors who were related to him of his eighteen governors. Khalīfah and Imām al-Ṭabarī—under the discussion of the year 34 A.H/654 A.D—have mentioned a complete list of his governors in their respective books. Hereunder is a reproduction of it:

1. Abū Mūsa al-Ash‘arī, governor of Kūfah.
2. Al Qa‘qā‘ ibn ‘Amr—Ṣaḥābī—its military chief.
3. Jābir ibn ‘Amr al-Muzanī¹, its tax chief.
4. ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir ibn Kurayz, governor of Baṣrah.
5. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī Sarḥ, governor of Egypt.
6. Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān, governor of Syria.
7. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Khālīd ibn al-Walīd², governor of Ḥimṣ.
8. Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah—Ṣaḥābī—governor of Qinnasrin³.
9. Abu al A‘war al-Sulamī—Ṣaḥābī—governor of Jordan.

1 He is Jabir ibn ‘Amr al-Muzanī. Al-Ṭabarī has mentioned him under the happenings of the year 21 A.H/641 A.D as the tax collector for ‘Umar رضي الله عنه of the irrigations of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, vol. 4 pg. 139. He has also mentioned him under the happenings of the year 30 A.H/650 A.D when ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه appointed him upon the tax of al-Sawād, vol. 4 pg. 422.

2 He is ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Khālīd ibn al-Walīd al-Makhzūmī. Al-Ṭabarī has mentioned him under the happenings of the year 13 A.H/634 A.D. He was, with his father, in the Battle of Yarmūk as a leader of one of the cavalry squadrons aged 18. He also mentioned him under the happenings of the year 33 A.H/653 A.D as the governor of Ḥimṣ, appointed by Mu‘āwiyah during the era of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه, vol. 4 pg. 321. He also mentions him under the happenings of the year 36 A.H/656 A.D amongst those who fought alongside Mu‘āwiyah at Siffīn, vol. 4 pg. 573. He also mentions him under the happenings of the year 37 A.H/657 A.D amongst those who was present at the arbitration between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, vol. 5 pg. 54.

3 A city of Syria 25 km south west of Aleppo. See, Yaḳūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 4 pg. 404.

10. Ḥakīm ibn Salāmah¹, governor of Palestine.
11. Al-Ash‘ath ibn Qays al-Kindī—Ṣaḥābī—governor of Azerbaijan².
12. Jarīr ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Bajalī—Ṣaḥābī—governor of Qarqīsiyā (ancient Circesium).
13. ‘Uṭaybah ibn al-Nahhās³, governor of Ḥulwān⁴.
14. Mālik ibn Ḥabīb⁵, governor of Māh.⁶

1 He is Ḥakīm ibn Salāmah al-Ḥizāmī. Al-Ṭabarī has mentioned him under the happenings of the year 34 A.H/653 A.D when ‘Uṭhmān رضي الله عنه had appointed him as governor of Al-Mawṣil, vol. 4 pg. 331. He then mentions him under the happenings of the year 36 A.H/656 A.D. when Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه marched on Baṣrah. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه sent him to them to ascertain if they were in agreement with al-Qa‘qā’ ibn ‘Amr in reconciling and that they ought to withdraw ‘Alī and his group came and they all considered the matter, vol. 4 pg. 496.

2 Amongst the Muslim lands formerly a soviet republic. See, Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 1 pg. 128.

3 He is ‘Uṭaybah ibn al-Nahhās al-‘Ijlī. Al-Ṭabarī has mentioned him under the happenings of the year 11 A.H/632 A.D during the khilāfah of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. He was amongst those who al-‘Alā’ al-Ḥaḍramī رضي الله عنه assigned to fight the apostates of Bahrain, vol. 3 pg. 310. He also mentions him under the happenings of the year 12 A.H/633 A.D as one of the leaders in the army of Khālid رضي الله عنه on the border of al-Ḥīrah, vol. 3 pg. 310. He also mentions him under the happenings of the year 34 A.H/654 A.D when ‘Uṭhmān رضي الله عنه had appointed him as governor of Ḥulwān, vol. 4 pg. 331. He also mentions him under the happenings of the year 45 A.H/665 A.D when al-Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah رضي الله عنه had offered him to oversee Kūfah until he returns from Amīr al-Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān, an offer which he accepted, vol. 5 pg. 217.

4 An ancient town on the Zagros Mountains in western Iran. See, Yaqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 2 pg. 290.

5 He is Mālik ibn Ḥabīb al-Yarbūṭī. Al-Ṭabarī mentions him under the happenings of the year 16 A.H/637 A.D in the left or right battalion—doubt of the narrator—in the army that was dispatched by Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqās رضي الله عنه to the people of Jazīrah as per the command of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه, vol. 4 pg. 38. He also mentions him under the happenings of the year 3 A.H. 654 A.D. when ‘Uṭhmān رضي الله عنه appointed him as governor of Māh, vol. 4 pg. 330. He was also the messenger of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه right before the Battle of Jamal the year 36 A.H/656 A.D, vol. 4 pg. 505.

6 A city in Shām on the banks of the Mediterranean Sea. See, Al-Ḥumayrī: *Al-Rawḍ al-Mi‘ṭār fī Khayr al-Aqtār*, pg. 486.

15. Al-Nusayr al-‘Ijlī¹, governor of Hamdhān².
16. Al-Sā’ib ibn al-Aqra³, governor of Aṣbahān⁴.
17. Sa’īd ibn Qays⁵, governor Rayy⁶
18. Salmān ibn Rabī’ah, governor of Al-Bāb.
19. Khunays ibn Ḥubaysh, governor of Māsabadhān⁷.

1 He is Nusayr ibn Thawr al-‘Ijlī. Al-Ṭabarī has mentioned him under the happenings of the year 13 A.H/634 A.D as one of those stationed by Muthannā ibn Ḥārithah at the Battle of Buwayb against the Sassanid Empire, vol. 3 pg. 461 and according to one narration he was stationed at al-Ṭalā’ī, vol. 3 pg. 465. He also mentions him under the happenings of the year 21 A.H/641 A.D prior to the Battle of Nahāwand when Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه appointed him over the cavalry at Marj, a fortress in Iraq, vol. 4 pg. 127. In the same year Allah سبحانه وتعالى delivered a conquest of a fortress in Persia at his hands which was thus attributed to him, vol. 4 pg. 134. He then mentions him under the happenings of the year 34 A.H/654 A.D. when ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه appointed him as governor of Hamdhān, vol. 4 pg. 330.

2 A mountainous area in Iran. A land plentiful with water, orchards, and crops. See Yaqūt: *Mu’jam al-Buldān*, vol. 5 pg. 410; and Al-Ḥumayrī: *Al-Rawḍ al-Mi’ṭār fi Khayr al-Aqṭār*, pg. 519.

3 He is al-Sā’ib ibn al-Aqra’, mawlā of Thaqīf ibn Mulaykah. Al-Ṭabarī has mentioned him under the happenings of the year 21 A.H/641 A.D. when ‘Umar رضي الله عنه had instructed him to divide the booty of the Muslim army at Nahāwand. He was a man well versed in mathematics, vol. 4 pg. 116 and he was known as Ṣaḥīb al-Aqbāḍ, vol. 4 pg. 133. He then mentions him under the happenings of the year 34 A.H/654 A.D. when ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه appointed as governor of Aṣbahān.

4 A region of Persia. See, Yaqūt: *Mu’jam al-Buldān*, vol. 4 pg. 421.

5 He is Sa’īd ibn Qays al-Hamdānī al-Sabī’ī. Al-Ṭabarī has mentioned him under the happenings of the year 21 A.H as being in the army of Nu’mān ibn Muqarrin who was dispatched by ‘Umar رضي الله عنه to fight the Sassanid at Nahāwand, vol. 4 pg. 129. He also mentions him under the happenings of the year 34 A.H/654 A.D. when ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه had appointed him as governor of Rayy. He also mentions him under the happenings of the year 36 A.H/656 A.D amongst the emissaries sent by ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to Mu’āwiyah رضي الله عنه calling him to submission and unity, vol. 4 pg. 513. He fought alongside ‘Alī رضي الله عنه at the Battle of Ṣiffīn, vol. 4 pg. 574. He also mentions him under the happenings of the year 39 A.H/659 A.D when ‘Alī sent him after the supporters of Mu’āwiyah when the news reached him of their attack and looting of Anbār, vol. 4 pg. 134.

6 A region in Persia close to Khorasan and Ṭabaristān. See, Al-Ḥumayrī: *Al-Rawḍ al-Mi’ṭār fi Khayr al-Aqṭār*, pg. 278.

7 A city in Iraq. See, Yaqūt: *Mu’jam al-Buldān*, vol. 5 pg. 41.

If ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ had wanted to show favouritism to any of his relatives at the expense of the Muslims, his stepson Muḥammad ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah would have been the most likely candidate for favouritism, but the khalīfah refused to appoint anyone to any position for which he was not qualified. Which is why he said to him:

يا بني ! لو كنت رضا ثم سألتني العمل لأستعملتك ، ولكن لست هناك

O my son, had I approved and then you asked me for a post I would have appointed you. But you are not suited to it.¹

That was not because he disliked him, nor was it because he held an aversion to him, otherwise he would not have helped him out at his own expense or provided him with a mount and supplies when he asked for his permission to go to Egypt.²

As for appointing young men, ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ had the best example in the Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He prepared an army to fight the Byzantines at the end of his life, and appointed Usāmah ibn Zayd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in charge of it who was under the age of twenty. Further in this army were the senior Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ with the likes of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا.³

When Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ passed away, Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ insisted that the army continue, but some of the Ṣaḥābah wanted to replace Usāmah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ with an older leader, and they asked ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to speak to Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ regarding it. Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ became angry when he heard this suggestion and said to ‘Umar: O ‘Umar, the Rasūl of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ appointed him and you are telling me to dismiss him?⁴

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 399.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 399.

3 Ibn Hishām: *Sīrah al-Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ*, vol. 4 pg. 328; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 226.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 2 pg. 226.

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ himself responded to this issue in front of a group of the Ṣaḥābah, when he said:

ولم أستمعل إلا مجتمعاً ، محتلماً ، مرضياً ، وهؤلاء أهل عملهم فسلوهم عنهم ، وهؤلاء أهل بلدهم ، وقد ولي من قبلي أحدث منهم وقيل في ذلك لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم مما قيل لي في استعماله لأسامه ، أكذاك - قالوا : نعم يعييون للناس ما لا يفسرون

I have not appointed anyone but one who is mature, adult and qualified. These are the people for whom they worked, so ask them about them; these are the people of the city from which they came. Those who come before me appointed people who were younger than them. People said about Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ what they said about me when he appointed Usāmah, is it not so?" They replied: "Yes." The people do not know what they are talking about.¹

‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said:

ولم يول - أي عثمان - إلا رجلاً سوياً عدلاً ، وقد ولي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عتاب بن أسيد على مكة وهو ابن عشرين سنة

‘Uthmān did not appoint anyone but men who were of good character and just, and Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ appointed ‘Itāb ibn Usayd as governor of Makkah when he was twenty years old.²

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا says:

إن الغوغاء من أهل الأمصار وأهل المياه وعبيد أهل المدينة اجتمعوا أن عاب الغوغاء على هذا المقتول بالأمس - عثمان - الأرب واستعمال من حدثت سنه ، وقد استعمل أسانهم قبله

Indeed, the mob of the cities, the Bedouins, and the slaves of the residents of Madinah gathered against this man—‘Uthmān—who was unjustly killed

1 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 347.

2 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 187.

yesterday. They censured him for appointing young men as governors whereas their like was appointed before.¹

To conclude, many of the relatives of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had been appointed to posts of leadership during the eras of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا. They were brave, capable, and worthy of leadership. Thus, the contentions of the careless cannot be counted against them as claims ought to be evaluated by way of examination and assessed with impartiality. The poet says has spoken true in the following couplet:

وعين الرضا عن كل عيب كليلة ولكن عين السخط تبدي المساويا

The pleased eye cannot see any faults;

Whilst the displeased eye sees nothing but faults.

As for those who shed negative light on ‘Uthmān for giving his relatives wealth, they can satisfy their contentions by understanding that the life of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in relation to his near ones was an embodiment of the Islamic teachings that encourage mercy and kindness. Consider the following Qur’anic injunctions:

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْوَدَّ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ

Say, [O Muḥammad], “I do not ask you for this message any payment [but] only good will through kinship.”²

وَأْتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ

*And give the relative his right, and [also] the poor and the traveller.*³

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 448.

2 Sūrah al-Shurā: 23.

3 Sūrah al-Isrā’: 26.

Similarly, his life was a practical manifestation of the life and teachings of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ had seen and understood from Rasūlullāh ﷺ what many others had not. He had gained insight into the faith to a far greater degree than the common layman. Amongst these insights into the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, was the deep affection the Prophet ﷺ had for his relatives which he exemplified by being good to them and showering them with kindness. For instance, he had given his uncle al-‘Abbās more than anyone else when the wealth of Bahrain came to him¹ and he had appointed ‘Alī, his cousin and son-in-law. For ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and for every believer the greatest role-model is Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

Ibn Kathīr says:

وقد كان عثمان رضي الله عنه كريم الأخلاق ذا حياة كثير ، وكرم غزير ، يؤثر أهله وأقاربه في الله ، تأليفا لقلوبهم من متاع الدنيا الفاني لعله يرغبهم في إيثار ما يبقى على ما يفنى ، كما كان النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يعطي أقواما ويدع آخرين إلى ما جعل في قلوبهم من الهدى والإيمان ، وقد تعنت عليه بسبب هذه الخصلة أقوام كما تعنت بعض الخوارج على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في الإيثار

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was of exemplary character, exceedingly modest, and exceptionally hospitable. He gave preference to his family and relatives for the sake of Allah. This was done in order to win them over and distance them from the transient possessions of this world by virtue of which they would give preference to the everlasting over the fleeting. This was similar to when Rasūlullāh ﷺ had given some whilst not giving others until their hearts were firm in guidance and faith. Some had gone to lengths to defame him due to this quality of his just as the Khawārij had made inflammatory comments against Rasūlullāh ﷺ due to his giving preference.²

Al-Bukhārī has recorded on the authority of Jābir ibn ‘Abd Allāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who said:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 65.

2 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 201.

بينما رسول الله لة يقسم غنيمه بالجعرانة إذ قال له رجل : أعدل فقال : شقيت إن لم أعدل

While Rasūlullāh ﷺ was distributing the booty at al-Ji'irrahān¹, somebody said to him, “Be just in your distribution.”

The Prophet ﷺ replied, “I would be wretched if I did not act justly.”²

In another narration of Imām Muslim on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zayd رضي الله عنه who said:

قال رجل : إن هذه القسمة ما عدل فيها وما أريد فيها وجه الله ، قال : فقلت : والله لأخبرن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال : فأتيته فأخبرته بما قال : قال : فتغير وجهه حتى كان كالصّرف ثم قال : فمن يعدل إن لم يعدل الله ورسوله - ثم قال - يرحم الله موسى ، قد أودى باكثر من هذا فصر

A person said, “By Allah, in this distribution justice has not been observed, nor has Allah’s pleasure been sought.”

I said, “By Allah, I will inform Rasūlullāh ﷺ”

I went and informed him whereupon the colour of his face turned red.

He said, “If Allah and His Apostle did not act justly, who else would act justly. May Allah be merciful to Mūsa, for he was harmed with more than this, yet he kept patient.”³

The ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه justifies his kindness to his family and relatives addressing the shūra council saying:

أنا أخبركم عني وعمّا وليت ، إن صاحبي اللذين كانا قبلي ظلما أنفسهما ومن كان منهما سبيل احتساباً ، وإن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كان يعطي فرايته وأنا في رهط أهل عيلة وقلة معاش ، فبسّط يدي في شيء من ذلك لما أقوم به فيه فإن رأيتم ذلك خطأ فردوه

1 A place between Ṭā’if and Makkah, though closer to Makkah. See, Yaquūt: *Mu’jam al-Buldān*, vol. 2 pg. 142.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 56.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 7 pg. 158.

I will tell you in regard to myself and my conduct in office that my two predecessors wronged both themselves and those who followed in their path. Indeed, Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to bestow public funds upon his relatives, while my near kinsmen were impoverished and possessed few of life's necessities. Thus, I laid my hands on some of that wealth because of my concern for them. Now if you regard that as an error, return the money.¹

In this manner, ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ brought into perspective the accusations levelled against him in giving preference to his family. In it he also explained that al-Shaykhayn; Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا had deprived themselves and their families acting upon the greater virtue of aversion whilst anticipating reward from Allah ﷻ. سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ. The Islamic Sharīah, the law of the Muslims and their reference point has not determined any law that constitutes a path for the Muslim ruler other than that of absolute justice in dealing with his constituents. Thus, when the rights of the masses have been fulfilled and each one has received their fair share, there is leeway for the ruler to then spend in avenues he wishes for reasons he deems appropriate.

Authentic narrations have outlined the great amount of wealth that the Muslims had attained during the era of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, an eye witness to this, relates of the condition of the society during this period. He says:

ادركت عثمان على ما تقموا عليه ، فلما يأتي على الناس يوم إلا وهم يفتسمون فيه خيرا يقال لهم : يا معشر المسلمين اغدوا على أعطياتكم فيأخذونها وافرة ، ثم يقال لهم اغدوا على السمن والعسل ، الأعطيات جارية ، والأرزاق دارة ، والعدو متقى ، وذات البين حسن ، والخير كثير ...

I saw why people got upset with ‘Uthman. Hardly a day went by without provisions being shared out among the people, it would be said to them: O Muslims, come and take your stipends, and they would take a lot. Then it would be said to them: Come and take purified butter and honey. The stipends were regular, the provisions were plentiful, the enemy was defeated, relationships were good and there was plenty...²

1 Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pg. 64.

2 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, vol. 4 pg. 594; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 232.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه further states in his address that his kinsmen were impoverished and possessed few of life’s necessities. They were in need of assistance. This also suggests that he saw a variance between the economic conditions of his relatives and that of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما. He deemed his relatives to be in much more of a need for assistance and aid. Ibn Taymiyyah explains the reason for this saying:

إن قبيلة عثمان كانت كبيرة وليست كقبيلة أبي بكر وعمر ، فكان يحتاج إلى إعطائهم وولايتهم أكثر من حاجة الخليفين قبله ، وهذا مما تفل عن عثمان الاحتجاج به

The clan of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was big in size unlike the clans of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما. Thus assisting them and appointing them was needed to a greater degree in comparison to the previous two Khulafā’. This gives a clearer meaning to the justification related from ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.¹

Further, it should be noted that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was exceedingly kind and generous to his relatives and the general Muslim populous even before his ascent to the seat of khilāfah. He says:

ولقد كنت أعطي العطية الكبيرة الرغبة من صلب مالي زمان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأبي بكر وعمر رضي الله عنهما وأنا يومئذ شحيح حريص . أفحين أتيت على أسنان أهل بيتي وفني عمري وودعت الذي لي في أهلي قال المملحون ما قالوا!

I used to give large and much coveted gifts from my personal property in the time of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم Abū Bakr, and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما, and at that time I was avaricious and greedy. Now when I have attained the usual life-span of my family, when my life has reached its end and I have distributed my property among my relatives, do the heretics say such things?²

Consider the statement of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, “Thus, I laid my hands on some of that wealth because of my concern for them”. There is indication in this that he

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 3 pg. 237.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 348.

fulfilled the responsibility of khilāfah and that of the Muslims with the aspiration of divine reward, not taking a stipend whilst his two predecessors would take a stipend from the public treasury that would suffice for them and their families; a matter of personal choice and judgment as the Imām forms part of *al-‘Āmilīn ‘alā al-Māl* (administrator of the wealth), and as such is entitled to a stipend even though he may be wealthy.¹ Rather, some jurists such as al-Ḥasan and Abū Thawr² hold the opinion that the relatives, being relatives of the Imām, will be entitled as well.³

Ibn Taymiyyah says:

وأما قولهم : وكان يؤثر أهله بالأموال الكثيرة من بيت المال حتى أنه دفع إلى أربعة نفر من فريش زوجهم بناته أربعمائة ألف دينار ودفع إلى مروان ألف ألف دينار - مليون دينار - فالجواب أن يقال : أين النقل الثابت بهذا؟ نعم كان يعطي أقاربه ويعطي غير أقاربه أيضا ، وكان يحسن إلى جميع المسلمين وأما هذا القدر الكثير فيحتاج إلى نقل ثابت ، ثم يقال ثانياً : هذا من الكذب البين ، فإنه لا عثمان ولا غيره من الخلفاء الراشدين أعطوا أحداً ما يقارب هذا المبلغ

There are those who say that he would give preference to his family with great sums of wealth from the public treasury to the extent of giving four individuals of the Quraysh, whom he had his daughters married to, four hundred thousand Dīnār and giving Marwan a million Dīnār. The answer to those who lay such claims is to ask for substantiation. Where are the

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Minhāj*, vol. 3 pg. 237.

2 He is Ibrāhīm ibn Khālīd ibn Abī al-Yamān, Abū Thawr al-Kalbī al-Baghdādī. Jurist and companion of Al-Shafīʿī.

- Ibn Ḥibbān says, “He was one of the leaders of the world in his jurisprudic ability, knowledge, piety, and nobility. He was a prolific author.”
- Al-Ḥakīm says, “He was the most reliable of Baghdad and their jurist in his time. He was also one of the erudite scholars of ḥadīth.”
- Al-Nasaʿī, Maslamah ibn al-Qāsim al-Andalūsī, and Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr have deemed him reliable.

He passed away the year 240 A.H/854 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, vol. 6 pg. 65; Al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā*, pgs. 92, 101, and 102; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1 pg. 118.

3 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Minhāj*, vol. 3 pg. 187.

narrations that prove it? Yes, he was particular in giving his relatives and others as well. He was good to all of the Muslims. These alleged amounts on the other hand need to be substantiated or else be counted as clear cut lies as neither ‘Uthmān nor did any of the other Rightly Guided Khulafā’ give anyone such a great amount.¹

2. Allegation: Allowing his uncle al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-‘Āṣ to return after he was banished

The second accusation made against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه is that he permitted his uncle Al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-‘Āṣ to return to Makkah after Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم had him banished from Makkah to Ṭā’if.

The jurisprudic outline of banishment as known from Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم does not necessitate it to be permanent and neither does the sharī’ah support the indefinite exile of every banishment. Rather, the doors of seeking forgiveness remain open that would relieve one of such a predicament as unanimously agreed upon by the great scholars.²

One can say with absolute certainty that if Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم had exiled anyone indefinitely, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه would not have disobeyed Allah سبحانه وتعالى and His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم by going against such a precedent. Also, the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم did not oppose his decision, whilst the piety of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and his submission to Allah سبحانه وتعالى and His Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم was above such an undertaking.

Simply put, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه permitted the return of Al-Ḥakam on the word of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم. This is the reason he requested Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما to permit his return during their khilāfah. Both these saints excused themselves from passing the judgment of his return citing the lack of witnesses as per the code of Islamic law.³

1 Ibid, vol. 3 pg. 190.

2 Ibn Ḥazm: *Al-Faṣl fi al-Milal*, vol. 4 pg. 154; Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Minhāj*, vol. 3 pg. 196.

3 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāṣim*, pg. 77.

When ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ ascended to the seat of khilāfah, he passed the judgment with regards to his uncle Al-Ḥakam based on his knowledge¹. Further, the decision of a khalīfah in this manner is legally accurate as per Islamic law as understood from the principles of the sharī’ah. Some of the leading scholars have adopted this opinion based on this and other similar instances². Additionally, this ought to be considered within the ambit of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ being the Imām and a Rightly Guided khalīfah whose ways are an extension of the ways of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as understood from the following narration:

عليكم بسنتي وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين من بعدي ، عضوا عليها بالنواجذ

Stay steadfast on to my Sunnah and on to the Sunnah of the Rightly Guided Khulafā’. Hold on to it firmly.³

Ibn al-‘Arabī says in this regard:

وأما رد الحكم فلم يصح - أي ما زعم البغاة من أن عثمان خالف فيه مقتضى الشرع - وقال علماؤنا في جوابه : قد كان أذن له فيه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وقال - عثمان - لأبي بكر وعمر فقالا له : إن كان معك شاهد ردناه ، فلما ولي - الخلافة - قضى بعلمه في رده ، وما كان عثمان ليصل مهجور رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ولو كان أباه ولا لينقص حكمه

The contention of the rebels that the return of Al-Ḥakam constitutes opposition of the sharī’ah by ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ does not hold any weight. Our scholars have answered this by saying, “Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had permitted him to end the banishment. It was for this reason that he approached Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ with his request. They countered that if he had a witness they would welcome him back. When he was appointed as the khalīfah, he passed judgment based on his knowledge of the permission

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 90.

2 This is the view of Aḥmad, al-Shafī’ī, Abū Yūsuf, Abū Thawr, and al-Muzanī. See, *Al-Mughnī*, vol. 9 pg. 53; and *Al-Fatḥ*, vol. 4 pg. 254-255.

3 *Abū Dāwūd*, vol. 4 pg. 201; *Al-Tirmidhī*: Kitāb al-‘Ilm: 2678; vol. 7 pg. 319. It has been authenticated by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, vol. 3 pg. 871; 3851.

granted by Rasūlullāh ﷺ. ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would not have welcomed back one exiled indefinitely by Rasūlullāh ﷺ, be it his father and he would also never go against the judgment of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.”¹

3. Allegation: Handing Fadak over to Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam

The third accusation made against ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is that handed over the land of Fadak to Marwan ibn al-Ḥakam whilst further giving him a hundred thousand Dirhams from the wealth received from Ifrīqiyyah. This is a lie and a fabrication levelled against him.²

Fadak is a small village close to Madinah Munawwarah which Allah ﷻ had allotted to His Messenger ﷺ. Thus, Rasūlullāh ﷺ could do with it as he pleased. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ left this worldly abode and Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was appointed as his successor, Fāṭimah al-Zahrā’ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا came to him asking him for her inheritance from her father in the order of releasing Fadak to her. Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ explained to her that he had heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying:

نحن معاشر الانبياء لا نورث ما تركنا صدقة

We the fraternity of Prophets do not leave behind any inheritance, what we leave is charity.³

When ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ became the khalīfah, ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib and ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا came to him seeking a reversal on the Fadak issue. ‘Abbās considered it to be the property of Rasūlullāh ﷺ with him being a rightful heir, whilst the view of ‘Alī coincided with that of Fāṭimah; considering it her property. ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ refused to pass a judgment between them that went against the decision of Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and the actions of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. He then made it over to them taking a strong covenant from them that they would manage the land just as Abū Bakr had done.

1 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāṣim*, pg. 77.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 91.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 4.

Imām al-Bukhārī relates on the authority of Mālik ibn Aws رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who said:

بينما أنا جالس في أهلي حين متع النهار إذا رسول عمر بن الخطاب يأتيني، فقال: أجب أمير المؤمنين، فانطلقت معه حتى أدخل على عمر فإذا هو جالس على رمال سرير ليس بينه وبينه فراش، متكئ على وسادة من أدم، فسلمت عليه ثم جلست، فقال: يا مالك إنه قدم علينا من قومك أهل آبيات، وقد أمرت فيهم برضخ فاقضه فاقضه بينهم، فقلت: يا أمير المؤمنين لو أمرت به غيري، قال: اقبضه أيها المرء، فبينما أنا جالس عنده أتاه حاجبه يرفأ فقال: هل لك في عثمان وعبد الرحمن بن عوف والزبير وسعد بن أبي وقاص يستأذنون؟ قال: نعم، فأذن لهم، فدخلوا، فسلموا وجلسوا، ثم جلس يرفأ يسيراً، ثم قال: هل لك في عليٍّ وعباس قال: نعم، فأذن لهما، فدخلوا، فسلموا فجلسا، فقال عباس: يا أمير المؤمنين، اقض بيني وبين هذا، وهما يختصمان فيما أفاء الله على رسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم من مال بني النضير، فقال الرهط عثمان وأصحابه: يا أمير المؤمنين اقض بينهما وأرح أحدهما من الآخر، قال عمر: تيدكم أنشدكم بالله الذي يآذنه تقوم السماء والأرض هل تعلمون أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: لا نورث ما تركنا صدقة. - يريد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم نفسه - قال الرهط: قد قال ذلك، فأقبل عمر على علي وعباس فقال: أنشدكما الله، أتعلمان أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قد قال ذلك؟ قال: قد قال ذلك، قال عمر: فإني أحدثكم عن هذا الأمر إن الله قد خص رسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم في هذا النبي بشيء لم يعطه أحداً غيره، ثم قرأ: وَمَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ... إلى قوله: قَدِيرٌ فكانت هذه خالصة لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، والله ما احتازها دونكم ولا استأثر بها عليكم، قد أعطاكموها وبثها فيكم حتى بقي منها هذا المال، فكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ينفق على أهل نفقة سنتهم من هذا المال ثم يأخذ ما بقي فيجعله مجعل مال الله فعمل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بذلك حياته، أنشدكم بالله هل تعلمون ذلك؟ قالوا: نعم، ثم قال لعلي وعباس: أنشدكما بالله هل تعلمان ذلك؟ قال عمر: ثم توفي الله نبيه صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال أبو بكر: أنا ولي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقبضها أبو بكر، فعمل فيها بما عمل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، والله يعلم إنه فيها لصادق بار راشد تابع للحق، ثم توفي الله أبا بكر، فكنت أنا ولي أبي بكر، فقبضتها سنتين من إمارتي أعمل فيها بما عمل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وما عمل فيها أبو بكر، والله يعلم إنني فيها لصادق بار راشد تابع للحق، ثم جئتاني تكلماني وكلمتكما واحدة وأمركما واحد، جئتني يا عباس تسألني نصيبك من ابن أخيك، وجاءني هذا - يريد علياً - يريد نصيب امرأته من أبيها، فقلت لكما: إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: لا نورث ما تركنا صدقة. فلما بدالي أن أدفعه إليكما قلت: إن شئتما دفعتهما إليكما على أن عليكما عهد الله وميثاقه لتعملان فيها بما عمل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وبما عملت فيها منذ وليتها، فقلتما: ادفعها إلينا، فبذلك دفعتهما إليكما، فأشددكم بالله هل دفعتهما إليهما بذلك؟ قال الرهط: نعم، ثم أقبل على عليٍّ وعباس فقال: أنشدكما بالله هل دفعتهما إليكما بذلك؟ قالوا: نعم، قال: فتلتسان مني قضاء غير ذلك، فوالله الذي يآذنه تقوم السماء والأرض لا أقضي فيها قضاء غير ذلك، فإن عجزتما عنها فادفعاهما إليَّ فإني أكفيكماها.

While I was at home, the sun rose high, the messenger of 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came to me and said, "The Amīr of the believers has sent for you." So, I went along with him till I entered the place where 'Umar was sitting

on a bedstead made of date-palm leaves and covered with no mattress, and he was leaning over a leather pillow. I greeted him and sat down.

He said, “O Mālik! Some persons of your people who have families came to me and I have ordered that a gift should be given to them, so take it and distribute it among them.”

I said, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn! I wish that you order someone else to do it.”

He said, “O man! Take it.”

While I was sitting there with him, his doorman Yarfa’ came saying, “‘Uthmān, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, Al-Zubayr, and Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqās are asking your permission; may I admit them?”

‘Umar said, “Yes”.

So they were admitted and they came in, greeted him, and sat down. After a while Yarfa’ came again and said, “May I admit ‘Alī and ‘Abbās?”

‘Umar said, “Yes.”

So, they were admitted, they came in, greeted him, and sat down. Then ‘Abbās said, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn! Judge between me and him (i.e. ‘Alī).”

They had a dispute regarding the property of Banī al-Naḍīr which Allah had given to His Messenger as Fay’. The group, ‘Uthmān and his companions said, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn! Judge between them and relieve both of them front each other.”

‘Umar said, “Be patient! I beseech you by Allah by Whose permission the Heaven and the Earth exist, do you know that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, ‘We do not leave inheritance, what we leave behind is charity’, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ meant himself (by saying “we”)?”

The group said, “He said so.”

‘Umar then turned to ‘Alī and ‘Abbās and said, “I beseech you by Allah, do you know that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said so?”

They replied, “He said so.”

‘Umar then said, “So, I will converse with you about this matter. Allah bestowed on His Messenger with a unique portion of the Fay’ that was not given to anyone else.” ‘Umar then recited the verse:

وَمَا آفَاءَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ فَمَا أَوْجَفْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَلَا رِكَابٍ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ
رُسُلَهُ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ -

And what Allah restored [of property] to His Messenger from them - you did not spur for it [in an expedition] any horses or camels, but Allah gives His messengers power over whom He wills, and Allah is over all things competent.

‘Umar added “So this property was expressly given to Rasūlullāh ﷺ but, by Allah, neither did he hoard it to himself, nor did he favour himself with it to your exclusion, but he gave it to all of you and distributed it amongst you till this property remained out of it. Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to spend the yearly expenses of his family out of this property and used to keep the rest of its revenue to be spent on Allah’s Cause. Rasūlullāh ﷺ kept on doing this during all his lifetime. I ask you by Allah do you know this?”

They replied in the affirmative. ‘Umar then said to ‘Alī and ‘Abbās. “I ask you by Allah, do you know this?”

‘Umar added, “When Allah had taken His Prophet unto Him, Abū Bakr said, ‘I am the successor of Rasūlullāh ﷺ so, Abū Bakr took over that property and managed it in the same way as Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to do, and Allah knows that he was true, pious and rightly guided, and he was

a follower of what was right. Then Allah took Abū Bakr unto Him and I became Abū Bakr's successor, and I kept that property in my possession for the first two years of my khilāfah, managing it in the same way as Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to do and as Abū Bakr used to do, and Allah knows that I have been true, pious, rightly guided, and a follower of what is right. Now you both (i.e. 'Alī and 'Abbās) came to talk to me, bearing the same claim and presenting the same case; you, 'Abbās, came to me asking for your share from your nephew's property, and this man, i.e. 'Alī, came to me asking for his wife's share from her father's property. I told you both that Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, 'We do not leave inheritance, what we leave behind is charity.' When I thought it right that I should hand over this property to you, I said to you, 'I am ready to hand over this property to you if you wish, on the condition that you would take Allah's pledge and convention that you would manage it in the same way as Rasūlullāh ﷺ used to, and as Abū Bakr used to do, and as I have done since I was in charge of it.' So, both of you said (to me), 'Hand it over to us,' and on that condition I handed it over to you. So, I ask you by Allah, did I hand it over to them on this condition?"

The group said, "Yes."

Then 'Umar faced 'Alī and 'Abbās saying, "I ask you by Allah, did I hand it over to you on this condition?"

They said, "Yes."

He said, "Do you now seek a different decision? By Allah, by Whose leave both the Heaven and the Earth exist, I will never give any decision other than that (I have already given). And if you are unable to manage it, then return it to me, and I will do the job on your behalf."¹

This is an authentic narration regarding the issue of Fadak during the era of al-Ṣiddīq and al-Fārūq رضي الله عنهما. When 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه ascended to the office of khilāfah,

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pgs. 42--44.

his manner of governance broadly, and his manner of dealing with the charitable estates of Rasūlullāh ﷺ specifically was like that of his predecessors. This refutes the fabricated accusation of him handing over the land of Fadak to Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam. This was a lie fabricated by those who wished to defame ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. We know this since there are clear texts that prove the oversight of the land by ‘Alī and ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه as a charitable estate by the permission of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. There is no authentic chain that establishes ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه having taken the responsibility of its oversight back from them. If, for arguments sake, he had, where are the protests of ‘Alī, ‘Abbās, and their children? Where is the evidence of them having lodged complaints against ‘Uthmān, which would have been evident if he had indeed taken it from them and handed it to his cousin Marwān. Is it comprehensible that ‘Abbās and ‘Alī would take their disagreement regarding Fadak to ‘Umar and then they and the Banū Hāshim remain silent against ‘Uthmān had he taken it from them?

‘Abd al-Razzāq narrated in *Al-Muṣannaf* on the authority of al-Zuhrī who said:

أن فداك كانت بيد علي ، ثم بيد حسن ثم بيد حسين ، ثم بيد علي بن حسين ، ثم بيد حسن بن حسن ، ثم بيد زيد بن حسن ، وقال معمر : ثم بيد عبد الله بن حسن ، ثم أخذها هؤلاء - يعني بني العباس -

Fadak was in the oversight of ‘Alī, then it went to Ḥasan, then to Ḥusayn, then to ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn, then to Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan, then to Zayd ibn Ḥasan. Ma‘mar says, “Then it was in the possession of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan. After that it was taken by these, i.e. the Banū al-‘Abbās.¹

4. Allegation: Gifting Marwān one-fifth of the Booty

The issue of the one hundred thousand Dirhams allegedly given by ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه to Marwān, is unsubstantiated as a gift to him and requires further elucidation. In reality, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sa‘d ibn Abī al-Sarḥ marched on and conquered Ifrīqiyyah. He attained much spoils from this conquest which he distributed amongst his

¹ ‘Abd al-Razzāq: *Al-Muṣannaf*, vol. 5 pg. 471.

army. He removed the khums of gold which amounted to five hundred thousand Dinar and sent it to the khalīfah. There remained other commodities, the khums of which proved impossible to send to the center of khilāfah. Marwān thus purchased this for an amount of one hundred thousand Dirhams. Majority of the payment was in cash. When he arrived in a delegation to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه with news of the conquest, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه handed him a small amount in lieu of bringing the good news as the general Muslim populous were anxious of news of this battle due to it being at a great distance.¹

What has been said of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه having given ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sa’d ibn Abī al-Sarḥ a fifth of the khums from the spoils of the conquest of Ifrīqiyyah. This is true and correct. However, he had taken it back from him upon the displeasure of the people. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه himself spoke to this critique in front of a large number of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. He said:

وقالوا إني أعطيت ابن أبي سرح ما أفاء الله ، وإني إنما نقلته خمس ما أفاء الله عليه من الخمس ، فكان مائة ألف ، وقد أنفذ مثل ذلك أبو بكر وعمر رضي الله عنهما فزعم الجند أنهم يكرهون ذلك ، فرددته عليهم وليس ذلك لهم ، أكذاك ؟ قالوا : نعم

The dissidents say that I gave to Ibn Abī Sarḥ the booty that Allah bestowed upon him. But in fact out of the booty that Allah gave, I only turned over to him one-fifth out of the khums. The amount was one hundred thousand Dirhams, and Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما did the same thing. The army claimed to find this reprehensible, and so I have restored it to them, though it was not really theirs. Is that the case? They said, “Yes”.²

There can be no case made against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه for what he had done as giving financial rewards to the brave and great warriors in order to boost morale has been established in the sunnah. Also, the khalīfah has the prerogative to stipulate and give to whomsoever he wishes if he deems it appropriate. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم

1 Al-Haythamī: *Al-Ṣawā’iq al-Muḥriqah*, pg. 175.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 347.

was the best role model for ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had stipulated and given many people in order to bring them closer to Islam. The Khulafā’ to come after also had done the same for those whom they deemed well suited.¹

Yaḥyā ibn Ādam al-Qurashī² has mentioned in his book *Al-Kharāj*, that Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had allocated the land between Al-Jurf³ and Qanāt⁴ to Al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had allocated Yanbu‘ to ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.⁵

Abū Yūsuf considered land to be equivalent to wealth. He was of the view that the Imām had the prerogative to allocate funds from the public treasury to those who would prove to be assets to the Islamic cause and spend in causes that he deemed to be in the interest of the Muslims.⁶

1 Abū Yūsuf: *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, pg. 62.

2 He is Yaḥyā ibn Ādam ibn Sulaymān al-Qurashī al-Umawī, Abū Zakariyyā al-Kufī. One of the reliable and trustworthy scholars and at whom mastery in narrating ḥadīth ended in his era.

- ‘Uthmān al-Dāramī says narrating from Ibn Mā‘īn, “Reliable.”
- Abū Ḥātim says, “He had deep knowledge and was reliable.”
- Ya‘qūb ibn Shaybah says, “Reliable, narrated many ḥadīth.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “He was reliable. He had attained knowledge and was trustworthy and cognisant in ḥadīth.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has mentioned him in *Al-Thiqāt* and said, “He was reliable and had a deep understanding.”

It is likely that he had authored other books besides *Al-Kharāj* due to Imām al-Nawawī saying, “He is from those scholars who had authored works.” Further al-Dhahabī has remembered him in *Al-Tadhkirah* as “Author of works.” Not mentioning any other book besides *Al-Kharāj* though. He passed away the year 203 A.H/878 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 281; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 478; Al-Dāramī: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 227; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 11 pg. 175.

3 A location three miles from Madinah in the direction of Shām. The wealth of the people of Madinah was stored here. See, Yaḥyā: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 2 pg. 128. Al-Jurf is currently irrigated land in Madinah.

4 A valley of Madinah Munawwarah, *Ibid*, vol. 4 pg. 401.

5 Al-Qurashī: *Al-Kharāj*, pgs. 77-78.

6 Abū Yūsuf: *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, pg. 60.

II. Accusations of innovation.

Those that accuse him of innovations use the following issues to carry their case:

1. Gathering the Qur'ān to one manuscript.
2. Prohibiting public use of the grazing reserve.
3. Performing the full ṣalāh at Minā.
4. Adding the second adhān in Jumu'ah.
5. Not taking retribution against 'Ubayd Allah ibn 'Umar, killer of Hurmuzān.

1. Gathering the Qur'ān to one manuscript.

The first accusation in this category is that of his burning other copies of the Qur'ān and uniting the ummah onto a single manuscript. The well-versed scholars have cited this to be of the many accolades of 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as it put an abrupt end to major differences between the Muslims and united them onto a one muṣḥaf.

Ibn al-'Arabī says:

وأما جمع القرآن فذلك حسنته العظمى ، وخصلته الكبرى ... وحسم مادة الخلاف فيها ، وكان نفوذ وعد الله بحفظ القرآن على يديه حسبما بيّناه في كتب القرآن وغيرها

Gathering the Qur'ān was a great deed and an enormous accomplishment of his. It curbed the differences that had begun to appear and was a manifestation of the promise of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى to protect the Qur'ān. In this instance the protection was through him.¹

The reason for gathering the ummah onto one manuscript is what has been mentioned of Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who was marching in the army to al-Bāb in the year 30 A.H when he returned he said to Sa'īd ibn al-'Āṣ:

1 Ibn al-'Arabī: *Al-'Awāṣim*, pg. 66.

لقد رأيت في سفري هذا عجبا ، ولئن ترك الناس ليختلف في القرآن ، ثم لا يقومون عليه أبدا قال : وما ذلك - قال : رأيت ناسا من أهل حمص يقولون : قراءتهم خير من قراءة غيرهم ، لأنهم أخذوها عن المقداد ، وأهل دمشق يقولون مثل ذلك ، وأهل الكوفة يقولون مثل ذلك ؛ لأنهم قرأوا على ابن مسعود ، وأهل البصرة يقولون مثل ذلك وأنهم قرأوا على أبي موسى ، ويسمون مصحفه لباب القلوب

I have seen strange happenings in these travels of mine. If people are left like this, they will differ in the Qur'ān and then no consensus regarding the Qur'ān will ever be achieved.

Sa'īd ibn al-'Āṣ asked, "And why is that?"

He replied, "I have seen the people of Ḥimṣ saying that their mode of recitation is better than others as they had learnt it from al-Miqdād, the people of Dimashq had the same view regarding their mode recitation, the people of Kūfah said the same having learnt from Ibn Mas'ūd, and the people of Baṣrah said the same having learnt from Abū Mūsā naming his manuscript 'The essence of the heart'.¹

At this point Ḥudhayfah went to 'Uthmān and said to him:

ادرك هذه الامة قبل ان يختلفوا في الكتاب اختالف اليهود والنصارى

Save this ummah with regards to the Qur'ān, before they differ with regards to the Qur'ān as the Jews and Christians differed (with regards to their Books).²

In the narration of Ibn 'Asākir, Anas ibn Mālīk رضي الله عنه reports:

أن حذيفة بن اليمان قدم على عثمان ابن عفان وكان يغزو مع أهل العراق قبل أرمينية في غزوهم ذلك فيمن اجتمع من أهل العراق وأهل الشام ، فتنازعوا في القرآن حتى سمع حذيفة من اختلافهم فيه ما يكره ، فركب حذيفة حتى قدم على عثمان فقال : يا أمير المؤمنين أدرك هذه الأمة قبل أن يختلفوا في القرآن اختلاف اليهود والنصارى في الكتب ، ففزع لذلك عثمان بن عفان ، فأرسل إلى حفصة بنت عمر أن أرسلني إلي بالصحف التي جمع فيها القرآن ، فأرسلت إليه بها حفصة ، فأمر عثمان زيد بن ثابت وسعيد

1 Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 50.

2 Ibn al-'Arabī: *Al-'Awāṣim*, pg. 68.

بن العاص وعبد الله بن الزبير وعبد الرحمن بن الحارث بن هشام أن ينسخوها في المصاحف وقال لهم إذا اختلفتم وزيد بن ثابت في عربية من عربية القرآن ، فاكتبوها بلسان قريش . فإن القرآن إنما نزل بلسانهم . ففعلوا حتى كتبت المصاحف . ثم رد عثمان الصحف إلى حفصة ، وأرسل إلى كل جند من أجناد المسلمين بمصحف وأمرهم أن يحرقوا كل مصحف يخالف المصحف الذي أرسل به ، فذلك زمن حرقت المصاحف بالنار

Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān رضي الله عنه came to ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه at the time when the people of Iraq were waging war to in Armenia. In this army were the people of Iraq and Shām. They argued in their different modes of recitation to the extent that Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه disliked what he heard from them.

Ḥudhayfah thus travelled to ‘Uthmān and said to him, “O chief of the Believers! Save this nation before they differ about the Book (Qur’ān) as Jews and the Christians did before.”

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was distressed by this affair and he sent a message to Ḥafṣah bint ‘Umar asking her for the manuscripts in which the Qur’ān was gathered. Ḥafṣah sent it to him. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه then instructed Zayd ibn Thābit, Sa’d ibn al-Ās, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr, and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām¹ to rewrite the manuscripts in perfect copies.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه said to them, “In case you disagree with Zayd bin Thābit on any point in the dialects of Qur’ān, then write it in the dialect of Quraysh, the Qur’ān was revealed in their tongue.” They did so, and they wrote the copies. ‘Uthmān returned the original manuscripts to Ḥafṣah. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه

1 He is ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām ibn al-Mughīrah al-Makhzūmī, Abū Muḥammad al-Madanī. From the Tābī‘īn. He narrates from a group of the Ṣaḥābah, amongst them ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Abū Hurayrah, and others.

- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Madanī, Tābī‘ī, reliable.”
- Al-Dāraqūṭnī says, “Madanī, a great personality who is worthy of being cited as evidence.”
- Ibn Sa’d says. “He was of the most noble of the Quraysh. Ibn Ḥibbān has counted him amongst the reliable Tābī‘īn.

He passed away the year 43 A.H/663 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 102; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/1/272; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 290; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 7 pg. 156; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6 pg. 156.

then sent to every Muslim army one copy of what they had copied, and ordered that all the other Qur'ānic manuscripts that differs with the one sent to be burnt. This was the period wherein the manuscripts were burnt.¹

Additionally, this act of 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was not done independently, rather it was a result of the opinion of many of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ who saw what Ḥudhayfah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ had seen. Further, this great deed pleased them. 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ says regarding this:

وقالوا : - أي الخارجة - كان القرآن كتبنا فتركتهما إلا واحدا ألا وإن القرآن جاء من عند واحد وإنما أنا في ذلك تابع لهؤلاء - أي الصحابة - أكذاك ؟ قالوا : نعم

They—the Khawārij—say that the Qur'ān used to be preserved in a number of different written versions, and you have abandoned all but one., But verily the Qur'ān is one, and came through one man. In this matter I have only followed these, i.e. the Ṣaḥābah. Is this the case?

They replied “Yes”

Sayf ibn 'Umar narrates with his chain to Suwayd ibn Ghafalah who said:

سمعت علي ابن أبي طالب يقول : أيها الناس ، الله ، الله ، إياكم والعلو في عثمان ، وقولكم : حراق المصاحف ، فوالله ما أحرقتها إلا عن ملا من أصحاب محمد ع جمعنا فقال : ما تقولون في هذه القراءة التي قد اختلف فيها الناس ؟ يلقي الرجل الرجل فيقول : قراءتي خير من قراءتك ، وقراءتي أفضل من قراءتك ، وهذا شبيه بالكفر ، فقلنا : ما الرأي يا أمير المؤمنين ؟ فقال : أرى أن أجمع الناس على مصحف واحد ، فإنكم إن اختلفتم اليوم كان من بعدكم أشد اختلافا ... ثم قال علي : والله لو وليت مثل الذي ولي - أي عثمان - لصنعت مثل الذي صنع ، فقال - الراوي - فقال القوم لسويد : الله الذي لا إله إلا هو لسمعت هذا من علي ؟ قال : الله الذي لا إله إلا هو لسمعت هذا من علي

I heard 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ saying, “O people. Fear Allah! Fear Allah! Do not exaggerate with regards to 'Uthmān. You say that he is the one who burnt the Maṣāḥif. By Allah! He burnt it only after having consulted the Companions of Muḥammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

1 Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 134; Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 1/1/22; Ibn al-Athīr: *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 3 pg. 111; Fārūq Ḥamādah: *Madkhal ilā 'ulūm al-Qur'ān wa al-Tafsīr*, pg. 80-89.

He gathered us and said, “What do you people say regarding the differences of people in their recitation? A man meets and says, ‘My recitation is better than yours and my recitation is superior to yours’. This resembles disbelief.”

We said, “What do you suggest O Amīr al-Mu’minīn?”

He said, ‘I suggest that we unite the people onto a single muṣḥaf because of you are having differences today, those to come after you will defer to a greater extent...’

‘Alī رضي الله عنه then said, “By Allah, if I had the responsibility of ‘Uthmān, I would have done just as he had done.”

The narrator says, “The people said to Suwayd, ‘By that Allah besides whom there is no God, did you truly hear this from ‘Alī?’”

He replied, “By that Allah besides whom there is no God, I truly heard this from ‘Alī.”¹

Consider the fact that Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه came to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه after the manuscript had been completed and said:

اصبت ووفقت ، أشهد لسمعت رسول الله ، يقول : « إن أشد أمتي حبا لي قوم يأتون من بعدي يؤمنون بي ولم يروني ، يعملون بما في الورق المعلق ، فقلت : أي ورق ؟ حتى رأيت المصاحف

You have done correctly and you have been inspired. I testify that I heard Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, “Verily those from my ummah who will love me the most will be those who will come after me and believe in me without having seen me. They will act in accordance with the laid out pages.”

I would think, what pages are these. Until I saw the manuscript.²

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 238; Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 51.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 237; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 236.

Even Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه with regards to whom some narrations depict his opposition to this act initially, altered his view, dropped his opposition, and delivered a sermon in Kūfah saying:

إن الله لا ينزع العلم انتزاعاً ، ولكن ينزعه بذهاب العلماء ، وإن الله لا يجمع أمة محمد على على ضلالة ، فجامعهم على ما اجتمعوا عليه ، فإن الحق فيما اجتمعوا عليه

Verily, Allah will not snatch divine knowledge at once. Rather, it will be by the passing of the scholars. Further, Allah will never gather the ummah of Muḥammad صلوات الله عليه وآله onto deviation. Therefore join them in what they have a consensus on as truth lies in their consensus.¹

Ibn 'Asākir related from Ḥusayn ibn Manḥab² who said:

زرت الحسن بن أبي الحسن فخلوت به يوماً ، فقلت له : يا أبا سعيد ، أما ترى ما الناس فيه من اختلاف ؟ فقال لي : يا أبا يحيى أصلح أمر الناس أربعة ، فذكرهم ثم قال : وعثمان بن عفان حيث جمع الناس على هذه القراءة ، وقد كانوا يقرأونه على سبعة أحرف ، فكان هؤلاء يلقون هؤلاء فيقولون : قراءةتنا أفضل من قراءة تكم حتى كاد بعضهم أن يكفر بعضاً ، فجمعهم عثمان على هذا الحرف ، ولولا ما فعل عثمان من ذلك لألحد الناس في القرآن إلى يوم القيامة

I visited al-Ḥasan ibn Abī al-Ḥasan³ in privacy one day. I said to him. “O Abū Sa'īd, do you not see that there remains no differences amongst the people.”

He said to me, “O Abū Yaḥyā, four individuals brought about harmony amongst the people.”

1 Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 52.

2 I did not find his profile in the sources available to me.

3 He is al-Ḥasan ibn Abī al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Abū Sa'īd.

- Ibn Sa'īd says, “Al-Ḥasan was an embodiment of knowledge, a high ranking scholar, a reliable jurist, and eloquent.”
- Al-'Ijlī says, “Tābī'ī, reliable. A pious person and a man of the sunnah.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān says in *al-Thiqāt*, “He had met some of the people of Ṣiffīn and saw one hundred and twenty Ṣaḥābah.”

He passed away the year 110 A.H/728 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa'īd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 156; Ibn Ma'īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 108; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/289; Al-'Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 163; and Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mizān*, vol. 2 pg. 107.

He mentioned them and then he said, “And ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān when he united the people onto this dialect of recitation whereas they would read according to seven dialects. Some would meet others and they would say, ‘Our recitation is superior to yours’, this almost went to the extent of them regarding others as disbelievers. ‘Uthmān then united them upon this dialect. Had ‘Uthmān not done so, people would have deviated from the Qur’ān till the day of Qiyāmah.¹

‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Maḥdī says:

خصلتان لعثمان بن عفان ليستا لأبي بكر وعمر : صبره على نفسه حتى قتل مظلوما ، وجمعه الناس على المصحف

There are two merits to the name of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه that aren’t to the names of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما. His forbearance in the face of difficulties to the extent of him being unjustly murdered and his unifying the people onto one muṣḥaf.²

Imām al-Bukhārī narrates in *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr* on the authority of Muṣ‘ab ibn Sa‘d³ who met the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم during the time ‘Uthmān copied out the Maṣāḥif. He attests to them being pleased with it.⁴

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 238.

2 Ibid, pg. 244.

3 He is Muṣ‘ab ibn Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqās al-Zuhrī, Abū Zurarah al-Madanī. He narrates from his father, ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, ‘Adī ibn Ḥātim, and others.

- Ibn Sa‘d mentions him in the second category of the people of Madinah and he says, “He was reliable and narrated many ḥadīth.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Tābīṭ, reliable.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has mentioned him amongst the reliable Tābīṭin.

He passed away the year 103 A.H/721 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 169; Khalīfah: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, pg. 243; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 429; Al-Dhahabī: *Tārīkh al-Islam*, vol. 4 pg. 204; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10 pg. 160.

4 Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 1 pg. 69.

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr says regarding this:

ولما اختلف الناس في القرآن زمن عثمان اتفق رأيه ورأي الصحابة أن يرد القرآن إلى حرف واحد، ووقع اختياره على حرف زيد، وهو الذي جمع القرآن في عهد أبي بكر، والأخبار بذلك متواترة المعنى وإن اختلفت ألفاظها

When the people differed in the recitation of the Qur’ān during the era of ‘Uthmān, he and the Ṣaḥābah decided to keep the Qur’ān to one dialect. They selected the dialect of Zayd, who had compiled the Qur’ān in the era of Abū Bakr. The narrations that portray this are *mutawātir*¹ in its implication though the wordings differ.

Imām al-Ṭabarī mentions the reason that prompted ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه to unify the ummah onto one muṣḥaf, being convinced that what he had done was not only the right thing but most necessary. This was because if he had not done so, it would have been a disservice to Islam and the Muslims. He says:

والآثار الدالة على أن إمام المسلمين وأمير المؤمنين عثمان بن عفان - رحمة الله عليه - جمع المسلمين نظرا منه لهم، وإشفاقا منه عليهم، ورافة منه بهم، حذار الردة من بعضهم بعد الإسلام، والدخول في الكفر بعد الإيمان، إذ ظهر من بعضهم بمحضه وفي عصره التكذيب ببعض الأحرف السبعة التي نزل عليها القرآن، مع سماع أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم منه النهي عن التكذيب بشيء منها، وإخباره إياهم أن المرء فيها كفر.... فجمعهم على مصحف واحد، وحرق ما عدا المصحف الذي جمعهم عليه، وعزم على كل من كان عنده مصحف مخالف المصحف الذي جمعهم عليه أن يحرقه... فإن قال بعض من ضعفت معرفته كيف جاز لهم - الصحابة - ترك قراءة أقرأهموها رسول الله عل وأمرهم بقراءتها، قيل: إن أمره إياهم لم يكن أمر إيجاب وفرض، وإنما كان أمر إباحة ورخصة.... فإذا كان كذلك لم يكن القوم بتركهم نقل جميع القراءات السبع تاركين ما كان عليهم نقله، بل كان الواجب عليهم من الفعل ما فعلوا، إذ كان الذي فعلوا من ذلك كان هو النظر للإسلام وأهله، فكان القيام بفعل الواجب عليهم بهم أولى من فعل ما لو فعلوا، كانوا إلى الجناية على الإسلام وأهله أقرب منهم إلى السلامة من ذلك

1 The word *Tawātir* (recurrence) is a mode of transmitting aḥādīth. Recurrence obtains when a ḥādīth is narrated through so many channels and by so many people that collusion upon forgery is deemed inconceivable (because of the assumption that such a large number of transmitters cannot find ways to conspire amongst themselves); knowledge engendered by this type is considered certain.

The narrations depict that the Amīr al-Mu'minīn, 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān رضي الله عنه united the Muslims out of concern for them and with their good at heart. This act of compassion was done by him fearing apostasy from some of the believers as the belying of some of the seven dialects in which the Qur'ān was revealed became known to him and the Ṣaḥābah had heard Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم forbidding belying any of it citing anyone who would do so a disbeliever. He, thus, united them onto one manuscript and burnt any other copies that they had gathered.

If one were to object—due to lack of knowledge—that how was it permissible for the Ṣaḥābah to discard such recitation that was not only taught to them by Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم but in which manner Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم also instructed them to recite. The answer is that the instruction given to them was not of compulsion, rather it was one of permission; a concession. Thus by not relating all seven modes of recitation they did not discard their required responsibility, rather their obligation was met by what they had done. This was because what they had done was in the best interests of Islam and the Muslims. Fulfilling this responsibility was of greater concern than the other option which would have resulted in a disservice to Islam.¹

2. Restricting use of the grazing reserve

The second accusation is of him restricting use of the grazing reserve, 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه explains it himself in the following words:

واني ما حميت حمى قبلي ... ثم لم يمنعوا - مستخدميه - من رعية أحدا ، واقتصروا الصدقات المسلمين
يحمونها لئلا يكون بين من يليها وبين أحد تنازع ... وما لي من بعير غير راحلتين ، وما لي ثاغية ولا راغية
، واني قد وليت ، واني أكثر العرب بعيرا وشاء فما لي اليوم شاة ولا بعير غير بعيرين لحجي ، أكذاك ؟
قالوا : نعم

I did not restrict the use of the pasture lands.... They—his servants—did not forbid grazing rights to anyone. It was only used for the alms of the Muslims, guarding them lest there be a dispute between anyone and the

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Jāmi' al-Bayān*, 1/1/22-23.

official in charge of the alms tax... I possess no camels save two riding animals; I have no other livestock at all. When I became the khalifah, I had more camels and sheep than any of the Arabs, and today I have neither sheep nor camels, except for two camels to use for the Pilgrimage. Is this the case? The people said, “Yes”.¹

Abū Sa‘īd², freed slave of Abū Usayd al-Anṣārī—a Ṣaḥābī—says:

سمع عثمان بن عفان أن وفد أهل مصر قد أقبلوا فاستقبلهم ، فلما سمعوا به أقبلوا نحوه ، قال : وكره أن يقدموا عليه المدينة ، فأتوه فقالوا له : ادع بالمصحف وافتح السابعة - وكانوا يسمون سورة يونس السابعة - فقرأها حتى أتى على هذه الآية فُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ فَجَعَلْتُمْ مِنْهُ حَرَامًا وَحَلَالًا قُلْ اللَّهُ أَدْنَىٰ لَكُمْ أَمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ تَفْتَرُونَ قالوا له : قف ، رأيت ما حميت من الحمى ، الله أذن لك أم على الله تفتري - فقال : وأمضه نزلت في كذا ، فأما الحمى فإن عمر حمي الحمى قبلي لإبل الصدقة ، فلما وليت زادت إبل الصدقة ، فزدت في الحمى لما زاد في الصدقة

‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān heard that a delegation of Egyptians had arrived. He thus went to receive them. When they heard of his arrival they presented themselves to him—disliking to meet him in Madinah—and said, “Call for a muṣḥaf and begin the recitation of Sūrah Yūnus.”

He began reciting until he reached the verse

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ فَجَعَلْتُمْ مِنْهُ حَرَامًا وَحَلَالًا قُلْ اللَّهُ أَدْنَىٰ لَكُمْ أَمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ تَفْتَرُونَ

Say, “Have you seen what Allah has sent down to you of provision of which you have made [some] lawful and [some] unlawful?” Say, “Has Allah permitted you [to do so], or do you invent [something] about Allah ?”³

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 347

2 He is Abū Sa‘īd, the freed slave of Abū Usayd al-Anṣārī رضي الله عنه.

- Ibn Sa‘īd has mentioned him *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, vol. 7 pg. 128.
- Al-Haythamī in *Majma‘ al-Zawā‘id* as reliable, vol. 7 pg. 219.

3 Sūrah Yūnus: 59.

They said to him, “Stop. Do you not see that you restricted use of the grazing pasture? Has Allah permitted you to do so or are you attributing falsities to Allah?”

He said, “This verse was revealed at a particular instance. As for the pastures, ‘Umar restricted its use before me for the camels of ṣadaqah. When I became the khalīfah the camels of ṣadaqah increased and so I increased the grazing land with its rise.”¹

Another narration states:

ولما نزل أهل مصر الجحفة يعاتبون عثمان ، فمن جملة ما تقموا عليه أنه حمي الحمى ، فأجابهم : وأما الحمى فوالله ما حميت لإبلي ولا غنمي ، وإنما حميته لإبل الصدقة لتسمن وتصلح وتكون أكثر ثمنا للمساكين

When the people of Egypt, encamped at Juḥfah² they protested against ‘Uthmān. Amongst the issues they brought against him was that he had restricted the pastures. He replied to this objection saying, “As for the pastures, By Allah, I did not restrict its use for my camels or sheep. I restricted it for the camels of ṣadaqah so that they may gain weight and be of better value for the poor.”³

In reality no objection can be raised against ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as he followed the established sunnah. During the era of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ there was a restricted grazing pasture.

Al-Bukhārī has narrated on the authority of Al-Ṣa‘b ibn Jatthāmah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ— from the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ who said:

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 470. The annotations conclude its chain to be authentic.

2 This was a village six miles from the shore and about seventy-six miles from Makkah. It is the Mīqāt of the people of Shām, Egypt, and the east. See, Al-Ḥumayrī: *Al-Rawḍ al-Mi‘tār fi Khayr al-Aqtār*, pg. 156. At present it is uninhabited though there are remains that are visited. Al-Balādhurī: *Mu‘jam Ma‘ālim al-Ḥijāz*, vol. 9 pg. 122.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 243.

ولا حمى إلا لله ورسوله

There is no restricted grazing pasture except for Allah and His Messenger.¹

And in the narration of *Al-Musnad* from Al-Ṣa'b ibn Jatthāmah al-Laythī is that Rasūlullāh ﷺ restricted al-Naqī² and said:

لا حمى إلا الله ورسوله

There is no restricted pasture except for Allah and His Messenger.³

Since Rasūlullāh ﷺ had restricted grazing pastures and the state was growing it is a no brainer that Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ had restricted pastures as well. Since the conquest of the cities of Persia and Rome had begun there was a fervent need for horses and camels to be used for fighting in the path of Allah. This is of particular importance as we know Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ did not innovate anything not present in the time of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Even in his first address he said:

ألا اني متبع ولست بمبتدع

Know well that I am a follower, not an innovator.⁴

It has also been established that 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ restricted the pastures of al-Naqī for the horses of the Muslims whilst restricting Rabadhah⁵ and Saraf⁶ for the camels of ṣadaqah⁷.

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 3 pg. 78.

2 A place twenty Farsakh from Madinah. See, Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 5 pg. 301. Presently known as Wādī al-Naqī.

3 Aḥmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 4 pg. 71

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 422.

5 A village close to Madinah on the way to Hijāz. See, Yaqūt: *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, vol. 3 pg. 24.

6 A well, six miles from Madinah. Ibid, vol. 3 pg. 212.

7 Ibn Sa'd: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pg. 305.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه says:

أما الحمى فإنما حماه - عثمان - الإبل الصدقة لتسمن ، ولم يحمه الإبله ولا لغنمه ، وقد حماه عمر من قبله

As for the pastures, ‘Uthmān restricted them for the camels to gain mass. He did not restrict it for his camels or sheep. And ‘Umar had restricted it before him.¹

‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها remarked in defence of ‘Uthmān:

ومواضع من مواضع الحمى حماها لهم ، وهي أمور قد سبق بها لا يصلح غيرها

The places of pasture that he restricted for them was an issue that had precedent. These places served this purpose only.²

Ibn al-‘Arabī says:

وأما الحمى فكان قديما ، فيقال : إن عثمان زاد فيه لما زادت الرعية . وإذا جاز أصله للحاجة إليه جازت الزيادة لزيادة الحاجة

The pastures were of old. ‘Uthmān augmented them as the constituents of the state increased. Since the precedent of having these for a need is permissible, augmenting it for an increased need is also permissible.³

3. Reading the prayer in full while in Minā

The third accusation raised against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه is that he read the complete units of prayer in Minā. This is true and established. Imām al-Bukhārī has narrated from Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه who said:

1 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 187.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 448.

3 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāšim*, pgs. 72-73.

صليت مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بمنى ركعتين وأبي بكر وعمر ، ومع عثمان صدرا من إمارته ثم أتمها

I performed the prayer in Minā with Rasūlullāh ﷺ of two units and with Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān in the beginning of his rein. Thereafter he performed it complete.¹

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would reply saying:

ألا وإني قدمت بلدا فيه أهلي فأتممت لهذين الأمرين الإقامة واتخاذ الأهل

Know well that I have come to a city in which reside my family. I have performed a complete prayer due to these two reasons: intention of residing and taking a wife.²

In the narration of Ibn ‘Asākir he explains his action thus:

أيها الناس إني تأهلت بمكة منذ قدمت ، وإني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : من تأهل في بلد فليصل صلاة المقيم

O People, I have taken a wife in Makkah since I have arrived. And I have heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying, “Whoever takes a wife in a city should pray the prayer of a resident.”³

In another narration he says:

سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : إذا تزوج الرجل ببلد فهو من أهله ، وإنما أتممت لأنني تزوجت منذ قدمتها

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 2 pg. 35.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 347

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 250; Aḥmad: *Musnad*, vol. 1 pg. 62. The question of the strength of the chain rests on ‘Ikrimah ibn Ibrāhīm al-Bāhili or, ‘Ikrimah ibn Ibrāhīm al-Azdī whose narrations are discarded. The third opinion is that it is someone else who is unknown. See, *Al-Musnad* with the annotations of Aḥmad Shākir, vol. 1 pg. 351. In any case the ḥadīth with this chain is weak.

I heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying, “When a man marries in a city, he is of its people. I only performed the complete prayer because I married when came.”¹

Ibn ‘Abbās and Aḥmad have clearly stated that if a traveller marries in a place he will be required to complete his prayer. This is also the view of Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, and their students.²

‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ came to ‘Uthmān seeking an explanation. He explained:

إني أخبرت أن بعض حاج اليمن وجفأة الناس قالوا : الصلاة للمقيم ركعتان واحتجوا بصلاتي

I have been told that some of the pilgrims of Yemen and the ignorant say, “Prayer for a resident is two units, basing their view on my prayer.”³

Al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar has recorded the statement of al-Zuhrī which gives strength to this statement. He says:

إنما صلى عثمان منى أربعاً لأن الأعراب كانوا كثروا في ذلك العام : فأحب عثمان أن يعلمهم أن الصلاة أربع

‘Uthmān performed four units of prayer in Minā due to the large number of Bedouins that had come that year. ‘Uthmān wished to teach them that the prayer consisted of four units.⁴

Similarly, the narration of al-Bayhaqī points to the same reasoning. In it there is mention that after ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ completed the full prayer in Minā he delivered a sermon and then said:

1 Ibid, pg. 250.

2 Ibn al-Qayyim: *Zād al-Ma’ād fi Hadyī Khayr al-‘Ibād*, vol. 1 pg. 470.

3 Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 34.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 2 pg. 571.

إن القصر سنة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وصاحبيه ، ولكن حدوث طعام فحفت ألا يستوا

Shortening the prayer is the sunnah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and his two Companions. However, due to the arrival of the common people I feared they would not understand its significance.¹

Ibn Jurayj says:

أن أعرابيا نادى عثمان بمني يا أمير المؤمنين : ما زلت أصليها منذ رأيتك عام أول ركعتين

A Bedouin called out to ‘Uthmān in Minā saying, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn, I have continued reading this prayer in two units since I saw you reading it in this manner the first year.”²

Ibn Ḥajar commenting on this says:

وهذه الطرق يقوي بعضها بعضا ولا مانع أن يكون هذا أصل سبب الإتمام

These narrations give strength to each other and there is the distinct possibility that this was the real reason of completing the prayer.³

Ibn al-‘Arabī defending ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ says:

فأما ترك القصر فاجتهاد ، إذ سمع عثمان أن الناس افتتنوا بالقصر وفعلوا ذلك في منازلهم ، فرأى أن السيئة ربما أدت إلى إسقاط الفريضة ، فتركها خوف الذريعة . مع أن جماعة من العلماء قالوا : إن المسافر مخير بين القصر والإمام ، واختلف في ذلك الصحابة ، ففي الصحيح أن الزهري سأل عروة : أما بال عائشة تتم ؟ قال : تأولت ما تأول عثمان

Leaving out shortening the prayer was based on ijtihād after ‘Uthmān heard that people had become confused regarding the shortening of the prayer and continued to do so in their places of residence. Seeing that

1 Ibid, vol. 2 pg. 571.

2 Ibid, vol. 2 pg. 571.

3 Ibid, vol. 2 pg. 571.

fulfilling the sunnah may lead to the disregard of the farḍ, he left it out. Together with this consider the fact that a group of scholars hold the opinion that a traveller has the option of shortening or completing their prayer. The Ṣaḥābah too differed on this.¹

It has been authentically narrated that al-Zuhrī asked ‘Urwah, “Why is it that ‘Ā’ishah completes her prayer?”

He replied, “Her opinion is like that of ‘Uthmān.”²

In any case this is a matter in which there remains difference of opinion. A great number of jurists throughout the Islamic lands have opined that shortening the prayer during travel is permissible not obligatory. One shortening the prayer is acting upon the concession whilst one completing is acting upon the original law. Allah ﷻ loves that a slave acts upon the concession just as he loves fulfilling the original instruction to its fullest. Thus, if ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه did not act upon the concession of shortening the ṣalāh, he acted upon the original law.

4. Adding a second Adhān to Jumu‘ah

The fourth accusation made against him is that he added the second adhān to the Friday prayer which is an innovation. The answer to this is that the sunnah of the Rightly Guided Khulafā’ is in fact an extension of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم as previously mentioned. Imām al-Bukhārī narrates on the authority of al-Sā’ib ibn Yazīd that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه added the second adhān during his khilāfah when the people increased in Madinah.³ The narration of Ibn Mājah and Al-Nasa’ī state that he gave the adhān at al-Zawra’—a house in the marketplace—before leaving so that the people would be informed that it was time for Jumu‘ah.⁴

1 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāṣim*, pg. 80.

2 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 2 pg. 36.

3 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 1 pg. 219.

4 *Ibn Mājah*, vol. 1 pg. 359; *Al-Nasa’ī*, vol. 3 pg. 101.

From this it comes to the fore that there was a need to add a second adhān to amplify the range of notification since the boundaries of the city of Madinah and its residents had increased. If this act of his was contrary to the sunnah the senior Ṣaḥābah, who were present in Madinah, would have opposed him. Also, ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ did not give the instruction for this adhān to be removed when he became the khalīfah. Furthermore, this act of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ of adding a second adhān has been adopted by all four schools of jurisprudic thought and agreed upon by all other scholars. This is just as the scholars have reached a consensus regarding the sunnah of ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in gathering the people behind one Imām for tarāwīḥ prayer in Ramaḍān.¹

5. He did not execute ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn ‘Umar

The fifth accusation in this category is from the Khawārij who say that ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ began his khilāfah by disregarding the implementation of the law of Qiṣās (death penalty) upon ‘Ubayd Allah ibn ‘Umar for killing Hurmuzān. Thus, they opine that he disregarded a law set by Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

One considering this incident will conclude that ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ did not disregard any law set by Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Yes, what he had done was present this case before the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ for consultation. He said:

أشيروا علي في هذا الذي فتق في الإسلام ما فتق - مشيرا إلى عبيد الله ، وكان محبوسا في دار سعد بن أبي وقاص - فأخرجه عثمان ليستطلع رأي المهاجرين والأنصار في شأنه ، فقال علي : أرى أن تقتله ، وقال بعض الصحابة : قتل عمر بالأمس ، ويقتل ابنه اليوم!

Give me your opinions regarding this man—referring to ‘Ubayd Allāh—who brought division into Islam. And this was when he was confined in the house of Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqās. ‘Uthmān brought him out so that he may hear the views of the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār with regards to him.

‘Alī said, “I think you should kill him.”

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Minhāj*, vol. 3 pg. 204.

One of the other Ṣaḥābah retorted, “‘Umar is killed yesterday and his son will be executed today?”¹

It should be noted that al-Hurmuzān was amongst those who were implicated in the assistance of the murder of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. It seems as though some of the Ṣaḥābah were unsure of his innocence and whether he was an innocent bystander who deserved a defence or was implicit in the murder of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and deserved a death sentence.²

The view of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was that those assisting in a murder would be sentenced to death as well. He is recorded to have said regarding a person killed at San‘ā:

لو تمالأ عليه أهل صنعاء لأقدتهم به

Had all the people of Sana joined forces against him, I would have killed them all³

Based on this, if ‘Ubayd Allāh explained his act as a result of being convinced that al-Hurmuzān had assisted in the murder of his father, this would have created a large enough doubt to forego pursuing the death penalty. This was similar to the instance of Usāmah ibn Zayd killing a man after he recited *lā ilāha illa Allah*, who he deemed to have said it merely to save himself. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم rebuked him but did not pass the decision of the death penalty due to his interpretation of the incident.⁴

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه passed his judgment based on the majority view of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. He also considered it vital to quell the fitnah and de-escalate the rising sentiment amongst the people and thus he made an undertaking of appeasing the family of al-Hurmuzān. He said:

1 Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pg. 356; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 239.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Minhāj*, vol. 3 pg. 200.

3 Ṣaḥīḥ *al-Bukhārī*, vol. 8 pg. 42; Dr Ruwayṭ al-Raḥīlī: *Fiqh ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb*, vol. 2 pg. 210.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 22.

أنا وليهم وقد جعلتها دية في مالي ، فاحتملها من ماله

I am now their master. I have decided that blood money should be paid in this case, and I shall bear the cost from my own money.¹

Ibn Kathīr commenting on this says:

والإمام يرى الأصلح في ذلك

The Imām noted the prudence in such a decision.²

Imām al-Ṭabarī has recorded the account of al-Qumādhbān, the son of al-Hurmuzān which illustrates that the matter was left to his discretion, to either take revenge his father by way of the death penalty or to forgive ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn ‘Umar. He says:

فلما ولي عثمان دعائي فأمكنني منه ثم قال : يا بني هذا قاتل أبيك ، وأنت أولى به منا فاذهب فاقتله - أي بإقامة الحد عليه - فخرجت وما في الأرض أحد إلا معي ... فقلت لهم : إلي قتله ؟ قالوا : نعم ، وسبوا عبيد الله ، فقلت أفلكم أن تمنعوه ؟ قالوا : لا ، وسبوه فتركته لله ولهم ، فاحتملوني ، فوالله ما بلغت المنزل إلا على رؤوس الرجال وأكفهم

When ‘Uthmān took office, he summoned me and put him in my hands. Then he said, “My son, this man is the murderer of your father; it is your duty rather than ours to take vengeance upon him, so go and kill him.” I went out with him, and there was no one in the land who did not support me and demand that I take action against him.

I said to them, “Is it up to me to kill him?”

They answered, “Yes.” And they reviled ‘Ubayd Allāh.

Then I said, “Is it your place to protect him?”

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 2 pg. 22.

2 Ibn al-Kathīr: *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 162.

They answered, “No,” and they reviled him.

Then I left him to Allah and to them, and they bore me away. By Allah, I only reached my home carried upon the heads and hands of these men.¹

In any case, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه is beyond reproach in this matter whether it played out with him using his discretion to decide the matter by consultative agreement with the Ṣaḥābah or by leaving the matter up to the son of al-Hurmuzān to avenge his father or forgive.

Ibn Taymiyyah says:

ومن العجب أن دم الهرمزان المتهم بالنفاق والمحاربة لله ورسوله والسعي في الأرض بالفساد تقام فيه القيامة ، ودم عثمان يجعل لا حرمة له ، وهو إمام المسلمين المشهود له بالجنة ، الذي هو وإخوانه - الصحابة - أفضل الخلق بعد النبيين

It is peculiar that some elements seek to celebrate the sanctity of the blood of al-Hurmuzān who was suspected of hypocrisy, opposing Allah and His Messenger, and spreading mischief through the lands. Whilst they pay no attention to the sanctity of the blood of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه the leader of the Muslims who was guaranteed paradise. He and his brothers—the Ṣaḥābah—were the best of creation after the Prophets.²

III. Accusations in his manner of dealing with those Ṣaḥābah who conflicted with him such as Abū Dharr, ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه

Amongst the criticisms levelled against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, the matter of him sending Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī رضي الله عنه to al-Rabadhah is featured prominently. To clarify

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4 pgs. 243-244. This narration ought to be researched and its chain of narration investigated. If it is established as authentic then it would be given preference as it has a massive bearing on the issue. And if not, there is no need to mention it. [Publisher’s note].

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Minhāj*, vol. 3 pg. 188

the position of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in this matter, we shall reproduce what Imām al-Bukhārī has narrated on the authority of Zayd ibn Wahb¹ who says:

مررت بالربذة فإذا أنا بأبي ذر ، قلت : ما أنزلك هذا ؟ قال : كنت بالشام فاختلفت أنا ومعوية في {وَالَّذِينَ
يَكْنُزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ} فقال معاوية : نزلت في أهل الكتاب ، فقلت نزلت فينا
وفيهم ، وكان بيني وبينه في ذلك ، فكتب إلى عثمان يشكوني ، فكتب إليّ عثمان أن أقدم المدينة فقدمتها ،
فكثر علي الناس حتى كأنهم لم يروني قبل ذلك ، فذكرت ذلك لعثمان فقال : إن شئت تنحيت فكنت قريبا
، فذاك الذي أنزلني هذا المنزل ، ولو أمروا عليّ حبشيا لسمعت وأطعت

I passed by a place called Al-Rabadhah and I met Abū Dharr and asked him,
“What has brought you to this place?”

He said, “I was in Sham and differed with Mu‘āwiyah on the meaning of
(the following verse of the Qur‘ān):

وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنُزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah.²

Mu‘āwiyah said, ‘This verse is revealed regarding the people of the
scriptures.’ I said, ‘It was revealed regarding us and also the people of the
scriptures.’

So we had a quarrel and Mu‘āwiyah sent a complaint against me to ‘Uthmān.
‘Uthmān wrote to me to come to Madinah, and I came to Madinah. Many
people came to me as if they had not seen me before.

1 He is Zayd ibn Wahb al-Juhanī, Abū Sulaymān al-Kufī. A Mukhaḍram, a great and renowned Tābi‘ī. There is consensus on citing him as proof. He narrates from ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, and others.

- Ibn Ma‘īn says, “Reliable.”
- Ibn Khirāsh says, “Kufī, reliable.”
- Ibn Sa‘d says, “He was reliable and narrated much ḥadīth.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Reliable.”

See, Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 6 pg. 102; Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārikh*, vol. 2 pg. 184; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārikh al-Kabīr*, 2/1/407; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārikh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 171; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3 pg. 427.

2 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 34.

So I told this to ‘Uthmān who said to me, ‘You may depart and live nearby if you wish.’ That was the reason for my being here for even if an Ethiopian had been nominated as my ruler, I would have obeyed him.”¹

This is the most reliable and authentic narration regarding the moving of Abū Dharr to al-Rabadhah. It paints a clear picture of the actualities surrounding this incident which the wicked and those with ulterior motives have sought to distort.

Ibn Ḥajar رَحِمَهُ اللهُ says:

وإنما سأل زيد بن وهب أبا ذر عن ذلك لأن مبعضي عثمان كانوا يشنعون عليه أنه نفى أبا ذر ، وقد بين أبو ذر أن نزوله في ذلك المكان كان باختياره

The reason Zayd ibn Wahb asked Abū Dharr about this was because those pitted against ‘Uthmān had accused him of exiling Abū Dharr. Abū Dharr clarified that his stay in that area was by his own choice.²

The narration indicates that the difference of opinion between Abū Dharr and Mu‘āwiyah was due to the interpretation of the aforementioned verse. Abū Dharr رَحِمَهُ اللهُ was of the opinion that a Muslim should not have wealth in excess of his needs. He would say to people:

ولا يبيت عند أحدكم دينار ولا درهم ، إلا ما ينفقه في سبيل الله أو يعده لغريم

None of you should have a Dinar or Dirham in his possession overnight, except that he intends spending it in the path of Allah or to repay his creditor.³

On the other hand, the view of the majority of the Ṣaḥābah, amongst them Mu‘āwiyah رَحِمَهُ اللهُ، was that retaining the wealth of which zakāt had been discharged would not be considered as hoarding.⁴

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 2 pg. 1.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 3 pg. 274.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fath*, vol. 3 pg. 271.

4 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāṣim*, pg. 74.

Imām al-Bukhārī has titled a chapter in Kitāb al-Zakāt as ‘The chapter establishing that wealth upon which zakat has been paid is not deemed hoarded wealth’.¹

The narration also indicates that ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was cognizant of the standing of Abū Dharr and fully aware of his noble status. He did not write to Mu‘āwiyah to send Abū Dharr upon a wild animal with a brute camel driver as understood from fabricated narrations.²

He had written to him directly instructing him to come to Madinah. This point is further strengthened by the narration of Ibn Sa‘d from Abū Dharr who said:

فكتب إلي عثمان أن اقدم إلى المدينة

‘Uthmān wrote to me instructing me to come to Madinah.³

Ibn Ḥajar has narrated from *Fawā'id Abī al-Ḥasan ibn Jadhlam* — from ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who said:

وإنما أرسلنا إليك لتجاورنا بالمدينة

We sent for you so that you may be close to us in Madinah.⁴

Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī has narrated from Qatādah that ‘Uthmān wrote to Abū Dharr stating:

أقبل إلينا فنحن أرفعى لحقك وأحسن جوارا من معاوية

Come to us, we will fulfil your rights to a greater degree and are better neighbours than Mu‘āwiyah.⁵

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 2 pg. 111.

2 Ibn A‘tham: *Al-Futūḥ*, vol. 2 pg. 156; Al-Mas‘ūdī: *Murawwaj al-Dhahab*, vol. 2 pg. 350.

3 Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 4 pg. 216.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fathī*, vol. 3 pg. 274.

5 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 3 pg. 94.

The narration also indicates that ‘Uthmān did not banish Abū Dharr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to al-Rabadhah as a form of punishment or exile. Rather, when Abū Dharr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ mentioned to the khalīfah the multitudes of people coming to him asking him of his arrival from Shām, ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ feared fitnah and said, “It may be better for you to depart”. ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was inferring to him that his views and temperament was perhaps not suitable amongst the masses. And whoever is of the temperament of Abū Dharr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ ought to refrain from mixing with people and leave people to their devices in matters that are not explicitly impermissible in the sharī‘ah.¹

The narration also illustrates the deep seeded faith of Abū Dharr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in his submission to the Amīr, complying with the command of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ of submitting to the leaders in all besides sin. This is evident from his statement, “If an Ethiopian had been nominated as my ruler, I would have obeyed him.” It has also been narrated through various chains that he said, “If ‘Uthmān had ordered me to walk on my head, I would have done so.”²

Badr ibn Khālīd al-Juramī³ says:

كنت جالسا عند عثمان طه إذ جاءه شيخ ، فلما رأوه القوم ، قالوا : أبو ذر . فلما رآه قال : مرحبا وأهلا يا أخي ، فقال أبو ذر : مرحبا وأهلا يا أخي ، لعمرى لقد غلظت في العزمة ، وإيم الله لو أنك عزمت علي أن أجبو الحبوت ما استطعت أن أجبو

I was sitting by ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, when an old man came. When the people saw him they said, “Abū Dharr.”

1 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāsim*, pg. 74.

2 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *Al-Muṣannaḡ*, vol. 15 pg. 225.

3 He is Badr ibn Khālīd al-Juramī al-Kufī. From the Tābī‘īn. He narrated from ‘Uthmān and Abū Dharr. Abū al-Juwayriyyah al-Juramī narrated from him.

- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Tābī‘ī, reliable.”
- Al-Bukhārī says, “He is listed amongst those of Kūfah.”

His life has been recorded by, Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/138; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 77; and Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḡ wa al-Ta‘āil*, vol. 2 pg. 412.

When ‘Uthmān saw him he said, “Welcome my brother.”

Abū Dharr replied, “Welcome my brother. You have been harsh and severe regarding difficult matters. By Allah! If you instructed me to crawl, I would crawl as much as I could.”¹

Ibn Sa’d narrates that some people of Kūfah said to Abū Dharr in al-Rabadhah:

إن هذا الرجل فعل بك وفعل ، هل أنت ناصب لنا راية - يعني لقتاله - فقال : لا ، لو أن عثمان سيرني من المشرق إلى المغرب لسمعت وأطعت

This man (‘Uthmān) has done such and such to you. Will you legitimize our effort to kill him by raising a flag for us?

He replied, “No. If ‘Uthmān ordered me to travel from the east to the west, I would listen and obey.”²

Ibn Abū Shaybah narrates the incident and their statements in the following words:

هل أنت ناصب لنا راية فتأتيك برجال ما شئت ؟ فقال يا أهل الإسلام لا تعرضوا علي أذاكم لا تدلوا السلطان ، فإن من أذل السلطان أذله الله - الحديث - والله لو صلبني عثمان على أطول جبل أو أطول خشبة لسمعت وأطعت ، وصبرت واحتسبت ، ورأيت ذلك خيرا لي ، ولو سيرني ما بين الأفق والأفق أو بين المشرق إلى المغرب لسمعت وأطعت

Will you legitimize our revolution by raising a flag and we will come to you with however many men you want?

He said, “O people of Islam. Do not present your ill to me. Do not disparage the leader. Whoever disparages the leader, Allah will humiliate him³— ḥadīth. By Allah! If ‘Uthmān crucified me on the longest piece of wood, I would listen and obey, and I would keep patient and hope for reward from

1 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh Madinah Munawwarah*, vol. 3 pg. 1041.

2 Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 4 pg. 227.

3 Aḥmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 5 pg. 49; Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 3 pg. 341.

Allah whilst considering it better for me. Moreover, if he ordered me to travel from between the horizons or between the east and the west I would listen and obey.”¹

Another narration outlines that Abū Dharr was in fact the one who sought permission to settle at al-Rabadhah. ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ṣāmit al-Ghifārī² says:

دخلت مع أبي ذر على عثمان . فحسر عن رأسه فقال : والله ما أنا منهم - يعني الخوارج - فقال - أي عثمان - : إنما أرسلنا إليك لتجاورنا بالمدينة . فقال : لا حاجة لي في ذلك ، اتذن لي بالريذة

I came to ‘Uthmān with Abū Dharr. He uncovered his head and he said, “By Allah I am not one of them, i.e. the Khawārij.”

‘Uthmān replied, “The only reason we sent for you is so that you may be close to us in Madinah.”

He said, “I have no need for that. Permit me to go to al-Rabadhah.”³

He would go this area during the era of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as recorded by the authors of the *Sunan*.⁴

In *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* it is recorded that Abū Dharr sought permission from ‘Uthmān to leave to al-Rabadhah as Rasūlullāh ﷺ as advised him that once the built up area reached Sal⁵, he should leave Madinah. ‘Uthmān permitted him to do

1 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *Al-Muṣannaḡ*, vol. 15 pg. 226.

2 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ṣāmit al-Ghifārī al-Baṣrī. From the Ṭābi‘īn. He narrates from his uncle, Abū Dharr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and others.

• Al-Nasa‘ī, Ibn Ḥibbān, al-‘Ijlī, and Ibn Sa’d have deemed him reliable.

He passed away the year 70 A.H/ 689 A.D. His life has been recorded by Khalīfah: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, pg. 191; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 262; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 5 pg. 84; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 2 pg. 447.

3 Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 4 pg. 232; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fathḥ*, vol. 3 pg. 274.

4 See, *Abū Dāwūd*, vol. 1 pg. 91.

5 A mountain of Madinah. See, Yaḡūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, vol. 1 pg. 236.

so and allocated to him a small herd of camels and gave him two slaves. He also instructed him as follows, “Do not cut yourself off from Madinah lest you revert to being a Bedouin.” Abū Dharr did so.¹

After Imām al-Ṭabarī recorded those narrations that suggest his confinement was of his own choice he comments:

وأما الآخرون فإنهم رويوا في سبب ذلك أشياء كثيرة وأمورا شنيعة كرهت ذكرها

As for the other narrators of these events, they recount many things concerning them, repugnant matters that I am loath to repeat.²

Ghālib al-Qaṭṭān³ says:

قلت للحسن - أي البصري - عثمان أخرج أباً ذر؟ قال : لا ، معاذ الله

I asked to al-Ḥasan i.e. al-Baṣrī, “Did ‘Uthmān banish Abū Dharr?”

He replied, “No. Ma‘ādih Allah!”⁴

When it would be mentioned to Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه had made him leave, he would consider such sentiment to be grave and he would say:

هو خرج من قبل نفسه ، ولم يسيره عثمان

He left by his own choice. ‘Uthmān did not make him leave.⁵

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 284.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 284.

3 He is Ghālib ibn Khattāf ibn Abī Ghaylān al-Qaṭṭān, Abū Sulaymān al-Baṣrī.

- Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal says, “Reliable, reliable.”
- Ibn Sa‘d, Ibn Ma‘īn, and al-Nasa‘ī have deemed him reliable.
- Ibn Ḥibbān has recorded his name in *Al-Thiqāt*.

His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 271; Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 468; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 7 pg. 48; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 8 pg. 242.

4 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh Madinah Munawwarah*, vol. 3 pg. 1037.

5 Ibid, vol. 3 pg. 1037.

From amongst the baseless lies that the Khawārīj accuse ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ of is that he struck ‘Ammār until his intestines were ruptured and that he stomped Ibn Mas‘ūd due to which he suffered from a hernia. Ibn al-‘Arabī commenting on these made up claims says:

وأما ضربه لآين مسعود ومنعه عطاءه فزور ، وضربه لعمار إفك مثله ، ولو فتق أمعاءه ما عاش أبدا . وقد اعتذر عن ذلك العلماء بوجوه لا ينبغي أن يشتغل بها ، لأنها مبنية على باطل ، ولا يبنى حق على باطل ، ولا تذهب الزمان في مماشاة الجهال فإن ذلك لا آخر له

The accusation that he hit Ibn Mas‘ūd and curtailed his stipend is a lie. Similarly, the accusation that he hit ‘Ammār is also a lie. If he had ruptured his intestines he would never have lived. The scholars have given explanations to these which are not suitable to delve into as they are based on untruths. Truth cannot be construed over untruths. Time cannot be squandered in playing along with the ignorant as there is no end to that.¹

The character of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, his advanced age, his faith, his modesty, his soft nature, precedence, and high status in Islam is far beyond him stooping so low and interfering with a man who himself is amongst the eminent Companions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was well aware of his precedence and virtue no matter their differences of opinion. ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, prevented people fighting for him and was prepared to face his own death with patience and hope for reward rather than have blood spilled and mass fitnah arise. The fabricated narrations propose that this same ‘Uthmān ordered his slaves to hit him till he lost consciousness thereafter he himself stomped his abdomen in this condition. Would a man of such nobility be happy, nay tolerate, such atrocities against ‘Ammār رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ whose virtues and status in Islam he was cognizant of? Would the character and modesty of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ allow him to vilify ‘Ammār رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ with calls of ignorance by speaking ill of his mother Sumayyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, a woman of precedence and noble virtue? Could this be possible whilst ‘Uthmān understood the significance of his relation to his mother, the first martyr in Islam?

1 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāṣim*, pgs. 63-66.

Indeed, this could never be! The reliable and authentic narrations do not contain a shred of evidence that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه would adopt such crude measures of punishment and retribution. Moreover, the character and nature of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه would be at complete odds with such behaviour. There is no doubt that pitting such fabricated narrations against the views and character of these eminent personalities as well as the general character of the society in that era lays bare the lies and falsities of the deceivers.

The reality of the incident surrounding ‘Ammār is related by ‘Uthmān himself as narrated by Ibn Abī Shaybah in his book *Al-Muṣannaḡ* in the following words:

جاء سعد وعمار فأرسلت إليهما ، فانصرف سعد وأبي عمار أن ينصرف - فتناوله رسولي من غير أمري ،
فوالله ما أمرت ولا رضيت ، فهذه يدي لعمار فليقتص

Sa’d and ‘Ammār arrived and I called for them. Sa’d returned and ‘Ammār refused to. My messenger assaulted him without my instruction. By Allah! I did not instruct him so and neither was I pleased with it. Here is my hand for ‘Ammār to extract justice (*Qiṣāṣ*).¹

This narration clarifies the stance of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه which can be surmised in the following:

- The messenger of ‘Uthmān had assaulted ‘Ammār without the instruction or permission of ‘Uthmān. What sin of ‘Uthmān is this?
- ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه – pious and truthful as he was – took an oath that he did not give the instruction and neither was he pleased with it. Rather, he was displeased with it.
- He did not just verbally make his displeasure known. In order to please him and equal the scales of justice he made himself available for ‘Ammār to extract justice. The reverence of ‘Uthmān for ‘Ammār was so great that

1 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *Al-Muṣannaḡ*, vol. 15 pgs. 220-221.

he did not avail his messenger for justice, he availed himself for an assault of the same nature.

The objectors claim that ‘Ammār was displeased with ‘Uthmān due to what had occurred. This is not true. Further, there is no reason to be displeased with the khalīfah if he had in fact disciplined him. This claim dissipates when one considers the narration of Abū al-Zinād¹ from Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who says:

أَنْ عَشْمَانَ لَمَّا حَوَّصَ وَمَنَعَ الْمَاءَ ، قَالَ لَهُمْ عِمَارُ : سَبَّحَانَ اللَّهِ ، قَدْ اشْتَرَى بَشْرَ رُومَةَ وَتَمَنَعُونَهُ مَاءَهَا ، خَلُوا سَبِيلَ الْمَاءِ ، ثُمَّ جَاءَ إِلَى عَلِيٍّ وَسَأَلَهُ إِيفَازَ الْمَاءِ إِلَيْهِ

When ‘Uthmān was surrounded and bared from water, ‘Ammār said, “Subḥān Allah, he bought the well of Rūmah and you prevent him from its water. Leave the path to the water open.” He then came to ‘Alī and requested him to send water to him.²

The accusation of ‘Uthmān having assaulted Ibn Mas‘ūd and curtailing his stipend is a lie as mentioned by Ibn al-‘Arabī. Ibn al-Athīr has stated in *Usd al-Ghābah* that

1 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Dhakwān al-Qurashī al-Madanī, Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, famously known as Abū al-Zinād. From amongst the eminent Tābī‘īn.

- Ibn Sa’d says, “He was reliable, narrated much ḥadīth, was eloquent, had deep insight into the Arabic language and was an intelligent scholar.”
- Ibn Ma‘īn says, “Reliable, a proof.”
- Ibn al-Madīnī says, “After the senior Tābī‘īn there was no one more knowledgeable than him in Madinah.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Madanī, Tābī‘ī, reliable.”
- Abū Ḥātim says, “Reliable, a jurist.”
- Al-Bukhārī says, “The most authentic chain of transmission of Abū Hurayrah is Abū al-Zinād— from Al-‘A’raj — from Abū Hurayrah.”
- Al-Nasa‘ī, al-Sājī, and Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī have also deemed him reliable.

He passed away the year 130 A.H/747 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 49; Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 305; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/1/83; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 254; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 5 pg. 49; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 5 pg. 203.

2 Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: *Al-Riyāḍ al-Nadīrah*, vol. 3 pf. 98.

Ibn Mas‘ūd had in fact become independent of taking a stipend and thus waived it as others had done.¹

If, for arguments sake, any of the above attributions to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه is even remotely true, then too the khalīfah is permitted to discipline whoever he deems deserving. In such an instance the khalīfah is not to be viewed negatively and neither will he be disparaged for it as he is responsible for keeping the order. The khalīfah does not do so due to any personal vendetta. Far from it when he is a man of justice, knowledge, and exemplary character.²

Another blatant lie flaunted is that Ibn Mas‘ūd branded ‘Uthmān a disbeliever. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم prohibited the branding of a Muslim as a disbeliever, let alone a pious Mu‘min. ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما narrates that Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

أَيُّمَا رَجُلٍ قَالَ لِأَخِيهِ يَا كَافِرٌ فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِهِمَا أَحَدُهُمَا

Whoever says to his brother, ‘O disbeliever’ then certainly one of them will be branded such.³

Moreover, the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم firmly followed the guidance and ways of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم more than anyone else.

When ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه became the khalīfah, Ibn Mas‘ūd went to Kūfah and said:

ولينا خيرا نأذا فوق ولم نأل

We have appointed the best of us in virtue and precedence and we did not find anyone better.⁴

1 Ibn al-Athīr: *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 3 pg. 390.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Al-Minhāj*, vol. 3 pg. 195.

3 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, vol. 7 pg. 97.

4 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 462; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 209.

Ibn Shabbah has narrated in *Tārīkh al-Madīnah* that a man stood up vilifying ‘Uthmān. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd said:

ما سرني أني أردت عثمان بسهم فأخطأه وأن لي مثل أحد ذهابا

I would not take gold equal to Mount Uḥud to shoot and miss ‘Uthmān.¹

Salamah ibn Sa‘īd² says:

ما سمعت ابن مسعود رضي الله عنه قاتلا لعثمان سوا قط ، ولقد سمعته يقول : لعن قتلتموه لا تستخلفونه
- أي لا تجدون مثله

I have never heard Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه speak ill of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. I heard him say, “If you kill him, you will not find anyone like him to replace him.”³

IV. Accusations against his personality such as being absent from Badr, fleeing Uḥud, and not being present at Bay‘ah al-Riḍwān.

‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه refutes these accusations in an authentic narration as recorded by Imām al-Bukhārī through the chain of ‘Uthmān ibn Mawhib⁴ who says:

جاء رجل من أهل مصر حج البيت فرأى قوما جلوسا فقال : من هؤلاء القوم ؟ قال : هؤلاء قريش ، قال
: فمن الشيخ فيهم - قالوا عبد الله بن عمر ، قال : يا ابن عمر ! إني سألتك عن شيء فحدثني عنه ، هل

1 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, vol. 3 pg. 1052.

2 I did not find his profile in the sources available to me.

3 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, vol. 3 pg. 1052.

4 He is ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mawhib al-Taymī al-Madanī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh. Tābī‘ī. He narrated from a group of the Ṣaḥābah, amongst them Ibn ‘Umar, Abū Hurayrah, and Umm Salamah.

- Al-‘Ijlī, Ibn Ma‘īn, Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasa‘ī, Ya‘qūb ibn Shaybah, and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable.

He passed away the year 160 A.H/679 A.D. His life has been recorded by Khalīfah: *Al-Ṭabaqāt*, pg. 273; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 328; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 6 pg. 155; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 2 pg. 221; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 7 pg. 132.

تعلم أن عثمان فرّ يوم أحد؟ قال : نعم ، فقال : هل تعلم أنه تغيب عن بدر ولم يشهد؟ قال : نعم ، قال : هل تعلم أنه تغيب عن بيعة الرضوان؟ قال نعم ، قال : الله أكبر ، قال ابن عمر : تعالي أبين لك ، أما فراره يوم أحد فأشهد أن الله عفا عنه وغفر له ، وأما تغيبه عن بدر فإنه كان تحته بنت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وكانت مريضة ، فقال له رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : إن لك أجر رجل ممن شهد بدرا وسهمه . وأما تغيبه عن بيعة الرضوان فلو كان أحد أعز ببطن مكة من عثمان لبعته مكانه ، فبعته رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وكانت بيعة الرضوان بعدما ذهب عثمان إلى مكة ، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بيده اليمنى : هذه يد عثمان ، فضرب بها على يده ، فقال : لعثمان ، فقال له ابن عمر : اذهب بها الآن معك

An Egyptian who came and performed Hajj saw some people sitting. He enquired, "Who are these people?"

Somebody said, "They are the tribe of Quraysh."

He said, "Who is the old man sitting amongst them?"

The people replied, "He is 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar."

He said, "O Ibn 'Umar! I want to ask you about something; inform me regarding it. Do you know that 'Uthmān fled away on the day of Uḥud?"

Ibn 'Umar said, "Yes."

The man said, "Do you know that 'Uthmān was absent on the day of Badr and did not join it?"

Ibn 'Umar said, "Yes."

The man said, "Do you know that he failed to attend the pledge of al-Ridwān?"

Ibn 'Umar said, "Yes."

The man said, "Allah Akbar!"

Ibn 'Umar said, "Let me explain to you. As for his flight on the day of Uḥud, I testify that Allah has excused him and forgiven him; and as for his absence from the battle of Badr, it was due to the fact that the daughter of

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ was his wife and she was sick then. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said to him, ‘You will receive the same reward and share of the booty as anyone of those who participated in the battle of Badr.’ As for his absence from the Bay‘ah al-Riḍwān, had there been any person in Makkah more respectable than ‘Uthmān to be sent as a representative, Rasūlullāh ﷺ would have sent him instead of him. Rasūlullāh ﷺ had sent him, and the incident of Bay‘ah al-Riḍwān happened after ‘Uthmān had gone to Makkah. Rasūlullāh ﷺ held out his right hand saying, ‘This is the hand of ‘Uthmān.’ He held his other hand with it saying, ‘This pledge of allegiance is on the behalf of ‘Uthmān.’

Then Ibn ‘Umar said to the man, “Bear these explanations in mind with you.”¹

To conclude, the aforementioned accusations as mentioned in the *Tārīkh* of Imām al-Ṭabarī and other such books of history which have been narrated from ignorant and weak historians, especially the Rawāfiḍ, continue to spread a fog around the realities of the lives of the Khulafā’ and eminent leaders of the ummah. This rings true to a greater degree regarding discussions that surround the era of crisis and fitnah.

It is truly unfortunate that the life story of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ has been plagued with such falsities. Narrating incidents in a twisted, biased approach and fabricating events surrounding this enlightened life story has been the drudgery of those seeking to vilify and discredit ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ himself had perceived this as understood from the letter he wrote to his governors:

أما بعد ، فإن الرعية قد طعنت في الانتشار ، ونزعت إلى الشر ، وأعداها على ذلك ثلاث : دنيا مؤثرة
وأهواء متشرعة ، وضغائن محمولة

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 203.

The public has split and have taken to evil. This is due to three principle reasons, preference of the world, following of desires, and sentiments of hatred.¹

Ibn al-‘Arabī commenting on these accusations says:

قالوا متعددين متعلقين برواية كذا بين ، جاء عثمان في ولايته بمظالم ومناكير .. هذا كله باطل سنداً ومتنا

They say these things as aggressors, citing the narrations of famed liars. They present ‘Uthmān as having ushered in oppression and evil during his reign. All of this is fabricated in subject matter and chain of transmissions.²

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 240.

2 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāšim*, pgs. 61-63.

Section Three: The circumstances surrounding the assassination of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه

Perhaps one might ask: How was ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه murdered whilst there was a group of senior Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم present in Madinah?

A question that Ibn Kathīr asks and answers, himself. His answer consists of the following four points:

Firstly, most or all of them did not think that the matter would escalate to his murder as the Khawārij were not actively trying to kill him. They had come seeking one of three outcomes, either he resigns from his position, he hands over Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, or they would kill him. They hoped that he would hand over Marwān to them or that he would resign thus gaining relief from this difficult situation. As for murder, no one thought it would happen and neither did they believe that these people would have the audacity to escalate to such a level.

Secondly, the Ṣaḥābah defended and protected him. However, when matters began to get out of hand, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه ordered the people to stand down so as not to spill blood of the Muslims and they did. After this those that laid siege were able to gain control and carry out what they wanted.

Thirdly, the Khawārij took advantage of the large number of people absent from Madinah. Many had left to perform the pilgrimage and many others were at the borders and outlying cities. The number of those that remained behind was perhaps not even equal to the number of the Khawārij who were close to two thousand.

Fourthly, the senior Ṣaḥābah had sent their children to the house to protect ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه whilst waiting for reinforcements from the cities to support them.¹

1 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 197-198.

Moreover, al-Māliqī goes on to further answer another question commenting that when ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ prevented them from helping him whilst himself being oppressed, he instructed them to stand down from a worthy act that was forbidding evil and establishing the truth. Why did he then do this? The answer to this has several dimensions, all praiseworthy. Consider the following four:

1. Him knowing without a doubt that he was going to be killed unjustly as Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had informed him that he would be killed unjustly whilst simultaneously instructing him to adopt patience. When they surrounded him, he realized that he was to be killed and the prophecy of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was to come to pass. This he had no qualms about, as it was revelation from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى Who knew he was to be killed in this manner. His view was that one seeking help and protection was not being patient whilst a promise of patience was taken from him.
2. He knew that the Ṣaḥābah present there were few in number whilst those who wanted to kill him were many. If he had permitted fighting he could not be certain that a large number of Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ would not lose their lives because of him. He therefore saved them with his own life out of compassion for them. He was the leader and the leader is responsible to protect those in his care in any way possible. Together with this he knew he was to be killed, so he protected their lives with his own, a measure in ensuring blood of the Muslims would not be spilled.
3. He understood that in a fitnah once the sword is unsheathed many are killed, some with no cause. He did not wish that his companions to unsheathe their swords in the said fitnah due to his concern for them. He saved them from the loss of their lives, wealth, and honour.
4. It is possible that he bore this with patience so that the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ may bear witness to his oppression, the defiance to his orders, and his unjust murder as the believers are the witnesses of Allah on His earth. Further, he did not like that the blood of a single Muslim be spilt because of him.¹

1 Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 194.

Some historians such as al-Wāqidī and Abū Mikhnaf have stated, as recorded in *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, that some of the Ṣaḥābah were content with his murder or that they were involved in it. Such statements are clearly refuted by authentic and reliable narrations that the muḥaddithīn have recorded in their books. What is evident is that not a single ṣaḥābī was content with the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Every one of them was at odds with it, cursing he who had carried out this accursed act. We will discuss this under the chapter that deals with the stance of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in the fitnah.

I. His patience and protection of Muslim blood.

The stance adopted by ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in facing the difficulties that had befallen him and the Muslims is exemplary and worthy of emulation. The sacrifice of one, by himself of himself, to save many, secured the honour of the ummah, and protect the blood of the Muslims. It would have been easy for him to save himself at the cost of the lives of the ummah if he so wished. If he was selfish and not a man of giving preference to others he would have used the Ṣaḥābah and the sons of the Muḥājirīn and Anṣār to protect himself and fight the Khawārij who defied him. He, however, intended to unify the ummah and sacrificed himself with patience and hope for reward.

Khalīfah narrates in his *Tārīkh* from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir ibn Rabī‘ah¹ who says:

كنت مع عثمان في الدار فقال أعزم على كل من رأى أن عليه سمعا وطاعة إلا كف يده وسلاحه ، فإن
أفضلكم عندي عتاء من كف يده وسلاحه

1 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir ibn Rabī‘ah al-‘Anzī, Abū Muḥammad al-Madanī. Amongst the senior Tābi‘īn. He narrates from his father, ‘Amr ibn al-Āṣ, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, and others.

- Abū Zur‘ah says, “A Madanī, saw the era of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, reliable.”
- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Madanī, Tābi‘ī, reliable.”

His life has been recorded by Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 14; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 263; Al-Fasawī: *Al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, vol. 1 pg. 251; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Mīzān*, vol. 2 pg. 449.

I was with ‘Uthmān at his house and he said, “Have every person you see resolve that he will listen and obey in refraining from using his hands and weapons. The most virtuous amongst you in my eyes is one who refrains from using his hands and weapons.”¹

He has also narrated through the chain of Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn who said:

انطلق الحسن و الحسين و ابن عمر و ابن الزبير و مروان كلهم شاكى في السلاح حتى دخلوا الدار فقال
عثمان أعزم عليكم لما رجعتم فوضعتم أسلحتكم و لزمتم بيوتكم

Al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr, and Marwān came to the house of ‘Uthmān, armed with their weapons to defend him. ‘Uthman told them, “I entreat you on oath to return, lay down your weapons, and remain in your homes.”²

Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ is reported to have said:

قلت لعثمان : اليوم طاب الضرب معك ، قال : أعزم عليك لتخرجن

I said to ‘Uthmān, “Today fighting for you is permitted.” He said, “I entreat you on oath to leave.”³

Ibn Abī Shaybah has recorded on the authority of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr who said:

قلت لعثمان يوم الدار : اخرج فقاتلهم ، فإن معك من قد نصر الله بأقل منه ، والله قتالهم لحلال ، قال
: فأبي

I said to ‘Uthmān on the day he was besieged, “Come out and fight them. You have the assistance of those whom Allah gave victory with a smaller group. By Allah, fighting them is permitted.” He says, “‘Uthmān refused.”⁴

1 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 174.

2 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 174.

3 Ibid, pg. 174.

4 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *Al-Muṣannaḡ*, vol. 5 pg. 204.

Imām Aḥmad has narrated in his *Musnad* that Mughīrah ibn Shu'bah رضي الله عنه came to 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه whilst he was besieged and said:

إنك إمام العامة وقد نزل بك ما ترى وإني أعرض عليك خصالا ثلاثا اختر إحداهن . إما أن تخرج فتقاتلهم ، فإن معك عددا وقوة ، وأنت على الحق وهم على الباطل . وإما أن تخرق بابا سوى الباب الذي هم عليه فتقعد على رواحك فتلحق مكة ، فإنهم لن يستحلوك وأنت بها . وإما أن تلحق بالشام فإنهم أهل الشام وفيهم معاوية . فقال عثمان ، أما أن أخرج فلن أكون أول من خلف رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ، في أمته بسفك الدماء ، وأما أن أخرج إلى مكة فإنهم لن يستحلوني بها ، فإني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : « يلحد رجل من قريش بمكة يكون عليه نصف عذاب العالم » ، ولن أكون أنا . وأما أن ألحق بالشام فإنهم أهل الشام وفيهم معاوية ، فلن أفارق دار هجرتي ومجاورة الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم

You are the ruler of the people and there has befallen you what you see. I advise you of three options; choose one of them. Go out and fight them, for you have the numbers and strength, and you are in the right and they are in the wrong; or make a door other than the door where they are, and sit on your mount and go to Makkah, for they will not dare to attack you there; or go to Syria, for among the people of Syria is Mu'āwiyah.

'Uthmān replied, "As for going out and fighting them, I will not be the first one after Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم to rule the ummah by shedding its blood. As for going out to Makkah because they would not dare to attack me there, I heard Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم say: "A man of Quraysh who visits Makkah with the aim of profanity or wrongdoing will have the punishment of half of mankind," and I will never be that one; and as for going to Syria because among the people of Syria is Mu'āwiyah, I will never leave the place to which I migrated and where I am close to Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم."¹

Ibn 'Asākir has narrated with his chain of narration to Jābir ibn 'Abd Allāh رضي الله عنه that 'Alī رضي الله عنه sent word to 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه saying:

1 Aḥmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 23 pg. 18; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 211. Aḥmad Shākir has deemed its chain weak 1/369 ḥadīth: 481.

إن معي خمسمائة دارع ، فأذن لي فأمتنعك من القوم ، فإنك لم تحدث شيئا يستحل به دمك . قال – أي عثمان – : جزيت خيرا ، ما أحب أن يهراق دم في سببي

I have five hundred men with shields. Give me permission to protect you against the people, for you have not done anything that would make it permissible to shed your blood.

‘Uthmān replied, “May you be rewarded with good. I do not want blood to be shed for my sake”¹

Abū Ḥabībah², the grandfather of Mūsa ibn ‘Uqbah, says:

بعثني الزبير إلى عثمان ، وهو محصور ، فدخلت عليه في يوم صائف وهو على كرسي ، وعنده الحسن بن علي ، وأبو هريرة ، وعبد الله بن عمر ، وعبد الله بن الزبير، فقلت : بعثني إليك الزبير بن العوام وهو يقرتك السلام ويقول لك : إني على طاعتي لم أبدل ولم أنكث فإن شئت دخلت الدار معك وكنت رجلا من القوم ، وإن شئت أقمت ، فإن بني عمرو بن عوف وعدوني أن يصبحوا على بابي ، ثم يمضون على ما أمرهم به . فلما سمع الرسالة قال : الله أكبر ، الحمد لله الذي عصم أخي ، أقرته السلام ، ثم قل له : إن يدخل الدار لا يكن إلا رجلا من القوم ، ومكانك أحب إلي ، وعسى الله أن يدفع بك عني ، فلما سمع الرسالة أبو هريرة قام فقال : ألا أخبركم ما سمعت أذناي من رسول الله عل قالوا : بلى ! قال : أشهد لسمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : « تكون بعدي فتن وأمور » فقلنا : فأين المنجى منها يا رسول الله ؟! قال : « إلى الأمين وحزبه ، وأشار إلى عثمان بن عفان . فقام الناس فقالوا : قد أمكنتنا البصائر ، فأذن لنا في الجهاد ، فقال عثمان : أعزم على من كانت لي عليه طاعة ألا يقاتل

Zubayr sent me to ‘Uthmān when he was being besieged and I entered upon him on a summer day. He was sitting on a chair and Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī, Abū Hurayrah, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr were with him. I said: “Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām has sent me to you. He sends greetings of salām to you and says to you: I am still loyal to you and I have not changed or retracted. If you wish, I will join you in your house, and will be one of the

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 403.

2 He is Abū Ḥabībah the freed slave of al-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām رضي الله عنه. He narrates from al-Zubayr and his grandson. The reliable historian Mūsa ibn ‘Uqbah narrates from him. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 300; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 9 pg. 359; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 10 pg. 360.

people there, or if you wish, I will stay where I am, because Banū ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf have promised to come to my place, then they will follow whatever instructions I give them.”

When ‘Uthmān heard the message, he said: “Allāh Akbar! Praise be to Allah Who has protected my brother. Convey salām to him and tell him, I appreciate what you said; may Allah ward off harm from me by you.”

When Abū Hurayrah read the message he stood up and said: “Shall I not tell you what my ears heard from the Rasūl of Allah ﷺ?”

They said: “Yes.”

He said: “I bear witness that I heard the Rasūl of Allah ﷺ say: “After I am gone there will be turmoil and other things. We said, ‘Where should we turn to for safety, O Rasūl of Allah?’ He said, ‘To *Al-Amīn* (the trustworthy one) and his group,’ and he pointed to ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān.

The people stood up and said: “Now we know what we should do. Give us permission to fight in jihād.

But ‘Uthmān said: “I urge anyone who is supposed to obey me not to fight.”¹

Abū Qatādah al-Anṣārī رضي الله عنه is reported to have said:

دخلت على عثمان وهو محصور أنا ورجل من قومي نستأذنه في الحج ، فأذن لنا ، فلما خرجت استقبلني الحسن بن علي بالبواب ، فدخل وعليه سلاحه ، فرجعت معه ، فدخل فوقف بين يدي عثمان قال : يا أمير المؤمنين ها أنا ذا بين يديك فمرني بأمرك ، فقال له عثمان : يا ابن أخي وصلتك رحم ، إن القوم ما يريدون غيري ، ووالله لا أتوقى بالمؤمنين ، ولكن أوقى المؤمنين بنفسي ، فلما سمعت ذلك منه قلت – أي أبو قتادة : يا أمير المؤمنين ! إن كان من أمرك كون فما تأمر – قال : انظر ما اجتمعت عليه أمة محمد ال فإن الله لا يجمعهم على ضلالة ، كونوا مع الجماعة حيث كانت

I came to ‘Uthmān with another man from my tribe seeking permission to go for Ḥajj whilst he was besieged and he permitted us to go. Upon leaving

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pgs. 511-512. The chain is authentic as per the comment of the researcher. It has also been reported by Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 374.

I met al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī at the door who entered with his weapons. I went back with him. He entered and stood before ‘Uthmān and said, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn, here I stand before you, command me as you wish.”

‘Uthmān said to him, “My nephew, I sympathise with you. These people do not intend harm to anyone but me. By Allah, I will not protect myself by the believers, rather I will protect the believers by sacrificing myself.”

When I [Abū Qatādah] heard him say this, I said, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn, if that’s what you have decided, what is your instruction for us?”

He replied, “See what the ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ has unanimity on as Allah will never unify them onto misguidance. Be with the Jamā‘ah wherever you may be.”¹

Bashshār² said, “I narrated this to Ḥammād ibn Zayd³, he teared and said, ‘May Allah have mercy on the Amīr al-Mu’minīn. He was besieged for more than forty nights and did not utter a word that could be held against him by an innovator.’”⁴

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 464. The chain is authentic as per the comment of the researcher. It has also been reported by Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 405.

2 He is Bashshār ibn Ṭisā al-Ḍabī al-Azraq.

• Ibn Ḥajar says, “*Maqbūl* (accepted) from the ninth category.”

Refer to, Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 1 pg. 100; Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Taqrīb*, vol. 1 pg. 97.

3 He is Ḥammād ibn Zayd ibn Dirham al-Azdī, Abū Ismā‘īl al-Azraq al-Baṣrī. One of the eminent leaders. He was a jurist and ḥāfiẓ, amongst those with deep understanding into the sunnah and ḥadīth.

• ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Mahdī says, “The leaders of people in their era were four; Sufyān al-Thawrī in Kūfah, Mālik in Ḥijāz, al-Awzā‘ī in Shām, and Ḥammād ibn Zayd in Baṣrah.”

• Ibn Sa’d says, “He was reliable, soft natured, a proof, and narrated much ḥadīth.”

• Al-Khalīlī says, “Reliable by consensus.”

He is of the seniors amongst the eight category. He passed away the year 179 A.H. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 286; Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 130; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 3 pg. 137; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 1 pg. 187; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 3 pg. 9.

4 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 414; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 405.

In this manner, many courageous Ṣaḥābah of the Muhājirīn and Anṣār and their sons gathered around ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in order to protect and fight for him. If ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه had permitted them to fight the Khawārij, they would have fought them and assisted him. However, the Islam, sentiment of giving preference, and sincerity of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه prevented him from allowing people to become embroiled in battle because of him. He detested the fact that if he permitted them to fight the Khawārij who had besieged him, senior and eminent Ṣaḥābah would be martyred; perhaps none would remain. The benefit of him staying alive would result in a greater atrocity of many people being killed. Thus, he patiently endured and hoped for reward, preferring to sacrifice himself for the ummah.

Al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr al-‘Arabī says that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was killed and the Ṣaḥābah were innocent in the matter of his murder as he prevented them from fighting those who would attack him. He said, “I will not be the first leader after Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم to permit fighting in the ummah.” He endured the difficulties patiently, surrendered to the trials, and sacrificed himself for the ummah.¹

Also, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was most able to escape had he chosen to. It was for this reason Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه said to him:

انطلق معي إلى الشام قبل أن يهجم عليك من لا قبل لك به ، فإن أهل الشام على الأمر - الطاعة - لم يزالوا . فقال له عثمان - وهو لا يرغب مفارقة دار الهجرة - : أنا لا أبيع جوار رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بشيء وإن كان فيه قطع خيط عنقي . فقال له معاوية : فأبعث إليك جندا منهم يقيم بين ظهري أهل المدينة النائية إن نابت المدينة أو إياك - فقال عثمان - واضعاً مصلحة الرعية في المقام الأول - : أنا لا أقترب على جيران رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الأرزاق بجند يساكنهم ، وأضيق على أهل الهجرة والنصرة . فقال معاوية : والله يا أمير المؤمنين لتغتال أو لتغزى . فقال عثمان : حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل

Come with me to Shām before you are attacked by men against whom you cannot defend yourself for people of Shām are steadfastly loyal.

‘Uthmān replied—not wanting to leave the place of hijrah, “I will not forsake being in the proximity of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم for anything, even if my throat be slashed.”

1 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, vol. 2 pg. -.

Mu'āwiyah said to him, "Then I will send an army to you that will confront any evil that may befall Madinah and you."

‘Uthmān said in reply—prioritising the welfare of the people, "It will stint the rations allocated to the neighbours of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, and it will create scarcity for the inhabitants of the Abode of Migration and Support (*Dār al-Hijrah wa al-Nuṣrah*)

Mu'āwiyah said, "By Allah, O Amīr al-Mu'minīn, you will surely be assassinated or attacked."

‘Uthmān concluded, "Allah is sufficient for me and what an excellent guardian he is."¹

Ibn Khaldūn says in his introduction:

إن الأمر كان في أوله خلافة، ووازع كل أحد فيها من نفسه هو الدين، وكانوا يؤثرونه على أمور دنياهم وإن أفضت إلى هلاكهم وهدمهم دون الكافة، فهذا عثمان لما حصر في الدار جاءه الحسن والحسين وعبد الله بن عمر وابن جعفر وأمثالهم يريدون المدافعة عنه فأبى ومنع من سل السيوف بين المسلمين مخافة الفرقة، وحفظا للألفة التي بها حفظ الكلمة ولو أدى إلى هلاكه

In the early days there was the true application of the khilāfah and the yardstick of excellence in every person was the measure of his faith. They would give preference over their worldly matters even if that meant they would be killed and the rest saved. Consider ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ whilst he was besieged in his house. Al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar, Ibn Ja‘far, and others like them intended defending him but he refused. He did not allow the unsheathing of swords between the Muslims fearing a greater split and further in order to protect the unity by which the faith is guarded, even if it lead to his death.²

‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had strong faith in Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى، he was generous with his life, far sighted, and patient to a fault in sacrificing his life for the ummah. This is counted amongst his greatest accolades by the Muslims. Ibn Taymiyyah says:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 345.

2 Ibn Khaldūn: *Al-Muqaddimah*, pgs. 207-208.

ومن المعلوم بالتواتر أن عثمان كان من أكف الناس عن الدماء وأصبر الناس على من نال من عرضه وعلى من سعى في دمه ، فحاصروه وسعوا في قتله وقد عرف إرادتهم لقتله ، وقد جاءه المسلمون ينصرونه وبشرون عليه بقتالهم ، وهو يأمر الناس بالكف عن القتال ، ويأمر من يطيعه أن لا يقاتلهم ... وقيل له تذهب إلى مكة فقال : لا أكون ممن ألحد في الحرم ، فقيل له : تذهب إلى الشام ، فقال : لا أفارق دار هجرتي ، فقيل له : فقاتلهم ، فقال : لا أكون أول من خلف محمدا في أمته بالسيف ، فكان صبر عثمان حتى قتل من أعظم فضائله عند المسلمين

It is known through undisputable channels that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was extremely precautionous in ensuring no blood of the Muslims be spilt. He was also the most patient in facing those that sought to vilify him and against those who were after his blood. They besieged him and made inroads in order to assassinate him, and he knew that they intended killing him. Yet when the Muslims came to his aid and advised him to fight, he instructed them to stand down and commanded those who would heed him to not fight. He was counselled to leave for Makkah, but he did want the one to bring contention onto the ḥaram. He was advised to go to Shām, but he did not want to leave Madinah. He was suggested to fight them, but he did not want to be the first leader after Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم to unsheathe the sword in the ummah. Thus, the patience of ‘Uthmān until the moment of his assassination is reckoned to be amongst his greatest accolades by the Muslims.¹

II. His preservation of the khilāfah system.

In addition to his patience and protection of the ummah from ruin and fragmentation another stance of resilience adopted by ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was his refusal to resign from the post of khilāfah; a demand of the Khawārij. By this he ensured the preservation and continuation of the system of state. If he had bowed to the pressure of the Khawārij and resigned, the post of khilāfah would have become a play thing in the hands of those seeking mischief in the lands. Rebellion would have become wide spread, the khilāfah system would have collapsed, and it would have allowed the masses and more so the agitators to impose upon the leaders.

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 3 pgs. 202-203.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was far-sighted in this decision. If he had given them what they wanted, it would have set a precedent of forcing resignation from the leaders whenever the people were displeased with them. It would have created long standing civil conflict, an inability to defend against enemies, and the weakening of the state. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه saw no one but himself able to preserve the ummah from disintegration, sacrificing himself to strengthen social order and protect the khilāfah, thus preventing complete anarchism.

There is no doubt that that this act of resilience from ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was the ultimate act of strength and greatness that could be expected from a man upon whom leadership had been thrust. He adopted the lesser of the two evils by sacrificing himself in order to preserve the khilāfah.

He had great faith in this decision of his. One of the leaders of the Khawārij, al-Ashtar al-Nakhaī had spoken to him of this as recorded by Ibn Sa’d in his *Ṭabaqāt*. He narrates from —al-Ḥasan from —Waththāb, who was one of those manumitted by Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Umar. Waththāb says:

قال : بعثني عثمان فدعوت له الأشر فجاء : فقال : يا أشر ما يريد الناس مني - قال : ثلاث ليس لك من إحداهن به ، قال : ما هن - قال : يخبرونك بين أن تخلع لهم أمرهم فتقول هذا أمركم فاختاروا من شئتم ، وبين أن تق من نفسك ، فإن أبيت هاتين فإن القوم قاتلوك . قال : أما ما من إحداهن بد . قال : لا ، ما من إحداهن ب . أما أن أخلع لهم أمرهم ، والله لأن أقدم فتضرب عنقي أحب إلي من أن أخلع أمة محمد بعضها على بعض ، وأما أن أقض من نفسي فوالله لقد علمت أن صاحبي بين يدي قد كان يعاقبان وما يقوم بد من القصاص ، وأما أن تقتلونني فوالله لئن قتلتهموني لا تتحابون بعدي أبدا ، ولا تصلون بعدي جميعا أبدا ، ولا تقتلون بعدي عدوا جميعا أبدا ثم انطلق - أي الأشر

‘Uthmān sent me to summon al-Ashtar and he came. Then (‘Uthmān) said, “Ashtar, what do the people want from me?”

He replied said, “You cannot avoid doing one of three things.”

‘Uthmān asked, “What are they?”

Al-Ashtar said, “They ask you to choose between the following. You may turn their affairs over to them and say, ‘This is your affair; choose

whomever you will for it. Second, you may have yourself punished. If you reject these two choices, then this band of men will kill you.”

‘Uthmān said. “Is there no way to avoid these choices?”

He said, “There is no choice to avoid them.”

‘Uthmān said, “As for turning their affairs to them, by Allah! I would prefer be brought out and beheaded than abandoning the ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ to civil war. As for having myself punished, by Allah, you know that two of my associates were punished before me, and my body cannot endure punishment. As for your killing me, by Allah, if you kill me you will never again have love for one another, nor will you ever pray together again, nor will you ever be united in fighting an enemy.”

Then al-Ashtar rose, and went away.¹

The eminent Companion, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه reinforced the stance of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in that he does not resign from the khilāfah under the pressure of the siege. This was because he feared a destructive future precedent of forced resignations by people upon the slightest of annoyances.

Imām Aḥmad has recorded in *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah* from Nāfi‘, the freed slave of Ibn ‘Umar, who said:

دخل ابن عمر على عثمان وعنده المغيرة بن الأحنس - له صحبة - فقال : انظر ما يقول هؤلاء ، يقولون : اخلعها ولا تقتل نفسك . فقال ابن عمر : إذا خلعتها أمخلد أنت في الدنيا ؟ قال : لا ، قال : فإن لم تخلعها هل يزيدون على أن يقتلوك ؟ قال : لا ، قال : فهل يملكون لك جنة أو ناراً ؟ قال : لا ، قال : فلا أرى أن تخلع قميصاً قمصكه الله ، فتكون سنة كلماه كره قوم خليفتهم أو إمامهم قتلوه

Ibn ‘Umar came to ‘Uthmān and al-Mughīrah ibn al-Akhnas—a Ṣaḥābī—was present there. He said, “Consider what they are saying, resign and do not kill yourself.”

Ibn ‘Umar said, “If you resign will you love forever?”

1 Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pgs. 72-73.

‘Uthmān said, “No.”

Ibn ‘Umar said, “If you do not resign, will they make any more efforts in killing you?”

He said, “No”

Ibn ‘Umar asked, “Do they decide paradise or hell for you?”

‘Uthmān replied, “No.”

Ibn ‘Umar said, “I do not think that you should remove this garment (of khilāfah) that Allah has adorned you with. If you do, it will set a precedent of murdering the khalīfah whenever the people are upset with their khalīfah or leader.”¹

Therefore, ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ deemed it better to be patient and steadfast, electing to give his life for the benefit of the faith. He was generous with his life for Allah, the faith, and the Muslims.

It has been authentically narrated from ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ took a covenant of patience from ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Imām Aḥmad has recorded with an authentic chain of transmission to ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا who reported:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ادعوا إلى بعض أصحابي ، قلت : أبو بكر ؟ قال : لا ، قلت : عمر ؟ قال : لا ، قلت : ابن عمك علي ؟ قال : لا ، قلت : عثمان ؟ قال : نعم . فلما جاء تنحى فجعل يساره ولون عثمان يتغير ، فلما كان يوم الدار وحصر ، قلنا : يا أمير المؤمنين ألا تقاتل ؟ قال : لا ، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عهد إليّ عهداً وإني صابر نفسي عليه

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “Send for one of my companions.”

I asked, “Abū Bakr?”

He replied, “No.”

1 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 170; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 473. The chain is authentic as per the comment of the researcher.

I asked, “‘Umar?”

He replied, “No.”

I asked, “Your cousin, ‘Alī?”

He replied, “No.”

I asked, “‘Uthmān?”

He said, “Yes.”

When he came they stepped aside and Rasūlullāh ﷺ began whispering to him and the colour of ‘Uthmān began changing. Then when he was besieged, we said to him, “O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, will you not fight?”

He said, “No. Rasūlullāh ﷺ took a covenant from me and will I will hold myself to it.”¹

The covenant taken from him by Rasūlullāh ﷺ was not to step down from the khilāfah so as not to set a precedent. Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal and ‘Umar ibn Shabbah have narrated on the authority of ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا who says:

سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول : يا عثمان ! عسى الله أن يقمصك قميصا من بعدي فإن أراذك المبيتون - وفي رواية : المنافقون - على خلعه فلا تخلعه - يقول له ذلك ثلاثا

I heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying, “O ‘Uthmān, perhaps Allah will clothe you with a garment after me. If the enemies—in another narration the word, hypocrites appear—intend to remove it from you, do not remove it.” He said this three times.²

Ibn Shabbah has narrated on authority of Ḥafṣah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا who said:

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 494. The chain is authentic as per the comment of the researcher.

2 Aḥmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 6 pg. 75; Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, ḥadīth: 3706. Al-Albānī has deemed it authentic in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 3 pg. 210, ḥadīth: 2923.

قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يا عثمان إنك مستشهد ، فاصبر صبرك الله ، ولا تخلع قميصا قمصكه
الله – الخليفة

The Prophet ﷺ said, “O ‘Uthmān, you will be martyred. Adopt patience and Allah will grant you the ability to persevere. And do not remove the garment (i.e. the khilāfah) that Allah will clothe you with.”¹

This ḥadīth clearly demonstrates that the Khawārīj were not seekers of justice or the truth. They were a people accustomed to hypocrisy, hiding beneath declarations of revolution, commanding the good, and forbidding the evil. There has been no group that have posed a greater threat to Islam and the Muslims than the hypocrites.

Removing ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ from the office of khilāfah had no shar‘ī justification as long as he continued to rule by the law of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى، dealt with his constituents with justice, held court with kindness and wisdom, and did not commit a crime that would necessitate his death or resignation. It is for this reason that ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ addressed those who besieged him saying, “If you find in the book of Allah—and in another narration in the truth—justification to shackle my legs, then do so.”²

Imām Aḥmad has reported in Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah and Ibn ‘Asākir in his *Tārīkh* that ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ faced those who had besieged him and said:

علام تقتلونني ! فإني سمعت رسول الله عل يقول : « لا يحل دم امرئ مسلم إلا بإحدى ثلاث : رجل زنى بعد إحصانه فعليه الرجم، أو قتل عمدا فعليه القود ، أو ارتد بعد إسلامه فعليه القتل » ، فوالله ما زنت في جاهلية ولا إسلام ، ولا قتلت أحدا فأقيد نفسي منه ، ولا ارتددت منذ أسلمت ، وإني أشهد ألا إله إلا الله ، وأن محمدا عبده ورسوله وفي رواية أحمد زيادة : ولا أحببت أن لي الدنيا بديني بدلا منذ هداني له ... فيم تقتلونني

1 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, vol. 3 pgs. 1069-1070; Al-Hindī has mentioned it in *Muntakhab Kanz al-Ummāl*, vol. 5 pg. 33.

2 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 171; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 492. The chain is authentic as per the comment of the researcher.

For what reason are you trying to kill me? I heard Rasūlullāh ﷺ saying, “It is not permissible to spill the blood of a Muslim except in one of three cases: a married person who commits adultery, as retaliation from one who intentionally kills, and for one who turns apostate after his being a Muslim. Then he will be killed.”

By Allah, I have never committed an act of adultery in the time of ignorance, nor after Islam, I have never killed anyone that retaliation be taken from me, and I have not turned apostate after accepting Islam. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and that Muḥammad is his servant and Messenger.”

There is an addition in the narration of Aḥmad in which he stated, “And I have never preferred the world in lieu of my faith since Allah guided me to it. Then why do you want to kill me.”¹

Ibn Sa’d and Ibn Manī² have narrated the following account in *Al-Ṭabaqāt* and *Al-Musnad* respectively:

يا قوم ! لا تقتلوني ، فإني وال وأخ مسلم ، فوالله إن أردت إلا الإصلاح ما استطعت أصبت أو أخطأت ،
وإنكم إن تقتلوني لا تصلوا جميعا أبدا ، ولا تغزوا جميعا أبدا ، ولا يقسم فيؤكم بينكم

O people! Do not kill me, for I am the leader and a brother Muslim. By Allah, I have only ever intended betterment, whether the outcome was

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 348; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 474. Its chain is sound and the ḥadīth is authentic. It is also recorded in *Al-Musnad*, vol. 1 pg. 63.

2 He is Aḥmad ibn Manī ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Baghawī al-Baghdādī, al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Thiqah. From amongst the senior scholars of ḥadīth.

- Al-Nasa’ī, Ibn Ḥibbān, and Maslamah ibn al-Qāsim have deemed him reliable.
- Al-Khalīlī says, “He is a contemporary of Aḥmad.”
- Ibn Abī Ḥātim says, “My father and Abū Zur’ah wrote ḥadīth from him.”

He passed away the year 244 A.H/858 A.D. His life has been recorded by Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 3 pg. 379; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 2 pg. 77; Al-Dhahabī: *al-Tadhkirah*, vol. 2 pg. 481; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 1 pg. 84.

good or not. If you kill me, you will never pray together again, you will never fight together again, and your spoils of war will not be distributed amongst you.¹

The following is the wording of the narration recorded by Ibn Abī Shaybah:

فوالله لئن قتلتموني لا تصلون جميعا أبدا ، ولا تجاهدون عدوا أبدا ، ولتختلف حتى تصيروا هكذا -
وشبك بين أصابعه

By Allah, if you kill me you will not pray together again, you will not fight the enemies again, and you will differ until you become like this—and he split his fingers apart.²

Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī—who had lived up to the year 110 A.H./728 A.D.—commenting on this says:

فوالله إن صلى القوم جميعا إن قلوبهم مختلفة

By Allah, even if they prayed together, their hearts differed.³

III. His martyrdom ﷺ

The besiege continued from the end of Dhū al-Qa‘dah up to the eighteenth of Dhū al-Ḥijjah the year 35 A.H. ‘Uthmān ﷺ was an embodiment of courage and fortitude during the siege. He radiated serenity and contentment of the highest level despite the severe conditions and the siege.

The pseudo-courage displayed by tyrants and authoritarian dictators who spill needless blood and arouse sentiments of submission based on fearmongering

1 Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pg. 67; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Maṭālib al-‘Āliyah bi Zawā‘id al-Masānīd al-Thamāniyah*, vol. 4 pgs. 51-52. The researcher comments, al-Būṣīrī says, “The narrators are reliable.” A similar narration has been recorded by al-Ṭabarī, vol. 4 pg. 372.

2 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *Al-Muṣannaḥ*, vol. 14 pg. 590.

3 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 171.

in order to secure their empires was a far throw from the true and eternal courage displayed by this Rightly Guided Khalīfah of Islam. Punishments and chastisements, that in reality is torture are considered feats of courage by tyrants; leaders whose governors and close ones aren't safe from their cruelty. These are self-serving oppressors who only concern themselves with their regimes. On the other hand, the courage and fortitude of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه who patiently endured without complaint and faced evil with no qualms was indeed the true manifestation of courage and fortitude.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه continued to advise those laying siege to him, reminding them of his status, perhaps they may relent, but they did not.¹ His address to them was marked by strength, confidence, and reliance on Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. He knew he was on the truth and that he would soon die as a martyr to this truth. Sometimes he would recall the ḥadīth of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم as they stood atop mount Uḥud with Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. The mountain trembled and Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم addressed the mountain saying:

اثبت أحد، فما عليك إلا نبي وصدیق وشهيدان

Be still Uḥud, for upon you are a Prophet, a Ṣiddīq, and two martyrs.²

At times he would recall the ḥadīth regarding the well of Arīs in which he was given the glad tidings of Jannah due to the difficulties he was to face.³ And at other times he would recall the counsel of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم to remain patient and to not remove himself from the khilāfah.⁴

Al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr ibn al-‘Arabī says:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 383.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 204.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 202.

4 See pg. 525-526.

وأمر عثمان كله سنة ماضية وسيرة راضية ، فإنه تحقق أنه مقتول بخبر الصادق له بذلك ، وأنه بشره بالجنة على بلوى تصيبه وأنه شهيد

The whole life of ‘Uthmān is an embodiment of being pleased with the decisions of Allah ﷻ. He was sure that he would be killed as Rasūlullāh ﷺ informed him, that he was promised paradise upon the difficulties he would face, and that he was to be a martyr.¹

Prior to his assassination, ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ saw in his dream that his time to leave the world had drawn close and he submitted to the will of Allah. Al-Ḥākīm has with an authentic chain of transmission from Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْمَا that ‘Uthmān arose one morning and addressed the people saying:

رأيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في المنام فقال : يا عثمان ! أفطر عندنا ، فأصبح صائما وقتل من يومه

I saw Rasūlullāh ﷺ in my dream and he said, “O ‘Uthmān, break your fast with us.” [The narrator says] He started his fast that morning and was killed on that very day.²

Abū Ya‘lā has recorded in his *Musnad* on the authority of Kathīr ibn al-Ṣalt³ who says:

نام عثمان في ذلك اليوم الذي قتل فيه - وهو يوم الجمعة - فلما استيقظ قال : لولا أن يقول الناس تمنى عثمان أمنية لحدثتكم حديثا ، قال - أي الراوي - : حدثنا أصلحك الله ، فلنسا نقول كما يقول الناس ، قال : رأيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في منامي هذا فقال : إنك شاهد معنا الجمعة

1 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Al-‘Awāṣim*, pg. 138.

2 Al-Ḥākīm: *Al-Mustadrak*, vol. 3 pgs. 99-103. Al-Dhahabī has authenticated it and agreed with his classification; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah* with a different chain of transmission, vol. 1 pg. 494. The chain is sound as per the comment of the researcher.

3 He is Kathīr ibn al-Ṣalt ibn Ma’dī Karīb al-Kindī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Madanī. Ibn Sa’d has classified him amongst the first category of Tābi‘īn in Madinah.

- Al-‘Ijlī says, “Madanī, Tābi‘ī, reliable.”
- Ibn Ḥibbān has mentioned him in *al-Thiqāt*

His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 5 pg. 14; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/205; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 396; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, vol. 7 pg. 157; Al-Dhahabī: *Al-Kāshif*, vol. 3 pg. 5.

‘Uthmān slept on the day he was killed—it was the day of Friday—when he woke up he said, “If it wasn’t for people saying that ‘Uthmān is wishing for death I would have narrated something to you.”

The narrator said, “May Allah have mercy on you, do narrate to us. We will not comment as the people would.”

He said, “I saw Rasūlullāh ﷺ in my dream in this sleep of mine and he said, ‘You will be present with us for Jumu‘ah.’”¹

Aḥmad has narrated with a sound to chain to ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who said:

إني رأيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في النوم البارحة ، ورأيت أبا بكر وعمر ، وأنهم قالوا لي : اصبر فإنك تظطر عندنا القابلة ، ثم دعا بمصحف فنشره بين يديه فقتل وهو بين يديه

I saw Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Abū Bakr, and ‘Umar in my dream last night. They said to me, “Be patient, you will break your fast with us tomorrow.” He then called for a muṣḥaf and opened it before him. He was killed with it was in front of him.²

The Khawārij surrounded his house and stained their swords with his pure blood whilst he recited the Book of Allah. The narrations differ in specifying his killer. Was it Rūmān al-Yamānī³, Kinānah ibn Bishr al-Tujībī⁴, or a man named Jabalah⁵. It has also been said that his killer has not been identified according to the correct opinion.⁶

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Maṭālib al-‘Āliyah bi Zawā‘id al-Masānīd al-Thamāniyah*, vol. 4 pg. 291. The researcher quoting al-Būṣīrī said, “Al-Bazzār, Abū Ya‘lā, and al-Ḥākim have narrated it. Al-Ḥākim has authenticated it and al-Dhahabī has concurred with him. See, Al-Ḥākim: *Al-Mustadrak*, vol. 3 pg. 99.

2 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 497; and Al-Haythamī: *Majma’ al-Zawā‘id*, vol. 7 pg. 232. He said, “‘Abd Allāh has narrated it and Abū Ya‘lā in *al-Kabīr*, both of their narrators are reliable.

3 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pgs. 174-175.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 394; Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 235.

5 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Maṭālib al-‘Āliyah bi Zawā‘id al-Masānīd al-Thamāniyah*, vol. 4 pg. 292. (From the *Musnad* of Ishāq ibn Rāhawayh).

6 Ibn al-‘Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 1 pg. 40.

However, this is not as important as identifying the personalities of his killers, considering the fact that an abettor is no different from the killer. They were the scum of the cities as al-Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ describes them.¹ They were the outcasts of their tribes as portrayed by ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.² Ibn Sa’d says in his *Ṭabaqāt* that they were the dregs of society who were resolute in their aspirations of evil.³ Imām al-Nawawī commenting on them in his commentary of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* depicts them as savage barbarians from riffraff tribes.⁴ Ibn Taymiyyah in his *Minhāj* describes them as misguided, tyrants, and imbeciles.⁵ Al-Dhahabī calls them leaders of evil and outcasts in *Duwal al-Islām*.⁶ And Ibn al-‘Imād al-Ḥanbalī concludes that they were vile men of disreputable tribes.⁷

Such descriptions of this mob is consistent with their behaviour throughout the siege and tyrannical murder of the khalīfah. How could they possibly bar him from water and food whilst being aware that he had, for so long, quenched the thirst⁸ and hunger of the Muslims utilizing his own personal wealth. He was one who never stopped giving when people faced difficulties or were in constrained circumstances.⁹ ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ rebuking those that had besieged him and weighing the gravity of their ill said:

يا أيها الناس ! إن الذي تفعلوه لا يشبه أمر المؤمنين ولا أمر الكافرين ، فلا تمنعوا عن هذا الرجل الماء ولا المادة - الطعام - فإن الروم وفارس لتأسر وتطعم وتسقي

O people! Their actions aren’t like that of Muslims or non-Muslims. Do not

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 462.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 462.

3 Ibn Sa’d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pg. 71.

4 Al-Nawawī: *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, vol. 3 pgs. 148 -149.

5 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 3 pgs. 189-206.

6 Al-Dhahabī: *Duwal al-Islām*, vol. 1 pg. 12.

7 Ibn al-‘Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 1 pg. 40.

8 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 202; Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 5 pgs. 290-291.

9 Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 242.

bar this man from water and food. Even the Romans and the Persians give food and drink to their prisoners.¹

Then how is it that they suffocated him and barred him from performing ṣalāh in the Masjid of Rasūlullāh ﷺ whereas he had extended that very masjid with his personal wealth.² How did they dare to murder him in cold blood whereas he had never sought vengeance against any one of his constituents. He had lived and ruled with impartiality and compassion. His constituents spent their time under his khilāfah in goodness and ease as related by those who witnessed it, the likes of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣṭī and others.³

The narration recorded by Ibn Kathīr in *al-Bidāyah* clearly outlines the true intent of these rebels. He narrates:

من أن الخوارج نادى بعضهم بعضا بعد قتل عثمان بالسوط على بيت المال ، فسمعهم خزنة بيت المال فقالوا : يا قوم ! النجا ! النجا ! فإن هؤلاء القوم لم يصدقوا فيما قالوا من أن قصدهم قيام الحق والأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر وغير ذلك مما ادعوا أنهم قاموا لأجله ، وكذبوا ، إنما قصدهم الدنيا

The Khawārij called out to each other after the killing of ‘Uthmān to ransack the public treasury. The keeper of the treasury heard them and commented, “O people, save yourselves, save yourselves! These people aren’t truthful in their claims of intent to establish the truth, call to the good, and forbid the evil. These and other goals they have claimed are false. Their only objective is the world.”⁴

Allah ﷻ did not overlook nor did he give respite to the oppressors, rather he disgraced them and extracted revenge from them, not sparing a single one of them.

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 387.

2 Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 5 pg. 290-291. He said, “The ḥadīth is sound.” Al-Albānī has authenticated it in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 3 pg. 209, Ḥadīth: 2921.

3 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, vol. 1 pg. 594; Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 232.

4 Ibn al-Kathīr in *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 189.

Khalīfah has recorded with an authentic chain in his *Tārīkh* on the authority of ‘Imrān ibn al-Ḥudayr¹ who said:

إن لا يكن عبد الله بن شقيق حدثني أن أول قطرة قطرت من دمه - أي عثمان - على فسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللهُ وَهُوَ
السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ فإن أبا حريث ذكر أنه ذهب وسهيل النميري ، فأخرجوا إليه المصحف ، فإذا القطرة على
فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللهُ فإنها في المصحف ما حكت

‘Abd Allāh ibn Shaqīq² told me that the first drop of ‘Uthmān’s blood fell on the words:

فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

*and Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing,
the Knowing.*³

As Abū Ḥurayth⁴ mentioned that he and Suhayl al-Numayr⁵ went and took out the Muṣḥaf, and the drop of blood on (the words):

1 He is, ‘Imrān ibn al-Ḥudayr al-Sadūsī, Abū ‘Ubaydah al-Baṣrī.

- Yazīd ibn Hārūn says, “He was the most truthful of people.”
- ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal says, “Amazing! Reliable.”
- Ibn Ma‘īn, al-Nasa‘ī and Ibn al-Maḍīnī have cited him as reliable.

He passed away the year 149 A.H/766 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 271; Ibn Ma‘īn: *Al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 436; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 6 pg. 296; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 8 pg. 125.

2 He is ‘Abd Allāh ibn Shaqīq, Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān; also known as Abū Muḥammad al-Baṣrī.

- Ibn Sa‘d has mentioned him amongst the first category of the Ṭābī‘īn of Baṣrah.
- Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal says, “Reliable.”
- Ibn Abī Khaythamah relating from Ibn Ma‘īn says, “Reliable, from the best of Muslims. His narrations cannot be faulted.”
- Abū Ḥātim and al-‘Ijlī says, “Reliable.”

He passed away the year 108 A.H/26 A.D. His life has been recorded by Ibn Sa‘d: *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 7 pg. 126; Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/1/116; Al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, pg. 261; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, vol. 5 pg. 81; and Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 5 pg. 253.

3 Sūrah Baqarah: 138.

4 I have not come across his profile.

5 I have not come across his profile in the readily available sources.

فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ

and Allah will be sufficient for you against them

is still in the Muṣḥaf and has not been erased.¹

Aḥmad has narrated with an authentic chain of narration from ‘Amrah bint Arṭāt al-‘Adawiyyah who said:

خرجت مع عائشة سنة قتل عثمان إلى مكة ، فمررنا بالمدينة ، ورأينا المصحف الذي قتل وهو في حجره ، فكانت أول قطرة فطرت من دمه على هذه الآية فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. قالت عمرة : فما مات منهم رجل سويا

I went to Makkah with ‘Ā’ishah the year ‘Uthmān was murdered. We passed through Madinah and saw the muṣḥaf which was on his lap when he was killed. The first drop of his blood had spilt on the verse:

فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

And Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

‘Amrah says, “Not one of those men died a good death.”²

Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn says:

كنت أطوف بالكعبة فإذا رجل يقول : اللهم اغفر لي ، وما أظن أن تغفر لي قلت : يا عبد الله ! ما سمعت أحدا يقول ما تقول ؟ قال : كنت أعطيت الله عهدا إن قدرت أن ألطم وجه عثمان إلا لطمته ، فلما قتل وضع على سريره في البيت ، والناس يجيئون فيصلون عليه ، فدخلت كأني أصلي عليه ، فوجدت خلوة فرفعت الثوب عن وجهه ، فلطمت وجهه وسجيته وقد بيست يميني ، قال محمد بن سيرين : رأيتها يابسه كأنها عود

1 Khalīfah: *Al-Tārīkh*, pg. 175; Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, pg. 384.

2 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, vol. 1 pg. 501. The researcher states, “Its chain is authentic.” He has also narrated it in *al-Zuhd*, pg. 127.

I was circumambulating the Ka'bah and I saw a man saying, "O Allah, forgive me, but I don't think You will forgive me."

I said, "O slave of Allah, I have never heard anyone saying what you are saying."

He said, "I promised Allah that if I could slap 'Uthmān on the face I would do so. When he was killed and placed on the bier in the house, and the people were coming to pay their last respects, I entered as if I wanted to pay my last respects, and I found myself alone with him. I lifted the cloth from his face and slapped his face, and then I covered him again. Now my right arm is paralyzed."

Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn said: "I saw it, like a piece of wood."¹

Al-Balādhurī has narrated in *Ansāb al-Ashrāf* on the authority of Ṭalq ibn Khushshāf² who said:

قدمت المدينة بعد مقتل عثمان ، فسألت عائشة عن قتله فقالت : لعن الله قتلته ، فقد قتل مظلوما فأد الله من ابن أبي بكر ، وأهدى إلى الأشر سهما من سهامه ، وهراق دم ابني بديل . فوالله ما من القوم أحد إلا أصابته دعوتها

I came to Madinah after the murder of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه. I asked 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها about his murderers and she said, "May the curse of Allah be upon his murderers. He was unjustly killed."

[Ṭalq ibn Khushshāf said] Allah سبحانه وتعالى took revenge on Ibn Abī Bakr, al-Ashtar was struck with an arrow from His arrows, and the two sons of Badīl were killed. Every one of them was afflicted by her curse.³

Qatādah narrates from a man of the Banī Sadūs who said:

1 Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, pg. 485.

2 He is, Ṭalq ibn Khushshāf ibn Bakr ibn Wā'il ibn Banī Qays ibn Tha'labah. A Tābi'ī who narrated from 'Uthmān and 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها. Refer to Al-Bukhārī: *Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/2/358; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *Al-Jarḥ wa Ta'dīl*, 4/49

3 Al-Bukhārī: *Al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, vol. 1 pg. 95; Al-Balādhirī: *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. 1 pg. 596.

كنت فيمن قتل عثمان فما منهم رجل إلا أصابته عقوبة غيري ، قال قتادة : فما مات حتى عمي ، قال أبو داود : وقتل ابني بديل بصفين

I was amongst those who killed ‘Uthmān. Every one of them were afflicted by a punishment besides me.

Qatādah says, “He did not die until he lost his eyesight.”

Abū Dāwūd said, “The two sons of Ibn Badīl were killed at Şiffīn.”¹

Another devastating outcome of their act was the Muslims unsheathing their swords against them until the Day of Qiyāmah. Al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad is narrated to have said:

مر علي رضي الله عنه على رجلين بالمدينة بعدما قتل عثمان وقبل بيعته وهما يقولان : قتل ابن بيضاء ومكانه من الإسلام والعرب ، ثم والله ما انتطح فيه عنزان فقال علي : ما قلتما ؟ فأعادا عليه ، فقال : بلى والله ! ورجال بعد رجال وكتائب بعد كتائب ، وزحوف بعد زحوف ورجال وكتائب وزحوف في أصلاب رجال حتى يكاد أو يخرج ابن مريم

‘Alī رضي الله عنه passed by two men in Madinah after ‘Uthmān had been killed and before allegiance was sworn to him. They were saying, “Ibn al-Bayḍā’ (i.e. ‘Uthmān) has been killed and his seniority in Islam and position amongst the Arabs was well known. But by Allah, no one is seeking to avenge him.”

‘Alī said, “What did you say?”

They repeated their comments.

‘Alī said, “No, by Allah a lot of men will be killed and there will be a great deal of fighting until the son of Maryam appears.”²

What he meant by this was that the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه opened the doors of division and differences between the Muslims which would last up to the looming of Qiyāmah.

1 Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 233.

2 Al-Māliqī: *Al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, pg. 233.

In conclusion of this section, we can determine that the murder of the khalīfah was not the greater goal of those who planned the siege. If that was the case than matters would have calmed down and the fitnah would have waned. A new khalīfah would have taken office and normalcy would have returned. However, the goals of those who led this movement were much more sinister and went far beyond killing the khalīfah and replacing him. Their goal was to destroy the basis of Islam by attacking its beliefs and foundations through the outfall of a fallen khalīfah; an opportune moment to engineer mechanisms of animosity and differences between the Muslims.

The most prominent example of this is when the whirlwinds of fitnah began to abate and efforts of reconciliation between ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, and Zubayr رضي الله عنه were afoot before the Battle of Jamal, almost having reconciled¹, the Saba’iyyah fearing the outcome of this reconciliation convened a meeting which comprised of Ibn Saba’ and the leaders of his cause. He apprised them of the situation and sought out their views. After having applied their minds to the issue, he began identifying avenues by which he could instigate war between the two parties.²

In this manner the plans of the Saba’iyyah continued to take effect during the era of ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. Their only intent being the destruction of the faith and instigation of groups consisting of the harsh Bedouin mobs and Muslims of the newly conquered lands in whose hearts Islam had not yet truly taken root. The plan adopted by them was not dissimilar to other instigators who launch campaigns forming a breeding ground for such groups to exist and prosper. Islam though, through the grace of Allah, proved to be resilient to such attacks, robust in facing these challenges, and more than capable in remaining unmoved. No doubt, Ibn Saba’ and his cronies are long gone, yet Islam stands high and tall. And even though his disastrous ideologies do find place in the minds of some, it is worth noting that those that ascribe to his thought are shunned due to the foul beliefs they commit themselves to and wicked deeds they bind themselves by.

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, vol. 4 pg. 488-489.

2 Ibid, vol. 4 pg. 493.

Whereas the greater portion of the ummah—the al-Sawād al-A‘ẓam—remain firm on the creed of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah.

Allah ﷻ has stipulated individuals for the Islamic cause who will refute the smut of such ideologies and present before the world its evil. The Muslims thus remain on the pristine doctrine of Tawḥīd following in the footsteps of the pious predecessors. Rasūlullāh ﷺ has explained this designation of Allah ﷻ in the following words:

لا تزال طائفة من أمتي على الحق لا يضرهم من خالفهم حتى يأتي أمر الله

A group of people from my Ummah will continue to be firm on the truth, and those who oppose them shall not harm them. They will continue to do so until the command of Allah comes.¹

¹ Al-Bukhari: *Al-Jāmi‘ Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 8 pg. 146; Muslim: *Al-Jāmi‘ Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 2 pg. 193; Abū Dāwūd: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 3 pg. 11; Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 4 pg. 585; Al-Dāramī: *Al-Sunan*, vol. 2 pg. 2.

Module Three: The first Fitnah in Light of Revelation and the stance of the Ṣaḥābah and Tābi‘īn

Section One: The Fitnah in Light of Revelation

Nabī ﷺ had foretold the occurrence of the Fitnah. It has been established via revelation that ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was upon the truth and that he was going to be killed wrongly therein. So how can it then be assumed that he was on falsehood?

Hence, it appears in an authentic narration that Nabī ﷺ informed him that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will make him wear a garment and that the hypocrites will want him to remove it and he ordered him not to remove it. And in some variations of the narration it is stated that he warned him against removing it and ordered him to exercise patience, he thus dutifully obeyed and exercised patience when he was tested.

This is the strongest proof of the fact that he was upon the truth, and after the truth there is nothing but misguidance! Hence, whoever opposed him has strayed from the path of truth. Why not so, when Rasūl Allāh ﷺ described his detractors who wanted him to denounce the Khilāfah with hypocrisy? From this it is clear that all the allegations which are hurled against him are either lies and fabrications, or they are interpretable with the best and most plausible of interpretations. This is in order that we confirm and accept as truth the prophecy of Nabī ﷺ which is categorical in nature.

Al-Tirmidhī narrates from Abū al-Sha‘thā¹ that various orators came forward in Shām after the Fitnah, amongst who were the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allāh ﷺ.

1 Jābir ibn Zayd al-Azdī, Abū Sha‘thā’ al-Baṣrī. He has narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās, Ibn ‘Umar, Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, and others. Ibn ‘Abbās has said regarding him, “If the people of Baṣrah have to be satisfied with the verdict of Jābir ibn Zayd, he would encompass them with knowledge of the Book of Allah.” He has been deemed reliable by Ibn Ma‘īn, Abū Zur‘ah and al-‘Ijlī. And Ibn Ḥibbān says regarding him in his *al-Thiqāt*, “He was a jurist,” and when he passed away Qatādah said, “Today the most learned scholar of Iraq has passed on.” See: *Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa’d* 7/179; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh* 2/73; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt* p. 93; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh* 2/12; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb* 2/38.

The last amongst them was a man by the name Murrah ibn Ka'b, a Ṣaḥābī, who said:

لولا حديث سمعته من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ما قمت، وذكر الفتن فقربها- أي الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم. فمر رجل متقع بالثوب، فقال: هذا يومئذ على الهدى، فقامت إليه فإذا هو عثمان بن عفان. فأقبلت عليه بوجهه فقلت: هذا؟ قال: نعم.

Had it not been for a ḥadīth of Nabī ﷺ which I heard I would not have stood up. Rasūl Allāh ﷺ made mention of various fitnahs and stated that they will ensue shortly. A man covered in a garment passed and Nabī ﷺ said regarding him, “This man at that time will be upon guidance.” I went to him and behold, he was ‘Uthmān. I thus faced Nabī ﷺ and asked, “This man?” He said, “Yes.”¹

Likewise, in *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah* of Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal the following narration of Ka'b ibn 'Ujrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ appears:

ذكر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فتنة قريبها وعظمتها، ثم مر رجل متقع في ملحفة، فقال: هذا يومئذ على الحق. فانطلقت مسرعا فأخذت بضيعيه، فقلت: هذا يا رسول الله؟ قال: هذا، فإذا عثمان بن عفان

Rasūl Allāh ﷺ made mention of a fitnah and he gave the impression that it will occur soon and that it will be great. Thereafter, a man passed covered in a shawl, and Nabī ﷺ said regarding him, “This man will be upon the truth on that day.”

I thus hurried to him and caught him by his bosom and asked, “This man, O Rasūl Allāh?”

He said, “This man.”

He was ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.²

1 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*: chapter of merits: 5/291, he has deemed narration Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ. And al-Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* 3/210: ḥadīth no. 2922.

2 Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal: *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah* 1/450. The chain is deemed Ṣaḥīḥ by the annotator.

‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه narrates that Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم made mention of a fitnah and said, “This person will be killed therein wrongly,” referring to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.¹

Similarly Ḥākim has narrated the following from Mūsā ibn ‘Uqbah in his *Mustadrak*:

حدثني أبو أمي أبو حبيبة، أنه دخل الدار وعثمان محصور فيها، وأنه سمع أبا هريرة يستأذن عثمان في الكلام فأذن له، فقام فحمد الله وأثنى عليه ثم قال: إني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: إنكم تلتقون بعدي فتنة واختلافا، فقال له قائل من الناس، فمن لنا يا رسول الله؟ فقال: عليكم بالأميين وأصحابه يعني عثمان

Abū Ḥabībah narrated to me that he entered the house of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه when he was incarcerated therein. He heard Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه seeking permission from ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه to speak. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه acceded. He thus stood up, praised Allah سبحانه وتعالى and thereafter said, “I heard Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, “You will encounter after me a fitnah and bickering.” A person asked, “So who should we hold on to?” He replied, “Hold on to the trustworthy and his companions,” referring to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.²

Also, Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal has narrated the following from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥawālāh:

أتيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو تحت دومة وهو يكتب الناس، فقال: يا بن حوالة أكتب؟ قلت: نعم يا رسول الله، قال: كيف أنت يا عبد الله بن حوالة وفتنة تكون في أقطار الأرض؟ قلت: ما خار لي الله ورسوله. فقال: اتبع هذا الرجل، فإنه يومئذ على الحق. قال: فاتبعته فأخذت بمنكبه فلففته، قلت: هذا يا رسول الله؟ قال: نعم. وإذا هو عثمان بن عفان.

1 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*: chapter of merits 5/293 (he has deemed in Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ). The author of *Tuḥfah al-Aḥwadhī* has stated that Ibn Ḥajar has deemed the narration Ṣaḥīḥ: 4/323. And al-Albānī has deemed it Ḥasan in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* 3/210: ḥadīth no. 2925.

2 *Mustadrak Ḥākim* 3/99, he has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ and al-Dhahabī has concurred; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah* 1/451, the annotator has deemed it authentic; *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* 7/210, he has also deemed its chain of transmission good.

I came to Rasūl Allāh ﷺ when he was conscripting the people under a huge tree. He thus asked, “O Ibn Ḥawālah, should I conscript you as well?”

I said, “Yes o Rasūl Allāh.”

He then said, “What will your stance be, O ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥawālah, when a fitnah will ensue in various parts of the land?”

I said, “What Allah and Rasūl ﷺ choose for me.”

He said, “Follow this man, for he will be upon the truth on that day.”

I thus followed him, held him by his shoulder, turned him around and asked, “This man, O Rasūl Allāh.”

He said, “Yes.”

He was ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.¹

Similarly, Ibn ‘Asākir narrates from Badr ibn Khālid the following:

وقف علينا ثابت يوم الدار، فقال: أما تستحيون ممن تستحي منه الملائكة؟ قلنا: وما ذاك؟ فقال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: مر بي عثمان وعندي جيل من الملائكة، فقالوا: شهيد من الأميين يقتله قومه، إنا لنستحي منه، فقال بدر: فانصرفنا عصابة من الناس

Thābit emerged to address us on the day of the house (the day ‘Uthmān was incarcerated in his own house) and said, “Do you not feel shy regarding a person from who the angels feel shy?”

We said, “What do you mean?”

He replied, “I heard Rasūl Allāh ﷺ saying, “‘Uthmān passed by me when a group of angels were by me. They said he is a martyr from amongst the unlettered whose people will kill him, we feel shy before him.”

Badr says that a group of them thus stood up and left.²

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah* 1/448. The annotator has deemed its transmission Ṣaḥīḥ.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* p. 88.

And Aḥmad has narrated in his *Musnad* and Ibn Shabbah in his *Tārīkh al-Madīnah* from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥawālah that Nabī ﷺ said:

من نجا من ثلاث فقد نجا، قالوا: ماذا يا رسول الله؟ قال: موتي، وخروج الدجال، وقتل خليفة مصطبر
بالحق يعطيه

“Whoever is saved from three things has attained salvation.”

They asked, “What are they O Rasūl Allāh.”

He said, “My death, the emergence of Dajjāl, and the murder of a Khalīfah who will be steadfast upon the truth and will dispense it.”¹

Also, Anas ibn Mālik رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūl Allāh ﷺ said:

إن لله سيفا مغمودا في غمده ما دام عثمان بن عفان حيا، فإذا قتل عثمان جرد ذلك السيف، فلم يغمد إلى
يوم القيامة

Allah ﷻ has a sword which is covered in its sheath as long as ‘Uthmān is alive. But when ‘Uthmān will be murdered that sword will be unsheathed and thereafter will never be returned to its sheath till the Day of Judgment.²

And al-Bukhārī cites the narration of Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ wherein he states that Nabī ﷺ entered an orchard whereafter a person came and sought permission. Rasūl Allāh ﷺ said, “Give him permission and give him the glad tidings of Jannah.” It was Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Thereafter another person sought permission and he said again, “Give him permission and give him the glad tidings of Jannah.” It was ‘Umar. Thereafter another person came seeking permission. He remained silent for a while and then said, “Give him permission and give him glad tidings of Jannah with a trial that will befall him.” That was ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.³

1 *Musnad Aḥmad* 4/105,109; *Tārīkh Madīnah* 3/1076; *Mustadrak Ḥākim* 3/101. Al-Ḥākim has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ and al-Dhahabī has concurred.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq* p. 456.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: chapter regarding the Companions of Nabī ﷺ: 4/202; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: chapter of merits: 15/170.

Commenting upon this narration Ibn Ḥajar states:

أشار بالبلوى المذكورة إلى ما أصاب عثمان في آخر خلافته من الشهادة يوم الدار

Nabī ﷺ alluded by mentioning the trial which befell ‘Uthmān at the end of his Khilāfah when he was killed on the day of the house.¹

He also says:

إنما خص عثمان بذكر البلاء مع أن عمر قتل أيضا، لكون عمر لم يمتحن بمثل ما امتحن عثمان من تسلط القوم الذين أرادوا منه أن يخلع من الإمامة بسبب ما نسبوه إليه من الجور والظلم من ذلك، واعتذاره عن كل ما أوردوه عليه، ثم هجموه عليه في داره وهتكهم ستر أهله، وكل ذلك زيادة على قتله

The reason why the trial was specifically mentioned for ‘Uthmān whereas ‘Umar was also murdered is that ‘Umar was not tested like ‘Uthmān; for the people had gathered against him and wanted him to denounce the Khilāfah due to the oppression of which they falsely accused him. Thereafter he presented his excuse for whatever they had raised against him, but they pounced upon his house and violated the privacy of his household. All of this was over and above his murder.²

Anas ibn Mālik narrates that Rasūl Allāh once climbed Mount Uḥud and with him was Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān and it started to tremor. He thus said:

اسكن أحد- أظنه ضربه برجله- فليس عليك إلا نبي وصديق وشهيدان

Settle O Uḥud—I think he struck it with his foot—for there is not upon you but a Nabī, a devout follower and two martyrs.³

And Ibn Mājah has narrated the following in his *Sunan* from ‘Ā’ishah:

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Fatḥ al-Bārī* 7/38.

2 *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, 13/51.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, vol. 4 pg. 204; Al-Nasa’ī: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, pg. 71.

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: يا عثمان إن ولاءك الله هذا الأمر يوماً، فأرادك المنافقون أن تخلع قميصك الذي قمصك الله-يعني الخلافة- فلا تخلعه، يقول ذلك ثلاث مرات

Rasūl Allāh ﷺ said, “O ‘Uthmān, if Allah ever makes you preside over this matter and the hypocrites then want from you that you remove your shirt—i.e. the Khilāfah—do not remove it.” He said that thrice.¹

And in a narration of Tirmidhī the following appears:

يا عثمان إنه لعل الله يقمصك قميصاً، فإن أرادوك على خلعه فلا تخلعه لهم

O ‘Uthmān, probably Allah will make you wear a garment. If they want from you to remove it, then do not remove it.²

And in the narration of Ibn Shabbah the following appears:

يا عثمان إنك مستشهد، فأصبر صبرك الله ولا تخلعن قميصاً قمصك الله

O ‘Uthmān, you will surely be martyred. So exercise patience, may Allah grant you patience, and do not remove a garment which Allah adorned you with.³

And in *al-Sunnah* of Abū al-‘Āṣim the following appears:

يا عثمان إن الله مقمصك قميصاً، فإن أرادك المنافقون على خلعه فلا تخلعه

O ‘Uthmān, Allah is surely going to adorn you with a garment, if the hypocrites want from you that you remove it, then don’t remove it.⁴

1 *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, chapter on the merit of ‘Uthmān ﷺ 1/41. Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 1/25: ḥadīth no. 90.

2 Aḥmad: *Al-Musnad*, vol. 6 pg. 75; Al-Tirmidhī: *Al-Sunan*, ḥadīth: 3706. Al-Albānī has deemed it authentic in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, vol. 3 pg. 210, ḥadīth: 2923.

3 *Tārīkh al-Madīnah*, 3/1069-1070.

4 *Al-Sunnah*, 2/562. Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ.

And the following appears in the narration of Ibn ‘Asākir:

يا عثمان إنك ستؤتى الخلافة من بعدي، وسيريدك المنافقون على خلعها فلا تخلعها

O ‘Uthmān, you will surely be granted the Khilāfah after me. The hypocrites will want you to denounce it, but never denounce it.¹

And Abū Sahlah² narrates:

قال لي عثمان يوم الدار: إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قد عهد إلي عهدا فأنا صابر عليه

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه said to me on the day of the house, “Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم took a pledge from me upon which I will remain steadfast.³

It is reported from ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه that Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

إنك ستبلى بعدي فلا تقاتلن

You will be tested after me, so do not fight.⁴

Anas ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه narrates:

رأيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وضع يده على كتف عثمان، وقال: كيف أنتم إذا قتلتم إمامكم،
ووتجالدتم بأسيافكم، وورث الدنيا شراركم، فويل لأمتي، فويل لأمتي إذا فعلوه

1 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 288.

2 Abū Sahlah, the freed slave of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. He narrated from his master and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها. Al-‘Ijlī said, “He a successor from Kūfah who is reliable.” Likewise Ibn Ḥibbān has enlisted him in his *Thiqāt*. And Ibn Ḥajar in *Taqrīb* has said that he is reliable. Al-‘Ijlī has included his biography in his *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 500.

3 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, chapter on merits: 5/295. He has deemed this ḥadīth Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ. *Mustadrak Ḥākim* 3/99. He has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ and al-Dhahabī has concurred. Albānī has also deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī* 3/212: ḥadīth no. 2928.

4 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 284.

I saw Rasūl Allāh ﷺ placing his hand upon the shoulder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and saying, “What will be your situation when you will kill your Imām, and you slay one another with your swords, and the evil amongst you will inherit your world? Destruction will await my Ummah! Destruction will await them when they do so.”¹

It is also narrated from Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه:

بلغني أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ذكر فتنة فقربها فأتيته بالبيع - وعنده أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان وطلحة والزبير - فقلت: يا رسول الله! بلغني أنك ذكرت فتنة، قال: نعم كيف أنتم إذا اقتتل فتان دينهما واحد وصلاتهما واحدة وحجهما واحد. قال أبو بكر: أدركها يا رسول الله؟ قال: لا. قال: الله أكبر. قال عمر: أدركها يا رسول الله؟ قال: لا. قال: الله أكبر. قال عثمان: أدركها يا رسول الله؟ قال نعم، وبك يبتلون

It reached me that Rasūl Allāh ﷺ made mention of a fitnah and that he mentioned its closeness. So I came to him whilst he was in Baqī, and Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه were by him.

I asked, “O Rasūl Allāh, it has reached me that you have made mention of a fitnah?”

He said, “Yes. What will your condition be when two groups among you will fight, their Dīn will be one, their Ṣalāh will be the same and their Ḥajj will be the same?”

Abū Bakr asked, “Will I witness it, O Rasūl Allāh?”

He said, “No.”

Thereafter ‘Umar asked, “Will I witness it O Rasūl Allāh?”

He said, “No.”

Subsequent to that ‘Uthmān asked, “Will I witness it o Rasūl Allāh?”

He said, “Yes. And with you they will be tested.”²

1 Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī, *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍīrah* 3/58. He said, “Ḥākīm has cited it.”

2 *Tārīkh Madīnah Dimashq*, (manuscript) 12/357.

Likewise, Khaythamah narrates the following from ‘Abd al-Malik ibn ‘Umayr¹:

أرسلت امرأة من الأنصار إلى النعمان بن بشير تسأله عن كلام ابن خارجة عند الموت، فكتب إليها: إني أخبرك أنني حضرت فخرج بروحه، حتى ما شككت إنه الموت، إذ أعاد الله إليه روحه، فقال: محمد خاتم النبيين، كان ذلك في الكتاب الأول، صدق، صدق. أبو بكر خليفة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم الضعيف في نفسه القوي في أمر الله، كان ذلك في الكتاب الأول، صدق، صدق. عمر بن الخطاب، وهو أقوى الثلاثة، القوي في أمر الله، القوي في نفسه، كان ذلك في الكتاب الأول، صدق، صدق. عثمان بن عفان، كان ذلك في الكتاب الأول، مضت اثنتان وبقي أربع، اختلف الناس، ارجعوا إلى خليفتمكم، فإنه مظلوم.

An Anṣārī woman sent a message to Nu‘mān ibn Bashīr رضي الله عنه asking him about the words uttered by Ibn Khārijah at the time of his death. So he wrote to her, “I inform you that I was present, his soul was taken up to the extent that I had no doubt it was death. Then suddenly Allah سبحانه وتعالى returned his soul to him and he started saying, “Muḥammad is the seal of the Ambiyā’, this was recorded in the first book. He spoke the truth, he spoke the truth. Abū Bakr was the Khalīfah of Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, he was weak in himself but strong in the matter of Allah سبحانه وتعالى. This was recorded in the first book. He spoke the truth, he spoke the truth. ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the strongest of the three, was strong in the matter of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and strong in himself. This was recorded in the first book. He spoke the truth, he spoke the truth. ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, this was recorded in the first book, two have passed and four remain. The people have differed, return to your Khalīfah for he has been wronged.”²

1 ‘Abd al-Malik ibn ‘Umayr ibn Suwayd ibn Ḥārithah al-Qurashī al-Qibṭī, Abū ‘Umar al-Kūfī. He saw ‘Alī and Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه, and narrated from Jābir ibn Samurah Jundub ibn ‘Abd Allāh, Jarīr ibn ‘Abd Allāh, Umm ‘Atīyyah al-Anṣāriyyah and Umm al-‘Alā’ al-Anṣāriyyah. Al-Bukhārī states that Ibn ‘Umayr used to say, “When I narrate a ḥadīth I do not discard even a letter of it.” Al-‘Ijlī states, “He was called Ibn al-Qibṭiyyah, he was the governor of Kūfah and was satisfactory in ḥadīth. He has narrated more than a hundred narrations. His memory was affected before his demise. Al-Nasā’ī states, “There is no problem with him.” Ibn Ḥibbān has also mentioned him in reliable transmitters of the successors. He passed away in 136 A.H. (653 A.H). His biography can be found in: Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh* 2/373; Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt* p. 163; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* 3/1/426; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt* p. 311; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt* 7/1176; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb* 6/411.

2 Khaythamah: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah* p. 249.

Likewise al-Bukhārī states in the translation of Zayd ibn Khārījah:

توفي زمن عثمان، وهو الذي تكلم بعد الموت

He passed away in the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. He is the one who spoke after death.¹

And al-Awzā‘ī narrates that ‘Umar sent a message to Ka‘b, Ka‘b al-Aḥbār saying:

يا كعب كيف تجد نعتي؟ أي في التوراة، قال: أجد نعتك قرن حديد، قال: وما قرن حديد؟ قال: لا تأخذك في الله لومة لائم، قال: ثم مه؟ قال: يكون بعد خليفة تقتله أمة ظالمة له. قال: ثم مه؟ قال: يقع البلاء

“O Ka‘b what description do you find of me (i.e. in the Tawrah)?”

He said, “I find in your description the mention of an iron horn.”

He asked, “What does an iron horn mean?”

He said, “The blame of the blamers will not affect you when it comes to Allah.”

He asked, “Then what?”

He replied, “After you there will be a Khalīfah whose transgressive people will kill him.”

He asked, “Then what?”

He replied, “The trial will occur.”²

And ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه explains this verse:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّنَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الَّذِينَ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ
مِنَ النَّاسِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

1 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* 2/1/383.

2 Al-Ṭabarānī: *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr* 1/40; al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍīrah* 3/57. He states that al-Ḍaḥḥāk has cited it.

*Those who disbelieve in the signs of Allah, and kill the prophets without right and kill those who order justice from among the people-give them tidings of a painful punishment.*¹

Those who order justice from among the people are: the rulers of justice, it thus refers to ‘Uthmān and his killing.²

And al-‘Irbāḍ ibn Sāriyah narrates:

وعظنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم موعظة ذرفت منها العيون ووجلت منها القلوب، فقام إليه رجل، فقال: يا رسول الله! كأن هذه موعظة مودع، فما تعهد إلينا؟ أو قال: أو صنا. قال: أو صيكم بتقوى الله والسمع والطاعة لمن ولي عليكم، وإن عبدا حبشيا، فإنه من يعبس بعدي فسيرى اختلافا كثيرا، فعليكم بستى وسنة الخلفاء الراشدين المهديين من بعدي، عضوا عليها بالنواجذ.

Rasūl Allāh ﷺ gave such an advice which caused the eyes to tear and the hearts to tremor. A person thus stood up and said, “O Rasūl Allāh, it seems as if this is an advice of one who is parting, so what do you emphasise upon us?” Or he said, “Advise us.”

He said, “I advise you to fear Allah ﷻ and to always listen and obey those who have been appointed over you, even if it be an Abyssinian slave. For whoever will live after me he will see a lot of bickering. So hold on to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly Guided Khalīfahs, bite upon it with your molars.”³

In this narration there is a clear indication toward the Fitnah, the obligation of obeying the Imām, and holding on to the straight path upon which the guided Khalīfahs were, one among them being ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. They were blessed with

1 Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān: 21.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 210.

3 *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, chapter of Sunnah, 4/201; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, chapter of merits, 4/150, he has deemed it Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ; *Musnad Aḥmad*, 4/126; Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd* 3/871: ḥadīth no. 3851.

such qualities which distinguished them from others in their personal conduct, their administration of the affairs of the Ummah, their preservation of its Dīn and dogma, and their meticulousness in upholding the path of Rasūl Allāh ﷺ; that is inviting others toward Islam, engaging in Jihād, establishing justice, enjoining good and prohibiting evil.

Guidance is the antithesis of deviance and following of the ego. It is complete steadfastness upon the way of Nubuwwah, with which they have been described in this ḥadīth. This is why their eras have been specifically mentioned to the exclusion of all the other eras of the various Islamic empires, i.e. due to the numerous specialities which distinguished them from all else. For the Rāshidī era was an ideal and a perfect example which every reformer tried to reach and which every revolutionary made his target. Hence, each one of them would try to raise the Ummah to the level of that exemplary era or at least close to it; he would deem it an ideal which was to be emulated by the Muslim generation. Therefore, every reformer and every ruler was judged according to that era and he would be measured with its scale. To the extent that many people dubbed the Umayyad Khalīfah, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, the fifth of the four guided Khalīfahs and added him to them.¹ This is because he followed their ideal, treaded their path and restored in his short rule (99-101 A.H./717-719 A.C.) the symbols of their methodology and brought alive their ways of ruling, administration, and interacting with the masses.

1 Ibn al-Jawzī: *Sīrah wa Manāqib ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz*, p. 72.

Section Two: The Stance of the Ṣaḥābah regarding the Fitnah

A person who studies the events of the Fitnah in the history of al-Ṭabarī and the other books of history through the narrations of Abū Mikhnaf, Wāqidi, Ibn A‘tham, among others, will get the impression that the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ were actually the ones instigating the Fitnah. Hence Abū Mikhnaf, a historian with strong Shī‘ī leanings, does not hesitate in accusing ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ of flaws and misadministration due to which he was deserving of what befell him.¹ He also depicts Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in one of his narrations as a rebel who revolted against ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and incited the people against him.²

Similarly, the narrations of Wāqidi are no different than the narrations of Abū Mikhnaf. He depicts ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as one who came to Madīnah to impugn ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, and states that when he received the news of his murder he said:

أنا أبو عبد الله، إذا حككت قرحة نكأتها، وإن كنت لأحرض عليه، حتى إني لأحرض عليه الراعي في
غنمه في رأس الجبل

I am Abū ‘Abd Allāh, when I scratch a blister I burst it. I was campaigning against him, to the extent that I would instigate a shepherd in in his flock at the top of a mountain.³

As for Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, according to him, he was the instigator of the rebels.⁴ And ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is depicted as a person who played a role in the fate of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He alleges that the Umayyads would make mention of that to him and would warn him of the dreadful consequences of the world coming to him:

يا علي أهلكتنا، وصنعت هذا الصنيع بأمر المؤمنين. أما والله لئن بلغت الذي تريد لتمرن عليك الدنيا

1 *Ansāb al-Ashraf* 5/59.

2 *Ansāb al-Ashraf* 5/78.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul* 4/375-379.

4 *Tārīkh al-Rusul* 4/375-379.

O ‘Alī you destroyed us and you done this reprehensible action to Amīr al-Mu‘minīn. By Allah, if you accomplish what you intend the world will pass by you.¹

Instead there are more narrations, which al-Ṭabarī states he purposely ignored due to their reprehensible content and his abhorrence for them.²

Likewise he has attributed a narration to al-Zuhrī which states that the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, more specifically the Muhājirīn, were the killers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Hence in the address of al-‘Abdī³ it appears that he pointed toward one of the Muhājirīn and said:

ثم إنكم أنكرتم من ذلك الرجل شيئاً فقتلتموه عن غير مشورة منا

Then you condemned something of this man and subsequently killed him without consulting us.⁴

In the transmission of this narration there is a person by the name Yūnus ibn Yazīd ibn Abī al-Najād al-Aylī. Abū Zur‘ah said regarding him:

سمعت أحمد بن حنبل يقول: في حديث يونس عن الزهري منكرات، وسئل أحمد: من أثبت من الزهري؟ قال معمر، قيل فيونس؟ قال: روى أحاديث منكراً

I heard Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal mention regarding the narration of Yūnus from al-Zuhrī that he narrates reprehensible narrations from him.

And Aḥmad was asked, “Who is more proficient in the narrations of al-Zuhrī?”

He said, “Ma‘mar.”

He was asked, “What about Yūnus?”

He replied, “He has narrated some reprehensible narrations.”⁵

1 Ibid. 4/364-365.

2 Ibid. 4/356.

3 I did not come across his biography.

4 Ibid. 8/470.

5 Ibn Ḥajar: *Tahdhīb*, 11/451.

As for the narration which is attributed to Zubayr رضي الله عنه, it depicts the besiegers as people of truth who are only pleased and infuriated for Allah. On the other hand it depicts ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه as the criminal who is required to openly repent for his crime.¹ In fact it sketches him as a deceiver who sought help from ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to mediate between him and his detractors so that they may give him some respite to return to them their rights, but thereafter he prepares for war with weapons in the period of respite.²

Can it possibly be perceived that this is really the narration of Zubayr رضي الله عنه, and that this was his actual stance regarding the ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه? Whereas he is the one who asked ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه for permission on the day of the house to defend him with the Banī ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf. He also reassured him that he did not change and go against his pledge.³

Also, in addition to its irreconcilable variations and their anomalous nature, the chain of transmission itself is not free from criticism. Hence in it there is a narrator by the name ‘Umar ibn Ḥammād. Abū Dāwūd has said regarding him:

كان من الرافضة، ذكر عثمان بشيء، فطلبه السلطان فهرب

He was from the Rāfiḍah. He made a remark about ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه because of which the ruler summoned him and so he fled.⁴

And al-Sājī⁵ said regarding him:

يتهم في عثمان عنده مناكير

1 *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/369.

2 *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/370.

3 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah* 1/511. The annotator has deemed the narration Ṣaḥīḥ.

4 *Tahdhīb*, 8/23.

5 Zakariyyā ibn Yaḥyā ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Baṣrī, famously known as al-Sājī, Abū Yaḥyā. He was a jurist and a ḥadīth scholar. Some of his books are: ‘*Ilal al-Ḥadīth*, *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, *Ikhtilāf al-Fuqahā*’. He passed away in 307 A.H/919 A.C. His biography features in: al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā*, p. 104; al-Dhahabī: *al-Tadhkirah*, 2/709; al-Asnawī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi’iyyah*, 2/22.

He is dubious when it comes to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and he has narrated reprehensible narrations.¹

Likewise the narration attributed to Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab contains that the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in general despised ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, especially Abū Dhar, Ibn Mas‘ūd and ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir رضي الله عنه.²

However, the problem with this narration is that such *Tadlīs*³ has occurred in it which is unacceptable, for a narrator who is suspected of lying has been omitted therefrom,⁴ Ismā‘īl ibn Yaḥyā ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh.⁵ It is for this reason scholars of ḥadīth have deemed this narration weak under the biography of Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā ibn Sumay‘⁶ the narrator from Abī Dhī‘b.⁷

1 *Tahdhīb* 8/23.

2 *Ansāb al-Ashraf* 1/512...

3 Deliberate omission of a narrator

4 In the transmission of the narration of al-Balādhurī the following appears: Hishām ibn ‘Ammār narrated to us, he said Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā narrated to us, from Sumay‘ from Muḥammad ibn Abī Dhī‘b from Zuhri from Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab who said... See: *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, 1/512.

5 Ismā‘īl ibn Yaḥyā ibn ‘Ubayd Allah al-Tamīmī. Al-Dāraquṭnī said regarding him, “And abandoned liar.” And Ibn Ḥibbān said, “Weak in ḥadīth.” And al-Ḥākim said, “Completely useless in ḥadīth.” And Ṣāliḥ ibn Muḥammad said, “Ismā‘īl ibn Yaḥyā forges narrations.” See: Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Majrūhīn*, 1/126; al-Dāraquṭnī: *al-Du‘afā’ wa al-Matrūkūn* p. 137; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 9/390-392.

6 Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā ibn al-Qāsim ibn Sumay‘. Ibn Shāhīn said regarding him, “Reliable.” And Abū Ḥātim said, “A scholar from Damascus whose ḥadīth can be written but not used as evidence.” And Abū Dāwūd said, “There is no problem with him but he was suspected of *Qadr* (denying pre-destiny).” Ibn ‘Adī has said that there is no problem with him.” And al-Ḥākim said, “Accurate in ḥadīth.” And Ibn Ḥajar said, “A truthful narrator who would make mistakes and practice *Tadlīs*.” He passed away in 204 A.H/819 A.C. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/203; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl* 8/38; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif* 3/87; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taqrīb* 2/198.

7 Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Mughīrah ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Abī Dhī‘b, Abū al-Ḥārith al-Madanī. He was a scholar who was reliable, a jurist, an ascetic and a devout worshipper. Ibn Ḥibbān said in his *al-Thiqāt*, “He was from the jurists of Madīnah and their devout worshippers. He proclaimed the truth the most in his era. He once advised al-Mahdī who responded by saying, “Surely you are the most truthful of people.” Ibn Ma‘īn, Aḥmad, Ya‘qūb ibn Shaybah and al-Nasā‘ī have deemed him reliable. See: Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/525; al-Jūzajānī: *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, p. 188; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 30; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 3/620; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 9/303.

Al-Bukhārī said regarding Ibn Sumay‘:

يقال إنه لم يسمع من أبي ذئب هذا الحديث يعني حديثه عن الزهري في مقتل عثمان

It is said that he did not hear from Abī Dhi‘b this narration, i.e. his narration from al-Zuhrī regarding the murder of ‘Uthmān.¹

And Ibn Ḥibbān said:

إن ابن سميع لم يسمع حديثه من أبي ذئب، وإنما سمعه من إسماعيل بن يحيى فدلس عنه

Ibn Sumay‘ did not hear the narration from Abī Dhi‘b. He actually heard it from Ismā‘īl ibn Yaḥyā and thereafter practiced *Tadlīs*.²

And al-Ḥākim said:

أبو محمد- يعني ابن سميع- روى عن أبي ذئب حديثا منكرا، وهو حديث مقتل عثمان، ويقال: كان في كتابه عن إسماعيل بن يحيى بن أبي ذئب فأسقطه، وإسماعيل ذاهب الحديث.

Abū Muḥammad, i.e. Ibn Sumay‘, narrated a reprehensible narration from Abī Dhi‘b, the narration regarding the murder of ‘Uthmān. It is said, “In his book it was actually from Ismā‘īl ibn Yaḥyā ibn Abī Dhi‘b and therefore he dropped him. And Ismā‘īl is useless in ḥadīth.³

Al-Ḥākim is known to have Shī‘ī leanings, thus this statement of his is particularly noteworthy.

From the aforementioned, the impression one gets is that the people who were instigating the Fitnah and took part in fuelling it against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه were the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who were around ‘Uthmān, like ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Amr ibn al-

1 *Al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* 1/1/203.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 9/391.

3 *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 9/392.

‘Āṣ, ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, Abū Dhar al-Ghifārī, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd, and ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, amongst others.

Can an intelligent person perceive that Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Ā’ishah, and ‘Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were part of the fitnah and fuelling its fire when they were the same people who marched to Baṣrah in order to seek revenge for the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ; they criticised ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ for delaying in executing the punishment upon the murderers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ? Did not the people who were in the army of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ know that Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, and ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا were instrumental in the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ? Why did they not raise their voices, mock them, and silence them with definitive evidence?

Contrary to the narrations cited above, which are examples of the narrations cited by those historians who had no scruples and thus portrayed the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ as conspirators and instigators who were responsible for the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, the books of the ḥadīth scholars have preserved for us authentic narrations in which the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ are portrayed as the helpers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, his defenders, and the seekers of revenge for his blood. They deem the prospect that they were instrumental in the fitnah impossible.

Al-Ṭabarī and Ibn ‘Asākir cite that when ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ received the news of the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ he said:

رحم الله عثمان وخلف علينا بخير، وقيل ندم القوم، فقرأ: كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ اكْفُرْ إِلَى آخِرِ
الآية.

May Allah have mercy on ‘Uthmān and may he grant us a good substitute. He was told that the people have regretted (what they did), He thus read: *Like the example of Satan when he says to man, “Disbelieve,”*¹ till the end of the verse.²

1 Sūrah Ḥaṣhr: 16.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/392; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 447.

And Aḥmad narrates in *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah* from 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylā:¹

رَأَيْتُ عَلِيًّا رَافِعًا حِضْنِيهِ يَقُولُ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَبْرَأُ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ دَمِ عَثْمَانَ

I saw 'Alī رضي الله عنه raising his arms and saying, "O Allah I declare my innocence before you from the blood of 'Uthmān."²

And 'Amīrah ibn Sa'd³ narrates:

كُنَّا مَعَ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَلَى شَاطِئِ الْفُرَاتِ، فَمَرَّتْ سَفِينَةٌ مَرْفُوعٌ شِرَاعُهَا، فَقَالَ عَلِيٌّ: يَقُولُ اللَّهُ: *وَلَهُ الْجَوَارِ الْمُنشآتُ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ* وَالَّذِي أَنْشَأَهَا فِي بَحْرٍ مِنْ بَحَارِهِ مَا قَتَلْتُ عَثْمَانَ وَلَا مَا لَأْتُ عَلَى قَتْلِهِ

We were with 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه at the bank of the Euphrates River. A ship passed with a high deck. So 'Alī رضي الله عنه said, "Allah سبحانه وتعالى says, 'And to him belong the ships elevated in the oceans like mountains.'⁴ By the one who created it in an ocean from his oceans I did not kill 'Uthmān nor did I help in his murder."⁵

1 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylā al-Anṣārī al-Awsī, Abū Ṭsā al-Kūfī. He has narrated from a group of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, one among them being 'Alī رضي الله عنه. Ishāq ibn Maṣūf has narrated from Ibn Ma'īn, "Reliable." Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. And Ibn Ḥajar stated that he went missing in the battle of Dayr al-Jamājim, and the scholars agree that it transpired in 82 A.H. See: Ibn Ma'īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/356; al-'Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 298; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 5/100; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 6/260.

2 Aḥmad: *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/452. The annotator has deemed its chain of transmission Ḥasan; Ibn Sa'd: *Ṭabaqāt*, 3/103, all its transmissions are Ṣaḥīḥ.

3 'Amīrah ibn Sa'd al-Hamadānī al-Yāmī, Abū al-Sakan al-Kūfī. He has narrated from 'Alī رضي الله عنه, Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه and several other Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. Ibn Ma'īn al-Bukhārī and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable. See: Ibn Sa'd: *Ṭabaqāt*, 6/299; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* 4/68; al-Dhahabī: *Mīzān al-Ṭidāl* 3/298.

4 Sūrah al-Raḥmān: 24.

5 Aḥmad: *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/458. The annotator has deemed its transmission Ḥasan; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* 4/1/68.

And Ibn ‘Asākir narrates in his *Tārīkh* from Sālim ibn Abī al-Ja‘d:¹

كنا مع ابن الحنفية في الشعب فسمع رجلا ينتقص عثمان وعنده ابن عباس، فقال: يا أبا عباس، هل سمعت أمير المؤمنين عشيبة سمع الضجة من قبل المربرد فبعث فلان بن فلان فقال: اذهب فانظر ما هذا الصوت؟ فجاء فقال: هذه عائشة تلعن قتلة عثمان والناس يؤمنون فقال علي وأنا ألعن قتلة عثمان في السهل والجبل، اللهم العن قتلة عثمان، اللهم العن قتلة عثمان في السهل والجبل، ثم أقبل ابن الحنفية عليه وعلينا، فقال: أما في وفي ابن عباس شاهدا عدل؟ قلنا بلى، قال: قد كان هذا.

We were with Ibn al-Ḥanafīyah in the valley.² He heard a person denigrating ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه was by him.

He thus said, “O Abū ‘Abbās! Did you hear what Amīr al-Mu‘minīn said when he heard a noise coming from Mirbad? He sent a person and told him, ‘Go and see from where that sound is.’ He returned and said, ‘It is ‘Ā’ishah cursing the killers of ‘Uthmān and the people are saying Āmīn.’ He thus said, ‘I also curse the killers of ‘Uthmān whether they be in the flatlands or in the mountains, O Allah curse the killers of ‘Uthmān, O Allah curse the killers of ‘Uthmān in the flatlands and the mountains.’”

Then Ibn al-Ḥanafīyah turned to us and to him and said, “Am I and Ibn ‘Abbās not two upright witnesses?”

We said, “Surely.”

Ibn ‘Abbās thus said, “This did indeed happen.”³

1 Sālim ibn Abī al-Ja‘d Rāfi‘ al-Ashjā‘ī, from the reliable scholars of the Tābī‘īn. Ibn Ma‘īn, Abū Zur‘ah and Nasā‘ī have deemed him reliable. Ibn Sa‘d said, “He was reliable and narrated ḥadīth in abundance.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “A Tābī‘ī, reliable.” And Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī said, “His reliability is unanimously agreed upon.” See: Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/186; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/2/107; al-‘Ijlī: *al-Thiqāt*, p. 173; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 2/109.

2 The valley of Abū Yūsuf in Makkah. It was were the houses of the Banū Hāshim were. It is the same valley to which Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم had resorted when the Quraysh had agreed to ostracise the Banū Hāshim. See: Yāqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, 3/347.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 476; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah* 1/455, the annotator has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ.

Likewise Ibn Abī Shaybah narrates the following in his *Muṣannaf* from the concubine of Zayd ibn Arqam:

جاء علي يعود زيد بن أرقم - له صحبة - وعنده القوم، فقال للقوم: أنصتوا واسكتوا، فوالله لا تسألوني اليوم عن شيء إلا أخبركم به، فقل له زيد، أنشدك الله؟ أنت قتلت عثمان؟ فأطرق ساعة ثم قال: والذي فلق الحبة وبرأ النسمة ما قتله ولا أمرت بقتله وما سرني.

‘Alī came to visit Zayd ibn Arqam رضي الله عنه, a Ṣaḥābī, and there were people by him. He said to the people, “Keep quiet and remain silent, for by Allah whatever you will ask me today I will inform you about it.”

Hence Zayd said to him, “I plea to you in the name of Allah, did you murder ‘Uthmān?”

He lowered his head for a while and then said, “By the one who split apart the seed and created the soul, I did not kill him, nor did I order his killing, and nor was I happy.”¹

And Ibn Sa’d narrates the following in his *Ṭabaqāt* from Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه:

سمعت عليا يقول حين قتل عثمان: والله ما قتلت ولا أمرت بقتله، ولكن غلبت - يقول ذلك ثلاث مرات.

I heard ‘Alī saying when ‘Uthmān was murdered, “By Allah I did not kill, nor did I order that he be killed, but I was overpowered.” He said that three times.²

And the following appears from Muslim ibn Yasār³ in *Ansāb al-Ashraf*:

1 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *Muṣannaf* 15/209; al-Ḥākim: *al-Mustadrak* (via the transmission of ‘Abdah ibn Ismā‘īl), 3/106.

2 Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/82; ‘Abd al-Razzāq: *al-Muṣannaf*, 11/450.

3 Muslim ibn Yasār al-Juhani. Ibn Sa’d said regarding him, “Muslim was reliable, scholarly, a devout worshipper, and an ascetic.” And al-‘Ijlī said regarding him, “A Baṣrī who was a Tābī‘ī and reliable.” Likewise Ibn Ḥibbān has recorded him in his *al-Thiqāt*. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/186; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, 429; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/85; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb* 10/142.

سألت ابن عمر هل شرك علي في دم عثمان؟ فقال: لا والله ما علمت ذلك في سر ولا علانية، ولكن كان رأسا يفرغ إليه، فألحق به ما لم يكن

I asked Ibn ‘Umar, “Did ‘Alī take part in the murder of ‘Uthmān?”

He replied, “Never by Allah, I do not know of that happening, not in secrecy and not publically. But because he was a leader to who people resorted such things were attached to him which had not actually happened.”¹

And Ibn Sīrīn said:

لقد قتل عثمان يوم قتل وما أحد يتهم عليا في قتله

The day when ‘Uthmān was killed no one blamed ‘Alī of being complicit in his murder.²

And Ibn Shabbah narrates in *Tārīkh al-Madīnah* from Rāshid ibn Kaysān³ the following statement of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه:

اللهم لم آمر ولم أرض

O Allah I did not command and was not happy.⁴

And the Ṣaḥābī Shaddād ibn Aws رضي الله عنه narrates:

1 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashrāf* 1/593.

2 Ibid. 1/593.

3 Rāshid ibn Kaysān al-‘Absī, Abū Fazārah al-Kūfī. Ibn Ma‘īn has deemed him reliable and Abū Ḥātim has deemed satisfactory. Al-Dāraquṭnī said, “A reliable and intelligent man. I did not see any criticism of him in the books of the transmitter biographers.” See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/1/296; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 3/485; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb* 3/227; al-Khazrajī: *Khulāṣah Taḥdhīb Taḥdhīb al-Kamāl*, p. 113.

4 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/1222.

لما اشتد الحصار بعثمان يوم الدار أشرف على الناس، فقال: يا عباد الله! قال: فرأيت علي بن أبي طالب خارجا من منزله معتما بعمامة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم متقلدا سيفه، أمامه الحسن وعبد الله بن عمر في نفر من المهاجرين والأنصار؛ حتى حملوا على الناس وفرقوهم ثم دخلوا على عثمان، فقال له علي: السلام عليك يا أمير المؤمنين. إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لم يلحق هذا الأمر حتى ضرب بالمقبل والمدبر، وإني والله لا أرى القوم إلا قاتلوك، فمرنا فلنقاتل، فقال عثمان: أنشد الله رجلا رأى الله حقا وأقرأن لي عليه حقا أن يهريق في سبيلي ملء محجمة من دم أو يهريق دمه في، فأعاد علي عليه القول، فأجابه بمثل ما أحابه، قال: فرأيت عليا خارجا من الباب وهو يقول: اللهم إناك تعلم أنا بذلنا المجهود، ثم دخل المسجد وحضرت الصلاة، فقالوا له: يا أبا الحسن: تقدم فصل بالناس، فقال: لا أصلى بكم والإمام محصور، ولكن أصلى وحدي، فصلى وحده، وانصرف إلى منزله فلحقه ابنه وقال: والله يا أبت قد اقتحموا عليه الدار، قال: إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون. هم والله قاتلوه، قالوا: أين هو يا أبا الحسن؟ قال: في الجنة والله زلفى، قالوا: أين هم يا أبا الحسن؟ قال: في النار والله ثلاثا.

When the siege intensified against ‘Uthmān on the day of the house, he came out to the people and said, “O the servants of Allah.”

The narrator says, “I saw ‘Alī coming out of his house wearing the turban of Rasūl Allah ﷺ and hanging his sword, ahead of him were Ḥasan, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar, and a group of the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār. They attacked the people, scattered them and managed to enter upon ‘Uthmān.

‘Alī thus said to him, “Peace be upon you, O Amīr al-Mu’minīn. Rasūl Allah ﷺ did not reach this matter till he was confronted with those who accepted and those who rejected. By Allah, I do not see these people but as determined to kill you, hence order us and we will fight on your behalf.”

‘Uthmān replied, “I plea in the name of Allah to any person who sees for Allah a right upon himself and also concedes my right upon him that he refrain from shedding blood the amount of a cupping glass of another person or shedding his own blood for me.”

‘Alī repeated his proposal but ‘Uthmān’s response was the same.

The narrator says, “I thus saw ‘Alī leaving the door and saying, “O Allah you know that we have tried our best.”

He then entered the masjid and it was time for Ṣalāh. The people thus said to him, “O Abū al-Ḥasan, go ahead and perform the Ṣalāh with the people.”

“I will not lead you in Ṣalāh when the Khalīfah is besieged, I will rather perform Ṣalāh myself,” he replied.

Hence he performed Ṣalāh alone and continued home. His son came thereafter and said, “By Allah, O my father they intruded into his house.”

He said, “To Allah we belong and to him is our return. They are surely going to kill him.”

The people asked, “Where will he be, O Abū al-Ḥasan?”

“In Jannah,” he replied.

They asked, “Where will they be, O Abū al-Ḥasan?”

“In Hell-Fire, by Allah,” he said thrice.¹

And Ibn ‘Asākir narrates with his chain of transmission from ‘Alī رضي الله عنه:

لقد علمت عائشة أن جيش المروة وأهل النهر (النهران) ملعونون على لسان محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم

Indeed ‘Ā’ishah knows that the army of Marwah and the people of Nahr are cursed upon the tongue of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

This implies that the narration is *Marfū’* (from Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم). And Abū Bakr ibn ‘Ayyāsh said, “The army of Marwah are the killers of ‘Uthmān and the people of Nahr are the Khawārij.”²

1 Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍīrah* 3/68.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* p. 454.

Ibn ‘Asākir has collected all the reports wherein ‘Alī رضي الله عنه disassociates himself from the killing of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in his *Tārīkh*.¹ ‘Alī رضي الله عنه would take oaths in his sermons and at other occasions emphasising that he did not kill him nor was he happy with his murder. This is established from him in so many different ways that they cumulatively give the benefit of certainty according to many scholars of ḥadīth.²

And Ibn Shabbah narrates from Nāfi‘ ibn Abī Anas³ from his father⁴ the following:

سمعت طلحة بن عبيد يقول: إنا قد تحدثنا من حديث ليلة، إن هذا الأمر - يعني أمر عثمان - فأقام فيه قوم كانوا عند رجل من خيار الناس ديناً ورأياً وحلماً، فسألوا أمير المؤمنين عثمان أمراً فأعطاهم ما سألوا، فلم ينتظروا بصدقه حتى حقه الأمر، وغلب سفهاء الناس حلماءهم، فلم يستطيعوا الرحمة

I heard Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh saying, we were talking one evening. In this matter, i.e. the matter of ‘Uthmān, a group arose who were, in the eyes of certain person, amongst the best of men in religion, discretion and forbearance. What they demanded of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn he readily gave. But then they could not wait in goodwill, and he lost control over the situation, imprudence trumped sensibility and mercy was beyond them.⁵

1 *Tārīkh Dimashq* p. 460-475.

2 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* 7/193.

3 Nāfi‘ ibn Mālik ibn Abī ‘Āmir al-Aṣḥabī, Abū Sahl al-Madanī al-Tamīmī. He was from the Tābī‘īn. He narrated from his father and from a group of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, some being: Ibn ‘Amr, Anas, and Sahl ibn Sa‘d. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad said, “He is from the reliable narrators.” And Abū Ḥātim and al-Nasā‘ī have also deemed him reliable. Ibn Ḥibbān has also mentioned him in his *al-Thiqāt*. He passed away in 140 A.H/757 A.C. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 316 (under the section regarding the Tābī‘īn of Madīnah); al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* 4/2/86; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 8/453; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 10/410.

4 Mālik ibn Abī ‘Āmir al-Aṣḥabī, Abū Anas, the grandfather of the famous Imām Mālik ibn Anas. He has narrated from a group of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, some being: ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and Abū Hurayrah. Ibn Sa‘d has included him in the second *Ṭabaqah* (generation of narrators) and has said, “‘Uthmān had stipulated a bonus for him. Al-‘Ijlī, al-Nasā‘ī, Ibn Ḥibbān and Ibn Sa‘d have deemed him reliable. He passed away in 74 A.H/693 A.C. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 5/63; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/305; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 418; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb* 10/19.

5 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah* 4/1204.

And al-Dāraquṭnī has narrated in *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah* that ‘Uthmān looked down at the people of the masjid. He spotted Ṭalḥah sitting in the east of the masjid.

يا طلحة! قال: لبيك! قال نشدتك بالله هل تعلم أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: من يشتري قطعة يزيدنها في المسجد، فاشتريتها من مالي، قال طلحة: اللهم نعم، فقال: يا طلحة! قال: يا لبيك! قال: نشدتك بالله هل تعلمني حملت في جيش العسرة على مائة؟ قال طلحة: اللهم نعم، ثم قال طلحة: اللهم لا أعلم عثمان إلا مظلوما

He thus said, “O Ṭalḥah!”

He replied, “I am present.”

He said, “I plea to you in the name of Allah, do you know that Rasūl Allah ﷺ said, ‘Who is willing to buy a piece of land to include it to the masjid?’ and I bought it from my wealth?”

He said, “Yes.”

He thereafter said, “O Ṭalḥah!”

He replied, “I am present.”

He said, “I plea to you in the name of Allah, do you know that I donated a hundred conveyances to the army of poverty (army of Tabūk)?”

Ṭalḥah replied, “Yes.”

And thereafter said, “O Allah I do not know ‘Uthmān but as wronged.”¹

And when Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ received the news of the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ he said:

يرحم الله عثمان وانتصر له وللإسلام، وقيل له: القوم نادمون، فقال: تبا لهم قرأ فلا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ تَوْصِيَةً وَلَا إِلَى أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

May Allah have mercy on ‘Uthmān and take revenge for him and for Islam. He was told that the culprits are regretting he said, “Woe to them.” and

1 Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍīrah*, 3/57.

then read the following verse, *And they will not be able to give any instruction, nor to their people can they return.*”¹

And al-Ṭabarī and Ibn ‘Asākir narrate that when Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ received the news of the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ whilst he was out of Madīnah he said:

إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون، رحم الله عثمان، وانتصر له. وقيل له إن القوم نادمون، فقال: دبروا، دبروا-وفي رواية: ذفروا، ذفروا وحيل بينهم وبين ما يشتهون.... الآية

“To Allah we belong and to him is our return. May Allah have mercy on ‘Uthmān and avenge his murder.”

He was told that the people are regretting and he said, “They planned it, they planned it (and in another narration: they are surely going to be terrified, they are surely going to be terrified). And prevention will be placed between them and what they desire, as was done with their kind before, indeed they were in disquieting doubt.”²

And Ibn Ḥajar narrates the following in his *Tahdhīb* from Mu‘tamir ibn Sulaymān³ from Ḥumayd al-Ṭawīl:⁴

1 The verse is in Sūrah Yāsīn: 50. And the narration appears in: al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul* 4/392; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 447.

2 The verse is in Sūrah Saba’: 54. And the narration appears in: al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/392; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 447.

3 Mu‘tamir ibn Sulaymān ibn Ṭarkhān al-Taymī, Abū Muḥammad al-Ṭabarī. One of the great scholars and from the senior members of the sixth *Ṭabaqah* (generation). Ibn Ma‘īn, al-‘Ijlī and Ibn Sa‘d have deemed him reliable. And Abū Ḥātim said, “Reliable and truthful.” He passed away in 187 A.H/802 A.C. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/290; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/575; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 433; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 8/402.

4 Ḥumayd ibn Abī Ḥumayd al-Ṭawīl, Abū ‘Ubaydah al-Khuzā‘ī. He was from the Tābi‘īn. He has been deemed reliable by al-‘Ijlī, Ibn Ma‘īn, and al-Nasā‘ī. And Abū Ḥātim said, “A reliable narrator with who there is no problem.” And Ibn ‘Adī said, “He has many narrations which are accurate.” He passed away in 142 A.H/759 A.C. See: Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/135; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/348; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 3/219; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 1/610.

قيل لأنس بن مالك: إن حب علي وعثمان لا يجتمعان في قلب، فقال أنس: كذبوا، لقد اجتمع حبهما في قلوبنا

Anas ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه was told, “The love of ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān cannot be in one heart together.”

He said, “They are lying, love for both of them is in our hearts together.”¹

And al-Balādhurī narrates from ‘Abd al-Majīd ibn Suhayl² the following:

قال سعد بن أبي وقاص حين رأى الأشتر وحكيم بن جبلة وعبد الرحمن بن عديس: إن أمرا هؤلاء أمراؤه
لأمر سوء

Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ رضي الله عنه said when he saw al-Ashtar, Ḥukaym ibn Jabalah, and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Adīs, “A matter which these people spearhead is indeed an evil matter.”³

And after the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه Sa‘d رضي الله عنه was sought. He was in his orchard. When he received the news he said:

فررنا إلى المدينة بديننا، فصرنا اليوم نفر منها بديننا وقرأ: اولئك الذين ضلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ
يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا اللهم أندمهم ثم خذهم

We fled to Madīnah with our Dīn in order to preserve it, now we have to run away from Madīnah in order to preserve it.

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 7/141.

2 ‘Abd al-Majīd ibn Suhayl ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf al-Zuhrī, Abū Muḥammad al-Madanī. Ibn Mā‘īn, al-Nasā‘ī, ibn al-Barqī, and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable. And Abū Ḥātim has said, “Satisfactory in ḥadīth.” And al-Ḥākim said, “A scholar from the reliable narrators of Madīnah, rare narrator of ḥadīth.” He was from the sixth generation. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 236 (in the section regarding the Tābi‘īn of Madīnah); Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 261; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 6/64; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Mashāhīr ‘Ulamā’ al-Amṣār*, p. 128; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 6/380.

3 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/590; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 404.

He then read, “They are those whose efforts are lost in worldly life, while they think that they are doing well in work.¹ O Allah, make them regret and then take them to task.”²

He was a person whose supplications were readily accepted.³

And Ibn Shabbah narrates from Qays ibn Abī Ḥāzim:⁴

سمعت سعيد بن زيد يقول: والله لو أن أحدا انقض فيما فعلتم في ابن عفان كان محقوقا أن يتقض

I heard Saʿīd ibn Zayd رضي الله عنه saying, “If someone has to collapse due to what you have done to ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه he would be justified.”⁵

And Ibn Shabbah narrates from Ribʿī ibn Ḥirāsh⁶ that he visited Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān رضي الله عنه when the people had already revolted against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. He thus said to him:

1 Sūrah al-Kahf: 104.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/392; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 447.

3 Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/142.

4 Qays ibn Abī Ḥāzim, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Kūfi. A Ṭābiʿī who witnessed the pre-Islamic and the Islamic era. Ibn Maʿīn said, “He is more reliable than al-Zuhrī.” And Ismāʿīl ibn Abī Khālid said, “He was accurate.” And al-Dhahabī said, “Reliable and an authority. They have agreed upon him being an authority. There is no one in the Ṭābiʿīn who has narrated from the ‘Asharah Mubashsharah besides him. He passed away in 98 A.H/716 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/67; Ibn Maʿīn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/489; Khālifāh: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 151; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/145; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 3/392.

5 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/1242; Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 15/204.

6 Ribʿī ibn Ḥirāsh ibn Jaḥsh ibn ‘Amr al-‘Absī, Abū Maryam al-Kūfi. He came to Shām and heard the sermon of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه in jābiyah and narrated from a group of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, some being: ‘Umar, ‘Alī, Ibn Mas‘ūd, etc. Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable and has good narrations.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “A Kūfan Ṭābiʿī who was reliable and from the fine men of the Ṭābiʿīn.” Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. And al-Lālikāʿī said, “His reliability is agreed upon.” He passed away in 100 A.H/718 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/127; Ibn Maʿīn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/159; Khālifāh: *al-Ṭabaqāt*; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 152; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 3/236.

يا رباعي، أخبرني عن قومك، هل خرج منهم أحد؟ قال: نعم فسمي له نفرا، فقال: إني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: من خرج من الجماعة مستذلا للإمارة لقي الله يوم القيامة لا وجه له

“O Ribī, tell me about your people, have any of them revolted?”

He said, “Yes,” and named a few individuals.

He thus said, “I heard Rasūl Allah ﷺ saying, ‘Whoever leaves the majority due to considering the leadership to be insignificant will meet Allah سبحانه وتعالى on the Day of Judgement without a face.’”¹

And Ibn ‘Asākir narrated from Khālīd ibn al-Rabī al-‘Abasī² the following:

سمعتنا بوجع حذيفة، فركب إليه أبو مسعود الأنصاري رضي الله عنه في نفر أنا فيهم إلى المدائن، قال: ثم ذكر قتل عثمان، فقال: اللهم إني لم أشهد، ولم أقتل، ولم أرض

We learnt of the sickness of Ḥudhayfah. Hence Abū Mas‘ūd embarked on a journey to Madā’in with a group of people, including me, to visit him. He made mention of the murder of ‘Uthmān and said, “O Allah I was not present, I did not kill, and I was not happy.”³

And Zayd ibn Wahb narrates from Ḥudhayfah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he said:

أول الفتن الدار، وآخرها الدجال

The first fitnah is the *Dār* (the house, i.e. the besieging and murdering of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in his house) and the last fitnah will be Dajjāl.⁴

1 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 3/1144.

2 Khālīd ibn al-Rabī al-‘Absī al-Kūfī. Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. Ibn Ḥajar said regarding him, “an accepted narrator from the second generation.” See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabūr*, 2/1/148; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 3/329; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taqrīb*, 1/213.

3 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 1/80; Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 15/206; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 458.

4 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 458.

And Ibn Sa'd narrates from Maymūn ibn Mihrān¹ that Ḥudhayfah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ making a circle with his hand said the following when 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was assassinated:

فتق في الإسلام فتق لا يرتقه جبل

Such a hole has been made in Islam that not even a mountain can cover it.²

And Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal narrated from Ibn Sīrīn from Ḥudhayfah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he said the following when he learnt of murder of 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

اللهم إنك تعلم برائتي من دم عثمان، فإن كان الذين قتلوه أصابوا فأني بريء منه، وإن كانوا أخطأوا فقد تعلم براءتي من دمه، وستعلم العرب لئن كانت أصابت بقتله لتحتلبن بذلك لبنا، وإن كانت أخطأت بقتله لتحتلبن بذلك دما.

O Allah you know my innocence in the murder of 'Uthmān. If those who murdered him are right than I disassociate from him, and if they are wrong then you know my innocence in his murder. The Arabs will surely come to know; if they are right they will draw milk (they will attract benefits and favourable conditions), and if they are wrong they will draw blood (they will suffer and shed the blood of one another).

Ibn Sīrīn says that they milked blood and the sword and killing was not raised from them thereafter.³

1 Maymūn ibn Mahrān al-Jazarī, Abū Ayyūb al-Kūfī al-Raqqī. The jurist and ḥadīth expert. Ibn 'Arūbah has included him in the first generation of the Tābī'īn. He was appointed to oversee the taxes of the peninsula and its judicial cases for 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz. 'Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad said, "I heard my father saying, "Maymūn Ibn Mahrān was reliable, more reliable than 'Ikrimah." And al-'Ijlī said, "A reliable Tābī'ī." And Abū Zur'ah and al-Nasā'ī said, "Reliable." And Ibn Sa'd said, "He was reliable and narrated a few narrations." And Ibn Khirāsh said, "A great scholar." He passed away in 116 A.H/734 A.C. See: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/477; Ibn Ma'tīn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/599; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/338; al-'Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 445; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 10/391.

2 Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/80; Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 15/210-211.

3 Aḥmad: *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/493. The annotator has deemed its transmission Ḥasan.

And Ibn ‘Asākir narrated from Jundub ibn ‘Abd Allāh رضي الله عنه, a Ṣaḥābī, that he met Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه and mentioned Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه before him. He thus said:

أما إنهم سيقتلونه! قال قلت: فأين هو؟ قال في الجنة، قلت، فأين قاتلوه؟ قال: في النار.

“They are going to kill him.”

I thus asked, “Where will he be?”

He said, “In Jannah.”

I asked, “And where will his killers be?”

He replied, “In Hell-Fire.”¹

And Ibn Shabbah reports from Ibrāhīm:²

لقد روي عن حذيفة في عثمان رضي الله عنه أحاديث أشهد أن كانت لمقالة كذاب

Such narrations have been narrated from Ḥudhayfah regarding ‘Uthmān that I can testify that they are the forgeries of a liar.³

And Khalīfah has narrated in his *Tārīkh* from Masrūq:⁴

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 388.

2 Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ al-Zuhrī. He narrated from his father. And from him Yūnus ibn Abī Ishāq and al-Mas‘ūdī narrated. Al-Nasā‘ī and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*: (the section regarding the Ṭābī‘īn of Madīnah), p.239; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/319; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 2/129; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 1/153.

3 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 3/1084.

4 Masrūq ibn al-Ajda‘ ibn Mālīk al-Hamadānī al-Wadā‘ī al-Kūfī, Abū ‘Ā‘ishah. A devout worshipper, a jurist and a reliable narrator from the Ṭābī‘īn. Al-Sha‘bī said, “I have not seen anyone more zealous for knowledge than him. He is considered amongst the students of Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه who would teach the people the Sunnah. Al-‘Ijlī said, “A Ṭābī‘ī from Kūfah who was reliable.” And Ibn Sa‘d said, “He was reliable and has good narrations.” Ibn Ḥibbān has mentioned him in his *al-Thiqāt*. And Wakī‘ and others state that Masrūq did not stay behind from the battles of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. He passed away in 63 A.H/682 A.H. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/76; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 426; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/65; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/120; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 10/109.

قالت عائشة: تركتموه كالثوب النقي من الدنس، ثم قربتموه تذبحونه كما يذبح الكبش، قال مسروق: فقلت هذا عملك كتبت إلى الناس تأمرينهم بالخروج عليه، فقالت عائشة، والذي آمن به المؤمنون وكفر به الكافرون ما كتبت إليهم بسواد في بياض حتى جلست مجلسي هذا. قال الأعمش: فكانوا يرون أنه كتب على لسانها

‘Ā’ishah said, “You left him like a garment which is pure from dirt and then brought him forward in order to slaughter him like how a ram is slaughtered.”

So Masrūq said to her, “This was your doings, you wrote to the people instructing them to revolt against him.”

She replied, “By the one in who the believers believe and the disbelievers disbelieve, I did not write to them with any ink on paper till I sat in this gathering.”

Al-A’ mash says that people thus assumed that those letters were forged against her.¹

And in the narration of Ibn Shabbah Umm al-Ḥajjāj al-‘Awfiyyah² is reported to have said:

كنت عند عائشة رضي الله عنها فدخل عليها الأشرع عثمان رضي الله عنه محصور، فقال: يا أم المؤمنين ما تقولين في قتل هذا الرجل؟ قالت: أس ام الحجاج فتكلمت امرأة بينة اللسان صينة، فقالت: معاذ الله أن أمر بسفك دماء المسلمين، وقتل أمامهم، واستحلال حرمتهم. فقال الأشرع: كتبتن إلينا حتى إذا قامت الحرب على ساق انسلتني منها! قال أبو وكيع: فسمعت الأعمش يزيد في هذا الحديث أن عائشة رضي الله عنها حلفت يومئذ بيمين ما حلف بها أحد قبلها ولا بعدها قالت: والذي آمن به المؤمنون وكفر به الكافرون ما كتبت إليهم سوداء في بياض حتى قعدت مقعدتي هذا.

I was by ‘Ā’ishah when Ashtar entered during the time of the incarceration of ‘Uthmān.

1 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 176; Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 7/195 (this transmission to her is Ṣaḥīḥ).

2 I did not come across her biography in the reference I have at my disposal.

He said, “O Umm al-Mu’minīn, what do you say about the murder of this man?”

Umm al-Ḥajjāj said, “A women who was clear in her speech and pure in her conduct (referring to ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said, “I seek the refuge of Allah from ordering the bloodshed of Muslims, the killing of their leader, and the violation of their sanctity.”

Ashtar replied, “You people wrote to us, then when the war became intense you sneaked out of it.”

Abū Wakī’1 says, “I heard al-A’mash adding to this narration that ‘Ā’ishah took an oath which no one before her or after her had ever taken. She said, ‘By the one in who the believers believe and the disbelievers disbelieve I did not write anything with ink on paper to them till my seating in this place.’”2

And al-Ṭabarī narrates from ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا:

كان الناس يتجنون على عثمان ويزرون على عماله ويأتوننا فيستشروننا فيما يخبروننا عنهم، ويرون حسنا من كلامنا في صلاح بينهم، فننظر في ذلك فنجده برياً تقياً وفيها، ونجدهم فجرة كذبة يحاولون غير ما يظهر، فلما قوا على الكائنة كاثروه فاقتموا عليه داره، واستحلوا الدم الحرام والبلد الحرام بلا ترة وعذر

People were offending ‘Uthmān and were denigrating his governors. They would come to us and consult with us regarding what they told us about

1 Al-Jarrāḥ ibn Malīḥ ibn ‘Adī ibn al-Ḥārith al-Rawāsī al-Kūfī, Abū Wakī’. ‘Uthmān al-Dārimī said, “There is no problem with him. The same is suggested by Ibn Abī Maryam.” And he said in another place, “Reliable.” And Abū al-Walīd and Abū Dāwūd have also deemed him reliable.” And al-Nasā’ī and al-‘Ijlī said, “There is no problem with him.” And Ibn ‘Adī said, “He has good narrations and accurate reports and he is truthful. However, on the other hand, Ibn Ma’tīn, Ibn Sa’d, Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him weak. He passed away in 176 A.H/792 A.C. See: Ibn Ma’tīn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/78; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/227; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 95; al-Ājurrī: *al-Su’ālāt*, p. 116; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*.

2 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/1224.

them and would consider those aspects of our speech to be good which benefitted them. We would look into the matter and would find ‘Uthmān to be noble, pious, and loyal and we would find them to be offenders and liars trying to accomplish a motive other than what they displayed. Hence, when they were able to overpower him in number they did so and intruded into his house. Thereafter they violated sacred blood and violated the sacred city without any fear of blame or excuse.¹

And al-Balādhurī narrates from ‘Urwah from ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا the following:

ليتني كنت نسيا منسيا قبل أمر عثمان، فوالله ما احببت له شيئا إلا منيت بمثله، حتى لو أحببت أن يقتل
لقتلت

I wish I was a forgotten matter before the issue of ‘Uthmān. By Allah whatever I loved for him I desired the same for myself, to the extent that if I loved that he be killed I would have desired to be killed as well.²

And Ibn Shabbah narrates from Ṭalq ibn Khushshāf the following:

قال: قلت لعائشة: فيم قتل أمير المؤمنين عثمان؟ قالت: قتل مظلوما، لعن الله قتلته

I asked ‘Ā’ishah, “For what reason was Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Uthmān killed?”

She said, “He was killed unjustly, may Allah curse his murderers.”³

And Umm Sulaym al-Anṣāriyyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said the following when she heard of the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

رحمه الله أما إنه لم يجلوا بعده إلا دما

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/1224.

2 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/596; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/462, the annotator has deemed its transmission Ṣaḥīḥ.

3 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/1244.

May Allah have mercy on him. Behold they have not milked anything after him besides blood.¹

Likewise it is narrated from some of the wives of Nabī ﷺ that they said the following after the demise of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه:

هجم البلاء، وانكفأ الإسلام

Calamity has struck and Islam has been overturned.²

And Abū Maryam³ narrates:

رأيت أبا هريرة يوم قتل عثمان وله صغيرتان وهو ممسك بهما وهو يقول: قتل والله عثمان على غير وجه الحق

I saw Abū Hurayrah the day ‘Uthmān was martyred. He had two braids of platted hair which he held and said, “By Allah ‘Uthmān has been unjustly killed.”⁴

And Ibn Kathīr narrates from Abū Bakrah in *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* that he said:

لأن آخر من السماء إلى الأرض أحب إلي من أن أشرك في قتل عثمان

I would prefer falling from the sky to the earth than having a share in the murder of ‘Uthmān.⁵

1 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 7/195.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 539.

3 Abū Maryam al-Anṣārī, and some say: al-Ḥaḍramī al-Shāmī, the freed slave of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه. He narrated from Abū Hurayrah and from Jābir and was alive during the era of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. Ibn Abī Ḥātim said, “His name was ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Mā‘iz.” Al-‘Ijlī said, “A Tābi‘ī from Shām who was reliable.” See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr* (section of Kunā), 9/69; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 510; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 9/437; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 12/231.

4 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 493.

5 Ibid. p. 493.

And Abū ‘Uthmān al-Nahdī¹ narrates from Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī the following:

إن قتل عثمان لو كان هدى احتلبت به الأمة لبناء، ولكنه كان ضلالا فاحتلبت به دما

If the murder of ‘Uthmān was based on guidance, the Ummah would have drawn milk because of it, but because it was based on deviance they drew blood because of it.²

And Ibn ‘Asākir has narrated from Samurah ibn Jundub رضي الله عنه:

إن الإسلام كان في حصن حصين، وإنهم ثلموا في الإسلام ثلثة بقتلهم عثمان، وإنهم شرطوا أشرطة، وإنهم لم يسدوا ثلمتهم ولا يسدونها إلى يوم القيامة، وإن أهل المدينة كانت فيهم الخلافة فأخرجوها ولم تعد فيهم

Islam was in a well-secured fortress, but by them killing ‘Uthmān they have caused a hole in Islam, surely they have split asunder several things. They have not covered the hole they brought about, or actually will never be able to cover it till the Day of Judgment. The Khilāfah was within the people of Madīnah, these people removed it from them and thus it never returned to them again.³

As for the stance of ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir رضي الله عنه, it is quite clear from what he said when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه sent him with his son, Ḥasan رضي الله عنه, to Kūfah to motivate the people to march in order to settle the matter of Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنه. Hence, it is reported that Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه met Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī and embraced him and then asked ‘Ammār:

1 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Mull ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Adī, Abū ‘Uthmān al-Nahdī. A Tābiī who witness the pre-Islamic and Islamic era. Al-Ājurrī narrates from Abū Dāwūd, “The most senior Tābiī of Kūfah.” And Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrates from his father, “He was reliable.” And Abū Zur‘ah, al-Nasāī, and Ibn Khirāsh said, “Reliable.” Ibn Ḥajar said, “Accurate narrator and a devout worshipper.” He passed away in 95 A.H/713 A.C. See: Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/359; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 505; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 5/283; al-Ājurrī: *al-Su‘ālāt*, p. 153; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taqrīb*, 1/499.

2 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/1245; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 490.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 493.

يا أبا اليقظان أعدوت على أمير المؤمنين عثمان قتلته؟

“O Abū al-Yaqqān, did you transgress against Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Uthmān by siding with his murderers?”

He replied:

لم أفعل

I did not do so.¹

And Ibn Shabbah narrates in *Tārīkh al-Madīnah* from Muslim ibn Sa‘īd:²

ما سمعت ابن مسعود قاتلا في عثمان سوءا قط، ولقد سمعته يقول: لئن قتلتموه لا تستخلفون

I have not heard Ibn Mas‘ūd say anything bad about ‘Uthmān. Yes I heard him saying, “If you kill him you will not be able to appoint after him.”³

And *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍīrah* the following wording appears:

مهلا فإنكم إن قتلتموه لا تصيبون مثله

Go easy, for if you kill him, you will not find someone like him.⁴

And in the version of Ibn Abī Shaybah the following appears:

لئن قتلوا عثمان لا يصيبوا منه خلفا

If they kill ‘Uthmān they will not find someone to replace him.⁵

1 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 7/236.

2 I did not come across his biography in the references I have at my disposal.

3 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 7/236.

4 Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍīrah*, 2/195.

5 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 15/204-205.

And al-Haythamī narrates in *Majma‘ al-Zawā‘id* from Kulthūm ibn ‘Āmir¹ from Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه:

ما سرنى أن رميت عثمان بسهم ثم أصاب أم أخطأ وأن لي مثل أحد ذهباً

It would not please me that I shoot an arrow at ‘Uthmān, which then hits him or misses him, and I am given in lieu of that gold equivalent to mount Uḥud in lieu of that.²

And al-Ṭabarī narrates from Sarī from Sayf:

لما أحبط بعثمان رضي الله عنه خرج عمرو بن العاص من المدينة متوجها نحو الشام، وقال: والله يا أهل المدينة ما يقيم بها أحد فيدركه قتل هذا الرجل إلا ضربه الله عز وجل بذل، من لم يستطع نصره فليهرب، فساروا، وسار معه ابنه عبد الله و محمد

When siege was laid on ‘Uthmān, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ left Madīnah heading toward Shām. At that time he said, “O people of Madīnah, whoever will stay in Madīnah and happens to witness the murder of this man, Allah سبحانه وتعالى will afflict him with humiliation. Whoever cannot help him should flee.” Hence they started to move, and he was joined by his two sons, ‘Abd Allāh and Muḥammad.³

And Abū Nu‘aym has narrated in *Ma‘rifat al-Ṣaḥābah* from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه:

عثمان بن عفان ذو النورين قتل مظلوماً، أوتي كفتلين من الأجر

‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, the bearer of two lights, he was killed unjustly and will be granted double reward.⁴

1 Kulthūm ibn ‘Āmir ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Abī Ḍirār, also known as Kulthūm ibn al-Muṣṭaliq. Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his in the category of the reliable Tābi‘īn. And al-Dārimī says from Ibn Mā‘īn, “Reliable.” See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/226; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 195; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 7/163; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 8/444.

2 Al-Haythamī: *Majma‘ al-Zawā‘id*, 9/93.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/558.

4 Abū Nu‘aym: *Ma‘rifat al-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/245; al-Ṭabarānī: *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, 1/46.

And Ibn Shabbah narrates from Rayṭah the freed slave of Usāmah ibn Zayd:

بعثتني أسامة إلى عثمان يقول: فأن أحببت نقبنا لك الدار، وخرجت حتى تلحق بمأمك يقاتل من أطاعك من عصاك

Usāmah sent me to ‘Uthmān with the following, “If you want we can make a hole for you in the house wherefrom you can leave and reach your place of safety. Thereafter those who obey you will fight those who disobey you.”¹

And al-Bukhārī has narrated in his *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr* that Ḥārithah ibn al-Nu‘mān رضي الله عنه, a Ṣaḥābī who witnessed Badr, said to ‘Uthmān whilst he was under siege:

إن شئت أن نقاتل دونك

If you want we can fight ahead of you.²

And Aḥmad has narrated from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām رضي الله عنه:

لا تقتلوا عثمان فإنكم إن فعلتم لم تصلوا جميعا أبدا

Do not kill ‘Uthmān, for if you do so you will never perform Ṣalāh unitedly again.³

And Ibn Sa‘d has narrated from Abū Ṣāliḥ:⁴

سمعت عبد الله بن سلام يوم قتل عثمان يقول: والله لا تهرقون محجما من دم أي من دم عثمان إلا ازددتم به من الله بعدا

1 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 3/1211.

2 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 1/76.

3 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/474. The annotator has deemed its transmission Ṣaḥīḥ.

4 Abū Ṣāliḥ, the freed slave of ‘Uthmān. He has narrated from ‘Uthmān and Ḥassān ibn ‘Aṭīyyah has narrated from him. Al-‘Ijlī has said, “Reliable.” See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 5/303; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/710; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 501.

I heard ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām saying the day ‘Uthmān was martyred, “By Allah you will not shed a cup full of blood, i.e. the blood of ‘Uthmān, but that you will go further away from Allah سُبْحَانَكَ يَا رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ.”¹

And Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām² narrates that he came to visit Ḥajjāj. The doorkeepers denied him entry and did not leave him till ‘Anbasah ibn Sa‘īd³ came:

فاستأذن له فأمر به أن يدخل عليه، فسلم، فرد عليه السلام، ثم مشى فقبل رأسه، فأمر الحجاج رجلين مما يلي السرير أن يوسعا له، فجلس فقال له الحجاج: لله أبوك؟ هل تعلم حديثنا حدثه أبوك عبد الملك أمير المؤمنين عن عبد الله بن سلام جدك؟ قال: أي حديث يرحمك الله؟ قال: حديث عثمان إذ حصره أهل مصر، فقال: نعم، قد علمت ذلك الحديث، فقال: أقبل عبد الله بن سلام، فصرخ الناس له حتى دخل على عثمان، فوجد عثمان وحده في الدار ليس معه أحد قد عزم على الناس أن يخرجوا عنه فخرجوا، فسلم عليه عبد الله بن سلام، فقال: السلام عليك أمير المؤمنين ورحمة الله، فقال أمير المؤمنين: ما جاء بك يا عبد الله بن سلام؟ قال: جئت لأبيت معك حتى يفتح الله لك أو استشهد معك، فإني أعزم عليك بما ولي عليك من الحق لما خرجت إليهم، خير يسوقه الله بك أو شر يدفعه الله بك، فسمع وأطاع، فخرج إلى القوم، فلما رأوه عظموه، وظنوا أنه قد جاءهم ببعض الذي يسرهم، فقام خطيباً، فاجتمعوا إليه فحمد الله وأثنى عليه فقال: إن الله بعث محمد بشيراً ونذيراً، يبشر بالجنة وينذر بالنار، فأظهر الله من اتبعه من المؤمنين على الدين كله ولو كره المشركون، ثم اختار الله له المساكن، فجعل مسكنه المدينة، فجعلها دار الهجرة والإيمان، وجعل بها قبره وقبر أزواجه. ثم قال: إن الله بعث محمداً هدى ورحمة، فمن يهتدي من هذه الأمة فإنما يهتدي بهدي الله، ومن يضل منهم فإنما يضل بعد السنة والحجة، فبلغ محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم الذي أرسل به، ثم قبضه الله إليه، ثم إنه كان من قبلكم من الأمم إذا قتل النبي بين ظهرانيهم كانت دينه سبعين ألف مقاتل كلهم يقتل به، وإذا قتل الخليفة كانت دينه خمسة وثلاثين ألف

1 Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/81.

2 Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām al-Isrā‘īlī al-Madanī. He narrated from his father and ‘Amr ibn Yaḥyā narrated from him. Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*, and al-Dhahabī has deemed him reliable. Ibn Ḥajar said, “Acceptable narrator from the fourth generation.” See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/262; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 8/118; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/99; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 9/534; *al-Taqrīb*, 2/221.

3 ‘Anbasah ibn Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ, Abū Ayyūb al-Kūfī. A Ṭābī. He has narrated from a group of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم amongst them: Abū Hurayrah and Anas رضي الله عنهما. Ibn Ma‘īn, Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasā‘ī, al-Dāraquṭnī, al-Dārimī, and al-Fasawī have deemed him reliable. Ibn Sa‘d said, “Reliable and a narrator of Ḥadīth.” See: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/345; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/457; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/35; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 158; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 8/155.

مقاتل كلهم يقتل به، فلا تعجلوا إلى هذا الشيخ أمير المؤمنين يقتل اليوم، فإني أقسم بالله لقد حضر أجله، نجده في كتاب الله، ثم أقسم لكم بالله الذي نفسي بيده لا يقتله رجل منكم إلا لقي الله يوم القيامة مشلا يده مقطوعة، ثم اعلموا أنه ليس للوالد على ولده حق إلا لهذا الشيخ عليكم مثله، وقد أقسم لكم بالله ما زالت الملائكة بهذه المدينة منذ دخلها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلي اليوم، وما زال سيف الله مغمودا عنكم منذ دخلها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فلا تسلوا سيف الله بعد إذ غمد عنكم، ولا تطردوا جيرانكم من الملائكة، فلما قال ذلك لهم قاموا يسبونهم ويقولون: كذب اليهودي، فقال لهم عبد الله: كذبتهم وأثمتهم ما أنا باليهودي، إني لأحد المؤمنين، يعلم ذلك الله ورسوله والمؤمنون، ولقد أنزل الله عز وجل في قرآنا: **قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ كَانُ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَكَفَرْتُمْ بِهِ وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَيِّ مِثْلَهُ فَأَمَنْ وَأَسْتَكْبِرْتُمْ** وأنزل في آية أخرى: **قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ**. فانصرفوا من عنده دخلوا على عثمان فذبحوه كما تذبح الحملان، فقام عبد الله بن سلام على باب المسجد حين فرغوا منه وقتلته في المسجد- فقال: يا أهل مصر، يا قتلة عثمان، أقتلتهم أمير المؤمنين؟ فوالذي نفسي بيده لا يزال بعده عهد منكوث ودم مسفوح ومال مقسوم أبدا ما بقيتم.

He sought permission for him and thus was given permission to see him. He greeted him and Ḥajjāj replied. He thereafter went and kissed his forehead and Ḥajjāj told the two men seated near his throne to make space for him whereafter he sat. Ḥajjāj asked, “What a brilliant person your father was. Do you know the ḥadīth which your father narrated from your grandfather, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām, to Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān?”

He asked, “Which ḥadīth?”

“The ḥadīth regarding ‘Uthmān and the people of Egypt besieging him,” he said.

He replied, “Yes, I know that ḥadīth. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām came and the people shouted out for him till he eventually managed to enter upon ‘Uthmān. He found ‘Uthmān alone in his house, for he had emphasised upon the people to leave due to which they left.

‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām greeted him saying, *‘Al-Salām ‘Alayka Amīr al-Mu‘minīn wa Raḥmat Allah.*’

Amīr al-Mu‘minīn asked him, “What has brought you, O ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām?”

He said, 'I have come to spend the night with you till Allah ﷻ makes an opening for you or I am martyred with you, for I don't see them but as people who will kill you. And if they do kill you that will be good for you and bad for them.'

'Uthmān said, 'I emphasise upon you because of my right over you that you go out to them, for probably Allah ﷻ will bring about some goodness or repel some evil because of you.'

He thus listened and obeyed and came out to the people. When they saw him, they respected him and assumed that he came to them with some news which would please them. He stood to address them and soon they gathered around him. He praised Allah and thereafter said, 'Allah ﷻ sent Muḥammad as a bearer of glad tidings and a warner, bearer of the glad tidings of Jannah and a warner from the Hell-Fire. Allah ﷻ gave those who followed him victory over all religions despite the polytheist hating that. Thereafter Allah ﷻ chose for him an abode and made Madīnah his abode. He made it the locus of īmān and migration and made his grave and the graves of his wives therein. Allah ﷻ sent Muḥammad ﷺ as a mercy and guidance, hence whoever will attain guidance in this Ummah will only attain it by the guidance of Allah, and whoever goes astray will only go astray after the Sunnah and the evidence has been conveyed. Muḥammad ﷺ conveyed what he was sent with and was thereafter taken away by Allah ﷻ. Then know that if a Nabī was killed in the people of the past then in retaliation for his death seventy thousand people would be killed, and if a Khalīfah was killed, then in retaliation for his death thirty five thousand people would be killed. So do not hasten by killing the elderly man, Amīr al-Mu'minīn, today, for by Allah his time of departure has indeed arrived, we find this in the Book of Allah ﷻ. Thereafter I take an oath and say that whoever will kill him today will meet Allah ﷻ on the Day of Judgement with his hand paralysed. Know that this person has the same right over you as a father has over his son. I take an oath in the name of Allah ﷻ and tell you that the angels have constantly been present in Madīnah since the coming of Rasūl Allah

صلى الله عليه وسلم, so do not unsheathe the sword of Allah after he has kept it covered from you and do not chase the angels, your neighbours.’

When he said that to them they stood up swearing him and saying, ‘The Jew has lied.’

He thus retorted, ‘You have lied and earned sin. I am not a Jew, I am one of the believers, Allah ﷻ and the believers know that; Allah ﷻ revealed the Qur’ān regarding me, ‘Say, “Have you considered: if it (i.e. the Qur’ān) was from Allah, and you disbelieved in it while a witness from the children of Israel has testified to something similar and believed while you were arrogant...”¹ And in another verse he said, ‘Sufficient is Allah as witness between me and you, and the witness of whoever has knowledge of the scripture.’²

They left and intruded into the house of ‘Uthmān and slaughtered him like how a kid is slaughtered. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām thereafter stood at the door of the masjid, whilst his killers were inside, and said, ‘O Egyptians, O the killers of ‘Uthmān, have you really killed Amīr al-Mu’minīn? By the one in whose hand is my soul, after him covenants will always be violated, blood will always be shed, and wealth will always be seized as long as you will live.’³

And al-Khazrajī⁴ has narrated from him in *Khulāṣah al-Tahdhīb* the following:

1 Sūrah al-Aḥqāf: 10.

2 Sūrah Ra’d: 43.

3 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/262 (through the transmission of Shu‘ayb ibn Ṣafwān); al-Tirmidhī: *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (from ‘Abd al-Malik ibn ‘Umayr, he has deemed it Ḥasan), 5/235; al-Ṭabarānī has also quoted it, as appears in: al-Haythamī: *Majma’ al-Zawā’id*, 9/93 (has deemed its narrators reliable): Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/476.

4 Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī al-Khayr ibn ‘Abd al-‘Alīm al-Khazrajī al-Anṣārī al-Sā’idī, Ṣafīyy al-Dīn. He had knowledge regarding ḥadīth and its transmitters. He authored *Khulāṣah Tadhīb Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā’ al-Rijāl*. He passed away in 923 A.H./after 1517 A.H. See: al-Zarkalī: *al-A’lām*, 1/160; ‘Umar Riḍā Kaḥḥālāh: *Mu’jam al-Mu’allifīn*, 1/288; Nāṣir al-Suwaydān: *Madākhil al-Mu’allifīn wa al-A’lām al-‘Arab*, p. 164.

لقد فتح الناس على أنفسهم بقتل عثمان باب فتنة لا يغلق إلى يوم القيامة

The people have opened upon themselves a door of fitnah which will not be shut till the Day of Judgement by killing ‘Uthmān.¹

And the day ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred he cried and said:

اليوم هلكت العرب

Today the Arabs have been destroyed.²

And Ibn ‘Asākir narrates from Nāfi³ from Ibn ‘Umar:

لقيت ابن عباس وكان خليفة عثمان على الموسم - موسم الحج - عام قتل، فأخبرته بقتله، فعظم أمره وقال:
والله إنه لمن الذين يأمرون بالتسقط فتمنيت أن أكون قتلت يومئذ

I met Ibn ‘Abbās, he was appointed as the deputy of ‘Uthmān in the season of Ḥajj the year he was killed, and I informed him of his murder. He considered it to be very grave and said, “By Allah, he was from those who enforced justice.” At that time I desired that I was rather killed that day.⁴

And Ibn Sa‘d narrated in his *al-Ṭabaqāt* from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه:

1 Al-Khazrajī: *Khulāṣah Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, p. 261.

2 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaf*, 15/212.

3 Nāfi’ the freed slave of Ibn ‘Umar, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Madanī, the jurist. Ibn ‘Umar came to own after one of the campaigns. He was from the senior Tābi‘īn. Ibn Sa‘d said, “Reliable and narrated ḥadīth in abundance.” And al-Bukhārī said, “The most Ṣaḥīḥ transmission is Mālik from Nāfi’ from Ibn ‘Umar.” Al-‘Ijlī and al-Nasā‘ī also deemed him reliable. Ibn Khirāsh said, “Reliable and noble.” And al-Khalīlī said, “Nāfi’ was the leader of the Tābi‘īn in Madīnah, a leader in knowledge, who undisputedly accepted, accurate in his narrations, he is not known to have made a mistake in a single narration. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt* (the section regarding the Tābi‘īn of Madīnah), p. 142; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/602; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 447; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 151; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 10/412.

4 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 212.

لو أجمع الناس على قتل عثمان لرموا بالحجارة كما رمي قوم لوط

If the people concurred upon killing ‘Uthmān they would be destroyed with stones like how the people of Lūṭ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ were destroyed.¹

And Zahdam al-Jarmī² said:

خطب ابن عباس فقال: لو لم يطلب الناس بدم عثمان لرموا بالحجارة من السماء

Ibn ‘Abbās delivered a sermon and said, “If the people did not seek retaliation for the blood of ‘Uthmān they would be destroyed with stones from the heaven.”³

And al-Balādhurī narrates from Nāfi‘ from Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا:

ما زال ابن عباس ينهى عن قتل عثمان ويعظم شأنه، حتى جعلت ألوم نفسي أن لا أكون قلت مثل ما قال

Ibn ‘Abbās continually prohibited from the killing of ‘Uthmān and deemed it a grave matter, to the extent that I started reproaching myself for not saying what he was saying.⁴

And Ibn Shabbah narrates from Ṭalq ibn Khushshāf:

انطلقنا إلى المدينة ومعنا قرط بن خيصة، فلقينا الحسن بن علي فقال له قرط: فيم قتل أمير المؤمنين عثمان؟ قال: قتل مظلوما

1 Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/80; Ibn Ma’in: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/295.

2 Zahdam ibn Muḍarrib al-Jarmī, Abū Muslim al-Baṣrī. A Tābī‘ī. He has narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās ‘Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn and others, and Qatādah and Abū al-Tayyāḥ have narrated from him. Al-‘Ijlī said, “A reliable Tābī‘ī.” And Ibn Ḥibbān made mention of him in *al-Thiqāt*. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/1/448; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 166; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 3/627; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 3/341.

3 Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/80.

4 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/595.

We went to Madīnah and with us was Qurṭ ibn Khaythamah.¹ We met Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī and thus Qurṭ ask him, “Why was Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Uthmān killed?”

He said, “He was killed unjustly.”²

And Abū Ḥumayd al-Sā‘idī, a veteran of Badr, said:

اللهم إن لك علي الأفعال كذا ولا أفعل كذا ولا أضحك حتى ألقاك

O Allah, I make a pledge to you that will not do this, and I will not do that, and I will not laugh till I meet you.³

And Yazīd ibn Abī ‘Ubayd⁴ narrated:

لما قتل عثمان خرج سلمة بن الأكوع - وهو بدري - من المدينة قبل الربذة فلم يزل بها حتى كان قبيل موته

When ‘Uthmān was martyred Salamah ibn al-Akwa‘, who was a veteran of Badr, left Madīnah and went to Rabadhah and stayed there till just before his death.⁵

And Yasār ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān⁶ states:

1 Did not come across his biography in the books I have at my disposal.

2 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/1245.

3 Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/80.

4 Yazīd ibn Abī ‘Ubayd al-Ḥijāzī, Abū Khālīd al-Aslamī, the freed slave of Salamah ibn al-Akwa‘. A Tābī‘ī. al-Ājurrī said narrating from Abū Dāwūd, “Reliable.” And ibn Ma‘īn, al-‘Ijlī, Abū Ḥātim, and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable. And Ibn Sa‘d said, “He was reliable and has a lot of narrations.” He passed away in 147 A.H./764 A.H. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt* (the section regarding the Tābī‘īn of Madīnah), p. 359; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/675; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 479; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 9/280; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 11/349.

5 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/1242.

6 Abū al-Walīd al-Madanī al-Makkī, Yasār ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. A Tābī‘ī. Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. And Ibn Ḥajar said, “An accepted narrator from the fourth generation.” See: al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/343; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 12/274; *al-Taqrīb*, 2/487.

أن بكير بن عبد الله سأله: ما فعل خالك؟ قلت لزم البيت. قال: ما مات ناس من أهل بدر حتى لزموا البيوت بعد قتل عثمان، فما خرجوا من بيوتهم إلا في قبورهم

Bukayr ibn ‘Abd Allāh¹ asked him, “What is your uncle doing?”

I replied, “He is staying at home.”

He said, “After the demise of ‘Uthmān many of the veterans of Badr kept to their houses, they did not leave their houses but for their graves.”²

And al-Ḥākīm has narrated from al-Sha‘bī, “I have not heard an obituary of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ better than that of Ka‘b ibn Mālīk رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

وأيقن أن الله ليس بغافل	فكف يديه ثم أغلق بابيه
عفا الله عن كل امرئ لم يقاتل	وقال لأهل الدار لا تقتلوهم
عداوة والبغضاء بعد التواصل	فكيف رأيت الله صب عليهم
عن الناس إدبار الرياح الجوافل	وكيف رأيت الخير أدبر بعده

He withheld his hands and then closed his door. And He knew that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is not unaware.

And he said to the inmates of the house do not kill them, may Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى forgive every person who does not fight them.

So did you see how Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى poured upon them enmity and hatred after unity?

And did you see how the good retreated after him from the people, like the retreating of winds that carry clouds.³

1 Bukayr ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ashajj al-Qurashī al-Madanī. Aḥmad, Ibn Ma‘īn, Abū Ḥātim, al-‘Ijlī, and al-Nasā‘ī have deemed him reliable. And al-Bukhārī said, “He was from the pious.” And Aḥmad ibn Ṣāliḥ al-Miṣrī said, “If you see Bukayr narrating from someone then do not ask about him, for he is reliable and there is no doubt about that.” He passed away in the era of Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik in 117 A.H./735 A.H. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt* (section on the Tābi‘īn of the Madīnah), p. 308; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/113; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 86; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 2/403.

2 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/403.

3 Al-Ḥākīm: *al-Mustadrak*: chapter of knowing the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ: 3/105.

And he also said the following in a poem regarding the good mannerisms of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and his stance regarding the fitnah:

إمامهم للكمنكرات وللعدر	عجبت لقوم أسلموا بعد عزهم
لجادلهم عثمان باليد والنصر	فلو أنهم سيموا من الضيم خطة
ولا كان في الأقسام بالضيق الصدر	فما كان في دين الإله بخائن
ولا تاركا للحق في النهي والأمر	ولا كان نكاثا لعهد محمد
وما بي عنه من عزاء ولا صبر	فإن أبكه أعذر لفقديه عدله
لفقد ابن عفان الخليفة من غدر	وهل لا مرئى يبكي لعظم مصيبة
وأهتك منه للمحارم والستر	فلم أر يوما كان أعظم ميتة
ومولاهم في حالة العسر واليسر	غداة أصيب المسلمون بخيرهم

I am amazed at a people who surrendered their Imām after their glory to evil and treachery.

Had they devised out of their oppression a plot, ‘Uthmān would have combatted them with strength and help.

For he was not treacherous in the Dīn of Allah and he was not miserly in his distributions.

He was not one who breached the pledge of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, nor was he one who left the truth in his prohibiting and enjoining.

If I cry over him I am to be excused due to me losing his justice. And there is nothing that can console me regarding his loss, nor can I bear that patiently.

Can there be any excuse for a person who cries due to a great calamity, due to the loss of the Khalīfah Ibn ‘Affān?

I have not seen a day in which someone greater has passed away, and in which the sacred laws of Allah and his veil were violated.

Than the morning in which the Muslims were struck with the loss of their best and their leader in times of difficulty and ease.¹

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 547.

And the stance of Ḥassān ibn Thābit رضي الله عنه is also quite clear from his eulogy regarding ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and his satire of those who opposed him:

وغزوتمونا عند قبر محمد	أتركتم غزو الدروب وراءكم
ولبئس أمر الفاجر المتعمد	فلبئس هدي المسلمين هديتم
حول المدينة كل لين مذود	إن تقدموا نجعل قري سرواتكم
ولمثل أمر أميركم لم يرشد	أو تدبروا فلبئس ما سافرتم
بدن تنحر عند باب المسجد	وكان أصحاب النبي عشية
أمسى مقيما في بقيع الغرقد	أبكي أبا عمرو لحسن بلائه

Did you abandon fighting in the various regions and thereafter come to fight us by the grave of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم?

Indeed an evil way of the Muslims have you treaded, and indeed evil is the matter of the intentional imposter.

If you advance, we will make the welcome treat of your leaders all over Madīnah spears which will defend us.

And if you retreat, then indeed wretched was your journey, and for a matter like the matter of your leader he was not guided.

It is as though the Companions of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم in the evening were like camels being slaughtered at the door of the Masjid.

I cry over the demise of Abū ‘Amr because of his great contribution, he has now become a resident of Baqī.¹

And he also said:

يد الله في ذاك الأديم المقدد	ماذا أردتم من أخي الدين باركت
وحتمتم بأمر جائر غير مهتد	قتلتم ولي الله في جوف داره
وأوفيتم بالعهد عهد محمد	فهلا رعيتم ذمة الله بينكم
وأوفاكم قدما لدى كل مشهد	ألم يك فيكم ذا بلاء ومصداق
على قتل عثمان الرشيد	فلا ظفرت أيمان قوم تبايعوا

1 Ḥassān: Dīwān, p. 62.

What did you want from the possessor of Dīn? May Allah bless that lacerated skin.

You killed the friend of Allah in the centre of his house, and you came with an oppressive matter which was bereft of guidance.

Why did you not take into consideration the pact of Allah between you, why did you not fulfil the pledge, the pledge of Muḥammad?

Was he not a man of contribution and truth amongst you, and was he not the most loyal at every moment of trial?

May not the agreements of such people ever succeed who pledged to kill 'Uthmān, the rightly guided.¹

And Ayman ibn Khuraym ibn Fātik al-Asadī رضي الله عنه said:

أي قتل حرام ذبحوا ذبحوا
يخشوا على مطمح الكف الذي طمحو
وباب جور على سلطانهم فتحوا
من سفح ذلك الدم الزاكي الذي سفحوا
تمام ظمء كما يستورد النضح
لقوا أثاما وخسرانا فما ربحوا

تفاقد الذابحو عثمان ضاحية
ضحوا بعثمان في الشهر الحرام ولم
فأى سنة جور سن أولهم
ماذا أرادوا أضل الله سعيهم
فاستوردهم سيوف المسلمين على
إن الذين تولوا قتله سفها

The slaughterers of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه searched openly which sacred blood they were going to slaughter, may they be slaughtered.

They assassinated 'Uthmān in the sacred month without fearing that people will aspire to do with them as they aspired to do with 'Uthmān.

What an evil way their spearheaders laid out for them and what an evil door of oppression did they open upon their leader.

What did they intend, may Allah make their efforts in vein, by shedding his pure blood which they shed?

1 Ibid.

So the swords of the Muslims brought them to drink, whilst they were thirsty, just as a water camel is brought.

Those who took charge of foolishly killing him, have indeed accrued sin and harm and did not profit in any way.¹

And al-Nābighah al-Ja'dī, a Ṣaḥābī رضي الله عنه, said the following regarding 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه

ما يظنن بناس قتلوا
وابن عفان حنيفا مسلما
أهل صفين وأصحاب الجمل
ولحوم الإبل لما تنتقل

What can be assumed regarding a people who killed the people of Ṣiffīn and the people of Jamal?

*And 'Uthmān who was solely dedicated to Allah and was a true Muslim, whilst the meat of the camels have not yet been moved.*²

And al-Qāsim ibn Umayyah ibn Abī al-Ṣalt, a Ṣaḥābī رضي الله عنه, said:

لعمري لبئس الذي ضحيت به
خلاف رسول الله يوم الأضحى

*By my life, very evil indeed is the sacrifice that you have made against Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم on the day of sacrifice.*³

From all of the aforementioned, it is probably clear that there can be no truth to those reports which depict the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم as role players and conspirators in the murder of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه. For each one tried to help him and defend him, they were willing to sacrifice their own lives in order to spare his. However, he ordered them to withdraw and told them that he wanted to meet Allah whilst pure and oppressed.

1 Al-Mubarrid: *al-Kāmil fī al-Lughah*, 2/39.

2 Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 527.

3 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 177.

Also, the innocence of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ in the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ has been established just as the innocence of the wolf was established in the killing of Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. Ḥasan al-Baṣṣī who was an eyewitness was asked, “Was anyone of the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār amongst those who murdered ‘Uthmān?” He said:

كانوا أعلاجا من أهل مصر

They were the riffraff of the people of Egypt.¹

And when Ḥudhayfah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ received the news of the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, when he himself was on his deathbed, he said:

الحمد لله الذي سبق بي الفتن قادتها وعلو جها

All praise is to Allah who is taking me away from the trials between their leaders and their riffraff.²

1 Ibid. p. 176.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 488.

Section Three: The Stance of the Tābī'īn and Those who Followed them Regarding the Fitnah

The stance of the Tābī'īn has been no different than that of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in defending 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه, respecting his sacred position, clearly stating that he was unjustly killed, deeming his murder to be a very grave matter, pleading there innocence in his murder, and condemning his murderers. For their primary objective was to upkeep the Sunnah and eradicate innovation without bias and personal tendencies. Therefore we find that many of their narrations regarding the First Fitnah portray 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه as a clean heart who was free from what all his opponents had attributed to him and accused him of.

It is narrated from Ka'b al-Aḥbār¹ that he said:

لا تقتلوا عثمان، فوالله لئن قتلتموه ليستحلن القتل ما بين دروب الروم إلى الصنعاء، ولتكونن فتن وضغائن

Do not kill 'Uthmān. For by Allah, if you kill him, murder will be made admissible between the regions of Rome and Ṣan'ā', and surely there will be trials and hatred.²

And Zayd ibn Ṣūḥān,³ one of those who witnessed the incarceration of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه, said the day 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه was murdered:

1 Ka'b ibn Mātī' al-Ḥīmyarī, famously known as Ka'b al-Aḥbār. He was a Jew who accepted Islam and came to Madīnah during the Khilāfah of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. He is reliable. Ibn Sa'd has made mention of him in the first generation of the Tābī'īn. One narration of his appears in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* from Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه. He passed away toward the end of the Khilāfah of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه. See: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 308; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1/62; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, 7/161; al-Dhahabī: *al-Tadhkirah*, 1/49.

2 Al-Māliqī: *al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān fī Maqal al-Shahīd 'Uthmān*, p. 178.

3 Zayd ibn Ṣūḥān ibn Ḥujr ibn al-Ḥārith al-'Abdī al-Kūfī, Abū Sulaymān, a Tābī'ī. He accepted Islam during the lifetime of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم and heard from 'Umar, 'Uthmān and Salmān رضي الله عنه. He was a scholar and an ascetic. Ibn Sa'd said, "He was reliable and narrated a few narrations." He was killed in the battle of Jamal in 36 A.H/656 A.C. See: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/123; Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 144; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Mashāḥir 'Ulamā' al-Amṣār*, p. 101; al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdad*, 8/439.

اليوم نفرت القلوب منافرها، والذي نفسي بيده لا تتألف إلى يوم القيامة

Today the hearts have started to hate, by the one in whose control is my soul they will never unite till the Day of Judgement.¹

And Sa‘īd ibn Hānī² narrates that some men came from Madīnah and passed by Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī³ whilst he was with Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه in Damascus. He asked them:

هل مررتم بأخوانكم من أهل الحجر؟ فقالوا: نعم، فقال: كيف رأيتم صنع الله بهم؟ قالوا: بذنوبهم، قال: فإني أشهد أنكم عند الله مثلهم، قال- أي الراوي-: فدخلوا على معاوية، فقالوا: ما لقينا من هذا الشيخ الذي خرج من عندك؟ فبعث إليه فجاءه فقال له: يا أبا مسلم ما لك ولبني أخي؟ قال: قلت لهم: مررتم على أهل الحجر؟ قالوا: نعم، قلت: كيف رأيتم صنع الله بهم؟ قالوا: صنع الله ذلك بهم بذنوبهم، فقلت: أشهد أنكم عند الله مثلهم، فقال: وكيف يا أبا مسلم؟ قال: قتلوا ناقة الله، وقتلتم خليفة الله، وأشهد على ربي لخليفته أكرم عليه من ناقته

“Did you pass by your brothers, the people of Ḥijr?”⁴

They said, “Yes.”

He then asked them, “How do you think Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى treated them?”

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 499.

2 Sa‘īd ibn Hānī’ al-Khawlānī al-Shāmī, Abū ‘Uthmān. He narrated from ‘Irbād ibn Sāriyah, Mu‘āwiyah and Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī. Al-‘Ijlī said, “A reliable Tābi‘ī.” And Ibn Sa‘d said, “He was reliable by the will of Allah.” And Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. He passed away in 127 A.H/744 A.C. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/450; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/1/518; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 188; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, p. 4/70; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 4/92.

3 ‘Abd Allāh ibn Thawb, famously known as Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī al-Yamānī al-Shāmī. He travelled to Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم but did not meet him. He met Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. Ibn Sa‘d has mentioned him in the second generation of the Tābi‘īn of Shām and has deemed him reliable. Ibn Ḥibbān, Ibn Ma‘īn have also deemed him reliable. And al-‘Ijlī said, “He was reliable and from the senior Tābi‘īn.” He passed away in 62 A.H/681 A.C. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/448; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 511; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/308; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/333; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 12/235.

4 The dwellings of the people of Thamūd.

They replied, “He punished them because of their sins.”

He retorted, “I testify that you are just like them by Allah.”

The narrator says that they entered upon Mu‘āwiyah and complained, “What did we encounter from this man who left from you just now?”

He thus sent for him and when he came asked him, “O Abū Muslim, what is the matter between you and my cousins?”

He replied, “I asked them if they passed by the people of Hījr and they said, ‘Yes.’ Thereafter I asked them of how they thought Allah ﷻ treated them and they said that Allah ﷻ punished them because of their sins. So I said, “I testify that you are just like them by Allah.”

Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ asked, “How is that, O Abū Muslim?”

He replied, “They killed the camel of Allah, and you [the group who came from Madīnah] killed the Khalīfah of Allah. I testify regarding Allah that his Khalīfah is dearer to him than his camel.”¹

And al-Sha‘bī said:

لقي مسروق الأشتر، فقال مسروق للأشتر: قتلتم عثمان؟ قال: نعم، قال: أما والله لقد قتلته صواما قواما

Masrūq met Ashtar and asked him, “Did you all kill ‘Uthmān?”

He replied, “Yes.”

He replied, “By Allah you killed him whereas he was one who fasted and offered nocturnal prayer abundantly.”²

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Madīnah Dimashq*, p. 499-500.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Madīnah Dimashq*, p. 502.

And al-Bukhārī has narrated in his *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr* from Muḥammad ibn al-Muntashir¹ that a group of the supporters of ‘Alī عليه السلام met Masrūq and said:

مسروق غضبان أن قتل عثمان، فخلف الأشر في أعقابهم، فقال يا أبا عائشة، ما رأيت مثل شيء صنعناه،
ولا يوم عجل بني إسرائيل

“Masrūq is upset because ‘Uthmān was killed.”

So Ashtar stayed behind them following their heels.

Masrūq said, “O Abū ‘Ā’ishah, I have not seen anything like what we have did, not even the day the Banū Isrā’īl worshipped the calf.”²

And Ibn Abī Shaybah and Ḥākīm narrate from ‘Umayr ibn Sa’īd al-Nakhaṭī³ the following:

لما رجع علي من الجمل وتهدياً لصفين اجتمعت النخع، فدخلوا على الأشر، فقال: هل في البيت إلا نخعي؟ فقالوا: لا، فقال: إن هذه الأمة عمدت إلى خيرها فقتلته، وسرنا إلى أهل البصرة قوم لنا عليهم بيعة فنصرنا عليهم بنكثهم، وإنكم تسبرون غدا إلى أهل الشام قوم ليس لكم عليهم بيعة، فلينظر امرؤ منكم أين يضع سيفه.

1 Muḥammad ibn al-Muntashir ibn al-Ajda’ ibn Mālik al-Hamadānī al-Wadā’ī al-Kūfī. He narrated from Ibn ‘Umar, ‘Ā’ishah عليها السلام and his uncle Masrūq. Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable and has narrated a few narrations.” And Aḥmad has deemed him reliable and praised him. And al-‘Ijlī said, “Reliable.” And Ibn Ḥibbān has mentioned him in his *al-Thiqāt*. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/219; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 414; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’ḍīl*, 8/99; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 7/365; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 9/471.

2 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 1/89.

3 ‘Umayr ibn Sa’īd al-Nakhaṭī al-Ṣahbānī al-Kūfī, Abū Yaḥyā. He narrated from ‘Alī, Sa’d, Abū Mūsā, Ibn Mas’ūd, Masrūq and others. And al-Sha’bī, al-A’mash and Ṭalḥah ibn Muṣarrif narrated from him. Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable and has some narrations.” And al-‘Ijlī and Ibn Ma’in have deemed him reliable. And Ibn Ḥibbān has mentioned him in his *al-Thiqāt*. He passed away in 115 A.H/733 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/170; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/532; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 275; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 5/252; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 8/146.

When ‘Alī عليه السلام returned from Jamal and started to prepare for Şiffin the people of Nakha‘ got together and went to Ashtar.

He asked, “Are there only Nakha‘ī people in the house?”

They said, “No.”

He thus said, “This Ummah targeted its best and killed him. Thereafter, they encountered the people of Baṣrah, a people upon who allegiance was binding, and we were given victory against them because of their violation. Tomorrow you will be heading to the people of Shām, a people upon who no pledge is binding, so every person should see where he strikes his sword.”¹

And al-Zuhrī narrates:

كان سعيد بن المسيب يسمي العام الذي قتل فيه عثمان عام الحزن

Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab would call the year in which ‘Uthmān عليه السلام was martyred the year of grief.²

And Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn narrates:

قال رجل لطاؤوس: ما رأيت أحداً أجراً على الله من فلان، قال: لم تر قاتل عثمان

A person said to Ṭā‘ūs,³ “I have not seen anyone so bold against Allah than so and so.”

1 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 15/265; al-Ḥākim: *al-Mustadrak*, 3/107.

2 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashraf*, 1/590.

3 Ṭā‘ūs ibn Kaysān al-Yamānī al-Ḥimyarī al-Jundī, Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. From of the ascetics of Yemen and a senior Tābī‘ī. Ibn Sa‘d, Ibn Ma‘īn, and al-‘Ijlī have deemed him reliable. He passed away in 106 A.H/724 A.C. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 5/537; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/275; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaḡhīr*, 1/252; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 234; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 1/705.

He replied, “That is because you did not see the killer of ‘Uthmān.”¹

And Ibn Abī al-Hudhayl² said:

والله لقد جار هؤلاء-أي قتلة عثمان- عن القصد حتى أن بينهم وبينه وعورة، ما يهتدون له وما يعرفونه

By Allah, these people, i.e. the murderers of ‘Uthmān, have strayed from the straight path, to the extent that there is a very rugged patch because of which they cannot be guided to it and cannot know it.³

And Mubārak ibn Fuḍālah⁴ said:

سمعت الحسن البصري يقول: ما علمت أحدا أشرك في دم عثمان ولا أعان عليه

I heard al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī saying, “(Fortunately) I do not know anyone who was made part of the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, nor anyone who help in his murder.”⁵

And in another narration:

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 456.

2 ‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī al-Hudhayl al-‘Anazī, Abū al-Mughīrah al-Kūfī. He narrated from a group of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, some being, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Alī, and Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنهم. Al-Nasā’ī said, “Reliable.” And Ibn Ḥibbān has included him in his *al-Thiqāt*. And al-‘Ijlī said, “A reliable Tābi‘ī.” He passed away after 110 A.H./728 A.C. during the reign of Khālid al-Qasrī. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/352; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/1/222; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 382; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 6/62.

3 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaf*, 15/206.

4 Mubārak ibn Fuḍālah ibn Abī Umayyah, Abū Fuḍālah al-Baṣrī. He narrated from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and it is said that he accompanied him for thirteen years. Al-Sājī said, “He was truthful, a good person, and was an ascetic.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “There is no problem with him.” And Abū Zur‘ah said, “He would practice Tadhīb, and wherever he emphatically mentions his acquisition of a narration he is reliable.” He passed away in 166 A.H./782 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/277; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/426; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 419; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/135; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 10/28.

5 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/1252.

لم يدع الله الفسقة - قتلة عثمان - حتى قتلهم بكل أرض

Allah ﷻ did not leave the imposters, the murderers of ‘Uthmān, till he got them killed in every land.¹

And Yūnus ibn ‘Ubayd² also narrates from him:

لو كان قتل عثمان هدى لاحتلبت به الأمة لبنا، ولكنه كان ضلالا فاحتلبت به الأمة دما

If the murder of ‘Uthmān was righteous the Ummah would have drawn because of it milk, but because it was deviant it drew because of it blood.³

And Ibn ‘Awn⁴ narrates from Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn:

لم تفقد الخيل البلق في المعازي الجيوش - يقصد قتال الملائكة مع المسلمين - حتى قتل عثمان

The horses with black and white were always present in the battles, referring to the angels fighting alongside the Muslims, till ‘Uthmān was murdered.⁵

1 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 1/79.

2 Yūnus ibn ‘Ubayd ibn Dīnār al-Baṣrī, Abū ‘Ubayd. Ibn Ḥibbān said, “He was a leader in knowledge, virtue, memory, precision, in following the Sunnah, and in despising the people of innovation. Together with that, he was stringently ascetic, a jurist and a retainer of many ḥadīths.” Ibn Sa’d, Aḥmad, Ibn Ma’īn, al-Nasā’ī, and Abū Ḥātim have deemed him reliable. And al-Dhahabī said, “He was from the practicing and reliable scholars.” He passed away in 139 A.H/756 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/260; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 2/49; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 9/242; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Mashāhīr ‘Ulamā’ al-Amṣār*, p. 150.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 500.

4 ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Awn ibn Arṭabān al-Muzanī al-Baṣrī al-Ḥāfīz. Ibn Ḥibbān said regarding him, “He was a leader in worship, virtue, piety, devotion, firmness upon the Sunnah, and harshness against the innovators.” And ‘Uthmān ibn Shaybah said, “He was reliable and had an accurate record of ḥadīth.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “He was a reliable Baṣrī, who was pious.” Ibn Ma’īn, Ibn Sa’d and ‘Īsā ibn Yūnus deemed him reliable. And al-Nasā’ī said, “Reliable and trustworthy.” He passed away in 151 A.H/768 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/261; Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 219; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 2/111; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 270; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 5/346.

5 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 500.

And it is also narrated from him:

لم تختلف في الأهله حتى قتل عثمان

No disputes took place regarding moon sightings till ‘Uthmān was murdered.¹

And Qurrah ibn Khālid² narrates from him:

لو حل القتال في أهل القبلة حل يوم قتل عثمان

If it were permissible to fight the people of the Qiblah, it would have been permissible the day ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred.³

And Jasr ibn Abī Ja‘far⁴ narrates:

عدنا أبا رجاء العطاردي في مرضه الذي مات فيه، فتحامل فجلس إلينا فقال: حياكم الله بالإسلام، أحلنا وإياكم دار السلام، اتقوا الله تعالى، ولا تسبوا عليا، وأبغضوا من يسبه، واتقوا الله، ولا تسبوا عثمان، وأبغضوا من يسبه

We went to visit Abū Rajā’ al-‘Uṭāridī⁵ in his fatal illness. He brought

1 Ibid. p. 510.

2 Qurrah ibn Khālid al-Sadūsī al-Baṣrī, Abū Muḥammad. Ibn Ma‘īn, Nasā’ī and Ibn Sa‘d have deemed him reliable. Ibn Ḥibbān has mentioned him in his *al-Thiqāt*, and said, “He was an expert.” And al-Ājurrī said, “Abū Dāwūd would mentioned him and elevated him.” And al-Ṭaḥāwī said, “Reliable, an expert and an accurate retainer.” He passed away in 155 A.H./771 A.H. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/275; Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 222; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Mashāhīr ‘Ulamā’ al-Amṣār*, p. 156; al-Ājurrī: *al-Su‘ālāt*, p. 344; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 8/371.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 457.

4 Jasr ibn Farqad, Abū Ja‘far al-Qaṣṣāb al-Baṣrī. He narrated from Ḥasan, and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Maḥdī and Wakī narrated from him. Abū Ḥātim said, “Satisfactory.” See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/246; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 2/539; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Lisān*, 2/104.

5 ‘Imrān ibn Malḥān, famously known as Abū Rajā’ al-‘Uṭāridī. A Ṭābi’ī who witnessed both the pre-Islamic and Islamic era but was not blessed with the companionship of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم. He narrated from a group of Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, some being, ‘Alī, ‘Amr, Samurah ibn Jundub, ‘Ā’ishah and others. Ibn Ma‘īn, al-‘Ijlī and Abū Zur‘ah have deemed him reliable. And ibn Sa‘d said, “He was reliable in ḥadīth.” He passed away in 107 A.H./744 A.C. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/704; Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 196; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/410; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 498.

himself to sit up and thereafter said, “May Allah keep you alive with Islam, and may Allah make our abode the abode of peace (Jannah). Fear Allah ﷻ and do not revile ‘Alī but despise the one who reviles him. Fear Allah ﷻ and do not revile ‘Uthmān but hate the one who reviles him.”¹

And Mūsā al-Juhanī² narrates from Ṭalḥah ibn Muṣarrif:³

أكثرتم في عثمان فيأبى قلبي إلا حبه

You have criticised ‘Uthmān a lot, but my heart denies but to love him.⁴

And Ibn ‘Asākir narrates in his *Tārīkh* from Maymūn ibn Mahrān:

قبض رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فباع أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كلهم أبا بكر ورضوا به من غير قهر ولا اضطهاد، ثم إن أبا بكر استخلف عمر، فاستأمر المسلمين في ذلك، فباعه أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أجمعون ورضوا به من غير قهر ولا اضطهاد، فلما حضر عمر الموت جعل الأمر شورى إلى ستة نفر من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأصحابه الحواريين، ولم يأل النصيحة لله ولرسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم وللمؤمنين جهده، وكره عمر أن يولي منهم رجلاً، فلا تكون إساءة إلا لحقت عمر في قبره، فاختار أهل الشورى عثمان بن عفان، فباعه أصحاب رسول الله

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 523.

2 Mūsā ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Juhanī al-Kūfī, Abū Salamah. Ya’lā ibn ‘Ubayd said, “In Kūfah there were four leaders and notables,” and one of those whom he mentioned was him. Yahyā ibn Sā’id al-Qaṭṭān, Aḥmad, Ibn Ma’īn, and al-Nasā’ī have deemed him reliable. Al-‘Ijlī said, “Reliable and considered amongst the scholars.” And Abū Zur’ah said, “Satisfactory.” And Abū Ḥātim said, “No problem with him.” And Ibn Ḥibbān has mentioned him in his *al-Thiqāt*. He passed away in 144 A.H./761 A.C. See: Ibn Ma’īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/149; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/288; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 8/149; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Mashāhīr ‘Ulamā’ al-Amṣār*, p. 165; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 10/354.

3 Ṭalḥah ibn Muṣarrif ibn ‘Amr ibn Ḥārith al-Hamdānī al-Kūfī, Abū Muḥammad. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Idrīs said, “I did not see ‘Amash praise anyone he met besides Ṭalḥah ibn Muṣarrif and they used to call him the leader of the scholars.” Ibn Ma’īn, Abū Ḥātim, al-‘Ijlī, Ibn Sa’d, and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable. He passed away in 112 A.H./730 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/308; Ibn Ma’īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/278; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 235; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 4/473; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 5/25.

4 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Madīnah Dimashq*, p. 511; al-Dhahabī: *Sīyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 5/191.

صلى الله عليه وسلم أجمعون والتابعون لهم بإحسان، ورضوا به من غير قهر ولا اضطهاد، فلم يزل أمر الناس على عهد أبي بكر وعمر مستقيماً، كلمتهم واحدة ودعواهم جماعة؛ حتى قتل عثمان جاؤوا بما هو أنكر منه، أنكروا عليه أمراً فيه كذبة، فأعتبهم وأرضاهم، وعزل من كرهوا واستعمل من أرادوا، ثم إن فساقاً من أهل مصر، وسفهاء من أهل المدينة دعاهم أشقاهم إلى قتل عثمان، فدخلوا عليه منزله وهو جالس مع مصحف يتلو فيه كتاب الله، ومعهم السلاح فقتلوه صابراً محتسباً رضي الله عنه.

Rasūl Allah ﷺ passed away. So the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allah ﷺ pledged their allegiance to Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and were happy with him without any coercion and force. Thereafter Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ appointed ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and sought the council of the Muslims in doing so. The Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ of Rasūl Allah ﷺ pledged their allegiance to him and were happy with his rule without any coercion and force. When ‘Umar’s رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ death dawned upon him he left the matter to a council of six Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and his supportive Companions. He did not fall short in his well-wishing for Allah and his Rasūl ﷺ and the believers. He disliked appointing one individual specifically because if anything wrong happened it would reach ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in his grave. The council elected ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and thus the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allah ﷺ pledged their allegiance to him and were happy with him without any coercion or force. The matter of the people remained straight and smooth during the era of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ; they were united till ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was martyred.

He was asked, “What were their reservations against ‘Uthmān?”

He replied, “Those who objected at certain things of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ ended up doing something more despicable than all of that; they objected in matters wherein they were liars, but he pleased them and satisfied them; he thus dismissed whom they despised and appointed whom they wanted. Thereafter some imposters of Egypt and foolish people of Madīnah instigated the most wretched amongst them to kill him. Hence they invaded his house, whilst he was seated reading the Book of Allah, with weapons. They murdered him whilst he was patient and hopeful of reward

”¹ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, 503, 504.

And Sulaymān ibn al-Mughīrah¹ narrates from Abū Ja‘far al-Bāqir:²

قتل عثمان على غير وجه الحق

‘Uthmān was killed unjustly.³

And Abū Ja‘far al-Qāri’⁴ said whilst talking about the rebels who had besieged ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, after mentioning their leaders and how many they were:

وضوت إليه حثالة من الناس قد مرجت أماناتهم وسفهت أحلامهم

And a group of the scum of the people advanced toward him, whose trusts were breached and whose minds were foolish.⁵

And Ḥarmalah narrates from Yazīd ibn Abī Ḥabīb:

1 Sulaymān ibn Abī al-Mughīrah al-‘Absī al-Kūfī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh. Aḥmad said, “He was reliable and noble,” and Ibn Ma‘īn deemed him reliable and Ibn Ḥibbān made mention of his in his *al-Thiqāt*. See: Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/234; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 4/145; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 1/320; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 4/221.

2 Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Hāshimī al-Qurashī, Abū Ja‘far al-Bāqir. Al-Nasā’ī has considered him from amongst the jurist of the Tābi‘īn of Madīnah. And Ibn al-Barqī said, “He was a jurist and was virtuous.” And Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable and narrated ḥadīth in abundance.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “He was reliable Tābi‘ī from Madīnah.” He passed away in 114 A.H./732 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 5/320; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 410; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 1/360; al-Ṭabarī: *Dhayl al-Mudhāyyal*, p. 641; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 9/350.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 500.

4 Abū Ja‘far al-Qāri’ al-Madanī al-Makhzūmī, his name was Yazīd ibn al-Qa‘qā’. Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable, and he was the senior scholar of the people of Madīnah in Qirā’ah due to which he was accorded the title al-Qāri’.” Ibn Ma‘īn, al-Nasā’ī, and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable. And Abū Ḥātim said, “Satisfactory in ḥadīth.” He passed away in 127 A.H./744. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt* (section regarding the Tābi‘īn of Madīnah), p. 151; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/699; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 9/284; Ibn al-Jazarī: *Ghāyah al-Nihāyah fī Ṭabaqāt al-Qurrā’*, 2/382; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 12/58.

5 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/591.

أعظم ما أتت هذه الأمة بعد نبينا ثلاث خلال: قتل عثمان بن عفان، وتحريقهم الكعبة، وأخذهم الجزية من المسلمين

The three gravest things to afflict the Ummah after its Nabi ﷺ are: The murder of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, the burning of the Ka’bah, and collecting of taxes from the Muslims.¹

It is also narrated from him:

إن عامة الركب الذين خرجوا إلى عثمان جنوا، قال ابن المبارك، أيسره، وفي رواية: الجنون لهم قليل

Most of those who revolted against ‘Uthmān ﷺ later became mentally impaired, Ibn Mubārak said, “This was a light punishment.”

And in another narration: “Insanity was a light punishment for them.”²

And Ḥammād ibn Salamah narrates from Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī the following:

من أحب أبا بكر فقد أقام الدين، ومن أحب عمر فقد أوضح السبيل، ومن أحب عثمان فقد استنار بنور الله، ومن أحب عليا فقد استمسك بالعروة الوثقى لا انفصام لها، قال حماد: فقلت لأيوب: أنتحفظ هذا؟ قال نعم، فاحفظوه وعلموه أبناءكم، وليعلمه أبناءكم أبناءهم

Whoever loves Abū Bakr has established the Dīn, whoever loves ‘Umar has made the path clear, whoever loves ‘Uthmān has attained light from the light of Allah, and whoever loves ‘Alī has held onto a very firm and reliable handhold.

Ḥammād said, “Did you memorise this (from someone)?”

He said, “Yes, so memorise it, teach it to your children and let your children teach it to their children.”³

1 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-ṣaghīr*, 1/59.

2 Ibn ‘Asākīr: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 510.

3 Ibid. p. 510.

And ‘Aththām ibn ‘Alī¹ says that he heard Sufyān al-Thawrī say the following:

لا يجتمع حب علي وعثمان إلا في قلوب نبلاء الرجال

The love of ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنهما cannot be together but in the hearts of noble men.²

And Mughīrah al-Ḍabbī³ reports:

قلت لأبراهيم النخعي، إن كان قتل عثمان، فقال: مه، والله إن أردت أن أقول إلا أنه كان عظيما، قال: أجل

I said to Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaṭī,⁴ “‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه has been martyred.”

He said, “Stop.”

1 ‘Aththām ibn ‘Alī ibn Hujayr al-‘Āmirī al-Kūfī, Abū ‘Alī. Al-Ājurrī narrates from Abū Dāwūd who heard Imām Aḥmad saying, “‘Aththām was a pious person.” And He said, “I asked Abū Dāwūd about him, he praised him and made good remarks about him.” And al-Nasāṭī said, “There is no problem with him.” And Abū Zur‘ah said, “Reliable.” And Abū Ḥātim said, “Truthful.” And al-Dāraquṭnī, Ibn Shāhīn, Ibn Sa’d, Ibn Ḥibbān and al-Bazzār have deemed him reliable.” He passed away in 195 A.H/810 A.C. See: Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 170; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 186; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 7/44; al-Ājurrī: *al-Su’ālāt*, p. 214; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 7/105.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 510.

3 Mughīrah ibn Miqṣam al-Ḍabbī al-Kūfī al-Faqīh, Abū Hishām. Abū Bakr ibn ‘Ayyāsh said, “I have not seen anyone more learned than Mughīrah and so I stayed in his company.” Ibn Ma’in said, “Reliable and trustworthy.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “Mughīrah was reliable and was a jurist.” And al-Nasāṭī and Ibn Sa’d deemed him reliable and Ibn Ḥibbān made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. He passed away in 136 A.H/753 A.C. See: Ibn Ma’in: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/581; Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 165; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 2/28; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 437; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 10/261.

4 Ibrāhīm ibn Yazīd ibn Qays al-Nakhaṭī al-Kūfī al-Faqīh, Abū ‘Imrān. Al-‘Ijlī said, “A reliable narrator from Kūfah. He saw ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها in his dream. He was the Muftī of Kūfah and was a pious and cautious jurist who had very little formalities. He passed away whilst under cover from Ḥajjāj. Al-A’mash said, “Ibrāhīm was good in ḥadīth.” And al-Sha’bī said, “He did not leave anyone more knowledgeable than him. He passed away in 96 A.H/714 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/270; Ibn Ma’in: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/15; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma’rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/100; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, 56; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 1/177.

I said, “I was just wanting to say that he was a great person.”

He said, “Yes.”¹

And Muṣ‘ab ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Zubayrī narrates that ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muṣ‘ab² informed him that al-Rashīd, the Abbasid khalīfah, said to him:

ما تقول في الذين طعنوا على عثمان؟ قال: قلت: يا أمير المؤمنين طعن عليه ناس، وكان معه ناس، فأما الذين طعنوا عليه فتنفروا عنه، فهم أنواع الشيع وأهل البدع وأنواع الخوارج، وأما الذين كانوا معه فهم أهل الجماعة إلى اليوم، فقال لي: ما أحتاج أن أسأل بعد اليوم عن هذا.

“What do you say about those who condemned ‘Uthmān?”

I said, “O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, some people condemned him and others supported him. As for those who condemned him they all scattered thereafter, they went on to become the various types of Shī‘ah, innovators and Khawārij. And as for those who stood by him, they have remained the people of the Jamā‘ah (unity) till today.”

He replied, “I do not have to ask about this again after today.”³

And Farazdaq made mention of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in a poem which he said in praise of Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd al-Malik:

1 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/1252.

2 ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muṣ‘ab ibn Thābit ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Zubayrī al-Qurashī al-Asadī. He was from the most just rulers. He was the governor of Yamāmah for the Abbasid Khalīfahs al-Mahdī and al-Hādī. And Rashīd forced him to govern over Madīnah when his age was seventy which he accepted with some conditions. Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī said, “He was praiseworthy in his governance, had beautiful conduct and was great in his stature and nobility. He passed away in Raqqah whilst out with al-Rashīd in 184 A.H/800 A.C. See” Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 461; al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 10/173; Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 10/185.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 8/353.

دمه صبيحة النحر

عثمان إذ قتلوه وانتهكوا

'Uthmān, when they killed him and violated his blood the morning of the day of Naḥr (10th Dhī al-Ḥijjah).¹

And al-Numayrī² said:

على متوكل أوفى وطابا
ورابع خير من وطىء الترابا

عشية يدخلون بغير إذن
خليل محمد ووزير صدق

The evening when they intruded without permission upon the one who had placed his trust in Allah and had lived up to his responsibilities and was pure.

The friend of Muḥammad and his honest minister and the fourth of the best people to step foot upon the soil.³

And from his splendid poetry are the following couplets which al-Mubarrid has cited:

ودعا، فلم أر مثله مخذولا
شققا وأصبح سيفهم مفلولا

قتلوا عثمان الخليفة محرما
فتفرقت من ذلك عصاهم

They killed 'Uthmān the Khalīfah in the sacred month, making him a target. I did not see anyone more helpless than him.

Thereafter their unity was shattered and their swords became blunt.⁴

1 Al-Farazdaq: *Dīwān*, 1/265.

2 'Ubayd ibn Ḥuṣayn ibn Mu'āwiyah ibn Jandal al-Numayrī. He was given the title shepherd of the camel due to him very beautifully and abundantly praising them. He was a master of poetry in the Umayyad era and would stay in the outskirts of Baṣrah. He passed away in 90 A.H/ 709. See: Ibn Sallām: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shu'arā'*, p. 117; Ibn Abī al-Khaṭṭāb: *Jamharah Ash'ār al-'Arab*, 172; al-Aṣḥāhānī: *al-Aghānī*, 23/348-363.

3 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 7/197.

4 Ibid. 2/39.

And Laylā al-Akhyaliyyah¹ said:

وكان آمن من يمشي على ساق
ما كان من ذهب محض وأوراق

أبعد عثمان ترجوا الخير أمته
خليفة الله أعطاهم وخولهم

Is the Ummah hopeful of good after ‘Uthmān, whereas he was the greatest believer amongst those who walked upon a shin?

He was the Khalīfah of Allah who showered them with his bounties of pure gold and pure silver.²

1 Laylā bint ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Raḥḥāl ibn Shaddād al-Akhyaliyyah al-‘Āmiriyyah. She was a very intelligent and eloquent poetess and had excelled in the art of poetry. She is considered to be from the class which is second to the class of Khansā^{رضي الله عنها} in poetry. She would often visit Ḥajjāj and he would honour her. She passed away on her way to Rayy in 80 A.H./700 A.H. See: al-Marzabānī: *Mu‘jam al-Shu‘arā’*, p. 343; Abū al-Faraj al-Aṣfahānī: *al-Aghānī*, 11/194-234.

2 Al-Mubarrid: *al-Kāmil fī al-Lughah wa al-Adab*, 2/39; al-Ṭabarānī: *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, 1/42.

Chapter Three - The Second Fitnah



Module One: The Fourth Rightly Guided Khalīfah (His Nomination, his Policies of Ruling, and the Plots against him)

Section One: The nomination of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه

Section Two: His policies of ruling

Section Three: The influence of the Saba’iyyah in the second fitnah



Module Two: Seeking retribution from the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and the stance of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.

Section One: the stance of those seeking retribution for the blood of ‘Uthmān, like Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Ā’ishah, Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, and whoever agreed with them.

Section Two: the stance of those who called for exercising patience in executing the retribution till matters settle, like ‘Alī, ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, al-Qa‘qā’ رضي الله عنه, and those who agreed with them.

Section Three: the stance of those who avoided the Fitnah, they form majority of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.



Module Three: The Second Fitnah

Section One: The Qurṛā’, the predecessors of the Khawārij.

Section Two: The issue of arbitration between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه.

Section Three: The results of the Fitnah.



Module One: The Fourth Rightly Guided Khalīfah (His Nomination, his Policies of Ruling, and the Plots against him)

Section One: The Nomination of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه

In those trying moments, which the Islamic empire underwent after the martyrdom of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, the Muslims desperately needed a Khalīfah who would fill the political vacuum; hence the nomination happen to fall upon ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. However, the narrations in this regard are numerous and are very different to one another.

Al-Ṭabarī alluding toward this difference says:

اختلف السلف من أهل السير في ذلك

The early scholars of history have differed in this regard.¹

As for the narrations that suggest that the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were the ones who pushed ‘Alī رضي الله عنه forward and sought him for the Khilāfah, whereafter the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār and the rest of the people pledged their allegiance to him, they are as follows:

The first narration is from Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyah:

كنت مع أبي حين قتل عثمان رضي الله عنه فقام فدخل منزله، فأتاه أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقالوا: إن هذا الرجل قد قتل، ولا بد للناس من إمام، ولا نجد اليوم أحدا أحق بهذا الأمر منك، ولا أقدم سابقه، ولا أقرب من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: لا تفعلوا، فإني أكون وزيراً خيراً من أن أكون أميراً، فقالوا، لا والله! ما نحن بفاعلين حتى نبايعك، قال، ففي المسجد، فإن بيعتي لا تكون خفياً، ولا تكون إلا عن رضا المسلمين، قال سلام بن أبي الجعد، فقال عبد الله ابن عباس رضي الله عنه فلقد كرهت أن يأتي المسجد مخالفة أن يشغب عليه، وأبي هو إلا المسجد، فلما دخل المهاجرون والأنصار فبايعوه، ثم بايعه الناس

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/427.

I was with my father when ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred. He stood up and entered his house. Subsequently the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم of Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم came to him and said, “This man has been murdered and the people require a leader. We do not find anyone who is more rightful of this matter than you today, nor anyone with an earlier contribution to Islam than yours and nor anyone closer to Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم than you were.”

He replied, “Do not do this, for it is better for me to be a minister than to be a ruler.”

They replied, “Never, by Allah! We will not accept anything other than pledging our allegiance to you.”

He acceded and said, “In the Masjid then, for I don’t want my nomination to be discreet and it should not happen but with the willingness of the Muslims.”

Sallām ibn Abī al-Ja’d said that ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه said, “I disliked that he come to the masjid due to the fear that they would cause a commotion but he refused to go anywhere but the masjid. Hence, when he entered, the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār pledged their allegiance to him and the people followed thereafter.”¹

The second narration is from Abū Bashīr al-‘Abdī:²

كنت بالمدينة حين قتل عثمان رضي الله عنه وجمع المهاجرون والأنصار، فيهم طلحة والزبير، فأثوا عليا رضي الله فقالوا: يا أبا الحسن هلم نبايعك، فقال: لا حاجة لي في أمركم، أنا معكم فيمن اخترتم، فقد رضيت به، فاختاروا والله، فقالوا، ما نختار غيرك، قال-أي الراوي- فاختلّفوا إليه بعد ما قتل عثمان رضي الله عنه مرارا، ثم أتوه في آخر ذلك، فقالوا له، إنه لا يصلح الناس إلا بأمره، وقد طال الأمر، فقال لهم: إنكم اختلفتم إلي وأنتم، وإنني قائل لكم قولا إن قبلتموه قبلت أمركم وإلا فلا حاجة لي فيه، قالوا، ما قلت من شيء قبلناه إن شاء الله، فجاء فصعد المنبر، فاجتمع الناس إليه، فقال: إني كنت كارها لأمركم، فأبیتم إلا أن أكون عليكم، ألا وإنه ليس لي أمر دونكم، إلا أن مفاتيح مالكم معي، ألا وإنه ليس لي أن أأخذ منه درهما دونكم، رضيتم؟ قالوا نعم، قال: اللهم اشهد عليهم، ثم بايعهم على ذلك، قال أبو بشير: وأنا يومئذ قائم أسمع ما يقول

1 Ibid. 4/427.

2 I did not come across his biography.

I was in Madīnah when ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred. The Muhājirīn and the Anṣār gathered, amongst them were Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنه, and they came to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and they said, “O Abū al-Ḥasan, come, let us pledge our allegiance to you.”

He replied, “I have no need for your matter, I will support you in whoever you choose and I will be happy. So nominate, by Allah.”

They replied, “We will not nominate anyone beside you.”

The narrator says: They went back and forth to him a few times. Thereafter they came to him and said, “The people cannot be handled but with leadership, and the matter has now prolonged.”

He said to them, “You came to me several times. I am going to tell you something, if you accept I will accept your proposal, otherwise I do not have any need to accept.”

They said, “Whatever you say we will accept, by the will of Allah.”

He thus came and ascended the pulpit and the people gathered around him.

He addressed them saying, “I despised your matter, but you refused except that I be nominated over you. Behold, I have no authority without your support. Behold, the keys to your wealth is with me, but also know that I will not take a Dirham without your consent. Are you happy?”

They said, “Yes.”

He thereafter said, “O Allah you be my witness upon them.”

He then accepted their allegiance.

Abū Bashīr says, “I was standing at that time by the pulpit of Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم listening to what he had to say.”¹

1 Ibid. 4/428.

The third narration is from Abū al-Malīḥ¹:

لما قتل عثمان رضي الله عنه خرج علي رضي الله إلي السوق، وذلك يوم السبت لثمانية عشرة ليلة خلت من ذي الحجة، فتابعه الناس وبهشوا في وجهه، فدخل حائط بني عمرو بن مبدؤل، وقال لأبي عمرة بن عمرو بن محصن، أغلق الباب، فجاء الناس فقرعوا الباب، فدخلوا فيهم طلحة والزبير رضي الله عنهما فقالا: يا علي ابسط يدك، فبايعه طلحة والزبير

When ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred ‘Alī رضي الله عنه headed toward the market place. This was on Saturday the eighteenth of Dhī al-Ḥijjah. The people followed him and found solace in him. He entered the orchard of Banū ‘Amr ibn Mabdḥūl and told Abū ‘Amrah ibn ‘Amr ibn Muḥṣan to shut the door. The people came, knocked and entered, amongst them were Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنه. They said, “O ‘Alī spread your hand,” and Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنه pledged their allegiance to him.”²

The fourth narration is from al-Sha‘bī:

لما قتل عثمان رضي الله عنه أتى الناس عليا وهو في سوق المدينة وقالوا له: ابسط يدك نبايعك قال: لا تعجلوا، فإن عمر كان رجلا مباركا، وقد أوصى بها شوري، فأمهلوا حتى يجتمع الناس ويتشاورون، فارتد الناس عن علي رضي الله عنه، ثم قال بعضهم: إن رجع الناس إلى أمصارهم يقتل عثمان ولم يبق بعده قائم بهذا الأمر لم نأمن الناس وفساد الأمة، فعادوا إلى علي رضي الله عنه، فأخذ الأشر ببيده، فقبضها علي فقال: أبعد ثلاثة؟ أما والله لو تركتها ليقصرن عليها عينك حيننا، فبايعته العامة، وأهل الكوفة يقولون: إن أول من بايعه الأشر

When ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was murdered the people approached ‘Alī رضي الله عنه whilst he was in the market of Madīnah and said to him, “Spread your hand so that we may pledge our allegiance.”

1 Abū al-Malīḥ ibn Usāmah al-Hudhalī. He narrated from ‘Ā’ishah, Ibn ‘Abbās, Ibn ‘Umar, Jābir, Anas رضي الله عنه and others. And Sālim ibn Abī al-Ja’d, Abū Qilābah al-Jarmī, Qatādah and others have narrated from him. Al-‘Ijlī said, “A reliable Tābi‘ī from Baṣrah.” And al-Dhahabī said, “Reliable.” And Ibn Ḥajar said, “Reliable, from the third generation.” He passed away in 112 A.H/730 A.C. See: Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/726; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 512; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/336; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taqrīb*, 2/476.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/428.

He replied, “Do not haste, for ‘Umar was a blessed person and he had appointed a council, so give the matter some time so that the people can gather and consult.”

The people returned and thereafter some said, “If the people will return to their cities with the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and no one takes charge of the matter of the Muslims after him we have no guarantee that the people will not dispute and the Ummah will not be in mayhem.”

Hence, they returned to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. Ashtar took his hand but ‘Alī رضي الله عنه retracted it. He said, “After three days, by Allah should you leave it, all your efforts for some time thereafter would have to be in obedience.” The general people then also gave their allegiance and the people of Kūfah would claim that the first person to pledge his allegiance was Ashtar.¹

The fifth narration is from Sayf ibn ‘Umar from his scholars:

لما كان يوم الخميس على رأس خمسة أيام من مقتل عثمان رضي الله عنه جمعوا أهل المدينة-أي جمعهم الخوارج- فوجدوا سعدا والزبير خارجين، ووجدوا طلحة في حائط له، ووجدوا بني أمية قد هربوا إلا من لم يطق الهرب، وهرب الوليد وسعيد إلى مكة في أول من خرج، وتبعهم مروان، وتتابع على ذلك من تتابع، فلما اجتمع لهم أهل المدينة قال لهم أهل مصر، أنتم أهل الشورى، وأنتم تعتقدون الإمامة، وأمركم عابر على الأمة، فانظروا رجلا تصبونه، ونحن لكم تبع، فقال الجمهور: علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه ونحن به راضون.

On Thursday, the fifth day after the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, they, i.e. the Khawārij, gathered the people of Madīnah. They found that Zubayr and Sa’d رضي الله عنه had left. They found Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه in his orchard. And they also learnt that the Banū Umayyah had fled with the exception of those who could not, and that Walīd and Sa’īd had made their way to Makkah and were followed by Marwān. Thereafter they were followed by whoever followed. When the people of Madīnah gathered, the people of Egypt said to them, “You are the people of the council, and it is you that will enact the leadership, and it is your matter that will prevail upon the Ummah, so see

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/433.

a person who you would like to appoint and we will follow.” Majority of the people thus said, “Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. We are happy with him.”¹

The sixth narration is from ‘Awf²:

أما أنا فأشهد إني سمعت محمد بن سيرين يقول: إن عليا جاء فقال لطلحة، ابسط يدك يا طلحة لأبايعك، فقال طلحة: أنت أحق وأنت أمير المؤمنين، فابسط يدك، فبسط علي يده فبايعه

As for me I testify that I heard Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn saying, “Alī عليه السلام came to Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه and said, “Spread your hand, “O Ṭalḥah so that I may pledged allegiance to you.”

He replied, “You are more deserving and you are the Amīr al-Mu’minīn, so spread you hand.”

‘Alī عليه السلام gave his hand and Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه pledged allegiance to him.³

The seventh narration is from the transmission of Naṣr ibn Muzāḥim al-‘Aṭṭār⁴ in which it is stated that a person, ‘Abd Khayr ibn Zayd,⁵ stood up and asked Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه:

1 Ibid. 4/433-434.

2 ‘Awf ibn Abī Jamīlah al-‘Abdī al-Hajarī, Abū Sahl al-Baṣrī, famously known as al-‘Arābī. ‘Abd Allāh said narrating from his father Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, “Reliable and good in ḥadīth.” And Abū Ḥātim said, “Truthful and satisfactory.” He has been deemed reliable by Ibn Ma‘īn, al-Nasā‘ī and Ibn Sa‘d. He passed away in 147 A.H/764 A.C. See: Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/460; *Khalīfah: al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 219; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 2/85; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Mashāhīr ‘Ulamā’ al-Amṣār*, p. 151; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 3/305.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/434.

4 Naṣr ibn Muzāḥim al-‘Aṭṭār al-Kūfī, Abū al-Faql. A historian of the calibre of Abū Mikhnaf. He was well versed in history and reports and was a staunch Rāfiḍī. He wrote the books *Ṣifīn*, *Jamal*, *Maqṭal Ḥujr ibn ‘Adī*, and *Maqṭal Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī*. He passed away in 212 A.H/827 A.C. See: al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 13/283; Ibn al-Nadīm: *al-Fihrist*, p. 106; Yāqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, 19/225; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 4/254.

5 ‘Abd Khayr ibn Yazīd al-Hamdānī, Abū ‘Umārah al-Kūfī. A Tābi‘ī who had witnessed both the pre-Islamic and Islamic era. He narrated from Abū Bakr, ‘Alī, Zayd ibn Arqam, ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها and others. Muslim has considered him to be from the first generation of the Tābi‘īn of Kūfah. And Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. See: al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 150; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 286; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 5/144; al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 11/126.

يا أبا موسى هل كان هذان الرجلان- يعني طلحة والزبير- ممن بايع عليا؟ قال نعم

O Abū Mūsā, were these two men, i.e. Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما, amongst those who pledged their allegiance to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه? He replied, “Yes.”¹

What is worth noting in all the above cited narrations is that they are all in harmony with the more correct stance regarding what had actually transpired; they are further supported by the Sunnah of Nabī صلی الله علیه وسلم in which there appears subtle hints toward the Khilāfah of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه; they are also supported by the reports of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and by what the historians, scholars of ḥadīth, jurists, and the people of knowledge have asserted regarding the legitimacy of the Khilāfah of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, its validity, and the pledging of the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār رضي الله عنهم.

Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, and al-Tirmidhī narrate from Safīnah رضي الله عنها:

سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: الخلافة ثلاثون عاما ثم يكون بعد ذلك الملك. قال سفينة: أملك، خلافة أبي بكر سنتين، وخلافة عمر عشر سنين، وخلافة عثمان اثنتي عشرة سنة، وخلافة علي رضي الله عنه ست سنين

I heard Rasūl Allāh صلی الله علیه وسلم saying, “Khilāfah after me will be for thirty years and thereafter will be kingdom.” Safīnah رضي الله عنها says, “Count. The Khilāfah of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه was two years, the Khilāfah of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was ten years, the Khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was twelve years, and the Khilāfah of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was six years.”²

And Aḥmad and Ḥākim narrate from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إن منكم من يقاتل على تأويل القرآن كما قاتلت على تنزيهه. فاستشرف لها القوم- وفيهم أبو بكر وعمر. قال أبو بكر: أنا هو؟ قال: لا، قال عمر: أنا هو؟ قال: لا، ولكن خاصف النعل- يعني عليا

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/486.

2 Aḥmad: *Musnad*, 5/220; *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*: Chapter on the Sunnah, 4/211; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*: Chapter on Fitan, 5/241. The ḥadīth has been deemed authentic by Albānī in *al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, p. 459, and in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 2/879 (ḥadīth no. 3882).

Rasūl Allāh ﷺ said, “Amongst you there is a person who will fight upon the interpretation of the Qur’ān just as I fought upon its revelation.” Hence the people began aspiring and amongst them were Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما. Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه said, “I am that person.” He said, “No.” Thereafter, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said, “I am that person.” He said, “No, but he will be the mender of the shoe,” referring to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه.¹

Likewise, in the Ṣaḥīḥ narrations regarding the Khawārij Muslim narrates the following:

تمرق مارقة عند فرقة من المسلمين يقتلها أولى الطفتين بالحق

A group will break away from the majority at a time of disunity amongst the Muslims, the closer of the two groups to the truth will fight it.²

And in another version:

قوما يخرجون على فرقة مختلفة يقتلهم أقرب الطفتين من الحق

A people who will revolt at a time of bickering, the closer of the two groups to the truth will kill them.³

And in the narration of Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī Abū Sa‘īd رضي الله عنه is reported to have said after relating the ḥadīth:

أشهد سمعت من النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وأشهد أن علياً قتلهم وأنا معهم، جيء بالرجل -أي منهم- على النعت الذي نعته النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم

1 *Mustadrak Ḥākim*, 3/123 (he has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ according to the requirements of Bukhārī and Muslim and al-Dhahabī has agreed with him; *Musnad Aḥmad*, 3/33, 82; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 12/357.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: chapter of Zakāt: 7/168.

3 *Ibid.* 7/168.

I testify that I heard that from Nabī ﷺ, and I testify that ‘Alī ﷺ fought them and I was with him. A person from amongst them was brought and his features were exactly as described by Nabī ﷺ.¹

Hence it is established by way of Shar‘ī evidence according to the Ahl al-Sunnah that ‘Alī ﷺ was a legitimate ruler and that it was obligatory to fight whoever rebelled against him till he returned to the truth and became willing to negotiate.

However, some researchers at times conflate the legitimate nomination of ‘Alī ﷺ, which no Muslim could deny or violate, and the battles of the fitnah which were purely based upon each camp specific *Ijtihād* (analyses of the situation and how to best deal with it) and what it deemed most relevant. Not to delve into this at all is actually the better and the safer option.

Aḥmad and al-Bazzār narrate from Abū Rāfi‘² that Rasūl Allāh ﷺ said to ‘Alī ﷺ:

إنه سيكون بينك وبين عائشة أمر، قال: أنا أشقاهم يا رسول الله؟ قال: لا، ولكن إذا كان ذلك فارددها إلى ما منها

“There will be a contention between you and ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ.”

He said, “Then I am the most wretched of people, O Rasūl Allāh ﷺ?”

He said, “No, but when that happens return her to her place of amnesty.”³

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: chapter on making the renegades repent: 8/53.

2 Abū Rāfi‘ al-Qibṭī, the freed slave of Rasūl Allāh ﷺ. His name was Ibrāhīm, and some say: Aslam, and others say: Thābit. He belonged to ‘Abbās ﷺ initially, but he gifted him to Nabī ﷺ who freed him when he gave him the glad tidings of ‘Abbās accepting Islam. He participated in the battle of Uḥud and the battles thereafter. It is said that he passed away in the Khilāfah of ‘Alī ﷺ. See: al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/294; Ibn Ḥajar: *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, 2/92.

3 *Musnad Aḥmad*, 6/393; and according to the layout of al-Sā‘ātī: 32:137; and Ibn Ḥajar has attributed it to *Musnad al-Bazzār* in *Fath al-Bārī*, 13/55.

Al-Ḥākim has narrated from Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها:

ذكر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خروج بعض أمهات المؤمنين، فضحكت عائشة رضي الله عنها، فقال: انظري يا حميراء أن لا تكوني أنت، ثم التفت إلى علي فقال: إن وليت من أمرها شيئا فارق بها

Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم made mention of the emerging of one of the Mothers of the Believers and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها laughed.

He said, “Make sure, O Ḥūmayrā’ that you are not the one.”

He then turned to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and said, “If you happen to preside over her matter than be lenient with her.”¹

And Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said regarding ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir رضي الله عنه:

ويح عمار تقتله الفئة الباغية

Woe be to ‘Ammār, the rebellious group will kill him.²

It is a known fact that ‘Ammār رضي الله عنه was in the army of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and that he was killed in the battle of Ṣiffīn. Hence with his death on the side of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه it became clear that he was closer to the truth in his wars against those who revolted against him, and that he was the Shar’ī ruler.

Aḥmad narrates from ‘Alī رضي الله عنه:

قيل يا رسول الله من يؤمر بعدك؟ قال: إن تؤمروا أبا بكر تجدوه أمينا زاهدا في الدنيا راغبا في الآخرة، وإن تؤمروا عمر نجدوه قويا أمينا لا يخاف في الله لومة لائم، وإن تؤمروا عليا ولا أراكم فاعلين تجدوه هاديا مهديا يأخذ بكم الطريق المستقيم

Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم was asked, “O Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم who will be appointed after you?”

1 Mustadrak Ḥākim: chapter on knowing the Ṣaḥābah, 3/119.

2 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: chapter of Ṣalāh, 1/115.

He said, “If you appoint Abū Bakr, you will find him to be trustworthy, disinclined from this world and inclined toward the afterlife, and if you appoint ‘Umar, you will find him to be strong, trustworthy, and one that will not fear the criticism of the criticsers regarding the Dīn of Allah, and if you appoint ‘Alī, which I do not think you will, you will find him to be a guide, and rightly guided, and he will make you tread the straight path.”¹

Likewise ‘Umar رضي الله عنه is reported to have said when he was stabbed:

إن ولوها الأجلح- يعني عليا- سلك بهم الطريق المستقيم

If they appoint the one with receding hair lines, referring to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, he will tread with them the straight path.²

And in another narration he said:

لله درهم إن ولوها الأصلع كيف يحملهم على الحق

For Allah is their good, if they appoint the bald person they will see how he will make them follow the truth.³

And Aḥmad narrates from Ḥārithah ibn Muḍarrīb:

حججت مع عثمان فكان الحادي يحدو أن الأمير بعده علي

I performed Ḥajj with ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and the person who would sing chants for the animals would say that the ruler after him will be ‘Alī.⁴

1 *Musnad Aḥmad*, 4/299; *al-Muʿjam al-Awsaṭ*, 4/299; *Musnad Bazzār*, 2/299; *Majmaʿ al-Zawāʿid*, 5/176, he said, “The narrators of *Musnad Bazzār* are reliable. And Aḥmad Shākīr deemed the narration of *Musnad Aḥmad* authentic (see: *Musnad Aḥmad*, with the annotations of Aḥmad Shākīr, 2/157). Also the annotator of the *Majmaʿ al-Baḥrayn* has deemed the narrators of *Muʿjam al-Ṭabarānī al-Awsaṭ* as reliable.

2 Ibn Saʿd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/342.

3 Ibn ‘Asākīr: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 12/344.

4 Aḥmad: *Faḍāʾil al-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/493. The annotator has deemed its transmission Ṣaḥīḥ.

And al-Bazzār has recorded with his chain of transmission from Zayd ibn Wahb:

كنا عند حذيفة، فقال: كيف أنتم وقد خرج أهل دينكم يضرب بعضهم وجوه بعض بالسيف؟ قالوا: فماذا تأمرنا؟ قال: انظروا إلى الفرقة التي تدعوا إلى أمر علي فالزموها فإنها على الحق

We were by Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه. He asked, “What will be your situation when the people of your Dīn will emerge against one another, striking the faces of one another with swords?”

They inquired, “What do you order us to do?”

He said, “Look for the group that calls toward the matter of ‘Alī and join it, for it will be on the truth.”¹

Faḍālah ibn Faḍālah al-Anṣārī narrates:²

خرجت مع أبي ألى يبيع عائدا لعلي بن أبي طالب، فقال له: يا أبا الحسن ما يقيمك بهذا البلد، إن أصابك أجلك لم يلك إلا أعراب جهينة، فلو احتملت إلى المدينة فأصابك أجلك وليك أصحابك فصلوا عليك، فقال: يا أبا فضالة! إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عهد إلي أن لا أموت حتى أؤمر ثم تخضب هذه- يعني لحيته- من هذه- ناصيته

I went out with my father to Yanbu‘ to visit ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه. My father said to him, “O Abū al-Ḥasan, what makes you stay in this city, if your death has to strike whilst you are here, the only people to see to you will be the Bedouins of Juhaynah. So why don’t you travel to Madīnah, for if your death has to strike whilst you are there your companions will see to your burial and read your funeral prayer?”

He said, “O Abū Fuḍālah, Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم had informed me that I will not die till I am appointed as the ruler and thereafter this, referring to his beard, is tainted with this, referring to his forehead.”³

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, 13/88.

2 Faḍālah ibn Abī Faḍālah al-Anṣārī al-Kūfī. A Tābī‘ī. Ibn Ḥibbān has deemed him reliable and Ibn Abī Ḥātim and al-Bukhārī remained silent about him. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/125; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 7/77; Ibn Ḥajar: *Ta‘jīl al-Manfa‘ah*, p. 219.

3 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 2/694, the annotator has deemed its transmission Ḥasan; al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍīrah*, 3/228,229.

As for the other sources which establish the nomination of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه as Khalīfah and are harmonious with the narrations cited by al-Ṭabarī regarding his nomination by the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār, they are the following:

Ibn Sa’d says in his *al-Ṭabaqāt*:

بويع علي رضي الله عنه يوم الجمعة لثمانية عشرة ليلة مضت من ذي الحجة سنة خمس وثلاثين، بإيعه بالخلافة طلحة، والزبير، وسعد بن أبي وقاص، وسعيد بن زيد بن عمرو بن نفيل، وعمار بن ياسر، وأسامه بن زيد، وسهل بن حنيف، وأبو أيوب الأنصاري، ومحمد بن مسلمة، وزيد بن ثابت، وجميع من كان بالمدينة من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

‘Alī رضي الله عنه was elected as the Khalīfah on Friday the eighteenth of Dhī al-Ḥijjah in 35 A.H. Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, Sa’īd ibn Zayd ibn ‘Amr ibn Nufayl, ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, Usāmah ibn Zayd, Sahl ibn Ḥunayf, Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, Zayd ibn Thābit رضي الله عنه, and all the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who were present in Madīnah pledged their allegiance to him.¹

The narration of Khalīfah ibn Khayyāṭ also establishes the nomination of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه although with brevity:

سنة ست وثلاثين بويع فيها علي بن أبي طالب بن عبد المطلب، وأمه فاطمة بنت أسد بن هاشم ابن عبد مناف بن قصي بن كلاب

In the year 36 A.H. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه ibn Abī Ṭālib was elected as the Khalīfah, and his mother was Fāṭimah bint Asad ibn Hāshim ibn ‘Abd Manāf ibn Quṣayy ibn Kilāb.²

Aḥmad has narrated with a Ṣaḥīḥ chain of transmission from Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah:

كنت مع علي وعثمان محصور فأتاه رجل فقال: إن أمير المؤمنين مقتول، ثم جاء آخر فقال: إن أمير المؤمنين مقتول الساعة، قال: فقام علي، فأخذت بوسطه تخوفا عليه فقال: خل لا أم لك، قال: فأتى

1 Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 2/31.

2 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 199.

علي الدار وقد قتل الرجل، فأتى داره فدخلها وأغلق عليه الباب، فأتاه الناس فضربوا عليه الباب فدخلوا عليه، فقالوا: إن هذا الرجل قد قتل ولا بد للناس من خليفة، ولا نعلم أحدا أحق بها منك، فقال لهم علي: لا تريدوني، فإني لكم وزير خير مني لكم أمير، فقالوا: لا والله، ما نعلم أحدا أحق بها منك، قال فإن أبيتم علي، فإن بيعتي لا تكون سرا، ولكن أخرج إلى المسجد، فمن شاء إن يبايعني يبايعني، قال: فخرج إلى المسجد فبايعه الناس.

I was with ‘Alī عليه السلام when ‘Uthmān عليه السلام was besieged. A person came to him and said, “Amīr al-Mu’minīn has been killed.” Thereafter another person came and said, “Amīr al-Mu’minīn has been killed just now.”

Hence he stood up and I held him by his waist, fearing upon him. He said, “Leave me, may you lose your mother.” He came to the house of ‘Uthmān عليه السلام and found that he had really been murdered. Thereafter he came to his house, entered, and closed the door upon himself. The people came and knocked on the door and eventually entered.

They said, “This man has been murdered and the people need a ruler and we do not know of anyone more deserving of this matter than you.”

‘Alī عليه السلام said to them, “Don’t want me, for I prefer being a minister for you than a ruler.”

They said, “No by Allah, we do not know of anyone more deserving of this matter than you.”

He replied, “If you insist, then my appointment will not be in secrecy, but I will go the masjid, whoever wants can pledge his allegiance there.”

Hence he went to the masjid and the people pledge their allegiance to him.¹

Aḥmad also narrates with an authentic transmission from ‘Awf the following:

كنت عند الحسن -أي البصري- وكان في المدينة عند مقتل عثمان رضي الله عنه، فذكروا أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم. فقال ابن جوشن العطفاني: يا أبا سعيد، إنما زرى بأبي موسى اتباعه عليا، قال- الراوي- فغضب الحسن حتى تبين الغضب في وجهه قال: فمن يتبع؟ قتل أمير المؤمنين عثمان مظلوما فعمد الناس إلى خيرهم فبايعوه، فمن يتبع؟ حتى ردها مرارا.

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 2/573, the annotator has deemed its transmission Ṣaḥīḥ.

I was by al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, and he was present in Madīnah during the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. They happened to discuss the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم and Ibn Jawshan al-Ghaṭafānī¹ said, “O Abū Sa‘īd, the only thing that has degraded Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه is the fact that he followed ‘Alī رضي الله عنه.”

The narrator says that al-Ḥasan became enraged and the anger was clearly discernible in his face. He said, “So who should he have followed? Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was killed unjustly, and so the people approached the best amongst them and pledged their allegiance to him. So who should he have followed?”

He repeated that a few times.²

And Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnawarī³ states in al-Akhhbār al-Ṭiwāl that when ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was murdered, for three days the people remained without an Imām in Ṣalāh and hence al-Ghāfiqī⁴ would lead them in Ṣalāh. Thereafter the people pledged their allegiance to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه:

1 ‘Abd Al-Raḥmān ibn Jawshan al-Ghaṭafānī al-Baṣrī. Abū Zur‘ah, Ibn Sa‘d and al-‘Ijlī have deemed him reliable, and Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his al-Thiqāt. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/228; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 290; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘āil*, 5/220; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 5/84; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 2/142.

2 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 2/576-577, the annotator has deemed its transmission Ṣaḥīḥ.

3 Aḥmad ibn Dāwūd al-Dīnawarī, Abū Ḥanīfah. A scholar who has expert in history, geography, engineering and botany. Some of his books are: al-Akhhbār al-Ṭiwāl, al-Nabāt, al-Jabr wa al-Muqābalah, and al-Faṣāḥah, al-Buldān, and Iṣlāḥ al-Mantiq. He passed away in 282 A.H/895 A.C. See: Yāqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Udabā’*, 26-132; al-Qifṭī: *Imbāh al-Ruwāt*, 1/41; al-Qurashī: *al-Kharāj*, 1/67.

4 Al-Ghāfiqī ibn Ḥarb al-‘Akkī. A son of one of the prominent tribes of Yemen which settled in Egypt. He was part of those whom the Saba‘iyyah had managed to influence in Egypt and was the leader of the Egyptians who had set out to besiege ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in Madīnah. When ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was prevented from coming to the Masjid al-Ghāfiqī would lead the people in ṣalāh. He was also one of those who invaded the house of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and killed him whilst he was reading the Qur’ān. After the demise of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, for five days al-Ghāfiqī was the ruler of Madīnah. See: al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/349-354-391-432.

أيها الناس أبايعتموني على ما بوع عليه من كان قبلي، وإنما الخيار قبل أن تقع البيعة، فإذا وقعت فلا خيار، إنما على الإمام الاستقامة وعلى الرعية التسليم، إن هذه البيعة عامة من ردها رغب عن دين الإسلام، وإنما لم تكن فلتنة

O people have you pledged your allegiance to me on the same terms upon which you had pledged allegiance to those before me. The option is only available before the appointment happens, once its done then there remains no option for anyone. Thereafter it is the duty of the Imām to see that he remains upright and it is the duty of the masses to obey and follow. This pledging is such that whoever rejected it eventually turned away from the religion of Islam, and in the past it was not something which would just suddenly happen.¹

Thereafter al-Dīnawarī states that ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ sent Jarīr ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Bajalī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in order to invite him to submit, saying that those who pledged allegiance to him were the very same people who pledge allegiance to Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. The following is the letter of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to him:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، من عبد الله علي أمير المؤمنين إلى معاوية ابن أبي سفيان، أما بعد: فقد لزمك ومن قبلك من المسلمين بيعتي وأنا بالمدينة وأنتم بالشام؛ لأنه بايعني الذين بايعوا أبا بكر وعمر وعثمان رضي الله عنهم، فليس للشاهد أن يختار ولا للغائب أن يرد، وإنما الأمر في ذلك للمهاجرين والأنصار، فأذا اجتمعوا على رجل منهم فسموه إماما كان ذلك رضا لله

In the name of Allah the Most Gracious the Most Merciful. From the servant of Allah ‘Alī, Amīr al-Mu’minīn, to Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān. Pledging allegiance to me has become binding upon you and those who are by you whereas I am in Madīnah and you are in Shām. This is because the people who pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ have pledged allegiance to me. Hence there remains no choice for the present and no option of rejecting for the absent. For the matter in this regard is based upon the discretion of the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār, if they concur upon a man and choose him as the ruler, that is a sign of the pleasure of Allah.²

1 Al-Dīnawarī: *al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 140.

2 *Al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 156.

And we find the following in the *Tārīkh* of al-Ya‘qūbī:¹

واستخلف علي بن أبي طالب... بايعه طلحة، والزبير، والمهاجرون والأنصار، وكان أول من بايعه وصفق على يده طلحة بن عبيد الله رضي الله عنه... وقال الأشر فقول: أبايك يا أمير المؤمنين على أن علينا بيعة المهاجرين، ثم قام أبو الهيثم بن التيهان وعقبه بن عمرو رضي الله عنهما فقالا: نبايعك على أن علينا بيعة الأنصار وسائر قريش.

‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib was appointed as the Khalīfah... Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr and the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār رضي الله عنهم pledged allegiance to him. The first person who pledge and gave his hand in the hand of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه. And al-Ashtar said, “I pledge allegiance to you, O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, deeming the pledge of the Muhājirīn being binding upon us.”

Thereafter Abū al-Haytham ibn al-Tayyihān and ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Amr رضي الله عنه stoop up and said, “We pledged to you deeming the pledge the of the Anṣār and all of the Quraysh being binding upon us.”²

And al-Balādhurī narrates from Mu‘tamir ibn Sulaymān:

قلت لأبي: إن الناس يقولون إن بيعة علي لم تتم، قال: يا بني، بايعه أهل الحرمين، وإنما البيعة لأهل الحرمين

I said to my father, “People say that the pledge to ‘Alī was not complete.”

He said, “O son, the people of the two Ḥarams pledged their allegiance to him. It is the pledging of the people of the two Ḥarams which is taken into consideration.”³

1 Aḥmad ibn Ishāq ibn Ja‘far ibn Wahb ibn Wāḍiḥ al-Ya‘qūbī al-Baghdādī. A traveller and a historian. He travelled to India and Armenia and also visited the Morocco and a number of Muslim lands. Some of his books are: *al-Tārīkh*, which he gifted to al-Mu‘tamid the Abbasid Ruler, *Akhbār al-Umam al-Sābiqah*, and *Mushākalah al-Nās li Zamānihim*. He passed away in 292 A.H./905 A.C. See: Yāqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, 5/153; al-Baghdādī: *Īḍāḥ al-Maknūn*, 1/219; al-‘Āmilī: 10/230-336.

2 Al-Ya‘qūbī: *al-Tārīkh*, 1/178.

3 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 2/208.

And Ibn A'tham al-Kūfī¹ also cites the reports of the appointment of 'Alī رضي الله عنه. The crux of it is that the people came to 'Alī رضي الله عنه after the murder of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه and sought him to take charge of the Khilāfah, but he refused and suggested to the people that they appoint Ṭalḥah or al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه. They said to him, "Come with us to Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr," and thus he went with them. When they reached the house of Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه, 'Alī رضي الله عنه said to him, "O Abū Muḥammad, the people have thronged around me to pledge, as for myself I have no need for it, so you spread your hand so that I may pledge allegiance to you." Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه replied, "O Abū al-Ḥasan, you are more deserving and more preferable for this matter than me due to your virtue, your kinship with Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم and your early contributions." The same had occurred with al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه. Hence 'Alī رضي الله عنه retreated to the masjid and the people gathered and pledged their allegiance to him.²

And al-Mas'ūdī states that 'Alī رضي الله عنه was appointed the day 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred, i.e. he was privately appointed at that time. Thereafter, four days later his general and public appointment took place.³

And Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī⁴ states that when 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه was murdered the people came rushing to 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه. Hence the people gathered upon him to appoint him, but he said:

1 Aḥmad ibn A'tham al-Kūfī, Abū Muḥammad. A famous Shī'ī historian. He has been deemed weak according to the scholars of ḥadīth. He wrote a book regarding the various conquests which took place till the era of al-Rashīd. He died on in 314 A.H/926 A.C. See: Yāqūt: *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, 2/220; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, 1/138.

2 Ibn A'tham: *al-Futūḥ*, 2/243-244.

3 Al-Mas'ūdī: *Murūj al-Dhahab*, p. 358.

4 Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Rabbihī ibn Ḥabīb ibn Ḥuḍayr, Abū 'Umar al-Qurtubī, the master of literature and history. He was a poet but later became more involved literary reports and their compilation. He earned acclaim for his famous books *al-'Iqd al-Farīd*. He has written few poems regarding admonishment and disinclination from this world. He died in 328 A.H/940 A.C. See: Ibn al-Faraḡī: *Tārīkh 'Ulamā' al-Andalus*, p. 38; Ibn 'Amīrah al-Ḍabbī: *Bughyah al-Multamis*, p. 148; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, 1/110.

ليس ذلك إليكم، إنما ذلك لأهل بدر ليبياعوا، فقال: أين طلحة والزبير وسعد بن أبي وقاص؟

This is not your prerogative, it is for the people of Badr to appoint. Where is Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr and Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ?"

Hence they came and they pledged allegiance and they were followed by the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār. This was on Friday the thirteenth of Dhī al-Hijjah in 35 A.H.¹

From all of the above, it is clear that as much as 'Alī رضي الله عنه wanted his appointment to be with the consent and the consensus of the Muslims, he also wanted it to be with the approval of the forerunners of Islam and the Ahl al-Ḥall wa al-'Aqd (people who would untie and tie, i.e. be consulted in making big decisions). Hence Ibn Ḥibbān states in his *al-Thiqāt*:

إن الناس حين هرعوا إلى علي رضي الله عنه بعد مقتل عثمان رضي الله عنه لمبايعته، قال: ليس ذلك إليكم، وإنما هو لأهل بدر، فمن رضي من أهل بدر فهو الخليفة، فلم يبق أحد من اولئك إلا أتى إليه، فطلب أن تكون على ملاء من الناس، فخرج إلى المسجد فبايعوه.

After the murder of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه the people rushed to 'Alī رضي الله عنه in order to pledge allegiance to him.

He said, "This is not your domain, but it is the domain of the veterans of Badr. Whoever the veterans of Badr choose he will be the Khalīfah."

Hence none of them remained but that he came to 'Alī رضي الله عنه. He requested that his appointment be done publically and proceeded to the Masjid where they pledged their allegiance to him.²

Al-Bāqillānī³ has also debated the issue of the appointment of 'Alī رضي الله عنه in his *al-Tamhīd*. He says:

1 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihī: *al-'Iqd al-Farīd*, 4/410.

2 Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 2/276-278.

3 Muḥammad ibn al-Ṭayyib ibn Ja'far, Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī al-Baghdādī. A judge and a theologian. He had an outstanding ability of deriving rulings and was very witty. 'Aqūd al-Dawlah al-Buwayhī had sent him as an ambassador to the Christian scholars who he met in front of their king. *continued ...*

فإن قال قائل: ما الدليل على إثبات إمامة علي، وأنه أهل لما قام به، وأسند إليه، ومستحق لإمامة الأمة؟ قيل له: الدليل على ذلك كمال خلال الفضل فيه واجتماعها له؛ لأنه من السابقين الأولين، وممن كثر بلاؤه وجهاده في سبيل الله، وعظم غناؤه في الإسلام... وما روي فيه من الفضائل المشهورة عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وسرد جملة وافرة منها ثم قال: هذا مع ما ظهر من إعظام كافة الصحابة له وإطباقتهم على علمه وفضله، وثاقب فهمه ورأيه وفقه نفسه... وقد بسطنا ذلك ضرباً من البسط في كتاب مناقب الأئمة، وبيعض هذه الخصال ودون هذه الفضائل يصلح للخلافة ويستحق الإمامة، فبان بما ذكرناه أنه حقيق بما نظر فيه وتولاه

If someone has to ask: what is the evidence to establish the Imāmah of ‘Alī عليه السلام and the fact that he was worthy of the mission that he assumed and that he was deserving of leading the Ummah? In response it will be said to him, “The evidence to establish that is perfection of virtuous traits and them being found in him collectively, for he was from the forerunners of Islam; he was from amongst those whose contributions and sacrifices for the cause of Allah سبحانه وتعالى were a lot and whose role in serving Islam was great; likewise all the wide-spread merits that have been reported regarding him also establish this.” (Thereafter he cites a few of them and then says) “Together with this is the fact that all the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم revered him and unanimously conceded his knowledge and virtue. Possessing only some of these traits and just a few of these merits would definitely make him eligible for Khilāfah and deserving of leadership. Hence it is clear from what we have mentioned that he was worthy of what he presided over and took charge of.”¹

And Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr narrates in *al-Istī‘āb* with his chain of transmission from Marwān ibn ‘Abd al-Malik:

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Some of his books are: *al-Tamhīd fī al-Radd ‘alā al-Mulḥidah, wa al-Mu‘aṭṭilah, wa al-Khawārij wa al-Mu‘tazilah, Kashf Asrār al-Bāṭiniyyah, and Manāqib al-A‘immah*. He passed away in 403 A.H./1013 A.C. See: al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 5/379; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, 4/209; Ibn Farḥūn: *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahhab*, 2/228.

1 Al-Bāqillānī: *al-Tamhīd*, p. 227-229.

سمعت هارون بن إسحاق يقول: من قال أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان وعلي وعرف لعلي سابقته وفضله فهو صاحب سنة، ومن قال أبو بكر وعمر وعلي وعثمان وعرف لعثمان سابقته وفضله فهو صاحب سنة، فذكرت له هؤلاء الذين يقولون أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان ويسكتون، فتكلم فيهم بكلام غليظ

I heard Hārūn ibn Ishāq¹ saying, “Whoever says Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī and concedes the early contributions of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and his merits he is an adherent of the Sunnah. And whoever say Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān and concedes the early contributions and merits of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه he is also an adherent of the Sunnah.”

I thus asked him about those who say Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān and thereafter remain silent and he made a very heavy statement of condemnation regarding them.²

Thereafter Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr says:

وروى عباس الدوري عن يحيى بن معين أنه قال: خير هذه الأمة بعد نبيها: أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان ثم علي - يعني في الفضل والخلافة - هذا مذهبا وقول الأئمة

And ‘Abbās al-Dūrī³ has narrated from Ibn Ma‘īn that he said, “The best of this Ummah after its Nabī صلوات الله وسلامه عليه was Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān and then ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, i.e. in terms of merit and in terms of assuming the Khilāfah,⁴ this is our stance and the stance of the senior scholars.”⁵

1 Hārūn ibn Ishāq ibn Muḥammad ibn Mālik al-Hamdānī al-Kūfī al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū al-Qāsim. Abū Ḥātim said, Truthful.” And al-Nasā‘ī deemed him reliable. And Ibn Khuzaymah said, “He was from the outstanding servants of Allah.” He passed away in 285 A.H/871 A.C. See: Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 9/87; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/188; *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 12/126; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 11/2.

2 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *al-Istī‘āb*, 3/50.

3 ‘Abbās ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥātim ibn Wāqid al-Dūrī, Abū al-Faḍl al-Baghdādī. Ibn Abī Ḥātim said, “Truthful.” And al-Nasā‘ī and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable. Al-Khalīlī said, “His uprightness is unanimously accepted.” See: Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 6/216; al-Ājurri: *al-Su’ālāt*, p. 261; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 1/144; al-Sam’ānī: *al-Ansāb*, 5/400; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 5/129.

4 This wording appears in *Tārīkh Ibn ‘Asākir*, p. 517.

5 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *al-Istī‘āb*, 3/50

He says in another place:

وباع له أهل اليمن بالخلافة يوم قتل عثمان

The people of Yemen pledged allegiance to him the day ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred.¹

And Ibn al-‘Arabī whilst commenting upon the appointment of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه states:

فلما قضى الله من أمره ما قضى، ومضى من قدره ما مضى، علم أن الحق لا يترك الناس سدى، وأن الحق بعد مفتقرون إلى خليفة مفروض عليهم النظر فيه، ولم يكن بعد الثلاثة كالرابع قدرا وعلما وتقى ودينا، فاعتقدت له البيعة. ولو لا الإسراع بعقد البيعة لعلي لجرى على من بها من الأوباش ما يرقع خرقة، ولكن عزم عامة المهاجرين والأنصار، ورأى ذلك فرضا عليه فانقاد له

When Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى decreed what he decreed and when his ordainment came to pass he knew that the truth will not leave the people wondering around without any purpose and that the truth still requires a Khalīfah whose election was compulsory upon them. And there was no one better after the three than the fourth in terms of stature, knowledge, piety, and adherence to the Dīn. Hence he was appointed and the pledge was given to him. If in appointing ‘Alī رضي الله عنه hastening had not occurred such harms would befall the Ummah at the hands of the riffraff that would not be repairable, but the majority of the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār emphasised and he saw that to be his obligation and thus acceded.²

And Ibn ‘Asākir has narrated from Qays ibn ‘Ubbād:

سمعت عليا يوم الجمل يقول: اللهم إني أبرأ إليك من دم عثمان، ولقد طاش عقلي يوم قتل عثمان، وأنكرت نفسي وجاؤوني للبيعة فقلت: والله إني لأستحي من الله أن أبايع قوما قتلوا رجلا قال له رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ألا أستحي ممن تستحي منه الملائكة. وإني لأستحي من الله أن أبايع وعثمان قتيل الأرض لم يدفن بعد، فانصرفوا. فلما دفن رجع الناس يسألوني البيعة فقلت: اللهم إني مشفق لما أقدم عليه، ثم جاء فبايعت، فلما قالوا: يا أمير المؤمنين، فكأن صدع قلبي وانسكبت بعيرة.

1 Ibid. 3/231.

2 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *al-Awāṣim*, p. 142.

I heard ‘Alī رضي الله عنه saying on the day of Jamal, “O Allah I plea my innocence to you from the blood of ‘Uthmān. My mind became fickle the day ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was killed and I despised myself. They came to me to pledge and I said, ‘By Allah I feel ashamed from Allah of accepting the allegiance of a people who killed a man regarding who Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, ‘Should I not feel shy from a person from who the angels feel shy.’ I feel shy from Allah that I be appointed as the ruler when ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه is still on the ground after being killed and not buried yet. Hence they left. Once he was buried the people returned to ask me to and so I said, ‘O Allah I fear that which I am embarking on.’ Then I accepted their allegiance, and when they said, ‘O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn,’ my heart split asunder and I started to cry.”¹

And Ibn ‘Asākir also narrates from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī that he said:

لما قدم علي الصرة في أثر طلحة والزبير قام عبد الله بن الكواء وقيس بن عباد فقالا: يا أمير المؤمنين أخبرنا عن مسيرك هذا، أوصية أوصاك بها رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أم عهد عهد إليك، أم رأي رأيته حين تفرقت الأمة، واختلفت كلمتها؟ فقال: ما أكون أول كاذب عليه، والله ما مات رسول الله موت فجأة ولا قتل قتلا، ولقد مكث في مرضه أياما وليالي يأتيه المؤذن بالصلاة فأبى أبكر فيصلني بالناس وهو يرى مكاني، ولقد أرادت امرأة من نسائه أن تصرفه عن أبي بكر، فأبى فغضب وقال: أتتن صواحب يوسف مروا أبا بكر يصلي بالناس. فلما قبض الله نبيه نظرنا في أمورنا فاخترنا لديننا من رضيه النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم لديننا، فكانت الصلاة أصل الإسلام وقوام الدين، وهو أمين الدين، فبايعنا أبا بكر، فكان لذلك أهلا لم يختلف عليه منا اثنان، ولم يشهد بعضنا على بعض، وتقطع منه البراءة، فأدبت إلى أبي بكر حقه، وعرفت له طاعته وغزوت معه جنوده، وكنت آخذ إذا أعطاني، وأغزو إذا أغزاني، وأضرب بين يديه الحدود بسوطي. فلما قبض رضي الله عنه ولاها العمر، فأخذها بسنة صاحبه وما يعرف من أمره، فبايعنا عمر، لم يختلف عليه منا اثنان، ولم يشهد بعضنا على بعض، ولم تقطع منه البراءة، فأدبت إلى عمر حقه، وعرفت طاعته، وغزوت معه في جيوشه، وكنت آخذ إذا أعطاني، وأغزو إذا أغزاني، وأضرب بين يديه الحدود بسوطي، فلما قبض تذكرت في نفسي قرابتي وسابقتي وفضلي وأنا أظن أن لا يعدلوا بي، فأخذ عبد الرحمن موثقنا على أن نسمع ونطيع لمن ولي إليه أمرنا، ثم أخذ بيد عثمان فضرب بيده على يده، فنظرت في أمري، فإذا طاعتي قد سبقت بيعتي، وإذا ميثاقي قد أخذ لغيري، فبايعنا عثمان، فأدبت إليه حقه، وعرفت له طاعته، وغزوت معه في جيوشه، وكنت آخذ إذا أعطاني، وأغزو إذا أغزاني، وأضرب بين يديه الحدود بسوطي. فلما أصيب نظرت في أمري... فبايعني أهل الحرمين وأهل هذين المصرين-يعني الكوفة والبصرة- وفي رواية: ثم إن عثمان قتل فجاؤوني فبايعوني طائعين غير مكرهين.

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 12/349.

When ‘Alī رضي الله عنه marched to Baṣrah behind Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه and their comrades, ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Kawwā’¹ and Qays ibn ‘Ubbād stood up and said, “O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, tell us about your march, is it due to a bequest that Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم had made to you, or due to a pledge which he took from you, or is it due to an opinion which you saw as most appropriate during the disunity of the Ummah and its bickering?”

He said, “I will not be the first person to lie against him. By Allah, Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم did not pass away suddenly nor was he killed abruptly. He actually stayed ill for a few days and nights in which the Mu‘adhhdhin would come to him and inform him of the ṣalāh, whereafter he would tell Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه to lead the people therein, despite knowing of my presence. A wife from his wives had tried to avert him from Abū Bakr, but he refused and became enraged and said, “You are like the women of the time of Yūsuf, order Abū Bakr to lead the people in ṣalāh.” When Allah سبحانه وتعالى eventually took the soul of the Nabī, we looked into our matter and thereafter chose for our worldly affairs the person whom Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم had chosen for our Dīn; for ṣalāh is indeed the pillar of Islam and the support of Dīn, and he was the one who was trustworthy in the Dīn. Hence we pledged allegiance to Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. He was deserving of that. No two people differed regarding him, we did not testify against each other, and we did not disassociate from him. I fulfilled the right of Abū Bakr, conceded the obligation of obedience to him, and fought with him in his battles. I would accept when he gave me, would fight when he demanded that from me, and would execute the capital punishment in his presence with my whip. When his soul was taken, he appointed ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. He treaded the path of his companion and acted according to what he knew of his affairs. Hence we pledged allegiance to ‘Umar. No two people differed regarding him, we did not testify against each other, and we did not disassociate from him. I fulfilled the right of ‘Umar, conceded the obligation of obedience to him, and fought with him in his battles. I would accept when he gave me, would fight when he demanded that from me, and would execute the capital punishment in his presence with my whip. When his soul was taken, I thought of my kinship

1 One of the leaders of the Khawārīj during the Khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. See: al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/318; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 2/474.

(with Rasūl Allāh ﷺ) and my early contributions and my merits and thus assumed that they will never turn away from me. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ﷺ took our word that we will listen to and obey the one to whom he will hand our affairs. He thereafter took the hand of ‘Uthmān ﷺ and gave his hand in his hand. I pondered over my matter and realised that my obligation of compliance has trumped my desire for appointment and that the pledge I had made was taken for someone else. Hence we pledged allegiance to ‘Uthmān ﷺ. I fulfilled the right of ‘Uthmān, conceded the obligation of obedience to him, and fought with him in his battles. I would accept when he gave me, would fight when he demanded that from me, and would execute the capital punishment in his presence with my whip. Thereafter, when he was murdered I thought of my matter... The people of the two Ḥarams (sanctuaries) and the people of these two cities (Kūfah and Baṣrah) pledged their allegiance to me.¹

Another narration states: Then ‘Uthmān ﷺ was murdered and hence they came to me happily without being coerced.”²

And Ibn ‘Asākir has recorded in his *Tārīkh* via the transmission of al-Dūrī:

سمعت أحمد بن حنبل يقول في الخلافة: أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان وعلي

I heard Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal saying regarding the Khilāfah, “Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī.”³

And he has narrated from Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr al-Ṭūsī⁴ the following:

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 12/352; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Maṭālib al-‘Āliyah*, 4/294-296, he commented saying, “Ishāq has narrated it with a Ṣaḥīḥ chain of transmission and Abū Dāwūd and al-Nasā’ī have narrated it briefly.

2 Ibid. 12/350.

3 *Tārīkh Dimashq* (printed section), p. 517.

4 Muḥammad ibn Manṣūr ibn Dāwūd ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ṭūsī al-Baghdādī. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal has made good mention of him and al-Nasā’ī and Ibn Ḥibbān have deemed him reliable. He passed away in 254 A.H/868 A.C. See: Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 8/94; al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 3/247; Ibn Abī Ya’lā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, 1/318; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 9/472.

قيل لأحمد بن حنبل: إن قوما قالوا: أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان ثم يسكتون، فقال: هذا كلام سوء

It was said to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal that a certain people say Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān and thereafter remain silent. He replied, “This is evil speech.”¹

And in the narration of al-Dāraquṭnī he is reported to have said:

لا يعجبني من وقف في علي بن أبي طالب في الخلافة

I do not like a person who suspends judgement regarding the Khilāfah of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه.²

And Ibn ‘Asākir narrates from Muḥammad ibn Muṭahhar that he said:

سألت أبا عبد الله أحمد بن حنبل منذ أربعين سنة عن التفصيل، فقال: أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان، ومن قال علي، لم أعنفه، ثم ذكر حديث سفينة في الخلافة فقال أحمد: علي عندنا من الراشدين المهديين، حماد بن سلمة-أي راوي حديث سفينة ثقة، وما نزيد كل يوم إلا بصيرة

I asked Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal forty years ago regarding the detail and he said, “Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān, and whoever says ‘Alī I will not reproach him.”

Thereafter mention was made of the ḥadīth of Safīnah رضي الله عنه regarding the Khilāfah and Aḥmad said, “‘Alī رضي الله عنه in our view was from the Rightly Guided, and Ḥammād ibn Salamah (the narrator of the ḥadīth of Safīnah) is reliable. And we do not increase everyday but in foresight.”³

And al-Maymūnī makes mention of his statement:

سمعت أحمد بن حنبل وقيل له: إلا ما تذهب في الخلافة؟ أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان وعلي. قال-الراوي-: فقيل له: كأنك تذهب إلى حديث سفينة، قال: أذهب إلى حديث سفينة وإلى شيء آخر، رأيت في زمن

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 517.

2 Al-Dāraquṭnī: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, p. 19.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 516.

أبي بكر وعمر وعثمان لم يتسم أمير المؤمنين، ولم يقيم الجمعة المحدود، ثم رأيت بعد قتل عثمان قد فعل ذلك، فقلت: إنه قد وجب له في ذلك الوقت ما لم يكن قبل ذلك

I heard Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal saying when he was asked regarding his view on the Khilāfah, “Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه.”

The narrators says that he was then asked, “Probably you are inclined toward the ḥadīth of Safīnah رضي الله عنه?”

He said, “Yes I take the ḥadīth of Safīnah and something else as well: I saw that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, in the time of Abū Bakr, ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, did not assume the title Amīr al-Mu‘minīn and did not establish the Jumu‘ah ṣalāh and the capital punishments. I saw him doing all of that thereafter and thus I said, “At that time that which was not established for him previously became established.”¹

And he also cited the following narration of Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Alī al-Ṭabarī:

صرت إلى أحمد بن حنبل رحمه الله فسألته عن خلافة علي رضي الله عنه هل ثبتت؟ فقال: ما سؤالك عن هذا؟ فقلت: إن الناس يزعمون أنك لا تثبت خلافته، فاستنكر ذلك وقال: أنا أقول! وسالت عيناه، ثم قال: يا هذا! قبض رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وقد صلى خلفه ثلاثون ألف رجل فجأؤوا بجماعتهم فقدموا أبا بكر رضي الله عنه، فأقول أخطأ القوم وأصبت! ثم فشا الإسلام الإسلام بعد فجأؤوا إلى عمر فقدموه، فأقول، أخطأ هؤلاء القوم وأصبت! ثم فتحت الفتوح، وفشا الإسلام، فصار المسلمون أضعاف هذه العدة مضاعفة، فقدموا عثمان رضي الله عنه فأقول: أخطأ القوم وأصبت! ثم زاد الإسلام وفشا ثم قدموا علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه، فأقول: أخطأ القوم وأصبت

I went to Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, may Allah have mercy on him, and asked him regarding the Khilāfah of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه whether it was established and so he said, “Why do you ask about this?”

I replied, “The people are claiming that you do not acknowledge his Khilāfah.”

1 Ibid. (manuscript), 12/354.

He disliked that and retorted, “Will I say something like that?” and his eyes started flowing with tears. Thereafter he said, “O person! Rasūl Allāh ﷺ passed away when thirty thousand people were performing Ṣalāh behind him. They all unanimously came and pushed Abū Bakr ﷺ forward, so should I say that they were wrong and I am right? Thereafter Islam spread and thus they came to ‘Umar ﷺ and pushed him forward, so should I say that the people were wrong and I am right? Thereafter conquest took place and Islam spread and the Muslims became manifold of what they previously were and thus they pushed ‘Uthmān ﷺ forward, so should I say that the people were wrong and I am right? Thereafter Islam increased and spread and they pushed ‘Alī ﷺ forward, so should I say that the people were wrong and I am right?”¹

Likewise Ibn ‘Asākir has narrated from al-Madā’inī:

لما دخل علي بن أبي طالب الكوفة دخل عليه رجل من العرب فقال: والله يا أمير المؤمنين لقد زنت الخلافة وما زانتك، ورفعتها وما رفعتك، وهي كانت أحوج إليك منك إليها

When ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ entered Kūfah an Arab person came to him and said, “By Allah, O Amīr al-Mu’minīn you have adorned the Khilāfah and it has not adorned you; and you have elevated it and it has not elevated you; and more than you were in need of it, it was in need of you.”²

And he narrates the following from Ibrāhīm ibn Rabāḥ:³

يستحق علي الخلافة بخمسة اشياء: بالقرب من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، والسبق إلى الإسلام، والزهد في الدنيا، والفقہ في الدين، والنكاية في العدو

‘Alī ﷺ deserved the Khilāfah due to five reasons: due to his kinship with Rasūl Allāh ﷺ, his early acceptance of Islam, his asceticism, his deep understanding of Dīn, and his ability to torment the enemy.⁴

1 Ibid. 12/354.

2 Ibid. 12/354.

3 I did not come across a biography of his in the references I have at my disposal.

4 Ibid. 12/349.

And Ibn Athīr narrates from Ismā'īl al-Khuṭabī:¹

لما قتل عثمان جاء كلهم يهرعون إلى علي، أصحاب محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وغيرهم، كلهم يقول: أمير المؤمنين علي، حتى دخلوا على داره فقالوا: نبايعك فمد يدك، فأنت أحق بها، فقال: ليس ذلك إليكم، إنما ذلك إلى أهل بدر، فمن رضي به أهل بدر فهو خليفة، فلم يبق أحد إلا أتى عليا فقالوا: ما نرى أحدا أحق بها منك، فمد يدك نبايعك، فقال: أين طلحة والزبير؟ فكان أول من بايعه طلحة بلسانه وسعد بن أبي وقاص بيده. فلما رأى علي ذلك خرج إلى المسجد وصعد المنبر، فبايعه طلحة، وتابعه الزبير وأصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم

When 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred they all came running to 'Alī رضي الله عنه, the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and others, all of them saying, "O Amīr al-Mu'mīnīn 'Alī," till they eventually entered his house and said, "We want to pledge to you so extend your hand, for you are most deserving of it."

He said, "This is not your prerogative, this is the prerogative of the veterans of Badr. Hence whoever the veterans of Badr will choose he will be the Khalīfah."

Hence no one remained from among them but that he came to 'Alī رضي الله عنه and said, "We do not see anyone more deserving of it than you, so stretch your hand so that we may pledge."

He asked, "Where is Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما?"

The first to pledge allegiance to him was Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه with his tongue and Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ رضي الله عنه with his hand. When 'Alī رضي الله عنه saw that he went to the Masjid and ascended the pulpit whereafter Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه pledged allegiance to him. Thereafter al-Zubayr and the other Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم followed along.²

1 Ismā'īl ibn 'Alī ibn Ismā'īl al-Khuṭabī al-Baghdādī, Abū Muḥammad. The orator, expert of Arabic literature, scholar of ḥadīth and historian. Abū Ḥafṣ ibn Shāhīn, al-Dāraquṭnī, and Ibn Mandah have narrated from him, amongst others. Al-Khaṭīb has said regarding him, "He was virtuous and knowledgeable regarding the history the people and their leaders. He compiled a major history based on chronological order. Al-Dāraquṭnī has deemed him reliable. He passed away in 350 A.H./961 A.H. See: al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 6/304; Ibn Abī Ya'lā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, 2/118; Yāqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, 7/190; al-Dhahabī: *al-Ībar*, 2/286; *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, 15/522.

2 Ibn al-Athīr: *Usd al-Ghābah*, 4/31.

And Ibn Taymiyyah said the following regarding the appointment of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه:

لكن المنصوص عن أحمد تبديع من توقف في خلافة علي وقال: هو أضل من حمار أهله، وأمر بهجرانه ونهى عن مناكحته، ولم يتردد أحمد ولا أحد من أئمة السنة في القول أنه ليس غير علي أولى بالحق منه، ولا شكوا في ذلك

But what is emphatically narrated from Aḥmad is: considering the one who suspends judgement regarding the Khilāfah of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to be an innovator. He would actually say that such a person is more astray than the donkey of his household and would order that he be ostracised and would prohibit against establishing marital ties with such a person. Aḥmad or any of the other Imāms of the Sunnah have never doubted in asserting that no one beside ‘Alī was more deserving than he was.¹

He also says in another place:

هو متفق عليه بين الفقهاء وعلماء السنة وأهل المعرفة والتصوف، وهو مذهب العامة... وإنما يخالفهم في ذلك بعض أهل الأهواء من أهل الكلام ونحوهم كالرافضة الطاعين في خلافة الثلاثة، أو الخوارج الطاعين في خلافة الصهرين عثمان وعلي، أو بعض الناصبة النافين لخلافة علي، أو بعض الجهال المتسننة الواقفين في خلافته

This is agreed upon between the jurists, the scholars of Sunnah, and the people of recognition (of Allah) and piety, and this is the stance of the general people as well. Only a few devious groups oppose them from the people of theology and their likes: like the Rāfiḍah who criticise the Khilāfah of the three, the Khawārij who criticise the Khilāfah of the two son-in-laws of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, some of the Nawāṣib who deny the Khilāfah of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, and some ignorant people who feign the persona of Ahl al-Sunnah who suspend judgement regarding his Khilāfah.²

And al-Dhahabī says:

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, 4/438.

2 Ibid. 35/19.

لما قتل عثمان سعى الناس إلى علي وقالوا: لا بد للناس من إمام، فحضر طلحة والزبير وسعد بن أبي وقاص والأعيان، وكان أول من بايعه طلحة ثم سائر الناس

When ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was murdered the people rushed to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and said, “It is necessary for the people to have a leader.” Hence Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ رضي الله عنه and the other prominent people came, and the first to pledge allegiance to him was Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه and then the rest of the people.¹

As for the narrations which are contrary to this, which are cited by al-Ṭabarī, some of them state that Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه pledged unwillingly. Hence It is narrated from al-Zuhrī that:

بايع الناس علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه، فأرسل إلى الزبير وطلحة فدعاهما إلى البيعة، فتلكأ طلحة، فقام مالك الأشتر وسل يسفه وقال: والله لتبايعن أو لأضربن به بين عينيك، فقال طلحة: وأين المهرب منه! فبايعه وبايعه الزبير والناس، وسأل طلحة والزبير أن يؤمرهما على الكوفة والبصرة فقال: تكونان عندي فأتجمل بكما، فأني وحش لغرافكما. قال الزهري: وقد بلغنا أنه قال لهما: إن أحببنا أن تبايعا لي وإن أحببنا مبايعتكما فقالا: بل نبايعك. وقال بعد ذلك: إنما صنعنا ذلك خشية على أنفسنا، وقد عرفنا أنه لم يكن لبايعنا، فظهرا إلى مكة بعد قتل عثمان بأربعة أشهر

The people pledged to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه. He thus sent a message to al-Zubayr and Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه inviting them to pledge as well.

Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه hesitated and thus Mālik al-Ashtar stood up, unsheathed his sword and said, “By Allah, You surely will pledge or I will strike this sword between your eyes.”

So Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه replied, “Where can one flee?”

Thus he pledged and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه and the people also pledged. Thereafter, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه requested that they be appointed as the governors of Kūfah and Baṣrah, so ‘Alī رضي الله عنه replied, “You will stay by me so that I may gain solace from your presence, I feel uncomfortable parting with you.”

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Duwal al-Islām*, 1/178.

Al-Zuhrī says, “It has also reached us that he said to the two of them, “If you want you can pledge to me, and if you want I can pledge to you.” They said, “Rather we will pledge to you.” And thereafter they said, “We only did that due to fearing upon ourselves, because we knew that he was not going to pledge to us.” Hence they set out for Makkah four months after the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.¹

He also narrated from ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Jundub² from his father:

لما قتل عثمان اجتمع الناس على علي، فذهب الأشتر فجاء بطلحة، فقال له: دعني أنظر ما يصنع الناس، فلم يدعه وجاء يتله تلاً، وصعد المنبر فبايع

When ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was murdered the people gathered by ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. Al-Ashtar went to Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه and he said, “Let me see what the people are doing.” He did not leave him and brought him pushing him (forcing him to walk). Hence he ascended the pulpit and pledged.³

And it is narrated through the transmission of al-Ḥārith al-Wālibī:⁴

جاء حكيم بن جبلة بالزبير حتى بايع: فكان الزبير يقول: جاءني لص من لصوص عبد القيس فبايعت والليح على عنقي

Ḥukaym ibn Jabalah⁵ came with al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه till he pledged. Hence al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه would say, “A thief from the thieves of ‘Abd al-Qays came to me, and thus I pledged whilst the sword was on my throat.”⁶

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/429.

2 Did not come across his biography in the references I have at my disposal.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/435.

4 I did not come across his biography in the references I have at my disposal.

5 Ḥukaym ibn Jabalah al-‘Abdī al-Amīr. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه appointed him over Sindh for some time. He thereafter settled in Baṣrah and was one of those who rebelled against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr has said regarding him, “He lived during the time of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم, but I am not aware of a single narration which establishes his companionship of Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم. He was killed on the day of Jamal in 36 A.H/656 A.C. See: al-Mas‘ūdī: *Murūj al-Dhahab*, 3/87; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *al-Istī‘āb*, 1/324; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Iṣābah*, 1/395.

6 Ibid. 4/435.

Ostensibly, it seems as though these narrations are not correct, for apart from the aforementioned narrations which state that Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما pledged wilfully and happily,¹ we find other narrations of the scholars of ḥadīth which support this stance (i.e. the stance that they pledged freely). Hence Ibn Shaybah has cited a few narrations in his Muṣannaf regarding the wilful pledge of Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه without any coercion or pressure.

Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb² narrates:

لما قتل عثمان قلت: ما يقيموني بالعراق وإنما الجماعة عند المهاجرين والأنصار، قال: فخرجت، فأخبرت أن الناس بايعوا علياً، قال: فانتهيت إلى الربذة وإذا علي بها، فوضع له رحل فقعد عليه، فكان كقيام الرجل، فحمد الله وأثنى عليه ثم قال: إن طلحة والزبير بايعا طائعين غير مكرهين

When ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred I said, “What is holding me back in Iraq, the group that I should be accompanying is the group of the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār.” He said, “I thus set out and was informed that the people have pledged to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه.” He said, “I reached Rabadhah and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was there. The saddle of a camel was placed for him, he sat upon it and he seemed in height like a standing person. He said after glorifying Allah سبحانه وتعالى, “Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما pledged freely without being coerced.”³

And Zayd ibn Wahb narrates:

قال علي لطلحة والزبير، ألم تبايعاني؟ قالوا: نطلب دم عثمان

‘Alī رضي الله عنه said to Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما, “Did you not pledge to me already?”

They replied, “We are seeking retaliation for the blood of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.”⁴

1 See p. 62-65.

2 Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb al-Bajalī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Kūfī. He narrated from the four Khulafā’, Bilāl, Ḥudhayfah, Miqdād رضي الله عنه, amongst others. Al-‘Ijlī said, “Reliable.” Ishāq ibn Manṣūr said from Ibn Ma‘īn, “Reliable.” And Khalīfah said, “He passed away in 82 A.H./701 A.C. See: al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 233; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/275; Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 117; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 5/3.

3 *Muṣannaf ibn Abī Shaybah*, 15/274; *Mustadrak Ḥākim*, 3/115.

4 *Muṣannaf ibn Abī Shaybah* 15/287.

This is an acknowledgement from them of their pledge. But they differed with ‘Alī رضي الله عنه regarding the establishing of the capital punishment upon the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه; they were proponents of immediate execution whereas ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was a proponent of patience till the conditions stabilise.

And it is narrated from al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays¹ that he came to Madīnah and found ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه besieged. He met Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما and said to them:

ما تأمراني به وترضيانه لي، فإني لا أرى هذا الرجل إلا مقتولا؟ فقالا: علي، ثم قال: أتأمراني به وترضيانه لي؟ قال: نعم. ثم انطلق حتى إذا أتى مكة جاء الخبر بقتل عثمان، فلقي أم المؤمنين عائشة رضي الله عنها، وكانت وقتذاك بمكة، فقال لها: من تأمريني أن أبايع؟ قالت: عليا، قال: تأمريني به وترضيانه لي؟ قالت: نعم. ثم قال الأحنف: فمررت على علي بالمدينة فبايعته، ثم رجعت إلى أهل البصرة ولا أرى الأمر إلا قد استقام

“What do you order me to do and what do you choose for me, for I do not see this man but as one who will be murdered.”

They replied, “Alī.”

He asked, “Do you order me to hold onto him and do you choose him for me?”

They replied, “Yes.”

He, Aḥnaf, then continued to Makkah and upon reaching there received the news of the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. He thus met the Mother of the Believers, ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها, who was in Makkah at that time. He asked her, “To who do you order me to pledge allegiance?”

1 Aḥnaf ibn Qays ibn Mu’āwiyah al-Tamīmī al-Sa’dī, Abū Baḥr al-Baṣrī. A Ṭābiṭ who witnessed both the era of ignorance and Islam but was not blessed with the company of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم. He has narrated from a group of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī says, “I have not seen a notable of a people better than Aḥnaf.” He has many merits and his forbearance was proverbial. Ibn Sa’d has mentioned him in the first generation of Ṭābiṭīn and has said that he was reliable and trustworthy. And al-Ḥākīm has mentioned that it is he who had conquered Marw al-Rawdh in Khorasan. He passed away in 67 A.H/686 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/93; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 57; Ibn Ma’in: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/20; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 1/191.

She said, “Alī.”

He asked, “Do you order me to pledge to him and do you choose him for me?”

She said, “Yes.”

Thereafter Ḥnaf says, “I passed by ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in Madīnah and pledged my allegiance to him, and I returned home and did not think of the matter but as stabilised.”¹

And Ibn Ḥibbān has cited in his *al-Thiqāt* that the first person to pledge was Ṭalḥah and thereafter al-Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.² And Ibn al-‘Arabī states:

فإن قال طلحة: بايعته واللج على قفي، قلنا اخترع هذا الحديث من أراد أن يجعل في القفالعة قفي كما يجعل في الهوى هوي، وتلك لغة هذيل لا قريش، فكانت كذبة لم تدبر

If Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “I pledged whilst the sword was on my neck (Qafi).” We will say that this ḥadīth has been invented by someone who wants to make the word “Qafā” into “Qafi” just as the word “Hawā” is made into “Hawi”; and this is the language of Hudhayl, not the language of Quraysh. So this narration turns about to be a lie which was not given enough thought.³

And al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī has cited the following statement of Muḥammad ibn Ishāq in *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah*:

إن عثمان لما قتل ببيع علي بن أبي طالب بيعة عامة في مسجد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، وبايع له بالمدينة طلحة والزبير

When ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was murdered pledges of the general public were given to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ in the masjid of Rasūl Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ also pledged to him in Madīnah.⁴

1 Ibid. 15/271.

2 Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 2/268.

3 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *al-‘Awāšim*, p. 144.

4 Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah*, 3/230.

And Ibn Ḥazm, commenting upon the pledge of Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنهم states:

فإذا مات عثمان رضي الله عنه وهو الإمام، ففرض إقامة إمام يأتهم به الناس لئلا يبقوا بلا إمام، فإذا بادر علي رضي الله عنه فبايعه واحد من المسلمين فصاعدا فهو إمام قائم، ففرض طاعته لا سيما ولم يتقدم بيعته بيعة، ولم ينازعه الإمامة أحدا، فهذا أوضح وأجيب في وجوب إمامته وصحة بيعته لزوم أمرته للمؤمنين، فهو الإمام بحقه وما ظهر منه قط إلى أن مات شيء يوجب نقض بيعته، وما ظهر منه قط إلا العدل والجد والبر والتقوى... وأما أم المؤمنين والزبير وطلحة رضي الله عنهم ومن كان معهم فما أبطلوا قط الإمامة علي، ولا طعنوا فيها، ولا ذكروا فيه جرحه تحطه عن الإمامة، ولا أحدثوا إمامة أخرى، ولا جددوا بيعة لغيره، هذا ما لا يقدر أن يدعيه أحد بوجه من الوجوه، بل يقطع كل علم على أن كل ذلك لم يكن

If ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه who was the ruler died, it was then compulsory to appoint a ruler who they could follow so that they do not remain without a leader. If ‘Alī رضي الله عنه advanced in this regard and even one person of the Muslims or more pledged allegiance to him, his rulership would become legitimately established. Hence it would be necessary to obey him, especially when considering that no other pledge or appointment surpassed his and that no one disputed with him regarding it. This is the clearest evidence of his rulership being binding and his appointment being valid upon the believers. He was the rightful ruler and he did not do anything till the time of his death which would engender the violation of his appointment. He only displayed justice, earnestness, nobility and piety. As for Umm al-Mu’minīn, al-Zubayr, Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه and those who were with them, they had never deemed the rulership of ‘Alī invalid, nor did they criticise it, nor did they impugn him with anything which would drop him from deserving rulership, nor did they initiate another rulership, and nor did they renew their pledge to anyone else beside him. No one has the ability to claim any of the above in any way possible, in fact a person can say with certainty that none of that had transpired.¹

Moving on, al-Ṭabarī has also cited various narrations regarding some of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, like Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, Ibn ‘Umar, Usāmah ibn Zayd, Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, and other, staying behind from pledging.

1 Ibn Ḥazm: *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 4/153.

Hence he narrates through the transmission of Ibn Shabbah from Abū al-Malīḥ:

وخرج علي إلى المسجد فصعد المنبر وعليه إزار وطاق وعمامة خز، ونعلاه في يده متكئا على قوس، فبايعه الناس، وجاؤوا بسعد فقال علي: بايع، قال: لا أباع حتى يبايع الناس، والله ما عليك مني بأس، قال: خلوا سبيله، وجاؤوا ببن عمر، فقال: بايع، قال: لا أباع حتى يبايع الناس، قال: انتني بحميل، قال: لا أرى حميلا، قال الأشتري: خل عني أضرب عنقه، قال: دعوه أنا حميله

He came to the masjid and ascended the pulpit. He was wearing a loin cloth, a *Ṭāq* (a specific type of clothing), a turban and a silken turban; his shoes were in his hands and he was leaning on a bow. They pledged to him and thereafter came with Sa'd رضي الله عنه.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه said to him, “Pledge.”

He said, “I will not pledge until the people pledge. By Allah there will not be for you any problem from my side.”

He thus said, “Clear his way.”

Then they came with Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and he said to him, “Pledge.”

He replied, “I will not pledge until the people pledge.”

‘Alī رضي الله عنه said to him, “Give me a guarantor.”

He replied, “I don’t see a guarantor as necessary.”

Al-Ashtar thus said, “Give me permission to slay him.”

‘Alī رضي الله عنه responded, “I am his guarantor.”¹

And in the narration of al-Wāqidī the following appears:

وبايع الناس عليا بالمدينة، وتربص سبعة نفر فلم يبايعوه منهم: سعد بن أبي وقاص، ومنهم ابن عمر، وصهيب، وزيد بن ثابت، ومحمد بن مسلمة، وسلمة بن وقش، وأسامة بن زيد، ولم يتخلف أحد من الأنصار إلا بايع فيما نعلم

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/428.

The people pledged allegiance to ‘Alī عليه السلام in Madīnah. But seven individuals delayed and did not pledge. They were: Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, Ibn ‘Umar, Ṣuhayb, Zayd ibn Thābit, Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, Salamah ibn Waqsh, and Usāmah ibn Zayd عليه السلام. None of the Anṣār had delayed in pledging according to what we know.¹

And in the narration of Ibn Shabbah from Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyah he is reported to have said:

كنت أمسي مع أبي حين قتل عثمان رضي الله عنه حتى دخل بيته، فأتاه أناس من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقالوا: إن هذا الرجل قد قتل، ولا بد من إمام للناس، قال: أو تكون شورى؟ قالوا: أنت لنا رضا، قال: فالمسجد إذا يكون عن رضا من الناس، فخرج إلي المسجد فبايعه من بايعه، وبايعت الأنصار عليا إلا نفيرا يسيرا

I was in the evening with my father when ‘Uthmān عليه السلام was murdered. He entered his house and the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم came to him and said, “This man has been murdered, and the people necessarily require an Imām.”

He said, “And it can be based on a council.”

They said, “You are our choice.”

He replied, “If that is the case then let us head to the Masjid so that the election happens with the happiness of the people.”

He thus set out for the Masjid and whoever pledged to him pledged to him, and the Anṣār pledged to him as well, with the exception of just a few people.²

What is obvious from these narrations is that the hesitation was only in the beginning, but when the matter became clear and the people unanimously

1 Ibid. 4/431.

2 Ibid. 4/429.

pledged to ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ these people went on to pledge as well. The greatest proof of this is the following statement of al-Wāqidi:

ولم يتخلف أحد من الأنصار إلا بايع فيما نعلم

No one from amongst the Anṣār stayed behind from pledging according to what we know.¹

And Ibn Kathīr states:

فلما كان يوم الجمعة وصعد علي المنبر، بايعه من لم يبايعه بالأمس

When Friday came and he ascended the pulpit. Those who never pledged to him yesterday pledged to him then.²

Furthermore, the fact that those who had stayed behind from pledging initially came to ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, i.e. Sa’d ibn Waqqāṣ, Ibn ‘Umar, Usāmah and Ibn Maslamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, and sought to be excused from fighting with him against the people of Shām or in any other battle which was to take place between him and the Muslims in Iraq is also a clear proof of the fact that they were abiding by their pledge which mandated that they obey him. Had the matter been otherwise they would have not went to him seeking to be excused, for in that case there would be no pledge that would be binding upon them.

What further emphasises the fact that they had pledged is the following statement of al-Ashtar which he made after these individuals had sought to be excused:

يا أمير المؤمنين إنا وإن لم نكن من المهاجرين والانصار، فإننا من التابعين لهم بإحسان، وإن القوم وإن كان أولى بما سبقونا إليه فليسوا بأولى مما شركناهم فيه، وهذه بيعة عامة الخارج فيها طاعن مستعتب، فحضر هؤلاء الذين يريدون التخلف عنك باللسان، فإن أبوا فأدبهم بالحبس، فأجابه علي: بل دعمهم ورأيهم الذي هم عليه

1 Ibid. 4/431.

2 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 7/227.

“O Amīr al-Mu’minīn. Although we are not from the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār, but we are from those who have followed them with goodness. And although these people enjoy preference over us in matters in which they surpassed us, but they do not enjoy any preference in matters which we have witnessed with them. This is a general pledge and the one who leaves it is a critic who should seek forgiveness. So induce these people who want to stay behind with your tongue and if they refuse than discipline them by detaining them.”

‘Alī رضي الله عنه replied to him saying, “Rather leave them upon the opinion that they hold.”¹

Al-Ashtar’s statement clearly suggests that these individuals, due to them staying behind from joining ‘Alī رضي الله عنه in his campaign against the people of Iraq, will be deemed as though they are protesting against the pledge itself. The response of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه makes this even clearer; because had the pledge not been binding upon them he would have excused them saying that they have not pledged and thus it would not be necessary for them to participate, rather than saying, “Instead leave them upon the opinion that they hold.”

And it appears in another narration:

ولما رأى علي من أهل المدينة ما رأى (أي عدم الرغبة في الخروج معه إلى العراق والشام خوفا من قتال أهل القبلة) لم يرض طاعتهم (أي تأكيد البيعة) حتى يكون معها نصرته.

And when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه saw in the people of Madīnah what he saw (i.e. their unwillingness to join him in his campaign to Iraq and Shām due to the fear of fighting the people of the Qiblah) he was not merely satisfied with their obedience unless they coupled it with helping him and supporting him.

And al-Bāqillānī presents a justification for the stance of those Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who were hesitant to support ‘Alī رضي الله عنه stating that that was not due to them discarding his Khilāfah, but rather it was because of their fear of civil strife

1 Al-Dīnawarī: *al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 142.

between the people of the Qiblah; in this regard they drew evidence from the ḥadīth of Rasūl Allāh ﷺ which exhorted us to stay away from the fights of Fitnah. Hereunder is what he has said:

فإن قال قائل: فإذا كانت إمامة علي رضي الله عنه من الصحة والثبوت بحيث وصفتهم فما تقولون في تأخر سعد بن أبي وقاص، وسعيد بن زيد، وعبد الله بن عمر، ومحمد بن مسلمة، وأسامة بن زيد، وسلمة بن وقش، وغير هؤلاء ممن يكثر عددهم وقعودهم عن نصرته والدخول في طاعته، قيل له: ليس في جميع القاعد من أسميائه أو ضربنا عن ذكره من طعن في إمامته واعتقد فسادها، وإنما قعدوا عن نصرته على حرب المسلمين لتخوفهم من ذلك وتجنب الإثم فيه، وظنهم موافقة العصيان في طاعته في هذا الفعل، فلذلك احتجوا عليه في القعود ورووا له فيه الأخبار، وقال منهم قائل: لا أقاتل حتى تأتيني بسيف له لسان يعرف المؤمن من الكافر، ويقول: هذا مؤمن وهذا كافر فاقتله، ولم يقل لعلي: إنك لست بإمام واجب الطاعة، وقال له محمد بن مسلمة بعد مراجعته ومعارضته: إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عهد إلي إذا وقعت فتنة بين المسلمين أن أكسر سيفي وأتخذ مكانه سيفاً من خشب... وكذلك قال أسامة بن زيد: قد علمت يا علي أنك لو دخلت بطن أسد لدخلت معك فيه، ولكن لا مواسة في النار، ولم يقل: إنك لست بإمام، وإنما خاف من قتل المسلمين، وليس هذا من القدح في الإمامة بسبيل.

If someone has to say: If the rule of ‘Alī عليه السلام was really as legitimate and valid as you have mentioned, then what do you say about the non-compliance of Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, Sa’īd ibn Zayd, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar, Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, Usāmah ibn Zayd, Salamah ibn Waqsh عليه السلام, and all the others who refrained from supporting him and abiding by his instructions?

It will be said to him: There is not a single individual from amongst those who remained behind, from those whom we mentioned and those that we did not, who questioned the legitimacy of his rule and believed it to be invalid. They only refused to stand by his side in his battles against the Muslims due to them fearing that and wanting to be free of any sin, and also because they assumed that obeying him in this regard was actually disobeying Allah سبحانه وتعالى; which is why they cited narrations of Rasūl Allāh عليه السلام to him in order to support their position. One of them said, “I will not fight with you till you bring me a sword that has a tongue and which can distinguish a believer from a disbeliever and which will say, “This is a believer and this is a disbeliever so kill him.” He did not say to ‘Alī, “You

are not the ruler compliance with whose orders is necessary.” Muḥammad ibn Maslamah said to him, “Rasūl Allāh ﷺ emphasised upon me that when strife ensues between the Muslims that I should break my sword and should take in place of it a sword of wood.” Likewise Usāmah ibn Zayd said to him, “You know well, O ‘Alī that if you were to enter into the belly of a lion I would enter therein with you, but I cannot sympathize with you when it comes to the fire.” He did not say, “You are not the Imām.” He merely feared the killing of the Muslims, and that has nothing to do with criticising his rule.¹

And Abū al-Ma‘ālī al-Juwaynī² said:

ولا اکتراث بقول من قال: لا إجماع على إمامة علي، فإن الإمامة لم تجحد له، وإنما هاجت الفتنة لأمر
أخرى

There is no consideration for the opinion of the one who says that there was no consensus upon the rule of ‘Alī. This is because his rule was not contested, and the Fitnah erupted due to other reasons.³

And al-Qāḍī Ibn al-‘Arabī after citing the statement of a people who averred that a group of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم stayed behind from supporting him, amongst who were Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, Ibn ‘Umar, Usāmah ibn Zayd, and their likes, refutes their statement saying:

1 Al-Bāqillānī: *al-Tamhīd*, p. 233,234.

2 ‘Abd al-Malik ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Yūsuf ibn Muḥammad al-Juwaynī, attributed to Juwayn which is a village near Nīsābūr, al-Ash‘arī, Ab al-Ma‘ālī. Ibn Khallikān said, “The most knowledgeable of the later scholars of the Shāfi‘iyyah. He stayed in Makkah for four years and was thus accorded the title Imām al-Ḥaramayn. Thereafter he stayed for some time in Madīnah presiding over Fatwā and teaching. Thereafter he returned to Nīsābūr where the minister Nizām al-Mulk built the Madrasah Nizamiyyah for him. Even the scholars would participate in his lessons. He has written: *al-Shāmil fī Uṣūl al-Dīn*, a book in Ash‘arī theology, *al-Burhān fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, and *al-‘Aqīdah al-Nizamiyyah fī al-Arkān al-Islāmiyyah*. He passed away in 478 A.H/ 1085 A.C. See: Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, 1/373; al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyyah*, 3/249; al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 18/468.

3 Al-Haythamī: *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muhriqah*, p. 184.

قلنا أما بيعته فلم يتخلف عنها، وأما نصرته فتخلف عنها قوم منهم من ذكرتم، لأنها كانت مسألة اجتهادية، فاجتهد كل واحد وأعمل نظره وأصاب قدره

We say that as for pledging to him, no one stayed behind from doing so. And as for supporting him, yes, a group of them did stay behind, amongst them were whom you have mentioned. This is because this was an *Ijthādī* issue (an issue in which various opinions were bound to emerge based on each person's analyses of the situation) in which each one of them applied his effort and reason and was correct to a limited extent.¹

The crux of the matter is that, even if some narrations in the *Tārīkh* of al-Ṭabarī exclude some of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم from pledging to 'Alī رضي الله عنه from amongst the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār,² they in no compromise the legitimacy of the rule of 'Alī رضي الله عنه. This is due to the fact that most of the narrations which were cited from various sources of ḥadīth, history, theology, Arabic literature, and the books of biographies all concur that the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and the common people pledged to him. Hence the very few narrations which contradict this and state that they stayed behind or that some of them were coerced are simply not worth consideration.

Likewise, even though Mu'āwiyah's رضي الله عنه denial to pledge to him is established, that in no way compromises the consensus of the elite Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم whose opinions were the primary factor in deciding and administering matters. Just as the refusal of Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah رضي الله عنه, the leader of the Khazraj, to pledge to Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه did not compromise the consensus of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم upon the Khilāfah of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. Not forgetting that Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه also conceded that 'Alī رضي الله عنه was most deserving of the Khilāfah and that he surpassed him in merit. His refusal was based on his demand that he wanted 'Alī رضي الله عنه to surrender the killers of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه to him so that he could seek retribution from them.³

1 Ibn al-'Arabī: *al-'Awāsim*, p. 144.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/428, 429, 431-435.

3 Ibn Muzāḥim: *Waqa'ih Shifṭīn*, p. 97; al-Dīnawarī: *al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 162.

Even if we have to, hypothetically, consider that some of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم did not pledge, something which the incontrovertible narrations render farfetched, Khilāfah according to the Ahl al-Sunnah is established by the pledging of the people of Ḥall and ‘Aqd (people who untie and tie knots lit. i.e. prominent people whose opinion holds weight in deciding and administering matters of the community), the people of sound reason and meticulous planning; it is not a requirement that all of them pledge, or not even a specific number of people for that matter; instead even if some of them pledged their pledging is good enough to enact a legitimate rule.

Hence, some scholars go on to aver that the minimum amount of people required to enact the rule of a ruler is five people who all unanimously agree to do so, or who acquiesce while one of them actively enacts on their behalf. They draw evidence from the enactment of the Khilāfah of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه which came about due the consensus of five of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who were then followed by the rest, viz. ‘Umar, Abū ‘Ubaydah, Usayd ibn Ḥuḍayr, Bashīr ibn Sa’d, and Sālim the freed slave of Abū Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه. Likewise they also draw evidence from the precedent of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه who formed a council of six people in which eventually one of them made a conclusive decision with the approval of the others. Some scholars of Kūfah even aver that it can be enacted with the appointment of only three individuals. Hence, one of them can preside over the matter of the Muslims with the approval of the other two who will serve as witnesses, like in the case of Nikāḥ which is valid with one guardian and two witnesses.¹

Furthermore, the rule of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه was already enacted with the appointment of those who were present at that time. When appointing him, they did not wait for the news of his appointment to reach everyone who stayed around Madīnah like the Banī Aslam, Ghifār and Juhaynah tribes, nor did they wait for the news to reach Makkah, Ṭā’if and al-Baḥrayn so that all the people could elect whoever they were pleased with from the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār. And when the news of his appointment eventually reached them no one objected.

1 Al-Māwardī: *al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyyah*, p. 4.

And al-Māwardī has concluded that Imāmah or pledging to enact the Imāmah is a *Farḍ Kifāyah* (communal obligation, if some members fulfil it the others are absolved) just like Jihād, and seeking of knowledge, for if the eligible people take care of it, its obligation falls away from all the people.¹

And in my opinion, the opposition which stood in the way of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was due to the political condition at that time. It was not an opposition which was based on challenging his rule, rather it was based more on demanding retribution for the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. This is owing to the following reasons:

Firstly, Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, ‘Ā’ishah, and Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ did not challenge ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in his Khilāfah or criticise the legitimacy of his rule. They merely set out seeking retribution for the blood of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ wanting the capital punishment of *Qīṣāṣ* to be executed as soon as possible upon his murderers. The proof of this is the following narration which al-Ṭabarī has cited from Aḥnaf ibn Qays with a sound transmission:²

خرجنا حجاجا فقدنا المدينة، فبينما نحن في منازلنا نضع رحالنا إذ أتانا أت فقال: إن الناس قد فزعوا وقد اجتمعوا في المسجد، فانطلقنا إلى المسجد، فذكر الحديث في مناشدة عثمان الصحابة، وإقرارهم بمنابيه-قال الأحنف بن قيس: فلقيت طلحة والزبير فقلت: لا أرى هذا الرجل إلا مقتولا، فمن تأمراني أن أبايع؟ فقالا: عليا، فقلت: أتأمراني بذلك وترضيه لي؟ فقالا: نعم، فخرجت حتى قدمت مكة، فأنا كذلك إذ قيل: قتل عثمان بن عفان، وبها عائشة أم المؤمنين فأتيته فقلت لها: أنشدك الله، من تأمرني أن أبايع؟ قالت: عليا، فقلت: أتأمرني بذلك وترضيه لي؟ قالت: نعم، فخرجت، فقدمت على علي بالمدينة فبايعت ثم رجعت إلى أهل البصرة، ولا أرى إلا الأمر قد استقام، فبينما نحن كذلك إذ أتاني أت فقال: هذه عائشة أم المؤمنين وطلحة والزبير قد نزلوا الخريبة، فقلت: فما جاء بهم؟ قال: أرسلوا إليك يستنصرون على دم عثمان قتل مظلوما

We left for Ḥajj and came to Madīnah. Whilst we were still in our halting places removing our saddles from the animals a person came to us and

1 Al-Māwardī: *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah*, p. 4.

2 The transmission is as follows: Ya‘qūb ibn Ibrāhīm al-Dawraqī (reliable, *al-Tahdhīb*, 11/381) who narrates from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Idrīs (reliable and a jurist, *al-Taqrīb*, 1/401, from Ḥuṣayn ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (reliable, *al-Tahdhīb*, 2/381), from ‘Amr ibn Ja‘wān (reliable, *al-Kāshif*, 2/281), from al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays (reliable, *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 57).

said, “People are perturbed and have gathered in the Masjid.” Hence we went to the masjid. He then goes on to mention the ḥadīth regarding ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه imploring the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and them conceding his merits.

Aḥnaf thereafter says, “I met Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما and asked them: “I do not see this man but as one who will be murdered, so what do you order me to do and what do you choose for me.”

They replied, “‘Alī.”

He asked, “Do you order me to hold onto him and do you choose him for me?”

They replied, “Yes.”

I then continued to Makkah and upon reaching there received the news of the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. I thus met the mother of the believers ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها who was in Makkah at that time.

I asked her, “To who do you order me to pledge allegiance?”

She said, “‘Alī.”

He asked, “Do you order me to pledge to him and do you choose him for me?”

She said, “Yes.”

I thus passed by ‘Alī رضي الله عنه in Madīnah and pledged my allegiance to him, and I returned home and did not think of the matter but as stable. Whilst we were still of that perception suddenly a person came to me and said, “Here are ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها Umm al-Mu’minīn, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما, they have halted and settled in Kharībah.”¹

I asked, “What has brought them?”

He replied, “They have sent a message to you seeking help in the case of the murder of ‘Uthmān who was unjustly killed...”²

1 A place in Baṣrah. See: al-Yāqūt: *Mu’jam al-Buldān*, 2/363.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/497-498.

Likewise, when ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ demanded from Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to pledge he responded saying:

فإن كنت صادقاً فأمكننا من قتل عثمان نقتلهم به، ونحن أسرع الناس إليك

If you are speaking the truth then hand over the killers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to us so that we may kill them and thereafter we will be the quickest of people to join you.¹

Secondly, the people of Madīnah enjoyed complete freedom which was not interrupted by any form of force or pressure during the period of the election and the pledging to ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. The most glaring evidence of this is the conversation which took place between ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and the people after the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, when they induced him to accept their pledges; he placed a condition that his election will happen in the masjid and that it will not be done discreetly and that it will only be done with the happiness of the Muslims.²

As for the narrations which suggest that Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا pledged due to being coerced, they do not rest on any acceptable evidence, due to the narrations regarding them pledging freely and willingly being authentic.

Thirdly, the early contributions of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, his merits, his meticulousness in holding to the laws of the Qur’ān and the Sunnah, and his emphasis in his sermons upon implementing the Sharī imperatives and prohibitions would never allow someone to challenge and undermine the legitimacy of his rule over the Muslims.

It is probably safe to say that ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was the most probable candidate for the Khilāfah after the murder of ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. For ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had made him part of the council that he had formed of six people. Thereafter four of them, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, Sa’d, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, had relinquished their right for

1 Al-Dīnawarī: *al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 163.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/427.

him and for ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Hence only he and ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ remained. This was sort of a consensus that if ‘Uthmān was not present ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was most deserving and hence also suggestive of the fact that after ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ he would be most rightful. Subsequent to that, he was elected by the people of *Dār al-Hijrah* (the abode of Hijrah, Madīnah Munawwarah) and thus surely became the Rightful Khalīfah.

Having said that, there was none from the *Ṣaḥābah* رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ of Rasūl Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ who was more deserving of the Khilāfah than him. For he was from the forerunners of Islam, from the Muhājirīn, he was the cousin of Rasūl Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and his son in law, among the many virtues which necessitated his rightfulness to be the Khalīfah of the Muslims.

Together with being an early contributor to the Dīn, his merits, and his kinship with Rasūl Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he was also a man of great capabilities and talents. His courageousness, willingness to always present himself, his intelligence, his judicial prowess, and his solemnness and earnestness for which he had become famous, his steadfastness upon the truth, and his foresight in analysing matters (to the extent that even ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would accept his views when things were unclear and confusing) all had rendered him the undisputed candidate for become the ruler of the Muslims at that sensitive time in their lives.

Section Two: His Policies of Ruling

Some researchers and historians note that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه according to them was not a man of the state or a man of politics who had control of affairs. Whilst others assume that he erred when he dismissed the various governors when taking charge of the Khilāfah, specifically in dismissing Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه.¹ And yet others assume that he was a warlord who only knew how to resolve issues through the sword, whereas a politician only resorts to the sword after his opinion becomes blunt and he no more has feasible options.² Likewise some have criticised him saying that he was weak in front of his comrades, he would submit to their demands and would not control them authoritatively.³

However, there is ample evidence which does not leave a shadow of doubt in that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was extremely intelligent, well-aware of the affairs, and a man of sound reasoning. Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنهم knew that and thus had taken him as an advisor to themselves. How can an intelligent person with sound reasoning be weak in politics when correct politics require reasoning, and reasoning requires intelligence and wisdom; and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه possessed both at the same time?

As for his experience in politics, there is no stronger evidence in this regard than the fact that Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم appointed him to convey the imperatives of the Sharī‘ah to all the Arabs in the season of Ḥajj, and to read the opening verses of Sūrah Barā’ah.⁴ Likewise there is no greater evidence to establish that than the fact that Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم had sent him as a commander to Yemen whereafter the entirety of the Hamadān tribe accepted Islam without any remonstrations or war.⁵ Hence the one who criticises him by averring that he was unaware of

1 Al-Khudrī: *Tārīkh al-Umam al-Islāmiyyah*, 2/51.

2 Ḥasan Ibrāhīm: *Tārīkh al-Islām al-Siyāsī*, 1/273.

3 Ṭāhā Ḥusayn: *al-Fitnah al-Kubrā* (‘Alī wa Banūhu), p. 165.

4 Ibn Hishām: *al-Sīrah*, 4/203.

5 Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍirah*, 3/223.

politics is actually criticising Rasūl Allāh ﷺ who delegated him to carry out these great tasks.

Furthermore, Shaykhayn (Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما) would consult with him excessively in political matters. Hence al-Ṭabarī has cited that when the Persians gathered in Nahāwand in great numbers to fight the Muslims ‘Umar رضي الله عنه gathered the people and consulted with them regarding whether he should set out himself to combat them. Majority of the people and some members of the council told him to do so. He again consulted with the people for a second time and this time ‘Alī رضي الله عنه stood up and said:

أما بعد، يا أمير المؤمنين، فإنك إن أشخضت أهل الشام من شامهم سارت الروم إلى ذراريهم، وإنك إن أشخضت أهل اليمن من يمنهم سارت الحبشة إلى ذراريهم، وإنك إن أشخضت من هذه الأرض انتقضت عليك العرب من أطرافها وأقطارها حتى يكون ما تدع وراءك أهم إليك مما بين يديك من العورات والعيالات، أقر هؤلاء في أمصارهم، واكتب إلى أهل البصرة فليتفرقوا ثلاث فرق: فرقة في حرمهم وذراريهم، وفرقة في أهل عهدهم حتى لا ينتقضوا، ولتسر فرقة إلى إخوانهم بالكوفة مددا لهم. إن الإعاجم إن ينظروا إليه غدا قالوا: هذا أمير العرب وأصلها، فكان ذلك أشد لكليهم عليك، وإما ما ذكرت من مسير القوم فإن الله هو أكره لمسيرهم منك، وهو أقدر على تغيير ما يكره، وأما عددهم فإننا لم نكن نقاتل فيما مضى بالكثره ولكن بالنصر. فقال عمر: هذا هو الرأي، كنت أحب أن أتابع عليه.

After praising Allah, O Amīr al-Mu’minīn, if you dispatch the people of Syria from Syria the Romans will target their wives and children. And if you dispatch the people of Yemen from Yemen, the Abyssinians will target their wives and children. And if you dispatch the people of this land, all the Arabs will attack you from all directions and places, whereafter what you leave behind will be more worrisome for you, i.e. the families and children, than what is ahead of you. Keep all of these people in their cities and write to the people of Baṣrah that they should distribute themselves into three groups: a group should remain with the women and children, a group should see to the people with who there is a truce so that they do not breach, and a group should go to their brothers in Kūfah as reinforcements. Thereafter, if the Persians see you tomorrow they will say “This is the leader of Arabs and the centre of their might” and thus that will cause them to unite against you even more ferociously. As for what you

have stated regarding the march of the Persians, Allah ﷻ dislikes their march more than you and He is more capable of altering that which He dislikes. And as for their numbers, we have never previously fought based on huge numbers, but rather on the basis of the help of Allah ﷻ.” ‘Umar ﷺ said, “This is the opinion. I wanted someone to back me up on it.”¹

‘Alī ﷺ was a *Muftī* who often times ‘Umar ﷺ would refer to in many difficult Sharī matters just as he was a very bright consultant in much of the complex political issues. The following is the attestation of ‘Umar ﷺ in this regard:

أقضاننا علي وأقرؤنا أبي

The most well versed in judicial matters is ‘Alī and the most well versed in the Qur’ān is Ubayy.²

And al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī has mentioned in *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍīrah* from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī ﷺ that he heard ‘Umar ﷺ saying to ‘Alī ﷺ after he had asked him regarding something to which he had responded:

أعوذ بالله أن أعيش في قوم لست فيهم يا أبا الحسن

I seek the refuge of Allah from living amidst a people in which you are not present, O Abū al-Ḥasan.³

And Yaḥyā ibn ‘Aqīl⁴ narrates that ‘Umar ﷺ would say to ‘Alī ﷺ when he would ask him about something and he would help him resolve it:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 3/480; al-Tabbānī al-Maghribī: *Ifādah al-Akhbār*, 2/17.

2 Al-Bukhārī: *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: Chapter of Tafsīr, 5/149.

3 Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍīrah*, 3/166.

4 Yaḥyā ibn ‘Aqīl al-Khuzā‘ī al-Baṣrī. He narrated from a group of Ṣaḥābah ﷺ, some being: ‘Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn and Anas ibn Mālīk. Ibn Ma‘īn said, “There is no problem with him.” Ibn Ḥibbān has deemed him reliable and al-A-Dhahabī said about him, “Truthful.” See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/2/292; Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *al-Jarḥ wa al-Tā‘dīl*, 9/176; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/231; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 11/259.

لا أبقاني الله بعدك يا علي

May Allah not keep me alive after you, O ‘Alī.¹

Likewise, Ibn Sa‘d has narrated in his *al-Ṭabaqāt* the following from Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab:

كان عمر بن الخطاب يتعوذ من معضلة ليس لها أبو الحسن

‘Umar رضي الله عنه would seek refuge from a contention for which ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was not present.²

It is also narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه that he would say:

إذا حدثنا ثقة عن علي الفتيا لا نعدوها

If a reliable person tells us of any of the legal verdicts of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, we do not bypass them.³

And al-Ḥākim has narrated from ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه:

أقضى أهل المدينة علي

The most proficient in his legal verdicts in Madīnah was ‘Alī رضي الله عنه.⁴

Furthermore, the political prowess of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه is even more evident when considering that he offered Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه the governorship of Baṣrah after the Battle of Jamal,⁵ for Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه was from those Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who

1 Al-Muḥibb al-Ṭabarī: *al-Riyāḍ al-Naḍīrah*, 3/166.

2 Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 2/239.

3 Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 2/238; Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *al-Istī‘āb*, 3/40.

4 Al-Ḥākim: *al-Mustadrak*: 3/135.

5 Ibn al-Athīr: *al-Kāmil*, 3/256.

settled in Baṣrah at a very early time, when it was first founded,¹ and thus was well acquainted with it and what was more suitable for it when compared to other places. Hence, if he took charge of its affairs he would be more adept at administering it well and running it in a way that was best for it and its people.

And when Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه politely declined ‘Alī رضي الله عنه asked him for his opinion as to who he should appoint. He undoubtedly made a brilliant choice and suggested a person who would be most capable of administering it well, for he suggested that Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه be appointed. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه accepted and appointed Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه as the governor of Baṣrah and he appointed with him Ziyād ibn Abī Sufyān² to take care of the taxes and the wealth of the national treasury (he was part of those who stayed away from the fight and did not participate).

‘Alī رضي الله عنه probably chose Ziyād to be an assistant of ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه and appointed him to oversee the taxes and the national treasury in order to reinstate peace in the hearts of the people of Baṣrah, and in order to pacify the panic of warfare which had just overtaken them. For in such circumstances the conqueror normally appoints men who by force subdue those who he struggled against him, in order to debase them and make them taste the bitter taste of their rebellion and non-compliance.

Hence, the fact that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه chose a person who was completely impartial and who had nothing whatsoever to do with the war, and the fact that he did not

1 Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/15.

2 Ziyād ibn Abī Sufyān. The scribe and the orator. He was the scribe of Abū Mūsā al-Ash’arī رضي الله عنه when he governed Baṣrah, and was the deputy of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه upon the region of Persia. He governed Baṣrah for Mu’āwiyah رضي الله عنه who later gave him control over Khurāsān, Sijistān, Baḥrayn and ‘Ummān. Aside from being very brutal and harsh he had many outstanding qualities. Qabīṣah ibn Jābir said about him, “I have not seen anyone with a more lively club nor a more honourable companions than Ziyād.” And al-Dhahabī said about him, “He was from the prominent people in terms of his discretion, intelligence, earnestness, and shrewdness, and his leadership and nobility was proverbial.” He passed away in the plague in 53 A.H. / 672 A.C. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/99; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 1/115; al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 3/494.

side with one of the two contending groups as well, it is clear that he wanted to implement justice and was keen on reinstating stability within the community. His intention was never to seek retribution or to soothe his anguish.

And as much as these stances indicate to the brilliance of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and his outstanding political prowess, they also allude to his appreciation and respect for the right of others to practice their *Ijtihād* as well, and to his immense respect for the honour of the Muslims even after achieving victory. Hence, he did not kill a wounded person, he did not kill a fleeing person, he did not take any wealth as booty, and nor did he violate the honour of any person. These are all actions which allude to his immaculate assessment of the issue from its various angles.

Likewise, al-Bāqillānī whilst elaborating upon the political experience of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, his good strategizing, his far reaching opinions, and his brightness and intelligence states:

هذا مع ما ظهر من إعظام كافة الصحابة له وإطباقتهم على علمه وفضله وثاقب فهمه ورأيه وفقه نفسه وقول مثل عمر فيه: لولا علي لهلك عمر، وكثرة مطابقتهم له في الأحكام، وسماع قوله في الحلال والحرام، ثم ما ظهر من فقهه وعلمه في قتال أهل القبلة من استدعائهم، ومناظرتهم، وترك مبادأتهم، والنبذ إليهم قبل نصب الحرب معهم وندائه: لا تبدأوهم بالحرب حتى يبدأوكم، ولا يتبع مدير، ولا يجهز على جريح، ولا يكبس بيت، ولا تهج امرأة، ورده حالات القوم إليهم، وترك اغتنام أموالهم، وكثرة الأمر لابن عباس وغيره بقبول شهادة أهل البصرة وصفين إذا اختلطوا وضعت الحرب أوزارها، والصلاة خلفهم، وقوله لمن سأل عن ذلك: ليس في الصلاة والعدالة اختلافنا، وإنما اختلفنا في إقامة حد من الحدود، فصلوا خلفهم وقبلوا شهادة العدول منهم إلى غير ذلك مما سنه من حرب المسلمين حتى قال جلة أهل العلم: لولا حرب علي لمن خالفه لما عرفت السنة في قتال أهل القبلة. هذا مع ما علم من شجاعته وغناته وإحاطته علما بتدبير الجيوش وإقامة الحدود والحروب، وقوله أي علي ظاهرا من غير رد أحد حفظ عليه، إن قريشا تقول: إن ابن أبي طالب رجل شجاع، ولكن لا رأي له في الحرب، لله أبوهم، ومن ذا يكون أبصر بها مني وأشد لها مراسا، والله لقد نصضت فيها وما بلغت العشرين، وها أنا اليوم قد ذرفت على الستين، ولكن لا أمة لمن لا يطاع

Added to this is the reverence all the *Ṣaḥābah* رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ had for him; their unanimous acknowledgement of his knowledge, virtue, far-reaching understanding, sound judgement, and his inherent talent of jurisprudence; and also the statement of ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in which he said, “Had ‘Alī not been

there ‘Umar would have been destroyed.”; likewise their agreement with him in many rulings, and acceptance of his opinion in matters pertaining to Ḥalāl and Ḥarām. His deep understanding of how to fight the people of the Qiblah also displayed his brilliance. For he first invited them, debated with them, did not initiate the battles with them, communicated to them his disassociation from them if they did not surrender, and announced that do not start the battle with them unless they start, that no fleeing person should be followed, no wounded person should be killed, no house should not be entered by force, and no woman should be terrified. Similarly, he returned the conveyances of the rebels to them and did not take their belongings as booty. He also time and again ordered Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه and others to accept the testimony of the people of Baṣrah and Ṣiffīn when they interact with one another after the battles were over. He also ordered them to read Ṣalāh behind them and when asked responded saying, “We have not disputed regarding Ṣalāh and integrity, we have merely disputed regarding the execution of a capital punishment from the capital punishments of Allah. So read Ṣalāh behind them and accept the testimony of the upright amongst them.” He had thus laid the precedent for civil strife and warfare amongst Muslims themselves, so much so that great scholars have asserted, “Had ‘Alī رضي الله عنه not fought those who opposed him, the Sunnah regarding fighting the rebels would never have been known.” All of this is notwithstanding what is known regarding his courageousness, his immense contribution, and his encompassing knowledge of arranging armies and establishing the commands of Allah and warfare. He is reported to have said, “The Quraysh say, ‘Surely Ibn Abī Ṭālib is a courageous man, but he has no knowledge of warfare.’ For Allah be sacrificed their father, who is there who is more knowledgeable regarding it than me and who engaged in it more than me? By Allah, I rose to it when I had barely reached twenty, and here I am today edging on sixty. But there is no leadership for a person who is not obeyed.”¹

Some researchers are of the opinion that one of the reasons why the Fitnah intensified is that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه dismissed all the governors of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه before

1 Al-Bāqillānī: *al-Tamhīd fī al-Radd ‘alā al-Mulhidah*, p. 228-229.

the pledges of the people of the various cities reached him despite Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah رضي الله عنه forewarning him of the repercussions of doing so. This particular criticism is not credible for the following reasons:

Firstly, ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was a *Mujtahid* and thus enjoyed the discretion of dismissing all the governors of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه if he deemed doing so appropriate. Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم who was infallible had appointed Khālid ibn Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ over Ṣan‘ā’ and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه over ‘Ummān,¹ but Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq رضي الله عنه dismissed both of them; he dismissed Khālid and appointed al-Muhājir ibn Abī Umayyah in his place رضي الله عنه, likewise he dismissed ‘Amr رضي الله عنه and appointed Ḥudhayfah ibn Miḥṣan رضي الله عنه in his stead.² Likewise Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه had appointed the two great commanders Khālid ibn al-Walīd and al-Muthannā ibn Ḥārithah رضي الله عنه³ and ‘Umar رضي الله عنه dismissed both of them, despite their talents and abilities.⁴ Similarly, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه had appointed ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه over Egypt⁵ and Mughīrah ibn Shu‘bah رضي الله عنه over Kūfah⁶ and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه dismissed both of them⁷ and appointed Ibn Abī Sarḥ over Egypt⁸ and Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ over Kūfah.⁹

So will an intelligent person ever criticise Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه for dismissing these capable governors? In every time there are conditions and circumstances which occur which compel the successor to do that which his predecessor did not do, for the one who is present sees what the absent cannot.

1 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 97.

2 Ibid. p. 123.

3 Ibid. p. 102.

4 Ibid. p. 122.

5 Ibid. p. 155.

6 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/241.

7 Ibid. 4/253, 264.

8 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 201.

9 Ibid.

Secondly, their assertion that he dismissed all the governors of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه is erroneous, for only the dismissal of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه in Shām,¹ Khālid ibn Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه in Makkah,² and Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه in Kūfah³ had occurred, and then also the last of the three was still kept in his position.⁴ As for Baṣrah, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir himself left whereafter ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه did not appoint anyone over it.⁵ And as for Yemen, its governor Ya‘lā ibn Muniyah took all the tax wealth of Yemen and came to Makkah after the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and joined Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه; and participated with them in the Battle of Jamal.⁶ Likewise Ibn Abī Sarḥ, the governor of Egypt, came with a delegation and appointed his cousin as the deputy; and when he returned he found that Ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah had taken charge of the affairs by force and the latter had thereafter banished him, he thus went to Ramlah, in Palestine, and stayed there till he passed away.⁷ It is clear from the above that the governors of Yemen and Baṣrah had relinquished their positions and that the governor of Egypt was dismissed by the rebel Ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah. As for the governor of Kūfah, ‘Alī رضي الله عنه had maintained him in his position. Thus, in actual fact the dismissal of only two individuals occurred: Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه the governor of Shām, and Khālid ibn Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه the governor of Makkah.

Furthermore, it is crucial to emphasise that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه did not appoint any person who played any role whatsoever in the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.⁸ He instead appointed the choicest of people over the Muslims. Hence, some of the governors who he had appointed upon the various regions are the following:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/442.

2 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 201.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/442.

4 Ibid. 4/449.

5 Ibid. 4/421.

6 Ibid. 4/450.

7 Ibid. 4/421.

8 Ibid. 4/445.

Sahl ibn Ḥunayf رضي الله عنه whom he appointed over Shām.¹ A great Ṣaḥābī who participated in the battles of Badr and Uḥud. He was one of those who remained firm on the side of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم when the people had staggered and had pledged allegiance to him upon death and had shot multiple arrows in order to defend Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم. He also participated in the Battle of Khandaq and all the other campaigns with Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم.²

‘Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf رضي الله عنه whom he appointed over Baṣrah.³ He was an Anṣārī Ṣaḥābī who had previously governed Iraq for ‘Umar رضي الله عنه.⁴

Qays ibn Sa’d ibn ‘Ubādah رضي الله عنه whom he appointed over Egypt.⁵ He was the security guard of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم. He was also generous and a person of sound reasoning and intelligence.⁶

And ‘Ubayd Allah ibn ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib رضي الله عنه whom he appointed over Yemen.⁷ He was one year younger than his brother ‘Abd Allāh and was noble, generous and a man with an outstanding reputation.⁸

Thirdly, as for their assertion that he dismissed the governors before the pledge of the people of the various cities reached him, it is important to note that appointing governors to states is not contingent on the reaching of the pledges according to all the Muslims. Hence, once the prominent people, to whom the community resorts when wanting to resolve issues, pledge to any Khalīfah, his leadership becomes binding upon all the distant cities in light of the Sharī’ah and in light of reason.

1 Ibid. 4/442.

2 Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/471; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Iṣābah*, 2/87.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/442.

4 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/209; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Iṣābah*, 2/459.

5 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 201.

6 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/141; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Iṣābah*, 3/249...

7 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 200.

8 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 3/512; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Iṣābah*, 2/437.

If the appointment of governors really was dependent upon the reaching of the pledges of the masses then the appointment of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه should be deemed incomplete, for he dispatched the army of Usāmah رضي الله عنه and the armies which went out to subdue to renegades and those who had refused to pay the Zakāh before the pledges of the people of Makkah, Ṭā'if and Jawā'ī in Baḥrayn reached him. Likewise 'Umar's رضي الله عنه appointment should also be deemed incomplete because before the pledges of the people of Yemen and the Muslim armies which were in Shām and Iraq reached him he had already dismissed Khālīd ibn al-Walīd رضي الله عنه and appointed Abū 'Ubaydah رضي الله عنه in his stead. 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه had also acted in many matters of the Muslims before the pledges of the people of the cities reached him.

Fourthly, with regards to what these researchers have quoted from the books of history regarding Mughīrah ibn Shu'bah رضي الله عنه warning 'Alī رضي الله عنه of the repercussions of dismissing the governors at a very early stage and thereafter advising him to dismiss them; and with regards to statement of Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه to 'Alī رضي الله عنه, “He advised you in the first instance (when he warned against dismissing) and deceived you in the second (when he advised to dismiss),¹ they are invalid for the following reasons:

- It is not possible for any Ṣaḥābī to first advise 'Alī رضي الله عنه and thereafter deceive him, so how could that be conceived from Mughīrah رضي الله عنه who was from the notables amongst them. Deception is not from the traits of the Muslims and Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم has said, as is established from him authentically, “Whoever deceives us is not from amongst us.”²
- Al-Ṭabarī has enlisted Mughīrah ibn Shu'bah رضي الله عنه, in one narration,³ from those who did not pledge their allegiance to 'Alī رضي الله عنه. So can it be conceived that a person who did not pledge allegiance to him came to advise him, if this narration is correct?

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/439.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: chapter of Īmān, 2/108.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/430.

- Was Mughīrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ a special advisor of the previous Khulafā', due to which its criticism of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ can be justified on the basis of not accepting his advice.

Having said that, it is also averred that 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ utilised force inappropriately by giving preference to warfare over peaceful negotiation and displaying leniency. With regard to this, it is important to note that in his political strategizing he is only known to have resorted to this in extreme circumstances and at the time of need when engaging in warfare seemed to be the only viable option.

'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, despite being very courageous and an advancing hero in battles, that alone did not compel him to resort to warfare each time. For he would not resort to warfare but when it was impossible for him to extinguish the fire of Fitnah. This was not his practice alone, rather there was a precedent for him in the noble practice of Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ fought those Arabs who refused to pay Zakāh because he felt that it was not permissible for him to exercise leniency with them due to the statement of Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

أمرت أن أقاتل الناس حتى يقولوا لا إله إلا الله، فمن قالها فقد عصم مني ماله ونفسه إلا بحقه، وحسابه على الله

I have been ordered to fight the people till they confess that there is no deity besides Allah. Whoever confesses it saves himself and his wealth from me unless one of its rights are violated and his reckoning will be to Allah.¹

He clarified his substantiation from this ḥadīth telling the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ that Zakāh is the right of wealth.²

Likewise 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ waged war against those who he felt had rebelled against the Khilāfah and according to him adopting a soft approach with them was not permissible. He thus said:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: chapter of Zakāh, 2/110.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: chapter of Īmān, 1/203.

عهد إلي - وفي رواية - أمرني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أن أقاتل الناكثين والقاسطين والمارقين

Rasūl Allāh ﷺ emphasised upon me, and in another narration, ordered me to fight the violators of their pledge, the transgressors and the rebels.¹

So, as was mentioned, the known strategy of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was to deploy wisdom and resolve the matter exercising leniency as much as that was possible. But where that was not feasible he would resort to warfare. This is clearly understood from what he said to the delegation of Kūfah in Dhī Qār:

وقد دعوتكم لتشهدوا معنا أخواننا من أهل البصرة، فإن يرجعوا فذاك ما نريد، وإن يلجوا داويناهم بالرفق، وبإيئناهم حتى يبدأونا بظلم

... I have invited you so that you witness with us the encounter with our brothers from the people of Baṣrah. If they return then that is what we want; if they persist we will treat them with leniency and we will stay away from them till they initiate the transgression against us.²

Likewise when he halted in Kūfah he stood to address the people. He praised Allah سبحانه وتعالى and then said:

يا أيها الناس املكوا أنفسكم، كفوا أيديكم وألسنتكم عن هؤلاء القوم، فإنهم إخوانكم، واصبروا على ما يأتيكم، وإياكم أن تسبقونا، فإن المخصوم غدا من خصم اليوم

O people, control yourself. Withhold your hands and your tongues from these people, for they are your brothers. Be patient on that which awaits you. And beware of doing anything before us, for the defeated tomorrow will be the one who is defeated today.³

Similarly, when he received the news that the army of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه had not allowed his governor entry into the lands of Syria, he called Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما and said to them:

1 Ibn ‘Asākīr: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 12/ p. 367-370 (cited with multiple transmissions).

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/487.

3 Ibid. 4/496.

سأمسك الأمر ما استمسك، فإذا لم أجد بدا فآخر الدواء الكي

I will withhold the matter as long as it can. Then if I do not find any option, the last treatment is always branding.¹

And in Şifḫīn he would say to his companions:

لا تقاتلوا القوم حتى يبدأوكم، فإنتم بحمد الله على حجة، وترككم إياهم حتى يبدأوكم حجة أخرى

Do not fight the people until they initiate the fight, for surely you are upon evidence. And leaving them till they initiate the fight is another evidence in your favour.²

Probably the clearest evidence in this regard is his stance regarding the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. His stance regarding them was based on dealing with them with wisdom and anticipating the appropriate opportunity in order to establish the penalty of Qiṣāṣ (retribution) on them. Hence, when the people had pledged he stood up to address them. One of the things he discussed was the sacred things which Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has sanctified, especially the sanctity of a Muslim, and that a true Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands people are safe, and that it is not permissible to offend a Muslim unless it is due to that which is deemed compulsory.³

It is as though in this address he was very subtly alluding to the killing of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and to the fact that his murderers violated his blood and offended him in an inappropriate manner. To the extent that the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه understood the strategy of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه by way of this sermon and thus they wanted to warn him of their might so that he acts with caution regarding their matter. Therefore, after the address one of them stood up and said:

1 Ibid. 4/446.

2 *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/10-11.

3 Ibid. 4/436.

إننا نمر الأمر إمرار الرسن
بمشرقيات كغدران اللين
حتى يمرن علي غير عنن

خذها إليك واحذرن أبا حسن
صولة أقوام كأسداد السفن
ونطعن الملك بلين كالشطن

*Take that O Abū al-Ḥasan, and duly take heed. We control this thing as if with a
bridle on the nose.*

*With the might of men as strong as an endless row of ships, and with swords as
shiny as rivulets of milk.*

*We softly stab at the kingdom, as if with a rope. Causing it to stumble forth without
any sense of direction.*

He thus replied saying:

سوف أكيس بعدها وأستمر
وأجمع الأمر الشتيت المنتشر
أو يتركوني والسلاح يبتدر

إني عجزت عجزة لا أعتذر
أرفع من ذيلي ما كنت أجر
إن لم يشاغبني العجول المنتصر

*I have become incapacitated with an inability after which I will not ask to be
excused. I will intelligently act after it and continue on my mission.*

*I will lift of my lower garment what before I used to drag. And I will gather the
matter which is disrupted and scattered.*

*That is if the hasty desirer of revenge does not interrupt me, or they leave me when
the weapon is striking in advance.¹*

It is clear from the very first instance that his stance regarding the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه revolved around calmness, patience, and intelligence; for he understood the depths of the matter very well and thus knew well what he was required to do and what he was required to leave in these trying times.

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/437.

Hence, the response he gave to those who were seeking the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in order to execute them is suggestive of his intelligence and political shrewdness together with his judicial and jurisprudential excellence. Having experience in politics is a must for a successful ruler, for it is by virtue of it that he is able to assess matters for what they are and place every matter in its appropriate place, especially in these precarious conditions in which ‘Alī رضي الله عنه took charge of the matter of the Muslims. The Fitnah was at its peak, the matters were unstable, the opinions were diverse, the people were gripped by fear, and the depth of the Fitnah was still to be unravelled, for the Khawārij who were ever alert had not left Madīnah after the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه nor did they leave after the appointment of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. So what did they really intend by staying on?

Due to all of the above, it was the duty of Amīr al-Mu‘minīn to tread circumspectly when dealing with these rebels, and to deploy with them the greatest amount of leniency till the suitable time for executing the command of Allah regarding them arrives. But those who were not inspired to understand the depths of this stance and those who had made their emotions the criterion regarding the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه insisted upon taking retribution from them as soon as possible.

Insistence upon seeking retribution for the blood of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه from the very first day that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was nominated was not politically prudent in any way. Likewise persistence upon the new Khalīfah to bring forward the murderers of the previous Khalīfah in order to kill them in retribution also was very far from wisdom, due to it placing immense strain on the new Khalīfah in a context where it would lead to the Fitnah intensifying, and killing and murdering continuing unabated, which would all lead to disastrous results the extent of which would only be known to Allah.

But ‘Alī رضي الله عنه exercised precaution in every matter which he assumed would be behind the demand for the retribution of the blood of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. He thus tried to explain to the demanders, at the head of who were Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما, his viewpoint regarding delaying the matter. Hence he said to them in a peaceful conversation:

يا إخوانه، إني لست أجهل ما تعلمون، ولكن كيف أصنع بقوم يملكوننا ولا نملكهم؟ ها هم هؤلاء قد ثارت معهم عبدانكم وثابت إليهم أعرابكم، وهم خلالكم يسومونكم ما يشاؤون، فهل ترون مرضعا لقدرة على شيء مما تريدون

O my brothers, I am not unaware of what you know. But how do I deal with a people who have control over us and we have no control over them? Here they are, your slaves have revolted with them and your Bedouins have joined their ranks. They are amidst you and can impose upon you whatever they want. So do you see any room for any ability to do any of what you intend?¹

It is only then that their reasoning clicked in and they all said, “No.”²

Thereafter, when ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ saw that they were understanding and was now sure that they were beginning to realise the reality of the matter, he clarified in no uncertain terms that he agreed with them in principle and that he was not contending the heinousness of the crime perpetrated by those sinful hands. Hence he continued his speech saying:

فلا والله لا أرى إلا رأيا ترونه-إن شاء الله- إن هذا الأمر أمر جاهلية، وإن لهؤلاء القوم مادة، وذلك إن الشيطان لم يشرع شريعة قط فيبرح الأرض من أخذ بها أبدا

No, by Allah, I will only see that as ideal what you see as ideal, if Allah wills. This matter is a matter of the pre-Islamic era and these people have substance. That is to say that never was a Shari‘ah ever coined and Shayṭān did not interfere with those who tried to hold on to it.³

He further went on to explain and inform them that people are different and that they do not all hold the same opinion: some will oppose their opinion, some will agree with them in what they want, and some will be neutral. He said:

1 Ibid. 4/437.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

إن الناس من هذا الأمر إذا حرك على أمور: فرقة ترى ما ترون، وفرقة ترى ما لا ترون، وفرقة لا ترى هذا ولا ذاك

People, regarding this matter when it is stirred, will be upon different views: a group will feel what you feel, a group will not feel what you feel, and a group will not feel this way or the other way.¹

Thereafter, he disclosed his final stance and said:

حتى يهدأ الناس، وتقع القلوب مواقعها، وتؤخذ الحقوق، فاهدأوا عني، وانظروا ماذا يأتيكم ثم عودوا

(Let the matter rest) till the people calm down and the hearts are restored to their normal states. So be peaceful with me and thereafter see what comes your way and thereafter return (with your case).²

But this wise political strategy was not understood by some and was not convincing enough to them, for people when in the state of fury and succumbing to emotions at times fail to assess matters as they stand correctly, as a result, their assessment of the circumstances becomes perverted and they start to think of the impossible as very likely and possible. Hence they said:

نقضي الذي علينا لا نؤخره، والله إن علينا مستغن برأيه عنا

We will carry out our duty and will not delay in doing so. For by Allah 'Alī is independent from us because of his personal opinion.³

Subsequent to that, when 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was informed of their statement, he actively went on to demonstrate to them that neither was he nor they capable of doing anything in such hostile circumstances. He thus announced:

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

برئت الذمة من عبد لم يرجع إلى مواليه، فتذامرت السبئية والأعراب وقالوا: لنا غدا مثلها ولا نستطيع
نحتج فيهم بشيء

“The covenant of protection is withdrawn from every slave who does not return to his masters.” The Saba’iyyah and the Bedouins started grumbling and they said, “There will be for us tomorrow another opportunity like it and we cannot protest against them with anything.”¹

It seems as though it occurred to the spearheaders of the Fitnah that the Khalīfah wants to strip them of their helpers who had their backs and were standing by their side. Hence, they remonstrated and induced the Bedouins to stay on and eventually they obeyed and stayed. On the third day after the pledging of the people, ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ came out to the people and said to them:

أخرجوا عنكم الأعراب

Take out the Bedouins from your vicinity.

And he said:

يا معشر الأعراب الحقوا بمياهكم

O Bedouins, return to your waters.

But the Saba’iyyah refused and the Bedouins followed. He thereafter entered his house and Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا came to him in a group of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ and he said to them:

دونكم ثأركم

Take your revenge.

1 Ibid. 4/438.

They said, “They (the rebels) turned a blind eye to that.” So ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said:

هم والله بعد اليوم أعزهم

He thereafter said the poetic verse:

لو أن قومي طاعوني سراهم
أمرتهم أمرا يديخ الأعدايا

If the leaders of my people obeyed me, I would come to them with a matter which would humiliate the enemy.¹

Despite the signs of satisfaction appearing from the expressions of Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا after ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had fully dissected the matter for them and had explained to them his stance which he adopted based on what saw, they still disagreed with him. They believed that the most effective way of pouncing upon these Khawārij was to go to Baṣrah and Kūfah and launch a sudden attack upon them from an army from those regions. Hence al-Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said:

دعني أت الكوفة فلا تفجأوا إلا وأنا في خيل

Let me come to Kūfah. And then you will not suddenly be attacked but that I will be in an army.

And Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said:

دعني فأت البصرة، فلا يفجأوك إلا وأنا في خيل

Allow me to come to Baṣrah. They will then not surprise you but that I will be in an army.²

1 Ibid. 4/438; al-Bāqillānī: *al-Tamhīd fī al-Radd ‘alā al-Mulḥidah*, p. 229.

2 *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/438.

But we find that ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ still exercised patience and said to them:

حتى أنظر في ذلك

(I will not decide anything) till I see into the matter.¹

‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ most likely feared the outbreak of another Fitnah and the matter turning into civil strife inside Madīnah whose consequences would not be favourable. Therefore, he did not accede to the request of Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا.

As for the allegation that ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was weak when it came to dealing with his companions, the only possible interpretation of that is that he had subjected himself to the principle of Shūrā (mutual council), a principle which is condoned in the Sharīah. There are two verses which discuss this principle, one entails an imperative regarding it and the other entails condoning those who practice upon it. Hence in the first verse the Qur’ān addresses Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and says:

فِيمَا رَحْمَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ لَئِن لَّيْتَهُمْ ؕ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ؕ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ
وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ ؕ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ؕ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

*So, by the mercy from Allah, O Muḥammad, you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude (in speech) and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. Do pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, they rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely upon him.*²

And the second verse is the word of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ يَا رَبَّنَا in Sūrah al-Shūrā:

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ

1 Ibid.

2 Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān: 159.

And those who have responded to their lord and established prayer and whose affair is (determined by) consultation among themselves, and from what we have provided them, they spend.¹

As for the Sunnah of Nabī ﷺ, it is replete with practical examples in which Rasūl Allāh ﷺ consulted with his Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. To the extent that Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ would say:

ما رأيت أحدا أكثر مشورة لأصحابه من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

I have not seen anyone who would consult so frequently with his companions than Rasūl Allāh ﷺ.²

Likewise the Rightly Guided Khulafā' also followed the principle of Shūrā and would often seek the council of the people of intelligence and reason from amongst their companions. They would at times even accept the opinions of their subjects.

Similarly, the companions of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ held a certain opinion, and thus he could not oppose it, not because of weakness and helplessness, but due to going with the opinion of the group. In spite of this, he would not always accept the opinions of his companions, rather he would at times hold onto his opinion when it became clear to him that it was correct and sound, and would thus hold on to the truth. For example, he opposed his companions in the issue of arbitration; those who had detracted themselves from supporting him felt that the war against Mu'āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and the army of Syria should continue, whereas he felt that the Book of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى should be accepted as the arbiter in the dispute between him and them when they promulgated that. He thus said to the messenger of Mu'āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, "I am more deserving than you to follow the book of Allah," as appears in an authentic narration of *Musnad Ahmad* and *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.³

1 Sūrah al-Shūrā: 38.

2 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*: Chapter on consulting, 3/129.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: chapter of Tafsīr, 6/45; *Musnad Ahmad* (according to the sequence of al-Sā'ātī), 23/137.

In reality, the matter is not a matter of weakness, short sightedness of opinion, and failure of political engagement. Instead the situation had changed from what it was previously, and this change had entailed a complete metamorphosis of the groups that surrounded the Khalīfah. They were not the companions of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما, but were mostly Bedouins and slaves, and the difference between the two is obvious. Interestingly, ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was asked, “Why is it that the people disputed against you and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and did not dispute against Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما?” He replied saying:

رعية أبي بكر وعمر مثلي ومثل عثمان سعد وعبد الرحمن، إما رعية عثمان ورعيتي أشباهك

The subjects of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما were people like me, ‘Uthmān, and Sa’d and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. As for the subjects of ‘Uthmān and my subjects, they are people like yourself.¹

The crux of this answer is that the people were not faithful to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما because their political decisions were different to the political decisions of ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī رضي الله عنهما, rather it was because most of their subjects were Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who were reared in the lap of prophethood which had fashioned them, and purified their traits from the ill-influences of the pre-Islamic era. Most of this blessed generation had passed on toward the latter part of the Khilāfah of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. As for those who succeeded thereafter, they were overwhelmed by the huge presence of slaves and renegade Bedouins whom Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه had returned to the Dīn through the swords of those noble men.

Ya‘qūb ibn Sufyān al-Fasawī has narrated with his transmission to Abū Ṣāliḥ:²

1 Al-Tabbānī al-Maghribī: *Ifādah al-Akḥbār*, 2/96.

2 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Qays, Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Ḥanafī al-Kūfī. He narrated from a group of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. Ibn Sa’d said, “A reliable person with few narrations.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “A successor from Kūfah who was reliable and from the partisans of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه.” And Ishāq ibn Maṣṣūr narrated from Ibn Ma‘īn, “Reliable.” Ibn Ḥibbān has also deemed him reliable. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/227; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/356; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 501; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 6/256.

رأيت علي بن أبي طالب أخذ المصحف فوضعه على رأسه حتى إنني لأرى ورقه يتقعقع، ثم قال: اللهم قد مللتهم وملوني وأبغضت بهم وأبغضوني، وحملوني علي غير طبيعتي وخلقتي وأخلاق لم تكن تعرف لي، اللهم فأبدلني بهم خيرا منهم، وأبدلهم بي شرا مني، اللهم أمت قلوبهم موت الملح في الماء. قال أحد رجال هذا السند: يعني أهل الكوفة

I saw ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه taking the Qur’ān and placing it on his head, to the extent that I could see its pages clattering, and saying, “O Allah I am tired of them and they are tired of me, I despise them and they despise me. They compelled me to act according to what is not my temperament and character and to adopt traits which were not previously known to me. O Allah, so grant me in place of them better than them and grant them in place of me someone worse than me. O Allah, cause their hearts to die like how salt dissolves in water.” One of the narrators of this transmission says, “referring to the people of Kūfah.”¹

This change also entailed a shift in the centre of the Khilāfah, for it shifted from Ḥijāz to ‘Irāq. From Ḥijāz where the pristine Prophetic Sunnah was alive to ‘Irāq where personal interests, leanings and various heretical ideas were deemed decisive. One of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنه actually realised this. Hence ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām رضي الله عنه took hold of the reigns of the horse of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه when he was preparing to leave from Madīnah for ‘Irāq and said to him:

يا أمير المؤمنين: لا تخرج منها—أي المدينة—فوالله لئن خرجت منها لا ترجع إليها ولا يعود سلطان المسلمين إليها أبدا

O Amīr al-Mu’minīn, do not leave it (Madīnah). By Allah if you leave it you will not return to it, and the kingdom of the Muslims will never return to it ever.²

Likewise change had occurred in the financial standing of the people as well. Hence the initial era of the Rightly Guided Khulafā’ was an era of difficulty and

1 Al-Fasawī: *al-Ma’rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/751.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/455.

disinclination from this world, but the era of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was an era of opulence which had engulfed all the people and had become part of their lives. This had brought about immense change in the lives of the people. But ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was still upon his default temperament of disinclination from the world and taking the wealth only where justified by the Sharī’ah and spending it in its correct places. Hence, once his brother ‘Aqīl complained to him and asked him for a favour.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه said to him, “Be patient till my stipend comes.”

But he insisted so ‘Alī رضي الله عنه said to him, “Go and take what is in the shops of the people.”

He retorted, “Do you want to make me a thief?”

‘Alī رضي الله عنه replied saying, “You as well, you also want to make me thief and give you from the wealth of the people.”

He said, “I will go to Mu‘āwiyah then.”

He responded, “That is your choice.”

He thus came to Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه who gave him a hundred thousand.¹

Added to all of this is the change that one notices which occurred in the ideologies of people and their thoughts because of the Fitnah. Before the Fitnah all the people subscribed to one ideology, but thereafter suddenly they became divided into groups and sects. One person would subscribe to one group or one belief and the other would subscribe to another. It is without a doubt that this division led to the bickering and disunity intensifying, which resulted in the weakening of the centre of Khalīfah and his control over matters.

Surprisingly, even though the winds of change had brought about immense differences in the era of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه: changes in the groups that surrounded the

1 Al-Dhababī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 3/100.

Khalīfah, in the centre of the Khilāfah, in the thoughts and ideologies of the people, and in their financial standing; but the stance of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه still remained firm without being tainted with various leanings and tendencies of that time. He did not go on to accept the new changes, for he preferred failure in everything else over failure in his guidance and justice.

Likewise, if the crux of politics is surrendering to the spirit of the time and its advancements, taking advantage of opportunities, and actualising the personal interests and selfish benefits of the ruler and those who throng around him, then ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was not a politician in that sense. And if the crux of politics is a good understanding of the circumstances, knowledge, intelligence, striving to bring about the common interest of the entire Ummah, and giving preference to noble political practices like justice, equality and benevolence, then ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was on a very high pedestal of such politics.

The conclusion is that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was from the best of rulers and politicians if the times continued to be as they were in the initial days. However, now that the spirit of the times was moving in a direction different to the direction it was moving in before, his outlook to politics no more remained effective in those circumstances, which some have interpreted as his inability in politics.

Section Three: The Influence of the Saba'iyyah in the Second Fitnah

Any person who studies history with the eye of impartiality will understand without a shadow of doubt that the embarking of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم to Baṣrah, whether they be 'Ā'ishah, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهم, or 'Alī رضي الله عنه, was not with the intent of engaging in warfare. Their embarking was merely with the intention of bringing about reform, as is reported in the narrations.

Hence, when 'Alī رضي الله عنه sent al-Qa'qā' ibn 'Amr رضي الله عنه to reason with the people of Jamal he said to Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما:

إني سألت أم المؤمنين، ما أشخصها وأقدمها هذه البلاد؟ فقالت: إصلاح بين الناس، فما تقولون أنتم؟
أمتابعان أم مخالفان؟ قالوا: متابعان، قال: فأخبراني ما وجه هذا الإصلاح؟ قالوا: فتلة عثمان رضي الله عنه،
فإن هذا إن ترك كان تركا للقرآن وإن عمل به كان إحياء للقرآن.

I asked Umm al-Mu'minīn what had compelled her to come out and brought her to these regions.

She said, "Bringing about reform between the people."

So what do the two of you say? Are you in agreement with her or disagreement?

They replied, "In agreement."

He thus said, "Tell me then, what is the way to bring about this reform?"

They said, "The murderers of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه. If this is left it will constitute leaving the Qur'ān and if it is executed it will constitute reviving the Qur'ān."¹

Likewise when Zubayr رضي الله عنه was asked regarding their march to Baṣrah he said:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/488.

نهض الناس فيدرك بهذا الدم لثلا يبطل، فإن في أبطاله توهين سلطان الله بيتنا أبدا، إذا لم يفظم الناس عن أمثاله لم يبق إمام إلا قتله هذا الضرب

We will induce the people so that the retribution for this blood is taken so that it does not become null. For annulling it will lead to weakening the authority of Allah amidst us forever. If the people are not weaned off from doing such crimes there will remain no Imām but that this group of people will kill him.¹

Similarly, when the opinion of Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما finally settled upon embarking to Baṣrah they came to ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها and said to her:

يا أم المؤمنين دعي المدينة-وكانت تريد الذهاب إليها- فإن من معنا لا يقرنون لتلك الغوغاء التي بها،
واشخصي معنا إلى البصرة، فإن أصلح الله الأمر كان الذي تريدين

O Umm al-Mu’minīn leave Maḍīnah (she was planning on going there), for those who are with us surely cannot compare with the riffraff who are present there. Come with us to Baṣrah, if Allah brings about reform what you want will happen.²

Ibn Abī Shaybah has also narrated that when ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها reached one of the waters of the Banū ‘Āmir the dogs started barking at her:

إي ماء هذا؟ قالوا: ماء الحوآب. فوقفت فقالت: ما أظنني إلا راجعة، فقال لها طلحة والزبير: مهلا رحمك الله، بل تقدمين فيراك المسلمون فيصلح الله ذات بينهم

She thus asked, “What water is this?”

They replied, “The water of Ḥaw’ab.”³

1 Ibid. 4/461.

2 Ibid. 4/450-451.

3 A place on the way to Baṣrah, it was a water place of the Arabs. See: Yāqūt: Mu’jam al-Buldān, 2/314. The ḥadīth of Ḥaw’ab is as follows, “Which of you will be the one at who the dogs of Ḥaw’ab will bark?” Ibn Kathīr has stated that its chain of transmission matches the authenticity criterion of the Ṣaḥīḥayn but they have not cited it. See: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 6/241. continued...

She stopped and said, “I don’t think of myself but as returning?”

So Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنه said to her, “Be patient, may Allah have mercy on you. Instead you will come and the Muslims will see you and because of your presence Allah will bring about reform and unity between them.”¹

And al-Bayḥaqī has narrated that when Zubayr رضي الله عنه intended to return to Madīnah, his son approached him and said:

مالك؟ قال: ذكرني علي حديثا سمعته من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وإني راجع، فقال له ابنه: وهل جئت لقتال؟ إنما جئت تصلح بين الناس، ويصلح الله هذا الأمر

“What is the matter with you?”

He replied, “Alī reminded me of a ḥadīth which I heard from Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم and I am returning.”

His son thus said to him, “Have you come to fight? You have merely come to bring about reform between the people so that Allah سبحانه وتعالى rectifies this matter.”²

Similarly when ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها reached Baṣrah and ‘Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf رضي الله عنه, the governor of Baṣrah, received the news from ‘Alī رضي الله عنه of her travelling, he sent her a message asking her regarding the reason for her travel. She replied thusly:

إن الغوغاء من أهل الأمصار ونزاع القبائل غزوا حرم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأحدثوا فيه الأحداث وأووا فيه المحذنين واستوجبوا فيه لعنة الله ولعنة رسوله، مع ما نالوه من قتل أمير المسلمين

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Al-Dhahabī said, “The transmission of this ḥadīth is Ṣaḥīḥ but they did not cite it.” See: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 2/125. And Ibn Ḥajar said, “This ḥadīth has been cited by Aḥmad, Abū Ya’lā, and al-Bazzār, and Ibn Ḥibbān and al-Ḥākim have deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ, and its transmission meets the requirement of Ṣaḥīḥ.” See: *al-Fatḥ*, 13/55. Whoever has deemed this ḥadīth weak has erred.

1 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaf*, 15/260.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (with the arrangement of Badrān), 5/368; Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 7/242.

بلا ترة ولا عذر، فاستحلوا الدم الحرام فسفكوه، وانتهبوا المال الحرام، وأحلوا البلد الحرام والشهر الحرام... فخرجت في المسلمين أعلمهم ما أتى هؤلاء القوم، وما فيه الناس وراءنا، وما ينبغي لهم أن يأتوا في إصلاح هذا، وقرأت لَّا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ نهض في الإصلاح ممن أمر الله عزوجل وأمر رسوله صلى الله عليه وسلم الصغير والكبير والذكر والأنثى، فهذا شأننا إلى معروف نأمركم به ونحضكم عليه، ومنكر ننهاكم عنه ونحضكم على تغييره

Indeed the riffraff of the various cities and the strangers living within the various tribes launched an attack on the sanctuary of Nabī ﷺ, perpetrated therein evils, and gave refuge therein to the perpetrators. Thereby they have made incumbent upon themselves the curse of Allah and the curse of his Rasūl. Together with that they murdered the leader of the Muslims without any blame or valid excuse; they violated sacred blood and shed it, they looted sanctified wealth, and desecrated the holy city and the holy month. Therefore, I came out to the Muslims in order to inform them of what these people have done and what is the situation of those whom we have left behind and of what they should be doing to remedy this situation. She then read: *No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or what is right or conciliation between people.* We will motivate to bring about reform, from those regarding who Allah and His Rasūl have ordered, the young and the old, and the male and the female. This is our condition, we order to implement good and encourage you to do so and we prevent you from evil and encourage you to change it.¹

And Ibn Ḥibbān has narrated that ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا wrote to Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī, the governor of Kūfah, the following letter:

إنه قد كان من أمر عثمان ما قد علمت، وقد خرجت مصلحة بين الناس، فمر من قبلكم بالقرار في منازلهم والرضا بالعافية حتى يأتيهم ما يحيون من صلاح أمر المسلمين

You have come to learn of what happened to ‘Uthmān, and I have come out in order to bring about reform between the people. So tell those who are by you to stay in their houses and be happy with wellbeing till what they love, the reform of the matter of the Muslims, comes to them.²

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/462.

2 Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 2/282.

Similarly when ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reached Baṣrah he came to ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا and said to her, “May Allah forgive you.” She replied, “And you as well. I had not intended but reform.”¹

Likewise, when ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ induced Qa‘qā’ to bring about conciliation with the people of Jamal he first started with ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا and asked her regarding the reason for her march, she replied, “To bring about reform between the people.”²

Al-Zuhrī has also transmitted her following statement:

إنما أريد أن يحجز بين الناس مكاني، ولم أحسب أن يكون بين الناس قتال، ولوعلمت ذلك لم أقف ذلك
الموقف أبداً

I just wanted my presence to serve as a barrier between the people. I did not imagine that fighting will ensue between the people. Had I known that I would never have adopted the stance I adopted.³

And Ibn al-‘Arabī emphasises:

وأما خروجها إلى حرب الجمل، فما خرجت لحرب، ولكن تعلق الناس بها، وشكوا إليها ما صاروا إليه من عظيم الفتنة وتهارج الناس، ورجوا بركتها في الإصلاح، وطمعوا في الاستحياء منها إذا وقفت إلى الخلق، وظنت هي كذلك فخرجت عاملة بقول الله تعالى لَا حَيْزِرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ نَّجْوَاهُمْ... الآية و

As for her march to the battle of Jamal, she had not embarked on the journey because of war, but the people clung on to her and complained to her of the graveness of the Fitnah and the of the people killing each other; they hoped to attain her blessings in bringing about reform and were desirous of the people being shy from her if she stood up to address them. She also assumed the same and thus came out practicing upon the verse: *No good is there in much of their private conversation... and the verse: And if two factions amongst the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two...*⁴

1 Ibn al-‘Imād al-Ḥanbalī: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, 1/42.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/488.

3 Al-Zuhrī: *al-Maghāzī*, p.154.

4 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, 3/1536.

In conclusion, ‘Ā’ishah, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُم had only set out to bring about reform and unity amongst the Muslims, to seek retribution for the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who was killed unjustly, and to elevate Islam by taking revenge from the Khawārij who considered it permissible to violate the blood of the Khalīfah. As for the fighting and the battle that ensued, that was not intended by them and was not their purpose, but was something instigated by the Saba’iyyah and their riffraff followers.

In fact ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ also set out primarily with the intention of bringing about reform and uniting the Muslims. It appears in the *Tārīkh* of al-Ṭabarī that when ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ intended to set out to Baṣrah a son¹ of Rifā’ah ibn Rāfi’ stood up and asked him, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn, what do you intend? And where are you taking us?” To which he replied saying:

أما الذي نريد وننوي فالإصلاح إن قبلوا منا وأجابونا إليه

As for what we intend, it is reform if they accept from us and respond to our call.²

Likewise, it is narrated via the transmission of Sayf that another person stood up to him in this journey and asked him, “What are you planning to do, O Amīr al-Mu’minīn, when you encounter these people?” He replied:

قد بان لنا ولهم أن الإصلاح والكف أحوط، فأن تابعوا فذلك، وإن أبوا إلا القتال فصدع لا يلتئم

It has become clear to us and to them that reform and withdrawal is more precarious. If they follow and do that, then that is what we intend. And if they refuse but to fight then that is a crevice which cannot be repaired.³

1 The narrator did not name him. However Rifā’ah, a veteran of Badr, had two sons: ‘Ubayd and Mu’ādh. See: *al-Tahdhīb*.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/471.

3 Al-Bāqillānī: *al-Tamhīd fī al-Radd ‘alā al-Mulhidah*, p. 237.

Also, when ‘Āmir ibn Maṭar al-Shaybānī¹ came to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه from Kūfah, the latter asked him about what he had left behind and the former informed. He then asked him about Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه, so he replied, “If your intention is reform, Abū Mūsā is all for it, and if your intention is fighting he is not the man for it.” ‘Alī رضي الله عنه thus replied, “By Allah my intention is nothing but reform, so why does he reject my view?”²

And when the delegation of Kūfah came to him in Dhī Qār he said to them:

يا أهل الكوفة أنتم لقيتم ملوك العجم، فعضضتم جموعهم، وقد دعوتكم لتشهدوا معنا أخواننا من أهل البصرة، فأن يرجعوا فذاك الذي نريده، وإن أبوا داويناهم بالرفق حتى يبدأونا بالظلم، ولن ندع أمرا فيه الإصلاح إلا أثرناه على ما فيه الفساد إن شاء الله.

O the people of Kūfah. You have encountered the kings of the Non Arabs and you have scattered their groups. I am inviting you to be present in the encounter with our brothers from Baṣrah. If they return, that is what we want, and if they refuse we will exercise leniency with them till they initiate the oppression against us. We will not leave any matter of reform but that we will give preference to it over mayhem, if Allah wills.³

This was not only the opinion of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه alone also. For it is narrated from his son Ḥasan that he would take an oath and say:

والله ما أردنا إلا الإصلاح

By Allah we did not intend but reform.⁴

1 One of the notables of Kūfah. Abū Ḥātim said regarding him, “A man who enjoyed stature amongst the Muslims. He heard from Ibn Mas‘ūd and al-Sha‘bī narrated from him.” See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/121; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 6/328.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/480.

3 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/258.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/483.

What further enforces this is that al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays came and said to ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “If you want I can fight with you and if you want I can prevent four thousand swords from standing against you.” He replied, “Prevent the four thousand swords from us.”¹

Al-Aḥnaf had come with six thousand fighters to join the ranks of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Without a doubt, by them joining ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, they would have brought about a very big disparity in the strength of both the parties and would lend great strength to the army of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Despite that, ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ declined his offer due to him giving preference to conciliation over warfare. Had his primary intention been engaging in warfare he would not have returned such groups which came willingly to join his ranks. For besides the aforementioned, even the clans of Ṭay’, Asad, and Bakr ibn Wā’il had offered to be with him but he declined.²

To reiterate, ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا all generally did not deem anything more suitable and appropriate than conciliation and the abandonment of warfare. That is what they parted on. And this time it seems as though Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا were fully satisfied with the argument of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ regarding exercising patience and not rushing in the matter of seeking retribution from the killers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ till matters settle and the centre of the Khilāfah regains its gravity whereafter justice can run its cause.

Hence, when some prominent companions of Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا suggested to them that they take advantage of the opportunity against ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ they replied:

إن هذا الأمر لم يكن قبل اليوم فينزل فيه قرآن ويكون فيه سنة من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ، وقد زعم قوم أنه لا يجوز تحريكه- أي أمر القصاص - وهو علي ومن معه، وقلنا نحن أنه لا ينبغي لنا أن نتركه ولا نؤخره، وقد قال علي: ترك هؤلاء القوم شر، وهو خير من شر منه، وقد كان يتبين لنا، وقد جاءت الأحكام بين المسلمين بإيثار أهمها منفعة وأحوطها

1 Ibid. 4/500, 501.

2 Ibid. 4/478-481.

This matter did not occur before this day due to which the Qur’ān would be revealed or the Sunnah established regarding it. A group of people have averred that it is not permissible to stir this matter (the matter of retribution), and they are ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and those with him. And we averred that it is not suitable for us to abandon this matter and delay it. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه said, “Leaving these people is evil, but it is better than an evil much greater than it. This has almost become clear to us, for the rulings between the Muslims are such that the most important and most prudent should be given preference.”¹

And Abū al-Jarbā’,² one of the close associates of Zubayr رضي الله عنه, said to him before the day of conciliation, “The strategy is that you send a thousand horsemen to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه before his friends reach him.” He replied saying:

إنا لتعرف أمور الحرب ولكنهم أهل دعوتنا-ديننا- وهذا أمر حدث لم يكن قبل اليوم، من لم يلق الله فيه
بعذر انقطع عذره يوم القيامة، وقد فارقتنا وفدهم على أمر، وأنا أرجو أن يتم لنا الصلح فأبشروا واصبروا

We are well aware of the matters of warfare, but they are the people of our campaign (Dīn). And this is a matter that had not happen before today; so whoever will not meet Allah with an excuse in it will have no excuse on the Day of Judgement. Their delegation has parted from us upon a matter and I hope that conciliation will be reached, so be happy and exercise patience.³

And Ibn Abī Shaybah has narrated, amongst others, with his chain of transmission to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣṭī:

جاء رجل إلى الزبير فقال: أقتل لك عليا؟ قال: وكيف؟ قال: آتبه فأخبره أنني معه ثم أفتك به، فقال الزبير:
سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: الإيمان قيد الفتك، لا يفتك مؤمن.

1 *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/475.

2 ‘Āshim ibn al-Dalaf, one of the Banū Ghaylān ibn Mālik ibn ‘Amr ibn Tamīm. He oversaw the placing of people into various locations in Baṣrah when it was founded. See: al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 3/593; 4/44.

3 *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/44.

A person came to Zubayr رضي الله عنه and said, “Should I kill ‘Alī for you?”

He asked, “How?”

He replied, “I will come to him, inform him that I am with him and thereafter kill him deceitfully.”

Zubayr رضي الله عنه thus said, “I heard Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, “Īmān has restricted deceit, and therefore a believer should not be killed deceitfully.”¹

Likewise it has been narrated that al-A‘war ibn Banān al-Minqarī, one of the prominent companions of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه,² stood up to him on the way to Baṣrah and asked, “O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, to what are you making us advance?”:

الإصلاح وإطفاء الثائرة لعل الله يجمع شمل هذه الأمة ويضع حربهم وقد أجابوا، قال: فإن لم يجيبوا؟ قال: تركناهم ما تركونا، قال: فإن لم يتركونا؟ قال: دفعناهم عن أنفسنا. قال: فهل لهم مثل ما عليهم من هذا؟ قال: نعم. وقام إليه أبو سلامة الدالاني فقال: يا أمير المؤمنين أتري لهؤلاء القوم حجة فيما طلبوا من الدم- يعني دم عثمان- إن كانوا أرادوا الله بذلك؟ قال علي: نعم، قال: وترى لك حجة بتأخيرك ذلك؟ قال: نعم، إن الشيء إذا كان لا يدرك فالحكم فيه أحوط وأعود نفعاً، قال: فما حالنا وحالهم إن ابتلينا بقتال غدا؟ قال: إني أرجو أن لا يقتل أحد نقي قلبه منا ومنهم إلا أدخله الله الجنة

He replied, “To bring about reform and to extinguish the strife, probably Allah will reunite the matter of this Ummah and do away with its war if they respond.”

He asked, “If they do not respond?”

He said, “We will leave them as long as they leave us.”

1 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaf*, 15/279; *Musnad Aḥmad*, 1/166-167; ‘Abd al-Razzāq: *al-Muṣannaf*: chapter on the Jihād of women and killing and deceitfully murdering, 5/299. There is a corroborative narration of Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه which appears in *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*: chapter of Jihād: sub-chapter regarding the enemy being attacked without their knowledge, 3/87. Shaykh Shu‘ayb al-Arna‘ūṭī (the annotator of *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā*) has said, “Its men are authentic and the ḥadīth is Ṣaḥīḥ.” See: 1/57, 58. Al-Albānī has also deemed the narration of Abū Hurayrah Ṣaḥīḥ in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 2/4533: ḥadīth no. 2407.

2 Did not come across his biography in the references I have at my disposal.

He then asked, “If they do not leave us.”

He replied, “We will repel them from ourselves.”

He further asked, “So will they get the same reward as the sin that they will bear in this matter?”

He replied, “Yes.”

Thereafter, Abū Salāmah al-Dālānī stood up to him and said, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn do you see any evidence for these people in the retribution they are demanding (for the murder of ‘Uthmān) if their primary intention in doing so is the pleasure of Allah?”

‘Alī عليه السلام said, “Yes.”

He then asked, “And do you see any evidence for yourself in delaying the seeking of retribution?”

He replied, “Yes, if a matter is unobtainable then the ruling should be based on what is most prudent and what will prove to be most beneficial.”

He further asked, “What would our status be and their status be if we are tested with fighting tomorrow?”

He replied, “I hope that no person with a clean heart will be killed from amongst us or them but that Allah will enter him into Jannah.”²

It is also narrated that Mālik ibn Jundub al-Fihri³ approached him on this trip and asked him, “What are you going to do, O Amīr al-Mu’minīn, if you encounter these people?”

1 Did not come across his biography in the references I have at my disposal.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/495,496.

3 Did not come across his biography in the references I have at my disposal.

He replied:

بان لنا ولهم أن الإصلاح والكف أحوط، فإن تابعوا فذاك، وإن أبوا إلا القتال فصدع لا يلتئم

It has become clear to us that reform and withdrawal is much more precarious. If they follow then that is what we want, and if they refuse but to fight then that is a crevice which cannot be repaired.

He further asked, “If we are tested with that, then what will the status of our men and their men who are killed be?” He replied:

من أراد الله نفعه ذلك، وكان بمنجاة

Whoever Allah wants that will benefit him and he will attain salvation.¹

This is also just like the first narration in clearly stating that they will not be sinful. According to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, at most they had exercised their Ijtihād and they erred in their assessment but not to the extent that they would be sinful.

This is indeed a very profound stance from Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما, and it is no less in its splendour from the stance of Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. For each one of them accepted conciliation and agreed upon it, and each one of them was cautious not to shed any blood or claim the life of any Muslim.

It is not possible for an intelligent person to conclude after learning of the aforementioned narrations that the leaders of both the parties were the ones of instigated the war and ignited its fire. How would that be possible when the idea of conciliation had settled favourably in their hearts? Instead the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and the cohorts of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’, may they receive from Allah what they deserve, were the people who ignited its flame and intensified its fire in order to escape from the capital punishment of retribution.

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/496.

Nonetheless, when the people settled in their places and they were at ease, ‘Alī رضي الله عنه emerged and so did Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما. They agreed amongst themselves and spoke of the matters they differed in. They concluded that conciliation and the abandonment of war was the best solution when the matter started to now eventually clear up. They parted upon that and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه returned to his camp and Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما returned to their camp. Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما sent for their senior companions and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه sent for his senior companions besides those who were involved in the siege against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. The people thus spent that night with the notions of conciliation and wellbeing; they were not doubting that the conciliation would reach fruition. Hence, some of them would walk by the side of the others and they would visit each other, they would not talk of anything and would not intend anything besides conciliation.

As for those who instigated the Fitnah, they spent the worse possible night; for they found themselves at the precipitous of destruction. They thus sat and they consulted the entire night. One of them said: “As for Ṭalḥah and Zubayr, we know their matter, and as for ‘Alī we did not know of his matter until today (this is after he announced that all the people should embark with him tomorrow besides anyone who helped in the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in any way), and the opinion of the people has become one regarding us. If they unite with ‘Alī رضي الله عنه tomorrow then that unity will be upon shedding our blood.”¹

Thereafter Ibn al-Sawdā’, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’, spoke and said:

يا قوم إن عزمكم في خلطة الناس فصانعوهم، وإذا التقى الناس غدا فانشبوا القتال، ولا تفرغوهم للنظر، فإذا من أنتم معه لا يجد بدا من أن يمتنع، ويشغل الله عليا وطلحة والزبير ومن رأى رأيهم عما تكرهون، فأبصروا الرأي وتفرقوا عليه والناس لا يشعرون.

O people, your victory is in mixing with the people so win them by friendliness. And when they meet tomorrow then cause war between them and do not allow them respite to deliberate. The result would be that those with who you will be with will find no option but to defend. Like this Allah

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/493, 505, 506.

will keep ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr and those who think like them busy from what you dislike. They all thus saw it as a valid opinion and they parted upon it without the people realising.¹

They concurred upon instigating a battle between them clandestinely. Hence, they marched in the darkness when it had enveloped them and because of which their neighbours did not take note of them. The Muḍarī thus went and marched to his Muḍarī brethren, the Rabīṭī came out and went his Rabīṭī brethren and the Yamānī emerged and marched to his Yamānī brethren and they attacked them and slayed them. This caused the people of Baṣrah and every tribe to rise to those who suddenly attacked them. Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما consequently came out with the notables of Muḍar and sent a message to their right wing, the Rabīḥah clan, the leader of which was ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām, and to their left wing, the leader of which was ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Attāb ibn Usayd,² and they remained in the centre; They inquired, “What is this?” The people replied, “The people of Kūfah attacked us by night.” They said, “How were we supposed to know that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was not going to desist till he sheds blood and desecrates the sanctity of life and that he will never listen to us.” They thereafter returned to the people of Baṣrah who had managed to counter attack those people till they returned them to their camp.³

On the other side, ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and the people of Kūfah heard a commotion, and the Saba’iyyah had placed a man close to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to inform him of what they wanted. Hence when he asked, “What is this?” That man said, “We were suddenly attacked by a group of people from amongst them so we repelled them.” ‘Alī رضي الله عنه thus said to the man of his right wing, “Go to the right wing,” and he said to man of his left wing, “Go to the left wing. I knew that Ṭalḥah and Zubayr would not desist till they spill blood and violate the sacredness of life and that they will never obey us.” And the Saba’iyyah were consistently adding fuel to the fire.⁴

1 Ibid. 4/494.

2 Did not come across his biography in the reference I have at my disposal.

3 Ibid. 4/494.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4, 507; Ibn al-Athīr: *al-Kāmil*, 3/242.

Another narration that corroborates the aforementioned narrative is what Ibn ‘Asākir has narrated in his *Tārīkh*:

إن عائشة طلبت من كعب بن سور أن يتقدم بكتاب الله ويدعوهم إليه، فدفعت إليه مصحفًا، وأقبل القوم - الذين في عسكر علي - وإمامهم السبئية يخافون أن يجري الصلح، فاستقبلهم كعب بالمصحف، وعلي رضي الله عنه من خلفهم يزعمهم وينهاهم ويأبون إلا إقدامًا، فرشقوه أي كعب بالنبال فسقط صريعًا.

‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها asked Ka’b ibn Sūr¹ to go forward with the Book of Allah and call them to it and gave him a manuscript of the Qur’ān. The people from the army of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه came and they were headed by the Saba’iyyah who were fearing that the conciliation will reach culmination. Hence, Ka’b approached them with the Qur’ān and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was behind them trying to scatter them and prevent them from advancing and they were refusing but to continue ahead. They thus shot Ka’b with multiple arrows which had caused him to fall dead.²

Likewise Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه also tried to address the people when they had all thronged around him. He said, “O people will you keep quite?” But they thronged even closer as if they were upon him and did not become silent. He thus frustratingly said:

أف أف فراش نار وذبان طمع

He muttered twice, “Uff, Uff. Moths of the fire and flies of greed.”³

During this sad battle which did not ensue with the happiness of either of the groups of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, ‘Alī رضي الله عنه expressed his grief upon the martyrs of both sides and said:

1 Ka’b ibn Sūr al-Azdī. From the senior Ṭābī’in and the noblemen of his time. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه had sent him as the judge of the Baṣrah and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه had retained him in his position. He came out in the battle of Jamal between the two factions in an endeavour to admonish them and invite them to peach and in the process was killed. See: *Akhbār al-Quḍāt*, 1/274; Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/ 91; Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 201; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Iṣābah*, 3/315.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (with the refinement of Badrān), 7/88.

3 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 182.

ليتني مت قبل هذا اليوم بعشرين سنة

I wish I died twenty years before this day.¹

And Ibn Abī Shaybah has narrated with his transmission to Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit² that ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said on the Day of Jamal:

اللهم ليس هذا أردت، اللهم ليس هذا أردت

O Allah this is not what I intended, O Allah this is not what I intended.³

He also passed by Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and saw him killed. He wiped the sand of his face and said:

عزيز علي أبا محمد أن أراك مجندلا تحت السماء

It is very difficult for me, O Abū Muḥammad, to see you lying under the sky.

And then he said:

إلي الله أشكو عجري ويجري

To Allah I complain of my worries and griefs.⁴

Similarly, when the killer of Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ came to him thinking that he will earn acclaim by him, he came to him with his sword and all his belongings in order to

1 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *Muṣannaf*, 15/282. Al-Haythamī in his *Majmaʿ*, 9/150 has deemed its transmission good.

2 Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit, Qays ibn Dīnār, Abū Yaḥyā al-Kūfī al-Asadī. From the reliable Tābiʿīn. Al-ʿIjlī said, “A reliable Tābiʿī from Kūfah.” And Ibn Maʿīn said, “Authority.” And al-Nasāʿī said, “Reliable.” And Abū Ḥātim said, “Truthful and reliable.” And al-Ṭabarī has made enlisted him in the categories of jurists. See: Ibn Maʿīn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/96; al-ʿIjlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 105; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Taʿdīl*, 3/107; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 1/105; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 2/178.

3 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *Muṣannaf*, 15/275.

4 Ibn ʿAsākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (with the refinement of Badrān), 7/89; Ibn al-Athīr: *Usd al-Ghābah*, 3/88-89.

present them to Amīr al-Mu'minīn. 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ grieved upon him immensely, held his sword in his hand and said:

طالما جلى الكرب عن وجه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

For a very long time did it repel hardships from the face of Rasūl Allah
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

And he said:

بشر قاتل ابن صفية بالنار

Give tidings of hell to the killer of the son of Ṣafīyyah.

And did not permit him to enter upon him.¹

'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ led the funeral prayer of the deceased of both sides, i.e. the people of Baṣrah and the people of Kūfah. He also led the funeral prayer of the members of the Quraysh tribe who were on either side and were both from Madīnah and Makkah. He thereafter got their bodies buried in a huge grave.²

Furthermore, al-Ḥārith³ has narrated in his *Musnad* from Sulaymān ibn Ṣurad رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ the following:

1 Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/105; Aḥmad: *Faḍā'il al-ṣaḥābah*, 2/737, the annotator has deemed it Ḥasan; al-Fasawī in his *Tārīkh*, 2/816.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/538.

3 Al-Ḥārith ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Usāmah, Abū Muḥammad al-Tamīmī al-Baghdādī. The scholar and the great retainer of ḥadīth. The compiler of the famous *Musnad*. Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. And al-Dāraquṭnī has said, "Truthful." Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbī has deemed him reliable and al-Dhahabī has said regarding him, "There is no problem with the man and his narrations are ok." He said this commenting upon al-Azdī who deemed him weak. He passed away in 282 A.H. /895 A.H. See: al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 8/218; Ibn al-Jawzī: *al-Muntaẓam*, 5/155; al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, 13/388; *al-Tadhkirah*, 2/619.

جئت إلى الحسن فقلت، اعدرنى عند أمير المؤمنين حيث لم أحضر الواقعة - يعني الجمل - فقال الحسن:
ما يصنع بهذا، لقد رأيتَه يلوذ وهو يقول: يا حسن، ليتني مت قبل هذا بعشرين سنة

I came to Ḥasan and said, “Please present my excuse to Amīr al-Mu’minīn for I did not participate in the event,” referring to Jamal.

Ḥasan said, “What will he do with this. I saw him holding on to me and saying, “O Ḥasan, I wish I died twenty years before this.”¹

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا also would cry till her head scarf would become wet when she would read the verse:

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ

And remain in your homes.²

And whenever she would mention the Battle of Jamal she would say:

وددت أني كنت جلست كما جلس أصحابي

I wish that I sat (at home) like how my companions sat.³

And in the narration of Ibn Abī Shaybah she is reported to have said:

وددت أني كنت غصنا رطبا ولم أسر مسيري هذا

I wish I was a fresh branch and that I did not set out on this trip of mine.⁴

It is worth noting that the influence of the Saba’iyyah in instigating the Battle of Jamal is something that is agreed upon by almost all historians and scholars.

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Maṭālib al-‘Āliyah*, 4/302. He said that al-Būṣīrī said that its narrators are reliable.

2 Sūrah al-Aḥzāb: 33. The narration appears in: al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 2/142.

3 Al-Haythamī: *Majma‘ al-Zawā’id*, 7/238.

4 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaf*, 15/281.

This is irrespective of whether they have dubbed them ‘the riffraff’, ‘the mischief makers’, the ‘simpletons’, ‘the people of base desires’, ‘the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه’, or even clearly stating that they were ‘the Saba’iyyah.’

These are some statements which emphasise this:

It appears in *Akhbār al-Baṣrah* of Ibn Shabbah that those to whom the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was attributed feared that the two groups will agree upon killing them in retribution, and thus they caused the war between them whereafter whatever happened happened.¹

And Ya’qūb ibn Sufyān al-Fasawī narrates from ‘Amr ibn Ja’wān:²

لما التقوا قام كعب بن سور ومعه المصحف ينشدهم الله والإسلام، فلم ينشب أن قتل

When they confronted each other Ka’b ibn Sūr stood up with the Qur’ān and pleaded to the people with the name of Allah and Islam. But he was soon killed thereafter.³

And in the narration of al-Ṭabarī and Ibn ‘Asākir it appears that the Saba’iyyah showered their arrows upon him and killed him.⁴

And al-Ṭaḥāwī said:

فجرت فتنة الجمل على غير اختيار من علي ولا من طلحة والزبير، وإنما أثارها المفسدون بغير اختيار السابقين

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Fath*, 13/56.

2 ‘Amr ibn Ja’wān al-Tamīmī al-Sa’dī al-Baṣrī. ‘Alī ibn ‘Āshim said, “I asked Ḥuṣayn about ‘Amr ibn Ja’wān. He replied, “He is a scholar who accompanied me on a ship.” Ibn Ḥibbān has mentioned him in his *al-Thiqāt*, and al-Dhahabī has stated that he is reliable. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/146; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 6/101; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 2/281; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 8/12.

3 Al-Fasawī: *al-Ma’rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 3/312.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/513; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (with the refinement of Badrān), 7/88.

The fitnah of Jamal occurred without the choice of ‘Alī عليه السلام or the choice of Ṭalḥah and Zubayr عليهما السلام. The mischief makers instigated the battle without the choice of the forerunners of Islam.¹

And al-Bāqillānī says:

وقال جلة من أهل العلم أن الواقعة بالبصرة بينهم كانت على غير عزيمة على الحرب بل فجأة، وعلى سبيل دفع كل واحد من الفريقين عن أنفسهم لظنه أن الفريق الآخر قد غدر به، لأن الأمر كان قد انتظم بينهم وتم الصلح والتفرق على الرضا، فخاف قتلة عثمان من التمكن منهم والإحاطة بهم، فاجتمعوا وتشاوروا واختلفوا، ثم اتفقت آراؤهم على أن يفترقوا فرقتين ويبدأوا بالحرب سحرة في العسكرين ويختلطوا، ويصيح الفريق الذي في عسكر علي، غدر طلحة والزبير، ويصيح الفريق الآخر الذي في عسكر طلحة والزبير غدر علي، فتم لهم ذلك على ما دبروه، ونشبت الحرب، فكان كل فريق منم دافعا لمكروه عن نفسه ومانعا من الإشاطة بدمه، وهذا صواب من الفريقين وطاعة لله تعالى إذ وقع، والامتناع منهم على هذا السبيل، فهذا هو السبيل المشهور، وإليه نميل وبه نقول.

Senior scholars of knowledge have stated that the event which occurred between them in Baṣrah was without them intending any war, it happened suddenly. And it happened due to each party defending itself after assuming that the opposite party betrayed it, for the matter between them had settled and conciliation was reached and they had parted with happiness. Hence, the murderers of ‘Uthmān عليه السلام feared that they will be surrounded and apprehended and thus they gathered and consulted and debated the matter. Thereafter they agreed that they will part into two groups and start the war at the break of dawn between the two armies; they decided that they will mix with the people, and the group which will be in the camp of ‘Alī عليه السلام will shout, “Ṭalḥah and Zubayr have betrayed,” and the group which will be in the camp of Ṭalḥah and Zubayr عليهما السلام will say, “Alī betrayed.” This was accomplished according to what they planned and the battle was fuelled. Hence, each group was repelling evil from itself and protecting against its blood being shed. This was the correct thing to do for both the groups and was obedience to Allah after this had suddenly occurred. They had defended themselves on this basis. This is the correct

1 Al-Ṭaḥāwī: *Sharḥ al-‘Aqīdah al-Ṭaḥāwīyah*, p. 456.

and the popular position. This is the view to which we incline and what we hold.¹

And al-Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār² cited the statements of the scholars regarding ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, Zubayr and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنهم concurring upon conciliation, discarding warfare and entertaining deliberation in the matter; and that those who were in the camp from the enemies of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه despised that and feared that the entire group will now be free to deal with them. Hence, they planned to dismiss the good and were successful in doing so.³

And Abū Bakr ibn al-‘Arabī says:

وقدم علي البصرة، وتدانوا ليتراءوا، فلم يتركهم أصحاب الأهواء، وبادروا بإراقة الدماء، اشتجر الحرب، وكثرت الغوغاء على البوغاء، كل ذلك حتى لا يقع برهان، ولا يقف الحال على بيان، ويخفى قتلة عثمان، وإن واحدا في الجيش يفسد تدبيره، فكيف بألف.

‘Alī came to Baṣrah and they came close in order to see each other, but the people of deviance did not leave them and they hastened to shedding blood. The war erupted between them and the riffraff dominated upon the land. All of this was so that evidence does not occur, and so that the condition not be dependent upon any clarification, and so that the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه remain covered. One person in the army is able to disrupt its strategizing, so what would the influence of a thousand be?⁴

1 Al-Bāqillānī: *al-Tamhīd fī al-Radd ‘alā al-Mulḥidah*, p. 233.

2 ‘Abd al-Jabbār ibn Aḥmad al-Hamdānī al-Asad’ābādī, Abū al-Hasan al-Qāḍī al-Shāfi‘ī. He was from the scholars of the principles of Sharī‘ah, theology and Qur’ānic exegesis. He was the supreme scholar of the Mu‘tazilah in his time. He presided over the court of Ray. He passed away in 425 A.H./1025 A.H. Some of his books are: *Tanzīh al-Qur’ān ‘an al-Maṭā‘in*, *Tathbīt Dalā’il al-Nubuwwah*, *al-Mughnī fī Abwāb al-Tawḥīd wa al-‘Adl*. See: al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 11/113; al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyyah*, 3/219; al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, 17/244; Ibn al-Murtaḍā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Mu‘tazilah*, p. 112; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, 3/386

3 Al-Hamdānī: *Tathbīt Dalā’il al-Nubuwwah*, p. 299.

4 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *al-‘Awāṣim*, p. 156-157.

And Ibn Ḥazm says:

وبرهان ذلك أنهم اجتمعوا ولم يقتتلوا ولا تحاربوا، فلما كان الليل عرف قتلة عثمان أن الإراغة والتدبير عليهم، فبيتوا عسكر طلحة والزبير وبذلوا السيف فيهم، فدفع القوم عن أنفسهم في دعوى حتى خالطوا عسكر علي، فدفع أهله عن أنفسهم، وكل طائفة تظن ولا شك أن الأخرى بدأتها القتال، واختلط الأمر اختلاطا، لم يقدر أحد على أكثر من الدفاع عن نفسه، والفسقة من قتلة عثمان لا يفترون من شن الحرب وإضرامه، فكلمنا الطائفتين مصيبة في غرضها ومقصدها، مدافعة عن نفسها، ورجع الزبير وترك الحرب بحالها، وأتى طلحة سهم غرب، وهو قائم لا يدري حقيقة ذلك الاختلاط، فصادف جرحا في ساقه كان أصابه يوم أحد بين يدي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فانصرف ومات من وقته، وقتل الزبير بوادي السباع بعد انسحابه من المعركة على أقل من يوم من البصرة، فهكذا كان الأمر.

The evidence of this is that they gathered and did not kill each other or fight. When night dawned upon them the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه realised that the planning and strategizing was against them. They, thus, attacked the camp of Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنه by night and struck the sword upon them. As a result, the people were compelled to defend themselves till eventually they mixed into the camp of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. This caused the people of his camp to defend themselves. Each group was assuming that the other was surely the one who initiated the fight and the matter became extremely confusing; no person was able to do anything more than defend himself. And the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه did not slacken at all in inducing the war and igniting it. So each of the two factions was correct in its objective which was to defend itself. Zubayr رضي الله عنه returned and left the war as it was. A stray arrow came to Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنه whilst he was standing and was unaware of the reality of the encounter. It struck a wound which he had sustained in the battle of Uḥud whilst defending Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم. He thus tried to leave but died immediately. Zubayr was killed in Wādī al-Sibā’ after he had left the battle, a place situated at less than a day’s distance from Baṣrah. This is how things had unfolded.¹

And Ibn ‘Asākir has cited that the Saba’iyyah were in the vanguard of the army and were refusing but to advance and fuel the war, fearing that conciliation might transpire.²

1 Ibn Ḥazm: *al-Fiṣal fī al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 4/157-158.

2 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (refinement of Badrān), 7/88.

And Ibn al-Athīr says in his *Tārīkh*:

كان من رأيهم جميعا أي الصحابة في تلك الفتنة ان لا يقتتلوا حتى يبدأوا، يطلبون بذلك المحجة، وأن لا يقتلوا مدبرا، ولا يجهزوا على جريح، ولا يستحلوا سلبا

It was the opinion of all the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in that Fitnah that they will not fight unless the fight is initiated against them, they will not kill a fleeing person, they will not kill a wounded person and they will not consider any spoils to be lawful (for themselves).”¹

And al-Dhahabī states that both the groups had united and ‘Alī and Ṭalḥah رضي الله عنهما had no intention of fighting. But the riffraff of both the groups targeted each other with arrows.²

And another narration states, “The foolish of both the groups... And the war erupted and the hearts revolted.”³ He likewise emphasises in *Duwal al-Islām* saying:

والتحم القتال من الغوغاء وخرج الأمر عن علي وطلحة والزبير

The fight intensified from the side of the riffraff and the matter no more remained in the control of ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهم.⁴

It would be justified to say after all of this: what is the obstacle from considering the narration of al-Ṭabarī and others which emphatically mention the Saba’iyyah and the role they played in the Battle of Jamal as explanatory for the other narrations which are general.

Likewise, what prevents us from thinking that there was a connection between the riffraff and the Saba’iyyah, even though their objectives were different to those

1 Ibn al-Athīr: *al-Kāmil*, 3/242, 243.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *al-Ibar*, 1/37.

3 Al-Dhahabī: *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 2/149.

4 Al-Dhahabī: *Duwal al-Islām*, 1/15.

of the Saba'iyyah. Probably they had induced a platform which the Saba'iyyah exploited to give rise to confusion and to instigate the war. This is usually the case in the movements and campaigns of the riffraff which are normally hijacked and exploited by the mischievous people.

Ibn Kathīr says in *al-Bidāyah*:

وعندما أشرف علي من جهة، وطلحة والزبير وعائشة من جهة أخرى على الصلح، وبعدما نادى على بأنه مرتحل فلا يرتحل معه أحد أعان على قتل عثمان، اجتمع رؤوس الخوارج كالأشتر النخعي، وشريح بن أوفى، وسالم بن ثعلبة، ومعهم زعيم السبئية عبد الله بن سبأ المعروف بابن السوداء، وباتوا يتشاورون فانتهمي أمرهم إلى الأخذ برأي ابن سبأ، وهو أن يثيروا الحرب بين العسكرين في الغلس

When 'Alī عليه السلام on the one hand and Ṭalḥah, Zubayr and 'Ā'ishah عليها السلام on the other hand were almost about to reach conciliation, and after 'Alī عليه السلام announced that he was going to travel and that no one who helped in the murder of 'Uthmān عليه السلام should travel with him, the heads of the Khawārij, like al-Ashtar al-Nakha'ī, Shurayḥ ibn Awfā, Sālim ibn Tha'labah and the leader of the Saba'iyyah 'Abd Allāh ibn Saba', who was known as Ibn al-Sawdā', gathered. They spent the night in consultation and eventually their matter ended with adopting the opinion of Ibn Saba', which was to instigate the war between the two armies in the darkness of dawn.¹

This is how the Saba'iyyah actively participated in the fight. Their primary function was to fuel the fire of the war whenever they sensed its flame burning out. They would advance toward the front when they would sense the people slackening and they would attack. Then when the fires fumed they would become elated and would refuse but to advance. This is what they had did till the end of the Battle of Jamal. This conspiring group was advantaged because it had infiltrated the ranks of the Ummah and it was pushed by the idea that the unity of the ummah will claim their sinful heads.

The influence of the Saba'iyyah did not end at the Battle of Jamal, rather their role in causing upheaval continued thereafter as well. Hence, when 'Alī عليه السلام got

1 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/239-240.

done with the Battle of Jamal he analysed the national treasury of Baṣrah and found that it contained six hundred thousand and some odd Dirhams. He thus distributed it upon those who were present with him in the battle; every person got five hundred. He then said:

لكم إن أظفركم الله بالشام مثلها إلى أعطياتكم

I promise you, if Allah grants you victory over the people of Shām, the like of it added to your bonuses.

The Saba'iyyah delved into that as well, and they criticised 'Alī عليه السلام behind his back.¹

In this manner, we find that the Saba'iyyah were with 'Alī عليه السلام outwardly, and that only because they believed that they could exploit him and benefit from him in fulfilling their objective regarding their specific viewpoint. But they learnt that he was averse to their viewpoint, was challenging them in their approach, and was not approving of what they were adopting. The matter of 'Alī عليه السلام, thus, perturbed them and infuriated them. But they did not muster the courage of revolting against him openly and rather chose to remain silent, conceal their acrimony toward him and worked against him secretly. They had done so by spreading propaganda between his followers and causing disunity amongst them.

The Saba'iyyah did not deem it fit to remain in Baṣrah for very long after the battle and thus they quickly left before 'Alī عليه السلام, as is stated by al-Ṭabarī. 'Alī عليه السلام picked up their motive and realised that they were opposing him. He thus set out behind them in order to put an end to any plan which they probably might be trying to hatch.²

From the aforementioned discourse the role that Ibn Saba' and his followers played in the Battle of Jamal becomes abundantly clear; their role was not

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/541.

2 Ibid. 4/544.

confined to instigating the first Fitnah which eventually led to the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, but they played a very pivotal role in the second fitnah which arose as the aftermath of the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, and which resulted in the worst of results for the unity of the Muslims and their central authority.

It is also clear without a doubt that the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were eager to bring about reform and unity. This is the truth which is conveyed by the historical reports and traditions and is also backed by reason and sound disposition.

Module Two: Seeking retribution from the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and the stance of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.

Section One: The Stance of those who were Seeking Retribution for the Blood of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه from amongst the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم

The murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was a direct cause for another crisis, or in other words, a second Fitnah, wherein the opinions differed and the viewpoints emerged with disparity. The Ijtihād of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم also differed as to what was the best medium of seeking retribution from the Khawārij who murdered ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.

A group of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم averred that the first duty of the Ummah was to take revenge for its martyred Khalīfah and execute the capital punishment upon his sinful murderers. Whilst others opined that the first most suitable thing to do was to restore unity, secure peace, and exercise patience till matters settle and the folds of the conspiracy unfold. Subsequent to that extirpating them and executing its propellants would be most important.

And a third group thought that since the oppressed Khalīfah only tolerated the siege upon him and prevented his believing followers from taking any action because of his passionate concern that no blood should be shed and not the smallest of Fitnahs should occur in the Ummah. Hence, it was only appropriate for those who succeeded him to give preference to the wellbeing of the Ummah and not side with either side of the conflict; especially when the prophetic Aḥādīth in this regard prohibits from fighting in the times of Fitnah.

Al-Nawawī states in this regard:

واعلم أن سبب تلك الحروب أن القضايا كانت مشتبهة، لشدة اشتباهها اختلف اجتهادهم وصاروا ثلاثة أقسام: قسم ظهر لهم بالاجتهاد أن الحق في هذا الطرف، وأن ملخفه باغ، فوجب عليهم نصرته، وقاتل الباغي عليه فيما اعتقدوه، ففعلوا ذلك، ولم يكن يحل لمن هذه صفته التأخر عن مساعدة إمام العدل في قتال البغاة في اعتقاده، وقسم عكس هؤلاء ظهر لهم بالاجتهاد أن الحق في الطرف الآخر، فوجب عليهم

مساعدته، وقتال الباغي عليه، وقسم ثالث: اشبهت عليهم القضية وتحيروا فيها، ولم يظهر لهم ترجيح أحد الطرفين، فاعتزلوا الفريقين، وكان هذا الاعتزال هو الواجب في حقهم، لأنه لا يحل الإقدام على قتال مسلم حتى يظهر أنه مستحق لذلك

Know that the cause of these wars was that the matters were confusing. Due to the extreme confusion, their Ijtihād differed and they became divided into three groups: It occurred to one group via their Ijtihād that the truth was on this side, and that the one who opposed it was a rebel. They, thus, considered it compulsory to help him and fight those who revolted against him in what he believed and that is what they did; (according to them) it was not permissible for someone of this nature to stay behind from helping a just ruler in combating those who were rebels according to his understanding. Another group was diametrically opposite to them; it occurred to them via their Ijtihād that the truth was on the other side, and, thus, they deemed it their responsibility to help him and fight those who opposed him. And to the third group the issue was confusing and they were perplexed. The validity of either of the two sides did not become clear to them and, thus, they avoided them both. This avoiding was necessary (according to them), for it is not permissible to advance in killing a Muslim till it becomes evident that he is deserving of it.¹

The stance of those who sought retribution for the blood of ‘Uthmān, like Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Ā’ishah, Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, and those who agreed with them

A well-known fact which is agreed upon by all historians is that the dispute between ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, and also the dispute between ‘Alī رضي الله عنه on the one hand and Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها on the other hand was solely in order to seek retribution from the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه immediately. The march of Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها to Baṣrah was for the very same reason.

1 Al-Nawawī: *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 15, 149.

Al-Ṭabarī has narrated that after ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا completed her ‘Umrah she left for Madīnah. A person from her maternal family, the Banū Layth, met her and informed her of the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. She, thus, returned to Makkah and when she halted at the door of the Masjid and headed for the Ḥijr Ismā’īl, the Ḥaṭīm, she secluded herself in it. The people gathered around her and she informed them of the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who was killed without any evidence or excuse and she said:

والله لأصعب عثمان خيرا من طباق الأرض أمثالهم، فنجاة من اجتماعكم عليهم حتى ينكل بهم غيرهم
ويشرد من بعدهم

By Allah the finger of ‘Uthmān is better than the earth full of their like. Hence, salvation is in you collaborating against them so that they are punished and serve as a lesson for others and so that those after them are dispersed.¹

It is also narrated that when ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا returned to Makkah ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir al-Ḥaḍramī, the governor of Makkah, asked her, “What has brought you back, O Umm al-Mu’minīn?” She replied saying:

ردني أن عثمان قتل مظلوما، وأن الأمر لا يستقيم ولهذه الغوغاء أمر، فاطلبوا بدم عثمان تعزوا الإسلام

What has returned me is that ‘Uthmān has been murdered wrongly. This matter will not be correct as long as these riffraff have any say. So, seek revenge for the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and you will elevate Islam by doing so.²

Likewise, when Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا came from Madīnah, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir from Baṣrah and Ya’lā ibn Munyah from Yemen, whereafter their group decided to march to Baṣrah after much deliberation, ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا said:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/449-450.

2 Ibid. 4/463.

إن هذا حدث عظيم وأمر منكر، فانهضوا فيه إلى إخوانكم من أهل البصرة فأنكروه، فقد كفاهم أهل الشام ما عندهم لعل الله يدرك لعثمان وللمسلمين بثأرهم

This is a grave event and a heinous matter, so rise in it to your brothers from the people of Baṣrah and condemn it, for the people of Syria have taken care for them of the situation on their side. Probably Allah will take for ‘Uthmān and for the Muslims their revenge.¹

And al-Ṭabarī also narrates that when ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا came to Baṣrah she asked the people for two things: to apprehend the murderers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and to uphold the Book of Allah.²

There can be no doubt regarding the eagerness that Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا had in slaying the Khawārij who murdered ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and in seeking retribution for his blood. Hence, when their opinion settled upon going to Baṣrah after much consultation their messenger announced:

إن أم المؤمنين وطلحة والزبير شاخصون إلى البصرة، فمن كان يريد إعزاز الإسلام، وقتال المحلّين والطلب بثأر عثمان، ومن لم يكن عنده مركب أو جهاز فهذا جهاز وهذه نفقة

Umm al-Mu’minīn, Ṭalḥah, and Zubayr are leaving for Baṣrah. Hence, whoever wants to honour Islam, fight the violators, and seek retribution for ‘Uthmān (should join us). And whoever does not have a conveyance or equipment then here is equipment and here is provision.³

In another narration it is stated that Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, and others who were with them had concurred upon seeking retribution for the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and fighting the Sabā’iyyah.⁴

1 Ibid. 4/450.

2 Ibid. 4/463.

3 Ibid. 4/449-450.

4 Ibid. 4/454.

And al-Ṭabarī narrates that al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays sent a person to the people coming from Ḥijāz in order to glean information regarding them. Hence, ‘Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and Abū al-Aswad al-Du’alī¹ departed and they came to Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and asked him, “What has brought you here?” He replied, “Seeking revenge for the blood of ‘Uthmān.”² They thereafter came to Zubayr and asked him, “What has brought you?” He replied, “Seeking retribution for the blood of ‘Uthmān.”³

Likewise, Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ addressed the people in Basrah standing on the right of the Mirbad (a camel market in Baṣrah), with him were Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and the people of Baṣrah and ‘Uthmān ibn Ḥunayf رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was on his left. He praised Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and exalted him and thereafter made mention of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and called for seeking retaliation for his blood. He said:

إن في هذا إعزازا لدين الله وسلطانه، وإن الطلب بدم الخليفة حد من حدود الله، وإنكم إن فعلتم أحببتم،
وإن تركتم لم يبق لكم سلطان، ولم يكن لكم نظام

In this is the elevation of the Dīn of Allah and his authority. And in seeking retribution for the blood of the Khalīfah is establishing an injunction from the injunctions of Allah. If you are going to do this you will be responding to the call, and if you are going to leave the matter no authority will remain for you and no system.⁴

1 Zālim ibn ‘Amr ibn Sufyān, Abū al-Aswad al-Du’alī, al-Qāḍī al-Baṣrī. A successor who witnessed both the pre-Islamic era and the Islamic era and accepted Islam after the demise of Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Ibn Sa’d has regarded him from the first generation of the people of Baṣrah. Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr said regarding him, “He was a man of piety, eloquence, oratory, understanding, intelligence and wisdom, and was from the senior successors. He was the first person to found the Arabic grammar and was a poet.” And Abū Ḥātim said, “He served as a judge in Baṣrah and was deemed reliable by Ibn Ma’īn, al-‘Ijlī, and Ibn Ḥibbān.” He passed away in 69 A.H./688 A.H. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/99; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 238; Ibn Ma’īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/692; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 12/10.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/462.

3 Ibid. 4/462.

4 Ibid. 4/464.

Also, when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه camped in Dhī Qār he sent Qa‘qā‘ ibn ‘Amr رضي الله عنه to Baṣrah, who had travelled to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه amongst those who travelled to him from Kūfah. He met Umm al-Mu‘minīn ‘Ā‘ishah رضي الله عنها just as he met Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما and asked them as to what had prompted them to travel to these regions. They replied saying:

قلته عثمان رضي الله عنه فإن هذا إن ترك كان تركا للقرآن، وإن عمل به كان إحياء للقرآن

The murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. If this is left it will be tantamount to leaving the Qur’ān, and if this is implemented it will be reviving the Qur’ān.¹

Similarly, when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه left for Kūfah and the groups camped and faced one another, ‘Ammār رضي الله عنه said when he drew close to the canopy of ‘Ā‘ishah رضي الله عنها and asked, “What are you seeking?” They replied, “We are seeking the blood of ‘Uthmān.”²

Furthermore, it is important to note that the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم all unanimously agreed upon establishing the capital punishment upon the murderers of ‘Uthmān, but they differed in hastening in doing so or deferring it till an appropriate time. Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Ā‘ishah, and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه considered advancing in establishing the punishment upon those who laid siege upon ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه to be ideal, and averred that starting with killing them was appropriate. Whereas Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and those who were with him thought it appropriate to delay the matter till the centre of Khilāfah regains its authority and the guardians of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه lodge a case before him against specific individuals, whereafter he can execute them after evidence is established. This was because these besiegers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه were not from a specific tribe, rather from different tribes.

Over and above this, establishing the capital punishment upon this band without the guardians of the murdered actively establishing evidence against them, by

1 Ibid. 4/489.

2 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *al-‘Awāsim*, p. 149.

the Imām who will then be required to pass his judgement against the killers, will inevitably lead to the spread of Fitnah which will result in a ferocious war that will claim the lives of innocent people. That is why the opinion of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was more correct and accurate than the opinion of Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Ā’ishah, and Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, as is stated in the Sharḥ texts.

The jurists concur that it is not permissible for anyone to seek retribution from anyone and claim his right without the ruler, or the medium of someone who is appointed by the ruler for that matter. Because that can lead to Fitnah and the spreading of confusion. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has appointed the ruler so that he may withhold the hands of some from oppressing others.¹ This is exactly what Qa‘qā‘ ibn ‘Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was saying:

إنه لا بد من إمامة تنظم الناس، وتزع الظالم، وتعز المظلوم، وهذا علي يلي بما ولي، وقد أنصف في الدعاء، وإنما يدعو إلى الإصلاح

A leadership is essential in order to keep the affairs of the people organised, repress the oppressor, and help the oppressed. And here is ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who is in charge. He has been fair in his call and has only called toward reform.²

Ostensibly, Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Ā’ishah and Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ believed and understood that the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was the most heinous of evils eradicating which was *Farḍ Kifāyah* (if carried out by some all are absolved) upon anyone who is capable of doing so and is not necessarily contingent upon the permission of the Imām. Over and above that their high ranking in Islam and acclaim amongst the people would make this achievable for them. This is what justified their march to Baṣrah. However, in this thinking of theirs, i.e. hastening to eradicate this evil, they were practicing Ijtihād, for it did not occur to them just as it did not occur to Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that eradicating this evil was linked to executing the capital punishment upon those who perpetrated it, and that doing so was contingent

1 Al-Qurtubī: *al-Jāmi‘ li Ahkām al-Qur’ān*, 2/256.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/484.

upon an Imām and the furnishing of evidence from the guardians of the murdered against the perpetrators whereafter the Imām can pass a judgement. This is to what their Ijtihād led them and, thus, it would be fine to say that they had erred but will accrue one reward for their Ijtihād.

Having said this, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما were closer to the truth than Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه due to four reasons.

Firstly, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما willingly pledged allegiance to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and conceded his virtue.¹ Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه although conceded the virtue of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, did not pledge to him.²

Secondly, the high esteem in which the people held them. Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه was without a doubt inferior than them.³

Thirdly, their only intention was to kill those who rebelled against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and did not have any intention of combatting ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and those who were with him in Jamal.⁴ Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه on the other hand insisted on fighting ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and those who were with him in Şiffīn.⁵

Fourthly, they did not accuse ‘Alī رضي الله عنه of complacency in executing the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه,⁶ whereas Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and those who were with him accused him thereof.⁷

1 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 15/271-274.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/438.

3 They were from the first forerunners of Islām and from the ten Şaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who given glad tidings of Jannah in one gathering, whereas Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه was from those who accepted Islam at the Conquest of Makkah.

4 See: p. 113, 116, and 118. (add page number)

5 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/242; Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnawarī: *al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 162.

6 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/454, 462-464.

7 Ibid. 4/444; Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/259.

Al-Qurṭubī¹ states the following in his commentary of Sūrah Ḥujurāt:

لا يجوز أن ينسب إلى أحد من الصحابة خطأ مقطوع به، إذ كانوا كلهم اجتهدوا فيما فعلوه وأرادوا الله عز وجل.. هذا مع ما قد ورد من الأخبار من طرق مختلفة عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أن طلحة شهيد يمشي على وجه الأرض، فلو كان ما خرج إليه من الحرب عصيانا لم يكن بالقتل فيه شهيدا... ومما يدل على ذلك ما قد صح وانتشر من إخبار علي بأن قاتل الزبير في النار، وقوله: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: بشر قاتل ابن صفية بالنار. وإذا كان كذلك فقد ثبت أن طلحة والزبير غير عاصيين ولا آثمين بالقتال أي إنهما معذوران باجتهدهما لأن ذلك لو كان كذلك لم يقل النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في طلحة "شهيد" ولم يخبر أن قاتل الزبير في النار، وإذا كان كذلك لم يوجب ذلك لعنهم، والبراءة منهم، وتفسيقهم وإبطال فضائلهم وجهادهم، وعظيم غنائمهم في الدين، رضي الله تعالى عنهم.

It is not permissible to attribute error to any of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم definitively, for they had all exercised Ijtihād in what they did and had in mind the pleasure of Allah سبحانه وتعالى. Together with this, narrations which have come to us through various sources from Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم state that Ṭalḥah was a martyr who was walking upon the land; if the purpose for which he had embarked was really a sin he would not have earned the status of martyrdom by being killed therein. Likewise, something else that points to this is the statement of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه which is authentically proven from him and is widely transmitted wherein he said that the killer of Zubayr is in the fire, and also his narration wherein he states that he heard Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, “Give glad tidings to the killer of the son of Ṣafīyyah of Hell-fire.” If this is the case, then it is established that Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما were not sinful in fighting, i.e. they were excused due to their Ijtihād. Because if the matter was otherwise Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم would not have dubbed Ṭalḥah ‘a martyr’ and he would not have informed regarding the murderer of Zubayr being in Hell-fire. And if that is the case, it does not necessitate cursing them, disassociating from them, deeming them sinful, and discarding their merits, striving, and great contribution to the Dīn رضي الله عنه.²

1 Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr al-Anṣārī al-Khazrajī al-Andalusī, al-Qurṭubī. A prominent exegete and ascetic. The following are some of his books: *al-Jāmi’ li Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, *al-Taqrīb li Kitāb al-Tamhīd*, *al-Asnā fī Sharḥ Asmā’ Allah al-Ḥusnā*, and *al-Tadhkirah bi Aḥwāl al-Mawtā wa Aḥwāl al-Ākhirah*. He passed away in 671 A.H/1273 A.D. See: Ibn Farḥūn: *al-Dībāj al-Mudhahhab*, 2/308; al-Maqrāsī: *Nafḥ al-Ṭīb*, 1/428.

2 Al-Qurṭubī: *al-Jāmi’ li Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, 16/321.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه acknowledged the validity of the view of Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها. He also conceded that they had evidence to substantiate the approach they were taking as long as they intended thereby the pleasure of Allah. Hence, when Abū Salāmah al-Dālānī stood up and asked, “Do these people have any evidence to back the blood that they are seeking if their intention thereby is to attain the pleasure of Allah?” He replied, “Yes.”¹

However, the mistake in their position was their passionate persistence in hastening to seek retribution for ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and execute his murderers, despite the circumstances not being very favourable to do so. Especially when considering that repelling evils takes precedence over securing interests. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه alluded to adopting the lesser of the two evils in the following statement:

هذا الذي ندعوكم إليه من إقرار هؤلاء القوم-قتلة عثمان- شر، وهو خير من شر منه-القتال والفرقة

This to which we are calling you, i.e. sparing these people (the murderers of ‘Uthmān), is bad, but it is better than an evil far greater than it, fighting and disunity.²

Likewise, al-Qa‘qā’ ibn ‘Amr also pointed out to them the mistake in their position when they embarked on killing the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه from Baṣrah which had led to the divide increasing. He emphasised upon them that this crisis can only be settled with calmness and deliberation.³

Also, Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما surely realised that the matter was indeed confusing. Their hesitance in what they were doing is a clear sign that matters were obscure, for it was extremely difficult to differentiate between right and wrong. Hence Zubayr رضي الله عنه dubbed this battle a Fitnah and said regarding it:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/496.

2 Ibid. 4/495.

3 Ibid. 4/488.

إن هذه الفتنة التي كنا نتحدث عنها، فقال له مولاه: أتسميها فتنة وتقاتل فيها؟ قال الزبير: ويليك إنا نبصر ولا نبصر، ما كان أمر قط إلا وأنا أعلم موضع قدمي فيه غير هذا الأمر، فإني لا أدري أنا مقبل فيه أم مدبر

“This Fitnah regarding which we were talking...”

His freed slave said to him, “Do you dub it a Fitnah and still fight in it?”

Zubayr رضي الله عنه replied, “Woe to you! At times we can see and at times we cannot. Never did a matter occur but that I knew my standing position with the exception of this matter, for I do not know whether I am coming or going.”¹

To further illustrate, when Ka'b ibn Sūr came to Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما, this was when 'Alī رضي الله عنه had arrived with his army. He said to the two of them:

ما تنتظرون يا قوم بعد توردكم أوائلهم؟ اقطعوا هذا العنق من هؤلاء، قالوا: يا كعب إن هذا أمر بيننا وبين إخواننا وهو أمر ملتبس، لا والله ما أخذ أصحاب محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم منذ بعث الله نبيه طريقا إلا علموا أين مواقد قدمهم، حتى حدث هذا، فإنهم لا يدرون أمقبلون أم مدبرون.

“What are you waiting for, O people after their first batch has come to you? Cut this neck of these people.”

They both said, “O Ka'b, this is a matter between us and between our brothers and it is a confusing matter. No, by Allah, the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم of Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم have not treaded a path since Allah sent his Nabī but that they knew the places of their feet till this happened, for they do not know whether they are coming or going.”²

Considering all of the above, if it was possible for the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم to err, as is the possibility with regard to every human, it would be permitted for us to accept their mistakes which were unintended and happened purely as a result of their

1 Ibid. 4/476.

2 Ibid. 4/495.

Ijtihād in which they were not guided to the correct stance. But in spite of that they will still be rewarded for the sincerity they showed in their Ijtihād, if Allah wills.

What is worth mentioning is that Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما were at the verge of revoking their stance regarding seeking the establishment of the capital punishment upon the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and were almost convinced with the viewpoint of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه when Qa’qā’ ibn ‘Amr had succeeded in convincing them of the viewpoint of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه.¹

This is clearly understood from what the two of them had said to Ṣaburah ibn Shaymān, one of the leaders of Baṣrah, when he came to them. He said to them:

يا طلحة يا زبير انتهزا بنا هذا الرجل، فإن الرأي في الحرب خير من الشد، فقالا: يا صبرة: إنا وهم مسلمون، وهذا أمر لم يكن قبل اليوم فينزل فيه قرآن أو يكون فيه من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم سنة، إنما هو حدث، وقد زعم قوم إنه لا ينبغي تحريكه اليوم-القصاص من قتلة عثمان- وهم علي ومن معه، فقلنا نحن: لا ينبغي لنا أن نتركه اليوم ولا نؤخره، فقال علي: هذا الذي ندعوكم إليه من إقرار هؤلاء القوم شر، وهو خير من شر منه، وهو أمر لا يدرك، وقد كاد يبين لنا، وقد جاءت الأحكام بين المسلمين بأيتار أعدها وأحوطها

“O Ṭalḥah and Zubayr. Rise with us to this man, for strategy in war is better than launching an attack.”

They replied, “O Ṣaburah! We and they are Muslims and this is a matter which had not occurred before this day due to which the Qur’ān would be revealed regarding it or there be regarding it a Sunnah of Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم. It is a new matter. Some people suggest that it is not feasible to stir it today, seeking revenge from the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, i.e. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and his people. We on the other hand said, ‘It is not appropriate for us to leave this today and we should not delay it.’ ‘Alī رضي الله عنه reasoned, ‘What we are calling you to of entertaining these people is evil, but it is better than an evil far worse than it, a matter that cannot be grasped. This was about

1 Ibid. 4/488-489.

to become clear to us, for the rulings between the Muslims have come in such a way that they necessitate giving preference to the more general and those based more on discretion among them.”¹

However, the plotting of the Saba’iyyah in order to instigate the war and fuel its fire, without the willingness of the Ṣaḥābah, did not allow the last step of the reconciliation to reach its culmination. This last step entailed within it the consensus of ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, and Zubayr رضي الله عنهم upon one stance. This would further ensure the safety of Muslim lives, the accomplishment of the greatest interest in the form of unity, filling the cracks, and uniting the rows.

Those who aver that the motive that drove Ṭalḥah and Zubayr رضي الله عنهما to mobilise was their greed for Khilāfah and that they had conspired against the people to achieve that are certainly wrong.² Ibn Shabbah debunks this assumption in his book *Akhbār al-Baṣrah*, saying:

إن أحدا لم ينقل أن عائشة ومن معها نازعوا عليا في الخلافة، ولا دعوا إلى أحد منهم ليولوه الخلافة، وإنما أنكورا على علي منعه من قتل قتلة عثمان وترك الاقتصاص منهم

No one has reported that ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها or those who were with her disputed with ‘Alī رضي الله عنه for the Khilāfah, nor did they campaign for anyone of them to appoint him to the Khilāfah. However, they had disproved of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه preventing the execution of the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and not exacting the revenge upon them.³

The events which concluded in the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه hurt them. They felt severe regret and assumed that they fell short of fulfilling the rights of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. They, thus, set out to seek revenge for him. Hence, when Zubayr رضي الله عنه

1 Ibid. 4/495.

2 Al-Shaykh al-Mufīd: *Kitāb al-Jamal*, p. 61.

3 Ibn Hajar: *Fatḥh al-Bārī*, 13/56.

passed by Malīḥ ibn ‘Awf al-Sulamī¹ on his way to Baṣrah the latter said to him:

يا أبا عبد الله! ما هذا؟ قال: عدي على أمير المؤمنين، فقتل بلا ترة ولا عذر! قال: ومن قال الغوغاء... قال فتريدون ماذا؟ قال: ننهض الناس فيدرك بهذا الدم، لثلا يبطل فإن أبطاله توهين سلطان الله بيننا أبدا. إذا لم يفظم الناس عن أمثاله لم يبق إمام إلا قتله هذا الضرب

“O Abū ‘Abd Allāh! What is this?”

He said, “Amīr al-Mu‘minīn has been attacked and has been murdered without any blame or excuse.”

He asked, “Who?”

He replied, “The riffraff.”

He further asked, “So what do you intend?”

He replied, “We rise and this blood should be sought so that it does not go to waste, for discarding it would result in humiliating the authority of Allah amidst us. If the people are not weaned off from doing such actions no Imām will remain but that this class of people will kill him.”²

And Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, whilst being showered with arrows in the Battle of Jamal, was saying:

اللهم خذ لعثمان مني اليوم حتى ترضى

O Allah take for ‘Uthmān from me till you are pleased.³

Likewise, when the news of the murder of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ reached ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, and she had reached Sarif⁴, she said:

1 I did not come across his biography in the sources I have at my disposal.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/461.

3 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 185.

4 A place between Makkah and Madīnah. See: Yāqūt: *Mu‘jam al-Buldān*, 3/212.

By Allah he has been wrongfully killed. By Allah I will seek revenge for his blood.¹

Ibn Ḥazm says:

قد صح صحة ضرورية لا إشكال فيها أنهم لم يمضوا إلى البصرة لحرب علي ولا خلافا عليه، ولا نقضا لبيعته، ولو أرادوا ذلك لأحدثوا بيعة غير بيعته، هذا ما لا يشك فيه أحد ولا يمكره أحد، فصح أنهم إنما نهضوا إلى البصرة لسد الفتق الحادث في الإسلام من قتل أمير المؤمنين عثمان رضي الله عنه ظلما.

It is established with obviousness and without any objection that they did not proceed to Baṣrah to fight ‘Alī رضي الله عنه or to oppose him or violate his pledge. Had they intended that they would have initiated a pledge other than the pledge they gave him. Regarding this no one can doubt or deny. Hence, it is established that they only proceeded to Baṣrah to obstruct the fissure which had occurred in Islam due to the murder of Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه wrongfully.”²

Moving on, it has become popular amongst people of ancient and of recent that the dispute between Mu‘āwiyah and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was due to Mu‘āwiyah’s رضي الله عنه greed for the Khilāfah, and that he had only revolted against ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and refused to pledge allegiance to him due to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه dismissing him from the governorship of Sham. Hence, a narration appears in *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah* of Ibn Qutaybah al-Dīnawarī³ which states that Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه claimed Khilāfah; this narration mentions what Ibn al-Kawwā’ said to Abī Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/459.

2 Ibn Ḥazm: *al-Fiṣal fi al-Mīlāl*, 4/157, 158.

3 Professor ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Usaylān has advanced several evidences to prove that the book *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah* is falsely attributed to Ibn Qutaybah. Hereunder are the following:

- a. None of those who have written the biography of Ibn Qutaybah have recorded that Ibn Qutaybah wrote a book on history named *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah*. The only history book that we know he has authored is *al-Ma‘ārif*. continued

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- b. A person who pages through the book will get the impression that Ibn Qutaybah stayed in Damascus and Morocco whereas he never left Baghdād, besides to Dīnawar.
- c. The style which the author of *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah* has followed is very different than the style of Ibn Qutaybah in his books which are at our disposal. For example, one of the outstanding features of his books is that he writes a lengthy introduction in the beginning and details therein the format of the book and the reason for authoring it. But the introduction to *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah* is very short and does not exceed three lines. Together with that its style is very different, a style that we do not see in the books of Ibn Qutaybah.
- d. The author of the book narrates from Ibn Abī Laylā in a way that gives the impression that he has directly heard from him. Ibn Abī Laylā is Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Laylā the jurist and the judge of Kūfah who passed away in 148 A.H. Whereas Ibn Qutaybah was born in 213 A.H. i.e. sixty five years after the demise of Ibn Abī Laylā.
- e. The narrators and scholars from whom Ibn Qutaybah normally narrates in his other works do not feature anywhere in this book.
- f. Many of the narrations in the book are cited with wording that denotes inauthenticity. Hence, many a time the narrations will be cited as, ‘they have mentioned from some Egyptians’, ‘they have mentioned from Muḥammad ibn Sulaymān from the scholars of Egypt’, ‘some scholars of Morocco have narrated to us’, ‘they have narrated from some scholars’, and ‘some scholars have narrated to us’. Phrases of this type are very far from the style and the language of Ibn Qutaybah and do not appear in any of his books.
- g. The author of *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah* narrates from two senior scholars of Egypt, whereas Ibn Qutaybah did not enter Egypt nor did he receive knowledge from these two scholars.
- h. Ibn Qutaybah enjoys a lofty position by the scholars. He is according to them from the Ahl al-Sunnah and is reliable in his Dīn and his knowledge. Al-Silaḥī mentions, “Ibn Qutaybah was from the reliable scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah.” Ibn Ḥazm says, “He was reliable in his Dīn and his knowledge.” Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī has averred the same. Ibn Taymiyyah has said, “Ibn Qutaybah subscribed to the school of Aḥmad and Ishāq and was a defender of the Sunnah.” See: *Lisān al-Mizān*, 3/357. A man of this stature according to the expert scholars, is it possible that he be the author of *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāsah* which distorts history and attributes to the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم that which they are free from.

اعلم أن معاوية طليق الإسلام، وإن أباه رأس الأحزاب، وأنه ادعى الخلافة من غير مشورة فإن صدقك فقد حل خلعه، إن كذبتك فقد حرم عليك كلامه

Know well that Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه is a late entrant to Islam and his father was the leader of the groups (in the battle of Khandaq). He claimed Khilāfah without consulting anyone. If he speaks the truth to you then it will be permissible to denounce him and if he lies to you then it will impermissible for you to talk to him.²

It also appears in the *Tārīkh* of al-Ṭabarī from Sayf that Mughīrah ibn Shu'bah came to 'Alī رضي الله عنه and suggested to him than he keep Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه in his position and that he only dismiss him or maintain him after he is sure of his compliance.³ He has also cited another narration from al-Wāqidi which is akin to the aforementioned narration, but with the following addition:

إن عليا قال لابن عباس: سر إلى الشام فقد وليتها، وأن ابن عباس لم يوافق على ذلك، وأشار عليه أن يكتب إلى معاوية يمينه ويعده -أي بالولاية- فرفض علي بقوله: والله لا كان هذا أبدا

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It seems as though the Orientalists paid much attention to investigating the attribution of the book to him; the first Orientalist who did so was Pascual de Gayangos in his book, *History of the Mohammedan Dynasties in Spain*. His view was supported by R. Dozy in his book *Histoire des Musulmans d'Espagne, jusqu'à la conquête de l'Andalousie par les Almoravides*. The books makes mention of Brockelmann in his book *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, Baron de Slane in *Géographie d'Aboulféda; texte arabe publié d'après les manuscrits de Paris* under the heading 'the narrations of *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāṣah*', and Margoliouth in his *Lectures on Arabic Historians*; they have all affirmed that the book is attributed to Ibn Qutaybah but it cannot possibly be his work. Before them Ibn al-'Arabī has also cautioned us of the same in his book *al-'Awāṣim* by stating that Ibn Qutaybah has in his book not left for the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم any good trace, assuming that everything in his book *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāṣah* is authentically established.

2 Ibn Qutaybah: *al-Imāmah wa al-Siyāṣah*, 1/113.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/439.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه said to Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه, “Proceed to Syria for I have appointed you over it.” But Ibn ‘Abbās did not agree and suggested to him that he write to Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and give him hope and promise him governorship. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه refused and said, “By Allah, that will never happen.”¹

And al-Dhahabī has cited that Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه told Jarīr ibn ‘Abd Allāh رضي الله عنه:

اكتب إلى علي يجعل لي الشام، أنا أبايع له

Write to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to designate Syria for me and I will pledge allegiance to him.²

However, the more correct opinion is that the dispute between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه revolved more around whether it was compulsory for Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and his comrades to pledge allegiance to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه before he exacts the retribution upon the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه or only after that. This has nothing to do with the Khilāfah.

The view of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and those who were with him, i.e. the people of Syria, was that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه should establish the retribution upon the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and subsequently they will pledge their allegiance.³ This had become their definitive stance since Nu‘mān ibn Bashīr رضي الله عنه carried the garment of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and placed it upon the pulpit in Syria so that the people could see it, and together with it the fingers which were attached to the sleeve of the garment. Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, thus, exhorted the people to seek revenge for ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and he was backed by a group of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in this regard.⁴

Al-Ṭabarī narrates that Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه sent a messenger to ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه. When he entered and assured amnesty for himself, he said:

1 Ibid. 4/440.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 1/168.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/438.

4 Ibid. 4/562; Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/248.

لقد تركت ورائي ستين ألف شيخ يبكون على قميص عثمان وهو منصوب لهم، وقد ألبسوه منبر دمشق، قال علي: مني يطلبون دم عثمان! ثم قال: اللهم إني أبرأ إليك من دم عثمان، نجا والده قتلة عثمان إلا أن يشاء الله

“I have left behind me sixty thousand elders who are all crying upon the garment of ‘Uthmān which was raised for them and which they had put over the pulpit of Damascus.”

‘Alī رضي الله عنه replied saying, “Are they seeking the blood of ‘Uthmān from me? O Allah I plead my innocence from the blood of ‘Uthmān. By Allah the killers of ‘Uthmān have attained salvation, unless Allah wills.”¹

When ‘Alī رضي الله عنه camped in Şifīn he approached them in the same manner as he had approached the people of Jamal. Hence, he sent a delegation to Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه in which was Bashīr ibn Abī Mas‘ūd al-Anṣārī² who initiated the conversation and said to Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه:

أدعوك إلى تقوى ربك وإجابة ابن عمك إلى ما يدعوك إليه من الحق، فإنه أسلم في دينك وخير لك في عاقبة أمرك، فقال معاوية: ويطلب دم عثمان؟ لا والرحمن، لا أفعل ذلك أبداً.

“I call you to fearing your Lord and answering the call of your cousin to the truth to which he is inviting you, for that is safer for you in your Dīn and better for you in terms of consequence.”

Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه replied, “And (in doing so) neglect the blood of ‘Uthmān! No, by al-Rahmān, I will never do that...”³

1 Ibid. 4/444.

2 Bashīr ibn Abī Mas‘ūd, ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Amr al-Anṣārī al-Madanī. He has narrated from his father the great Ṣaḥābī: Abū Mas‘ūd al-Anṣārī. Al-‘Ijlī said, “He is a Medinan successor who is reliable.” Likewise, al-Bukhārī, Muslim, and Abū Ḥātim al-Rāzī have deemed him reliable and Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of his in his *al-Thiqāt*. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/104; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 82; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 4/70; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 1/466.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/242.

And Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnawārī has stated that Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ wrote to ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ the following:

فإن كنت صادقا فأمكننا من قتلته-أي عثمان- نقتلهم به ونحن أسرع الناس إليك، وإلا فليس لك ولأصحابك عندنا إلا السيف، فوالله الذي لا إله غيره لنطلبن قتلة عثمان في البر والبحر حتى نقتلهم أو تلحق أرواحنا بالله والسلام

If you are true then give us authority over the killers of ‘Uthmān so that we may kill them for him. Or else there is nothing for you and your comrades by us beside the sword. For by Allah beside who there is no deity we will seek the killers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ on land and in the ocean till we kill them or till our souls reach Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Greetings.¹

And Yaḥyā ibn Sulaymān al-Ju‘fī narrates in *Kitāb Ṣiffīn* with a good chain of transmission from Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī that he had the following conversation with Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

أنت تنازع عليا في الخلافة أو أنت مثله؟ قال لا. وإني أعلم أنه أفضل مني وأحق بالأمر، ولكن أستم تعلمون أن عثمان قتل مظلوما وأنا ابن عمه ووليه أطلب بدمه؟ فأتوا عليا فقولوا له يدفع لنا قتلة عثمان، فأتوه فكلموه، فقال: يدخل في البيعة ويحاكمهم إلي، فامتنع معاوية...

“Are you disputing with ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ regarding the Khilāfah or are you his equal?”

He said, “No. I know that he is more virtuous than me and much more deserving of the matter. But don’t you know that ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ has been killed whilst wronged and I am his cousin and his guardian who is seeking retribution for his blood? So, go to ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and tell him to handover the killers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to me.”

They thus came to him and spoke to him to which he responded saying, “He should enter the allegiance first and thereafter institute legal proceedings against them by me.”

Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ refused.²

1 Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnawārī: *al-Akhhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 162.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Fatḥh al-Bārī*, 13/86.

And Ibn Muzāḥim has narrated in his book *Waq'at Šiffīn* that Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī said to Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه:

يا معاوية! قد بلغنا أنك تهتم بمحاربة علي بن أبي طالب، فكيف تناوته وليست لك سابقته؟ فقال معاوية: لست أدعي أنني مثله في الفضل، ولكن هل تعلمون أن عثمان قتل مظلوما؟ قالوا: نعم. قال: فليدفع لنا قتلته حتى نسلم له هذا الأمر

“O Mu‘āwiyah! It has reached us that you intend to fight ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. How do you oppose him when you do not enjoy the accolade of his early contributions?”

Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه replied, “I do not claim that I am like him in virtue, but do you know that ‘Uthmān has been wrongly killed?”

They said, “Yes.”

He, thus, said, “He should thus handover his killers to us so that we may acknowledge for him this matter.”¹

Furthermore, Ibn al-‘Arabī has stated that the reason for the war between the people of Syria and Iraq was their disparate views:

فهؤلاء-أي أهل العراق- يدعون إلى علي بالبيعة تأليف الكلمة على الإمام، وهؤلاء-أي أهل الشام- يدعون إلى التمكن من قتل عثمان ويقولون: لا نبايع من يأوي القتل

These people (the people of Iraq) were calling to pledging allegiance to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and uniting the word of the Muslims upon the Imām. And these people (the people of Syira) were calling to getting authority over the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and were saying ‘we will not pledge to a person who gives refuge to the killers’.²

1 Ibn Muzāḥim: *Waq'at Šiffīn*, p. 97.

2 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *al-‘Awāšim*, p. 162.

And al-Juwaynī mentions in *Luma' al-Adillah* that although Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه fought 'Alī رضي الله عنه but he did not deny his leadership and did not claim it for himself. He was merely seeking the killers of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه assuming that he was correct, whereas he was in error.¹

As for Ibn Taymiyyah, he says that Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه did not claim the Khilāfah, for the pledge for it was not enacted for him due to which he would have fought 'Alī. Hence, he did not fight 'Alī رضي الله عنه considering himself to be a Khalīfah nor on the premise that he deserved it, and he would confess this to those who asked him.²

Ibn Kathīr cites two narrations in this regard: the first is from Ibn Dīzīl³ with his chain of transmission to Abū al-Dardā' and Abū Umāmah رضي الله عنهما. They both visited Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه and asked:

يا معاوية! علام تقاتل هذا الرجل؟ فوالله إنه أقدم منك ومن أبيك إسلاما، وأقرب منك إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأحق بهذا الأمر منك. فقال: أقاتله على دم عثمان، وأنه أوى قتلة عثمان، فاذهبا إليه، فقولوا: فليقتلنا من قتلة عثمان، ثم أنا أول من أبايعه من أهل الشام.

وفي رواية ابن أعثم: لكنني أقاتله حتى يدفع إلي قتلة عثمان، فإذا فعل ذلك كنت أنا رجلا من المسلمين أدخل فيما دخل فيه الناس

1 Al-Juwaynī: *Luma' al-Adillah fī 'Aqā'id Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah*, p. 115.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, 35/72.

3 Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī al-Hamdānī al-Nasā'ī, commonly known as Ibn Dīzīl. He was a leader, a great retainer of ḥadīth, reliable, and a devout worshipper. Due to his zeal for knowledge he was accorded the title 'Sayfannah' which was a bird in the Egyptian region which would eat all the leaves of a tree when sitting on it. Likewise, was the case of Ibn Dīzīl, for he would not go to any scholar but that he would not part from him till he encompassed all his narrations. Al-Ḥākim said, "Reliable and trustworthy." Ibn Khirāsh said, "He was truthful in speech." Al-Dhahabī said, "He is the pinnacle of perfection." It is narrated from him that he would say, "If I have my book in my hand I would not bother if Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal be on my right and Yaḥyā ibn Ma'īn be on my left," (due to the accuracy of his books). He passed away in 281 A.H/893 A.C. See: Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 2/213; al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, 13/184; Ibn al-Jazarī: *Ghāyah al-Nihāyah fī Ṭabaqāt al-Qurrā'*, 1/11; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mīzān*, 1/48.

“O Mu‘āwiyah! On what basis are you fighting this man? For by Allah he accepted Islam before you and your father, he is closer to Rasūl Allah ﷺ than you and he is more deserving of this matter than you.”

He replied, “I am fighting him for the blood of ‘Uthmān and because he gave refuge to the killers of ‘Uthmān. So, go to him and tell him to exact revenge for us upon the killers of ‘Uthmān and thereafter I will be the first to pledge allegiance to him from the people of Shām.”

And in the narration Ibn A‘tham: “But I will fight him till he hands over the murderers of ‘Uthmān ﷺ to me. If he does that, I will be the first of the Muslims to enter that which the people have entered.”¹

As for the second narration it states that ‘Alī ﷺ sent a message to Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ calling him to pledge allegiance to him. Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ consulted ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ ﷺ and the leaders of the people of Syria. They refused and suggested that they will not pledge till the murderers ‘Uthmān ﷺ are not killed or handed over to them.²

And al-Dhahabī narrates from Ya‘lā ibn ‘Ubayd³ from his father⁴ that he said:

1 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 7/360.

2 Ibid. 7/253.

3 Ya‘lā ibn ‘Ubayd ibn Abī Umayyah al-Iyādī al-Ḥanafī, Abū Yūsuf al-Ṭanāfīsī al-Kūfī. Ibn Sa‘d said, “He was reliable and narrated many ḥadīth.” Šālīḥ ibn Aḥmad said, “He was accurate in his narrations and was pious in himself.” Ibn Ma‘īn said, “Reliable,” and Abū Ḥātim said, “Truthful,” and al-Dāraquṭnī said, “All the sons of ‘Ubayd are reliable.” He passed away in 209 A.H. /823 A.C. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/397; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 156; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 4/458; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 11/402.

4 ‘Ubayd ibn Abī Umayyah al-Ṭanāfīsī al-Laḥḥām al-Ayādī, Abū al-Faḍl al-Kūfī. He has been deemed reliable by Ibn Ma‘īn, al-‘Ijlī and Ibn Ḥibbān. Abū Zur‘ah said, “There is problem with him.” Abū Ḥātim said, “He is a Shaykh.” See: Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/385; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 324; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 5/401; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 7/60; Sa‘d al-Hāshimī: *Abū Zur‘ah al-Rāzī wa Juhūdih fī al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah*: the narrators who have been authenticated by Abū Zur‘ah: 3/907.

قال أبو مسلم الخولاني وجماعة لمعاوية: أنت تنازع عليا؟ هل أنت مثله؟ فقال: لا والله إني لأعلم أن عليا أفضل مني وأحق بالأمر، ولكن أستم تعلمون أن عثمان قتل مظلوما، وأنا عمه، وأنا أطلب بدمه؟ فأتوا عليا فقولوا له: فليدفع إلي قتل عثمان وأسلم له

Abū Muslim al-Khawlānī and a group of people said to Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, “Are you disputing with ‘Alī? Are you an equal to him?”

He replied, “No, by Allah I know that ‘Alī is better than me and more deserving of the matter. But don’t you know that ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه has been wrongfully killed and I am his cousin and seeking retribution for his blood? So, go to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and tell him to handover the killers of ‘Uthmān to me and I will submit to him.”¹

And al-Haythamī says:

ومن اعتقاد أهل السنة والجماعة أن ما جرى بين معاوية وعلي رضي الله عنهما من الحروب، فلم يكن لمنازعة معاوية لعلي في الخلافة للإجماع على أحقيتها لعلي... فلم تهج الفتنة بسببها، وإنما هاجت بسبب أن معاوية ومن معه طلبوا من علي تسليم قتلة عثمان إليهم لكون معاوية ابن عمه، فامتنع علي

From the beliefs of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah is that the wars which occurred between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه were not due to Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه disputing with ‘Alī رضي الله عنه for the Khilāfah due to consensus that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was most deserving of it. Hence, the Fitnah did not erupt because of that. It erupted because Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and those who were with him asked ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to handover the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه to him due to Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه being his cousin, but ‘Alī رضي الله عنه refused.²

As is clear, all the narrations corroborate each other and indicate that Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه had resisted in order to seek retribution for the blood of ‘Uthmān and that he explicitly stated that he would enter into the obedience of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه if the capital punishment was established against the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 4/573.

2 Al-Haythamī: *al-Şawā‘iq al-Muħriqah*, p. 325.

Even if it is hypothesised that he used the issue of retribution as a pretext to fight ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ because he coveted the Khilāfah, what would happen if ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ managed to establish the capital punishment upon the killers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ? Inevitably Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would eventually surrender to ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and pledge his allegiance to him, for that was his stance in the Fitnah. Likewise, all those who fought alongside him only did so on the basis of seeking retribution against the killers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Furthermore, if Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ really was concealing something else in his heart which he did not reveal to the people then this situation would have surely posed a great challenge for him due to which he would never have mustered the courage to pledge because of his greed.

Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was from the scribes of revelation and was from the honourable Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, he was truthful in his speech and was a man of forbearance. How can it then be entertained that he fought a Shar‘ī Khalīfah and spilled the blood of Muslims over a vanishing rulership. He is the one who said:

والله لا أخير بين أمرين، بين الله وبين غيره إلا اخترت الله على ما سواه

By Allah I am never given an option between to matters, between Allah and others besides him, but that I always choose Allah over everything beside him.¹

Likewise, it is established from Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that he said:

اللهم اجعله هاديا مهديا واهد به

O Allah make him a guider, one who is guided, and use him as a means of guidance.²

1 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, 3/151.

2 *Musnad Aḥmad*, 4/216; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*: chapter of merits: sub-chapter regarding the merits of Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: 5/350, he has deemed the narration Ḥasan Gharīb. Similarly, al-Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 3/236: ḥadīth no. 3018.

He also supplicated:

اللهم علمه الكتاب وقه العذاب

O Allah teach him the book and save him from the punishment.¹

As for the mistake in his stance, it lies in his refusal to pledge allegiance to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه before hastening in his demand of retribution from the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه; he demanded that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه hand over the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه to him, whereas a seeker of retribution is not in any way eligible to rule. He has to first enter into the obedience of the ruler, raise his case to him and thereafter seek his right from him.

It would be plausible to aver that Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه exercised his *Ijtihād* and assumed that the truth was with him. Hence, he stood to address the people of Syria after summoning them and reminded them the he was the guardian of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and that he was killed oppressively. He recited unto them the verse:

وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَوْلِيِّهِ سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يَسْرِفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَنْصُورًا

*And whoever is killed unjustly, we have given his heir authority, but let him not exceed limits in the matter of taking life. Indeed, he has been supported.*²

He then said, “I want you to let me know of yourselves regarding the murder of ‘Uthmān.” All the people of Syria stood up and they all affirmatively responded to seeking revenge for the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. They pledged allegiance to him, promised him, and gave him their pledges that they will sacrifice their lives and their wealth till they exact the desired revenge or Allah سبحانه وتعالى captures their souls.³

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 2/913, its annotator has deemed it Ḥasan li Ghayrihī; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 14/1/327; Ya’qūb ibn Sufyān in his *Tārīkh*, 2/345.

2 Sūrah al-Isrā’: 33.

3 Ibn Muzāḥim, p. 32.

This mistake can be substantiated by what ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir رضي الله عنه said in the Battle of Şiffīn. Ziyād ibn al-Hārith, a Şahābī رضي الله عنه, says:

كنت إلى جنب عمار بن ياسر بصفين وركبتي تمس ركبته، فقال رجل: كفر أهل الشام، فقال عمار: لا تقولوا ذلك، نبينا ونبيهم واحد، وقبلتنا وقبلتهم واحدة، ولكنهم قوم ممتنون جاروا عن الحق، علينا أن نقاتلهم حتى يرجعوا

I was on the side of ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir رضي الله عنه in the Battle of Şiffīn and my knee was touching his knee. A person said, “The people of Shām have disbelieved.” ‘Ammār رضي الله عنه said, “Do not say that. Our Nabī and their Nabī is one, and our Qiblah and their Qiblah is one, but they are a people who have been deluded and have diverted from the truth. Therefore, it is our duty to fight them till they return to it.”¹

1 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaf*, 15/294.

Section Two: The Stance of those who called for exercising patience in exacting the retribution till conditions settle, like ‘Alī, al-Qa‘qā’ and those who concurred with them

Al-Ṭabarī in his *Tārīkh* has cited the causes of the dispute which ensued between the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم regarding the execution of the capital punishment upon the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Considering the importance of the coming narration, due to it sketching all these causes very meticulously and due to it clearly relaying the stance of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه regarding the Fitnah, I will cite it in its entirety:

اجتمع إلى علي بعدما دخل بيته طلحة والزبير في عدة من الصحابة فقالوا: يا علي! إننا قد اشتربنا الحدود، وإن هؤلاء القوم - إشارة إلى السبئية وأنصارهم من الأعراب والعييد - قد اشتربوا في دم هذا الرجل وأحلوا بأنفسهم، فقال علي: يا إخواناه! إنني لست أجهل ما تعلمون، ولكن كيف أصنع بقوم يملكوننا ولا نملكهم! ها هم هؤلاء قد ثارت معهم عبدانكم وثابت إليهم أعرابكم، وهم خلالكم يسومونكم ما شاؤوا، فهل ترون موضعاً لقدرة على شيء مما تريدون؟ قالوا: لا. قال: فلا والله لا أرى إلا رأياً ترونه إن شاء الله. إن هذا الأمر أمر جاهلية، وإن هؤلاء القوم مادة، وذلك إن الشيطان لم يشرع شريعة قط فيبرح الأرض من أخذ بها أبداً. إن الناس من هذا الأمر - أي القصاص من قتلة عثمان - إن حرك على أمور: فرقة ترى ما ترون، وفرقة ترى ما لا ترون، وفرقة لا ترى هذا ولا هذا، حتى يهدأ الناس، وتقع القلوب مواقعها، وتؤخذ الحقوق فاهداً وعني ماذا يأتيكم ثم عودوا.

After ‘Alī رضي الله عنه entered his house, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما entered upon him with a group of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.

They said, “O ‘Alī! We have placed the execution of the capital punishments as a requisite, and these people (referring to the Saba’iyyah and their helpers from the Bedouins and slaves) have all taken part in the blood of this man and have violated themselves by doing so.”

‘Alī رضي الله عنه said, “O my brethren! I am not unaware of what you know, but how do I deal with a people who have full control over us and we have no control over them. Here they are, your slaves have revolted with them, your villagers have joined their ranks, they are amidst you and are able to inflict upon you whatever they want to. So, do you envision any ability to do what you want?”

They replied, “No.”

He further said, “Never, by Allah, I will not adopt any opinion except the opinion that you will choose. This matter (exacting revenge upon the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه) is a matter of the pre-Islamic era; this is because never does Shayṭān initiate any practice but that there will always be people who will hold on to it. If this matter is stirred the people will end up in three groups: a group will aver what you aver, a group will aver other than what you aver, and a group will not aver this or that till the people calm down and the hearts revert to their normal states and the rights are claimed. Hence, remain calm and anticipate what comes your way and thereafter return.”¹

There is no doubt that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was waiting for exclusive authority to be established for him whereafter he would look into the matter of the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Hence, when Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه, and those who were with them demanded the execution of the capital punishment he apologised by saying that they were too many and that they enjoy such strength that could not be underestimated. He, thus, requested them to exercise patience till the conditions became stable and matters became calm whereafter it would be appropriate to seek the rights.

As for the people of Shām they demanded as a requisite for their pledge that the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه be handed over to them and that revenge be taken from them. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه said to them:

ادخلوا البيعة واطلبوا الحق تصلوا إليه

Enter into the pledge and then demand the right and you will reach it.

But they said, “You do not deserve the pledge as long as the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه are with you and you see them morning and evening.”²

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/437.

2 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, 2/1718.

It is definitively known that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was more accurate in his stance and more correct in his speech; because if he hastened in executing the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه their tribes would have united against him and an internal civil strife would have ensued. This is exactly what happened when Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما executed the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in Baṣrah subsequent to which thousands of people became infuriated, displayed chauvinism, and united as one front to fight Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما. Qa’qā’ ibn ‘Amr رضي الله عنه addressed them in this regard saying:

قد قتلتما قتلة عثمان من أهل البصرة، وأنتم قبل قتلهم أقرب إلى الاستقامة منكم اليوم، قتلتم ستمائة إلا رجلا، فغضب لهم ستة آلاف، واعتزلوكم وخرجوا من بين أظهركم، وطلبتم ذلك الذي أفلت - يعني حرقوس بن زهير - فمعه ستة آلاف، وهم على رجل، فإن تركتموه كنتم تاركين لما تقولون، وإن قاتلتموهم والذين اعتزلوكم، فإدبلوا عليكم، فالذي حذرتم وقربتم به هذا الأمر أعظم مما أراكم تكرهون وأنتم أحميتم مضر وربيعه من هذه البلاد، فاجتمعوا على حربكم وخذلناكم نصرة لهؤلاء، كما اجتمع هؤلاء لأهل هذا الحدث العظيم والذنب الكبير. فقالت أم المؤمنين رضي الله عنها: فتقول أنت ماذا؟ قال: أقول هذا الأمر دواؤه التسكين، وإذا سكن اختلجوا، فإن أنتم بايعتمونا بعلامة خير وتباشير رحمة ودرك بنار هذا الرجل، وعافية وسلامة لهذه الأمة، وإن أنتم أبيتم إلا مكابرة هذا الأمر واعتسافه كانت علامة شر وذهاب هذا الثأر، ويعنه الله في هذه الأمة هذا هزها، فأثروا العافية وترزقوها، وكونوا مفاتيح الخير كما كنتم تكونون، ولا تعرضونا للبلاء ولا تعرضوا له فيصرعنا وإياكم... فإن هذا الأمر الذي حدث أمر ليس يقدر، وليس كالأمر، ولا تقتل الرجل الرجل، ولا نفر الرجل، ولا القبيلة الرجل.

“You have killed the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه from the people of Baṣrah, but you were closer to soundness before killing them than you are today. You killed six hundred men minus one and six thousand people as a result became infuriated; they withdrew from you and left your midst. You sought the person who escaped, i.e. Ḥurqūṣ ibn Zuhayr, but he was protected by six thousand people, all of them protecting one man. Hence, if you leave him you will be discarding what you proclaim, and if you fight also those who detracted and supposedly they are given victory over you then I think that that which you feared and that with which you drew this matter closer is far greater than what I see you despising. You infuriated the Muḍar and Rabī‘ah tribes of these lands and, thus, they united upon fighting you and forsaking you to help these people, just as these people had prior to that united to help the criminals of this grave event and this preposterous sin.”

Umm al-Mu'minīn عليها السلام asked, "So what do you suggest?"

He replied, "I say that the solution to this matter is in letting the matter rest. Once it has settled they will be uprooted. So if you pledge to us this will be a sign of goodness and a harbinger of mercy and will lead to exacting the revenge for this man. And if you refuse but to treat this matter with obstinateness and force it will be a sign of evil and a cause of this revenge going to waste. Allah has raised this matter in the Ummah to trial it. So give precedence to wellbeing and it will be given to you and be keys of goodness as you previously were. Do not make us vulnerable to difficulty nor become victims thereof yourselves, for it will drop us and you. This matter which has occurred cannot be measured, it is unlike other matters; it is not like a man killing a man, or a group of people killing a man, or a tribe killing a man."¹

And Ibn Dihyah² narrates with his chain of transmission till Yaḥyā ibn Hānī:³

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/ 488-489.

2 'Umar ibn al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alī, Abū al-Khaṭṭāb, Ibn Dihyah al-Kalbī, famously known as Dhū al-Nasabayn. The historian and retainer of ḥadīth, from the people of Sabtah in Maghrib. He practiced as a judge in Dāniyah in Andalus, thereafter, he travelled to Morocco, Shām, Irāq and Khurāsān, and eventually he settled in Egypt. Ibn Khallikān says about him, "He was from the elite scholars and prominent figures. He was an expert in the sciences of ḥadīth and was well versed in Arabic grammar, language, the history of the Arabs and their poetry. He has written: *A'lām al-Naṣr al-Mubīn fī al-Mufaḍḍalah bayn Ahl Ṣiffīn*, *al-Nibrās Fī Tārīkh Banī al-'Abbās*; *al-Muṭrib min Ash'ār Ahl al-Maghrib*, and *al-Tanwīr fī Mawlid al-Sirāj al-Munīr* which he ended with the following verse:

لو لا الوشاة وهم أعداؤنا ما وهموا

Had it not been for the slanderers who are our enemies, they would never have assumed.

He passed away in 633 A.H/1236 A.D. See: Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, 3/448; al-Maqqarī: *Nafh al-Ṭīb*, 1/368; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 3/186.

3 Yaḥyā ibn Hānī' ibn 'Urwah ibn Faḍfāḍ al-Murādī al-Kūfī Abū Dāwūd. He narrates from his father, Anas ibn Mālik, Abī Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه, amongst others. And Shu'bah, al-Thawrī, and Sharīk narrate from him. Abū Ḥātim said, "A pious person who was from the prominent figures of Kūfah." Al-Dāraquṭnī said, "He is an authority." And he has been deemed reliable by Ibn Ma'tīn, al-Fasawī and al-Nasā'ī and Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in *al-Thiqāt*. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/309; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'adīl*, 9/195; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/237; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 11/293.

أن رجلا قال لعبد الله بن عمرو، علي كان أولى أم معاوية؟ قال: بل علي: قلت: فما أخرجك؟ قال: أما إني لم أضرب بسيف ولم أوم بسهم، ولكن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: أطع أبك.

A person asked ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr رضي الله عنه, “Is ‘Alī more deserving or Mu‘āwiyah?”

He said, “‘Alī.”

So, I asked, “What prompted you to march (against him)?”

He replied, “I did not strike with a sword nor did I shoot an arrow. But Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Obey your father.”

This is an established chain. Yaḥyā ibn Hānī’ ibn ‘Urwah al-Khawlanī, known as Abū Hānī’ is reliable. Sufyān ibn Sa‘īd al-Thawrī has narrated from him and Muslim has narrated from him exclusively.¹

‘Alī رضي الله عنه was waiting for the reassurance of safety and unity and for the guardians of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه to lodge a case against the murderers before he could deal with them. Subsequent to that the claimants and the defendants would appear, the claim would officially be lodged and the answers be given, the evidence be established and ultimately the decision be passed according to the truth.²

There is no dispute in the Ummah that it is permissible for the Imām to delay the execution of a capital punishment if it can potentially lead to the eruption of a Fitnah or to the fragmenting of unity.³

As for the allegation that has been levelled on ‘Alī رضي الله عنه regarding the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه being in his army, al-Ṭaḥāwī has explained it in the following manner:

1 Ibn Diḥyah: *A’lām al-Naṣr al-Mubīn*, slate no. 7.

2 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *al-‘Awāṣim*, p. 146.

3 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, 2/1718.

وكان في عسكر علي رضي الله عنه من اولئك الطغاة الخوارج الذين قتلوا عثمان من لم يعرف بعينه، ومن تنصّر له قبيلته، ومن لم تقم عليه حجة بما فعله، ومن في قلبه نفاق لم يتمكن من إظهاره كله

In the army of Alī رضي الله عنه there were rebellious Khawārij who killed ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. But some of them were not specifically known, some were protected by their tribes, upon some the evidence was not established for what they did, and some contained hypocrisy in their hearts which he was unable to completely expose.¹

Whatever the case maybe, his stance regarding them was one of precaution and simultaneously one of disassociation. Hence, when peace was reached between him and Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها he addressed the people that evening. In his address he made mention of the pre-Islamic era, its misfortunes, and its deeds; also, of the good fortune of the people of Islam due to the affinity and the unity they enjoyed. He mentioned that Allah سبحانه وتعالى united them after his Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم upon Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه, and after him upon ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, and after him upon ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Thereafter this incident occurred which was imposed upon the Ummah by a group of people, the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, who coveted the world and were jealous of those whom Allah سبحانه وتعالى had gifted with it and were jealous of the merits with which Allah سبحانه وتعالى had favoured him. They intended to reject Islam and wanted to reverse everything, but Allah سبحانه وتعالى had a plan which he was bound to reach.²

He then said:

ألا وإني راحل فارتحلوا، ولا يرتحلن غدا أحد أعان على عثمان بشيء في شيء من أمور الناس، وليغن السفهاء عني أنفسهم.

Behold, tomorrow I plan to travel so you travel (with me). But anyone who in anyway helped in the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه with anything should not travel, and the foolish should excuse themselves from me.³

1 Al-Ṭaḥāwī: *Sharḥ al-Ṭaḥāwīyyah*, p. 546.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/493.

3 Ibid.

Likewise, when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه during the Battle of Jamal heard the people of Baṣrah passionately raising their voices in Du‘ā’ he asked, “What is this?” They replied, “It is ‘Ā’ishah supplicating and they are supplicating with her against the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and their cohorts.” ‘Alī رضي الله عنه also supplicated and said:

اللهم العن قتلة عثمان وأشياعهم

O Allah curse the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and their cohorts.¹

And Ibn Shaybah has narrated that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه heard a voice come from Umm al-Mu‘minīn رضي الله عنها so he asked, “See what they are saying.” They returned and responded, “They are raising their voices regarding the killers of ‘Uthmān.” He thus said:

اللهم أحلل بقتلة عثمان خزيا

O Allah send down disgrace on the killers of ‘Uthmān.²

And Ibn Kathīr has quoted the following from him:

اللهم العن قتلة عثمان في البر والبحر

O Allah curse the killer of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in the land and in the ocean.³

And in *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah* of Aḥmad the following is narrated from Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyah:

بلغ عليا أن عائشة رضي الله عنها تلعن قتلة عثمان في المرید-مرید البصرة- قال: فرفع يديه حتى بلغ بهما وجهه فقال: وأنا ألعن قتلة عثمان، لعنهم الله في السهل والجبل، قال مرتين أو ثلاثا

1 Ibid. 4/513.

2 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaḥ*, 15/277.

3 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/250.

It reached ‘Alī رضي الله عنه that ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها was cursing the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in the Mirbad—the market place of Baṣrah. He raised his hands till he brought them to his face and said, “I also curse the killers of ‘Uthmān. May Allah curse them in the plains and in the mountains.” He said that two or three times.¹

As is clear, even though the focal point of the dispute of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم was the difference of opinion regarding the medium through which it was best possible to unite the Ummah, repel the fitnah, and execute the capital punishment upon the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, then it is still definitively established that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه did not differ with the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم regarding the ill-intentions of the Khawārij. This is clear from what he said to Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما:

فلا والله لا أرى إلا رأيا ترونه إن شاء الله، إن هذا الأمر أمر جاهلية.

By Allah I will not opine but that which you opine Allah willing, but this is a matter of the pre-Islamic era.²

He was uninterested in them remaining in his army, and if the conditions were favourable he would have banished them, but the situation was as he said, even though for a limited time:

إنهم يملكوننا ولا نملكهم

They have full control over us and we do not have control over them.³

Furthermore, even though he did not banish them from his army, he definitely dealt with them with caution and looked at them with disdain. To the extent that al-Ṭabarī said that he did not appoint any of them to any position whilst preparing for his march to Shām. He called his son Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyah

1 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 1/455. The annotator has deemed its transmission Ṣaḥīḥ.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/437.

3 Ibid.

and handed the flag over to him, made ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه the commander of the right section of the army, ‘Umar ibn Abī Salamah the commander of the left section, Abū Laylā ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Jarrāh¹ the commander of the vanguard, and appointed Qutham ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه over Madīnah.²

He took this initiative in order to proclaim his disassociation from those imposters and to display his ability to run the matters of the Muslims without their help. For amongst his partisans and the supporters of his rule there were enough people to render him independent from seeking their help and having congenial relations with them.

This was the most he could do with that band of people at that time and was enough to excuse him, because they were multitudes of people and had relatives and kinsmen in his army and, thus, he felt that a fitnah would ensue in the Ummah if he dealt with them with more sternness. This is exactly what had transpired with Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها in Baṣrah. When they killed some, their tribes became infuriated and as a result detracted from them. Hence, all the people of Rabī’ah ibn Qays and most of the people of Bakr ibn Wā’il withdrew from them. Likewise, the Banū Sa’d ibn Tamīm, approx. six thousand people, and scattered members of the Khindif tribe also withdrew from them. The people of Rabī’ah had eventually joined the ranks of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه.³

Al-Bāqillānī analyses the aspect of delaying the execution of the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, expressing his approbation for the stance of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه in the following words:

وعلى أنه إذا ثبت أن عليا ممن يرى قتل الجماعة بالواحد، فلم يجر أن يقتل جميع قتلة عثمان إلا بأن تقوم البيعة على القتلة بأعيانهم، وبأن يحضر أولياء الدم مجلسه، ويطلبوا بدم أبيهم ووليهم... وبأن يؤدي الإمام اجتهاده إلى أن قتل عثمان لا يؤدي إلى هرج عظيم وفساد شديد قد يكون فيه قتل عثمان أو أعظم

1 He is the cousin of Abū ‘Ubaydah al-Jarrāh. See: al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/445.

2 Ibid. 4/445.

3 Al-Tabbānī: *Ifādah al-Akhbār*, 2/52.

منه، وإن تأخير إقامة الحد إلى إمكانه وتقضي الحق فيه أولى وأصلح للأمة وألم لشعثهم وأنفى للفساد
والتهمة عنهم.

Even if it is established that ‘Alī عليه السلام was of the opinion that a group of people can be killed in lieu of one person, it was still not permissible for him to kill all the killers of ‘Uthmān عليه السلام except after the evidence was established upon the murderers specifically; and after the guardians appeared in his court and sought the blood of their father and relative... In this regard the Imām had to exercise his Ijtihād to make sure that the murder of ‘Uthmān عليه السلام did not result in a blood bath and extreme havoc which would equate to his murder or be even greater in magnitude. He had to also understand that delaying the execution of the capital punishment to a feasible time and seeking the right therein is better and more appropriate for the Ummah; it is a more effective method of uniting them, and repelling evil and suspicion from them.¹

Similarly, Ibn Ḥazm justifies the stance of ‘Alī عليه السلام in the following words:

فقول وبالله تعالى التوفيق، إما قولهم: إن أخذ القود من قتلة عثمان المحاربين لله تعالى ولرسوله،
الساعين في الأرض بالفساد، والهاتكين حرمة الإسلام والحرم والإمامة والهجرة والخلاف والصحة
والسابقة نعم، وما خالفهم علي قط في ذلك ولا البراءة منهم، ولكنهم كانوا عددا ضخما جما لا طاعة
له عليهم، فقد سقط عن علي رضي الله عنه ما لا يستطيع عليه كما سقط عنه وعن كل مسلم ما عجز عنه
من قيام بالصلاة والصوم والحج ولا فرق. قال الله تعالى: لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا وقال رسول الله
صلى الله عليه وسلم: إذا أمرتكم بشيء فأتوا منه ما استطعتم، ولو أن معاوية بايع عليا لقوي به على أخذ
الحق من قتلة عثمان، فصح أن الاختلاف هو الذي أضعف يد علي عن إنفاذ الحق عليهم، ولو لا ذلك
لأنفذ الحق عليهم كما أنفذه على قتلة عبد الله بن خباب إذ قدر على مطالبته قتلته

We say, and from Allah do we seek inspiration. As for their statement, “It was incumbent to execute the capital punishment upon the murderers of ‘Uthmān عليه السلام who were at war with Allah and His Rasūl صلى الله عليه وسلم, who were striving to cause corruption in the earth, and were violating the sanctity of Islam, the Ḥaram, leadership, migration, difference of opinion, the honour of the companionship of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم and the feat of early contributions,” yes (that is completely correct). ‘Alī عليه السلام did not ever oppose them in that

1 Al-Bāqillānī: *al-Tamhīd fī al-Radd ‘alā al-Malāḥidah*, 231,

regard nor did he oppose them in disassociating from the rebels. However, they were copious in number and he did not enjoy their compliance. Thus, this obligation was dropped from him due to being unable to execute it just as the obligation of performing Ṣalāh, fasting, and Ḥajj falls away from every Muslim who is unable to carry them out. Allah ﷻ says, “Allah does not charge a soul except with that which is within its capacity,”¹ and Nabī ﷺ said, “When I order you to do something then do it as best as you can.”² Had Mu‘āwiyah ﷺ pledged his allegiance to ‘Alī ﷺ he would have gained the strength to seek retribution from the killers of ‘Uthmān ﷺ. It is correct to assert that it was the difference of opinion which had enfeebled the hand of ‘Alī ﷺ from establishing the truth against them. Had that not ensued he would have established the truth against them just as he had established it against the killers of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Khabbāb,³ for he was able to take his killers to task.⁴

Also, Ibn al-‘Arabī cites the viewpoint of ‘Alī ﷺ in the following manner:

لا يمكن طالبا من مطلوب ينفذ فيه مراده بغير حكم ولا حاكم.

I will not give authority to a claimant over a defendant for him to execute upon him what he intends without a legitimate rule and a legitimate ruler.⁵

1 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 286.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter of I’tiṣām (holding on to the Sunnah), 8/142.

3 ‘Abd Allāh ibn Khabbāb al-Arat al-Madanī. Al-‘Ijlī said, “He was reliable and from the senior successors. The Ḥarūriyyah, Khawārij, killed him when ‘Alī sent him to them. He, thus, sent a message to them saying, “Grant us our retribution for ‘Abd Allāh,” (i.e. hand his killer over to us). They replied, “How can we give you retribution for him when we all have killed him.” Consequently he set out to confront them and fought them.” And Abū Nu‘aym said, “He lived during the era of Nabī ﷺ but there is difference of opinion regarding his companionship. He saw Nabī ﷺ and his father was a Ṣaḥābī.” And al-Ghallābī says, “He was killed in 37 A.H/657 A.C. and was from the leaders of the Muslims. Ibn Ḥibbān has also made mention of him in *al-Thiqāt*. See: *al-Bukhārī: al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/1/78; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 254; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 5/8; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 5/196.

4 Ibn Ḥazm: *al-Fiṣal fī al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 4/162.

5 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *al-‘Awāṣim*, p. 163.

Thereafter comments saying the following:

أما وجود الحرب بينهم فمعلوم قطعاً، وأما كونه بهذا السبب، أي بسبب الخلاف حول القصاص من قتلة عثمان، فمعلوم كذلك قطعاً، وأما الصواب فيه فمع علي، لأن الطالب للدم لا يصح يحكم، وتهمة الطالب للقاضي لا توجب عليه أن يخرج عليه، بل يطلب الحق عنده، فإن ظهر له قضاء وإلا سكت وصبر، فكم من حق يحكم الله فيه... وأبي كلام كان يكون لعلي-لما تمت له البيعة- لو حضر عنده ولي عثمان وقال له: إن الخليفة قد تمالأ عليه ألف نسمة حتى قتلوه، وهم معلومون. ماذا كان يقول إلا: اثبت وخذ، وفي يوم كان يثبت، إلا أن يثبتوا هم-أي قتلته- إن عثمان كان مستحقاً للقتل، وبالله لتعلمن يا معشر المسلمين أنه ما كان يثبت على عثمان ظلم أبداً، وكان يكون الوقت أمكن للطالب وأرفق في الحال، وأيسر وصولاً إلى المطلوب. والذي يكشف الغطاء في ذلك أن معاوية لما صار إليه الأمر لم يمكنه أن يقتل من قتلة عثمان أحداً إلا بحكم، إلا من قتل في حرب، بتأويل أو دس عليه فيما يقال.

As for the occurrence of war between them, this is categorically known. And as for it occurring due to the dispute around the issue of seeking retribution from the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, that is also categorically known. As for the soundness of stance, it was with ‘Ali رضي الله عنه. This is because a seeker of blood does not have the right to rule; also, the suspicion of the seeker regarding the judge does not legitimate revolting against him. Instead, he should claim his right from him and, thereafter, if the judgement is passed in his favour (well and good) or else he should choose silence and exercise patience. For how many a rights has Allah decided already...? And if the election of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه would have reached unanimity and thereafter the guardian of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه appeared before him and said, “A thousand people united against the Khalīfah and eventually killed him and the suspects are all known,” what could his response have been besides saying, “Establish your claim and take your right and establish the day in which this occurred,” unless the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه could establish that he was deserving of murder. By Allah, you know with certainty, O congregation of Muslims, that oppression can never be established against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. The time would, thus, have been more appropriate for the claimant and more convenient for the situation and it would have been much easier to reach the desired goal. What unveils the matter even further is that when Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه became the ruler it was not possible for him to kill any of the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه except after a valid case was lodged against him. Yes of course with the exception

of those whom he killed in a battle on the basis of Ijtihad or by forging an allegation against him, as is averred.¹

Ibn al-‘Arabī is also of the opinion that due to the Shar‘ī evidences such as, “The rebellious group will kill ‘Ammār رضي الله عنه,” and the statement, “The closer of the two groups to the truth will eventually kill the Khawārij who will emerge at the time of disunity amongst the Muslims,” that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was the legitimate ruler and that whoever rebelled against him was a rebel whom it was necessary to fight till he surrendered to the truth. It is without doubt that he was more correct in his view and in his statements in his response to the people of Shām urging them to enter into his pledge and thereafter demand their right. Because if he went on to execute the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه before the unity of the Muslims was stabilised the tribes of these men would have supported them and that would cause the emergence of a third group. He, thus, was waiting to take hold of the reign of matters in order for the process of the incrimination of these perpetrators to begin and for the decree of truth to be passed regarding them.²

And ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī mentions in his book *al-Imāmah* the following:

أجمع فقهاء الحجاز والعراق من فريقي الحديث والذين منهم: مالك والشافعي وأبو حنيفة والأوزاعي والجمهور الأعظم من المتكلمين أن عليا مصيب في قتاله لأهل صفين، كما قالوا بإصابته في قتل أهل الجمل (أي أقرب إلى الحق منهم)، وقالوا، أيضا لأن الذين قاتلوه بغاة ظالمون له، ولكن لا يجوز تكفيهم
ببغيتهم

The scholars of Hijāz and Irāq that comprise of the scholars of ḥadīth, like Mālik, al-Shāfi‘ī, Abū Ḥanīfah, and al-Awzā‘ī, and the vast majority of theologians concur that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was correct in his wars against the people of Ṣiffīn. They also concur that he was correct in fighting the people of Jamal as well (i.e. he was closer to the truth than them). They also aver that this is due

1 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *al-Jāmi‘ li Aḥkām al-Qur‘ān*, p. 163-168.

2 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *Aḥkām al-Qur‘ān*, 2/1717, 1718.

to the fact that those who fought him were rebels and offenders. However, it is not permissible to excommunicate them because of their rebellion.¹

Ibn Taymiyyah condenses the stance of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه in the following words:

فهو يرى أنه يجب على معاوية وأصحابه طاعته ومبايعته... وأنهم خارجون عن طاعته يمتنعون عن هذا الواجب، وهم أهل شوكة رأى أن يقاتلهم حتى يؤدوا هذا الواجب فتحصل الطاعة والجماعة

He was of the opinion that it was incumbent upon Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and his comrades to obey him and pledge to him, they were rebelling against him by refusing to do so. They were people of might and, thus, he deemed it fit to fight them till they fulfil this obligation which will result in obedience to the supreme authority and unity.²

And Ibn Ḥajar says in *al-Iṣābah*:

وكان رأي علي أنهم يدخلون في الطاعة ثم يقوم ولي دم عثمان فيدعي به عنه، ثم يعمل ما يوجبه حكم الشرع

The view of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was that they should enter into his obedience and thereafter the guardian of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه should emerge and lodge a case on his behalf. Thereafter he will act according to the requirements of the Shari‘ ruling.³

Likewise, al-Haythamī also justifies the stance of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه saying:

فامتنع علي ظنا منه أن تسليمهم إليهم على الفور مع كثرة عشايرهم واختلاطهم بعسكر علي يؤدي إلى اضطراب وتزلزل في أمر الخلافة التي بها انتظام كلمة أهل الإسلام، سيما وهي في ابتدائها لم يستحكم الأمر فيها، فرأى علي رضي الله عنه أن تأخير تسليمهم أصوب إلى أن يرسخ قدمه في الخلافة، ويتحقق التمكن في الأمور فيها على وجهها، ويتم له انتظام شملها، وانفاق كلمة المسلمين.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه refused, thinking that handing the murderers over to them, Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and his people, immediately in spite of their huge tribes

1 Ibn Diḥyah: *A‘lām al-Naṣr al-Mubīn*: the eleventh slate.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, 35/ 72.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Iṣābah*, 2/508.

and in spite of them being part of the army of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه could cause turbulence and unrest in the matter of the Khilāfah, which is the source of keeping the unity of the Muslims intact; especially when it was not consolidated as yet. Hence ‘Alī رضي الله عنه thought that delaying in surrendering them was more correct till the Khilāfah found its feet. Thereafter, he would be able to deal with the matters as they stand, the organisation would be complete, and the unity of the Muslims would be achieved.¹

The deferring of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was based on an existing and well-known need. Hence, when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه shifted his base from Madīnah to Iraq in order to be closer to Shām, all the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه also marched with him. They forced their way into his army and were many in number, especially the people of Baṣrah and Kūfah. As a result they now returned to the fort of their strength and the pride of their tribes. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, thus, felt that establishing the capital punishment upon them will open a door of such unrest that he probably will not be able to shut thereafter. The great Ṣaḥābī, al-Qa‘qā’ ibn ‘Amr, also realised this reality and explicated it to Umm al-Mu‘minīn ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها, and the two Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهما of Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم. Consequently, they acknowledged it, excused ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, and agreed with him in his stance which primarily meant repelling the more imminent of the two evils and tolerating the lesser of the two evils.

Prudent political engagement demanded what ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was calling for, i.e. exercising patience, having forbearance, and not rushing into the matter. For the matter was of a magnitude that it required unity of the ranks in order to produce a united stance, subsequent to which the challenge which was threatening the base of the Khilāfah could be addressed. However, disunity enfeebled the base of the newly elected Khalīfah, and as a result it done away with all hopes of avenging the murdered Khalīfah.

Moving on, another Shar‘ī proof that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was closer to the truth than Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه is the following:

1 Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī: *al-Ṣawā‘iq al-Muḥriqah*, p. 325.

And also, what al-Bukhārī has narrated in his *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* via the transmission of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه from Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم:

ويح عمار تقتله الفئة الباغية

Woe to ‘Ammār. The rebellious group will kill him.¹

The commentator says:

وفي هذا الحديث علم من أعلام النبوة وفضيلة طارئة لعلي وعمار، ورد على النواصب الزاعمين أن علياً رضي الله عنه لم يكن مصيباً في حروبه

In this ḥadīth is a prophecy from the prophecies of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم, a clear merit of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and ‘Ammār رضي الله عنه, and a refutation of the Nawāṣib who claim that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was not in the right in his battles.²

And al-Nawawī says that the narrations from Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم clearly establish that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was right and upon the truth, and that the other group, the comrades of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, were rebels who rebelled on the basis of Ijtihād. They also establish that both groups were believers and that because of the fratricidal war they did not leave the fold of imān nor did they sin.³

Likewise, it also appears in an authentic ḥadīth, narrated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه that he said:

ذكر النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قوما يكونون في أمته يخرجون في فرقة من الناس سبماهم التحالوق - الخوارج - قال: هم شر الخلق - يقتلهم أدنى الطائفتين إلى الحق وفي رواية أخرى: يخرجون على فرقة مختلفة يقتلهم أقرب الطائفتين من الحق

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter of Jihād, 3/207.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, 1/542.

3 Al-Nawawī: *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 7/168.

Nabī ﷺ made mention of a people who will emerge in his Ummah, they will emerge at a time of disunity of the people and their distinctive sign will be shaving, i.e. the Khawārij. He ﷺ said, “They are the worst of the creation, the closer of the two groups to the truth will kill them.”¹

In another narration it appears, “They will rebel against a disputing group and the closer of the two groups to the truth will kill them.”²

This ḥadīth clearly suggests that ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was closer to the truth than those who opposed him in Jamal and Ṣiffīn. However, he was not entirely correct, for prudence and safety was in desisting from fighting. This is because a matter is always judged according to its result and its outcomes, and it is without a doubt that the result of the battles was very painful. Nabī ﷺ, thus, praised Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ because Allah ﷻ united the Muslims at his hands and preserved their blood from being spilled. Nabī ﷺ said:

إن ابني هذا سيد، ولعل الله أن يصلح به بين فئتين عظيمتين من المسلمين

This son of mine is a leader. Probably Allah ﷻ will bring about reconciliation because of him between two big groups of the Muslims.³

On the other hand, he did not praise ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ for fighting the people of Shām. The most that he said is that he was closer than them to the truth. As opposed to fighting against the Khawārij, for Nabī ﷺ emphatically praised it saying:

فأينما لقيتموهم فاقتلوهم، فإن في قتلهم أجرا لمن قتلهم إلى يوم القيامة

So wherever you meet them kill them, for in killing them is reward for whoever kills them till the Day of Judgement.⁴

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 7/167.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter regarding Fitan, 8/48.

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter regarding demanding from the renegades and obstinate people to repent, 8/52.

Furthermore, ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ himself was happy and elated after fighting the Khawārij,¹ but was disheartened and distraught after fighting the people of Jamal. And after the Battle of Şifḥīn he said:

لو علمت أن الأمر يكون هكذا ما خرجت

If I knew that the matter would result in this I would never have marched.²

Even some of those who participated in the battle subsequently regretted, as is narrated regarding Shaqīq ibn Salamah³ in *Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. He was asked, “Did you participate in Şifḥīn?” He replied, “Yes, and how bad indeed was Şifḥīn.”⁴

In fact ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ himself is reported to have said:

لله در مقام سعد بن مالك وعبد الله بن عمر، إن كان برا إن أحره لعظيم، وإن كان إثما إن إثما إن خطاه
ليسير

What a beautiful stance indeed was the stance of Sa’d ibn Mālik and ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar. If it was noble it was great in reward, and if it was a sin it was but a small error.⁵

In this manner, a brief perusal of the matter in its entirety will reveal to us that

1 *Şaḥīḥ Muslim*, 7/171-172.

2 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muşannaḥ*, 15/275, 293.

3 Shaqīq ibn Salamah al-Asadī, Abū Wā’il al-Kūfī. A successor who witnessed both the pre-Islamic and post-Islamic era. He has narrated from a group of the Şaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ some being, Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Mu‘ādh, and Sa’d رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Işhāq ibn Manşūr quotes Ibn Ma‘īn saying, “Reliable.” Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable and narrated many narrations.” Al-‘Ijlī said, “A pious person.” And Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr said, “They have agreed upon his reliability.” And al-A’mash said, “Hold on to Shaqīq ibn Salamah, for I found the noble people in their abundance considering him to be from the best of them.” He passed away in 82 A.H./701 A.D. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/96; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/258; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/2/245; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 222. Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 4/361.

4 *Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter of holding on to the Sunnah, 8/148.

5 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, 4/440.

the most prudent stance and the most appropriate was the stance of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who stayed away from the Fitnah and gave preference to not fighting the people of the Qiblah. Because Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has issued a command to fight the rebelling party only when it refuses to enter into any conciliation, and he has not ordered that it be fought and combatted from the very beginning (without any attempts of negotiation). He says:

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي
تَبْغِي حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

*And if two factions amongst the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns, then make settlement between them and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.*¹

1 Sūrah al-Ḥujarāt: 9.

Section Three: The Stance of those who avoided the Fitnah, they form Majority of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ

Those Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who avoided the Fitnah did so on the basis of a Shar'ī principle which is established from the emphatic statements of Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Some of these statements are binding on each individual to whom they were directed. This principal is avoiding fighting in the Fitnah.

Al-Bukhārī has narrated from Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that Rasūl Allāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

ستكون فتن القاعد فيها خير من القائم، والقائم فيها خير من الماشي، والماشي فيها خير من الساعي، من تشرف لها تستشرفه، فمن وجد منها ملجأ أو معاذاً فليعد به

Soon Fitnahs will occur. The one sitting in them will be better than the one standing; the one standing in them will be better than the one walking; the one walking in them will be better than the one running. Whoever will peer into them they will grip him and destroy him. Hence, whoever finds any place of refuge or security should seek refuge therein.¹

Ibn Ḥajar says:

ففي الحديث تحذير من الفتنة والحث على اجتناب الدخول فيها، وإن شرها يكون بحسب التعلق بها

In this narration there is a warning sounded regarding the Fitnah and it entails an exhortation to avoid entering it. It also informs that its evil will be according to the engagement in it.²

And Muslim and Abū Dāwūd have narrated the following narration from Abū Bakrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: chapter of Fitān: sub-chapter: there will be a Fitnah in which the one sitting will be better than the one standing: 8/92.

2 Ibn Hajar: *al-Fath*, 13/31.

إنها ستكون فتنة يكون المضطجع فيها خيرا من الجالس، والجالس فيها خيرا من القائم، والقائم خيرا من الماشي، والماشي خيرا من الساعي، قالوا: يا رسول الله، ما تأمرنا؟ قال: من كانت له إبل فليلحق بإبله، ومن كانت له غنم فليلحق بغنمه، ومن كانت له أرض فليلحق بأرضه، قالوا فمن لم يكن له شيء من ذلك؟ قال: يعمد إلى سيفه فيضرب بحدده على حرة، ثم لينج ما استطاع النجاء

There is going to be a Fitnah in which a person who is lying down will be better than the one sitting; a sitting person will be better than the one standing; a standing person will be better than the one walking; a walking person will be better than the one running.

They asked, “O Rasūl Allāh, so what do you order us to do?”

He replied, “Whoever has camels should go to his camels; whoever has sheep should go to his sheep; and whoever has land should go to his land.”

They asked, “What about a person who has none of that?”

He replied, “He should take his sword and strike its sharpness upon a rocky land and thereafter he should run for as long as he is able to.”¹

And al-Tirmidhī narrated from Umm Mālik al-Bahziyyah that she said:

ذكر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فتنة فقربها، قالت: قلت: يا رسول الله! من خير الناس فيها؟ قال: رجل في ماشية يؤدي حقتها يعبد ربه، ورجل أخذ برأس فرسه يخيف العدو-الكفار- ويخوفونه

Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم made mention of a Fitnah and gave the impression that it was near.

She said, “O Rasūl Allāh! Who will be the best of people therein?”

He replied, “A person in his livestock who fulfils their right and worships

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, chapter of Fitān and the signs of Qiyāmah, sub-chapter regarding Fitnahs coming down like rain, 18/9; *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, chapter of Fitān, sub-chapter regarding the prohibition from striving in the Fitnah, 4/99.

Allah ﷻ, and a person holding the head of his horse and therewith threatens the enemy (the disbelievers) and they threaten him.”¹

Likewise, al-Bukhārī, Mālik, and al-Nasā’ī have narrated from Abū Sa’īd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه that Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

يوشك أن يكون خير مال المسلم غنم يتبع بها شعف الجبال ومواقع القطر يفر بدينه من الفتن

Very soon the best wealth of a Muslim will be sheep with which he will follow the top of the mountains and the places of rain. He will do so in order to flee with his Dīn from the Fitnahs.²

And al-Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd narrated from Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه that Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم said regarding the Fitnah:

كسروا فيها قسيكم، وقطعوا فيها أوتاركم، والزموا فيها أجواف بيوتكم، وكونوا كابن آدم -ها بيل-

Brake in it your bows, and cut in it your ropes, and remain in it in the centre of your homes, and be like the son of Ādam (Hābīl).³

And ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Šāmit narrates the following from Abū Dharr رضي الله عنه:

كنت خلف رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حين خرج من حاشي المدينة، فقال: يا أبا ذر أرأيت أن الناس قتلوا حين تغرق حجارة الزيت من الدماء، كيف تصنع؟ قال: قلت: الله ورسوله أعلم، قال: تدخل بيتك،

1 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, chapter of Fitān, sub-chapter regarding how a person should be in the Fitnah, 3/320. ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Ārna’ūt has deemed it Ḥasan in the footnotes of *Jāmi’ al-Uṣūl*, 10/16; and al-Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, p. 234, ḥadīth no. 1769.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter of Fitān, sub-chapter regarding going into outskirts (and living like a villager) in the Fitnah, 8/94; *Sunan al-Nasā’ī*, chapter of Īmān, sub-chapter regarding fleeing with ones Dīn from the Fitān, 8/123; *al-Muwatta’*, chapter regarding seeking permission, p. 829.

3 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, chapter of Fitān, 3/333; *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, Chapter regarding Fitān, sub-chapter regarding the prohibition of striving in the Fitnah, 4/100. Al-Ārna’ūt in *Jāmi’ al-Uṣūl* has deemed the narration Ṣaḥīḥ (10/9) and al-Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 2/241, ḥadīth no. 1795.

قال: قلت يا رسول الله فإن أتى علي، قال: تأتي من أنت منه، قال: فأحمل السلاح؟ قال: إذا شاركت القوم، قلت، فكيف أصنع يا رسول الله؟ قال: إن خفت إن يبهرك شعاع السيف فألق طائفة من ثوبك على وجهك يبيء بإثمك وإثمه

I was riding behind Nabī ﷺ when he left the orchards of Madīnah. He asked, “O Abū Dhar! What do you think of a time when the people will fight and as a result the stones of oil will be drenched with their blood, what will you do?”

I said, “Allah and his Rasūl know best.”

He said, “You should enter your house.”

I asked, “If someone intrudes upon me?”

He said, “You should proceed to the people you belong to.”

He asked, “So should I take up weapons?”

He said, “You will then be part of the people in their crime.”

I asked, “So what should I do, O Rasūl Allāh?”

He replied, “If you fear that the brilliance of the sword will astound you then place a portion of your clothes upon your face and let him return with your sin and his sin.”¹

And al-Bukhārī narrates from Abū Bakrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that whilst Nabī ﷺ was delivering a sermon Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ came and so he said:

إن ابني هذا سيد، ولعل الله أن يصلح به بين فئتين عظيمتين من المسلمين

This son of mine is a leader, and probably Allah will bring about conciliation at his hands between two major groups of the Muslims.²

1 Al-Khallāl: *Kitāb al-Īmān* of Aḥmad, slate no. 12.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter of Fitan, 8/98.

Commenting on this narration Ibn Ḥajar says:

واستدل به على تصويب رأي من قعد عن القتال مع معاوية وعلي رضي الله عنهما، وإن كان علي أحق بالخلافة وأقرب إلى الحق، وهو قول سعد بن أبي وقاص وابن عمر ومحمد بن مسلمة وسائر من اعتزل تلك الحروب

This narration has been used to substantiate the stance of those who stayed away from the strife between Mu'āwiyah and 'Alī رضي الله عنه, in spite of 'Alī رضي الله عنه being more deserving of the Khilāfah and closer to the truth. This was the view of Sa'd ibn Waqqāṣ, Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, and all those who avoided those wars.¹

And al-Bukhārī narrates under the chapter regarding becoming a Bedouin in the times of Fitnah from Yazīd ibn Abī 'Ubayd² that he said:

لما قتل عثمان بن عفان خرج مسلمة بن الأكوخ من البدرين إلى الربذة وتزوج هناك امرأةً وولدت له أولاداً، فلم يزل بها حتى قبل أن يموت بليال نزل المدينة

When 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه was murdered Salamah ibn al-Akwa' رضي الله عنه—from the veterans of Badr—went to Rabadhah and married a woman there who bore a few children for him. He remained there and only moved to Madīnah a few nights before he passed away.³

He thereafter passed away in the abode of migration as an honour from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى approx. forty years after the martyrdom of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه in the year 74 A.H./693 A.D.⁴

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Fath*, 13/6.

2 Yazīd ibn Abī 'Ubayd, Abū Khālīd al-Aslamī, the freed slave of Salamah ibn al-Akwa' رضي الله عنه. Ibn Sa'd said, "He was reliable and narrated many narrations." Al-Ājurrī quoted Abū Dāwūd saying, "Reliable." And Ibn Ma'tīn has deemed him reliable and al-'Ijlī said, "A Tābi'ī from Ḥijāz who is reliable." He passed away in 147 A.H./764 A.D. See: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 359; al-'Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 479; Ibn Ma'tīn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/765; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 11/349.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter of Fitan, 8/94.

4 Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 4/308.

Furthermore, from the outstanding jurisprudential prowess of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ is the fact that they differentiated between the legitimacy of the rule of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and the obligation to fight by his side, rather the validity of fighting the people of the Qiblah. For although he was a Shar‘ī ruler it did not necessarily follow therefrom that his fighting against the people of Ṣiffīn and Jamal was absolutely right and completely correct.

It is important to note that most of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ had avoided the Fitnah. At the head of them was Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. On the day of Ṣiffīn there was no one who was more virtuous than him besides ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Likewise, Sa‘īd ibn Zayd (one of the ten Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who were given glad tidings of Jannah in one gathering), Zayd ibn Thābit, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muḥaffal, Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, Abū Barzah al-Aslamī, Abū Bakrah, Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī, Usāmah ibn Zayd, and ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar—among others—had also avoided the Fitnah.

Al-Ṭabarī has narrated from al-Sha‘bī that he said:

بالله الذي لا إله إلا هو ما نهض في تلك الفتنة إلا ستة بدرين ما لهم سابع أو سبعة ما لهم ثامن

By Allah, besides who there is no deity, no one rose in the Fitnah besides six Ṣaḥābah of Badr to who there was no seventh, or seven to who there was no eighth.¹

Likewise, ‘Abd al-Razzāq and Aḥmad have narrated with an authentic chain of transmission² from Muḥammad ibn Sīrīn the following:

هاجت الفتنة وأصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عشرات الألف فلم يحضرها منهم مائة بل لم يبلغوا ثلاثين

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/308.

2 Aḥmad (reliable and a great retainer. *al-Taqrīb*, 1/24) narrates from Ibn ‘Ulayyah (an authority and a leader. *al-Kāshif*, 1/69) from Ayyūb al-Sakhtiyānī (reliable and an authority. *al-Taqrīb*, 1/89) from Ibn Sīrīn (a reliable Ṭābi‘ī. *al-Thiqāt* of al-‘Ijlī: p. 405).

The Fitnah erupted and the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were tens of thousands in number. But not even a hundred of them participated therein, in fact no even thirty.¹

And Ibn Baṭṭah narrates the following from Bukayr ibn al-Ashajj:

أما إن رجلا من أهل بدر لموا بيوتهم بعد قتل عثمان فلم يخرجوا إلا في قبورهم

Behold many men of Badr remained in their homes after the martyrdom of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and did not leave only to their graves.²

And Shu‘bah narrates:

سألت الحكم هل شهد أبو أيوب صفين قال: لا ولكن شهد النهر موقعة النهروان

I asked al-Ḥakam,³ “Did Abū Ayyūb participate in Ṣiffīn?”

He said, “No. But he was present in the Battle of Nahrawān.”⁴

Likewise, al-Ḥakam was asked, “Did Khuzaymah ibn Thābit رضي الله عنه witness the Battle of Jamal?” He replied:

1 *Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq*, 11/357; Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/253.

2 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 4/1242; Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/253.

3 Al-Ḥakam ibn ‘Utaybah al-Kindī al-Kūfī, Abū Muḥammad. Mujāhid ibn Rūmī said, “I saw al-Ḥakam in Masjid al-Khayf and the people were dependent upon his knowledge.” And Jarīr ibn Mughīrah said, “When al-Ḥakam would come to Madīnah they would free for him the pillar of Nabī صلوات الله عليه وسلم and he would read Ṣalāh toward it.” And ‘Abbās al-Dūrī said, “He was a person of worship and merit.” And Ibn Mahdī said, “Al-Ḥakam ibn ‘Utaybah is reliable and authentic.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “Reliable in ḥadīth. He followed the Sunnah meticulously.” Ibn Ma‘īn, Abū Ḥātim and al-Nasā‘ī have deemed him reliable. And Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable, a jurist, a scholar, an honourable and a great narrator of ḥadīth.” Al-Fasawī said, “He was reliable and a jurist.” He passed away in 113 A.H./731 A.D. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/331; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/332; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/16-21; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 126; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/125; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 2/432.

4 Ibn Abī Shaybah: *al-Muṣannaf*, 15/303; Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 196.

ليس به ولكنه غيره من الأنصار، مات ذوا الشهادتين في زمن عثمان بن عفان رضي الله عنه

It is not him but another person from the Anṣār (with the same name), *Dhū al-Shahādatayn* (the Ṣaḥābī whose testimony was equal to the testimony of two) passed away during the time of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه.¹

And Sayf narrates the following from his teachers:

لما خطب علي في أهل المدينة يدعوهم إلى الخروج معه إلى الشام، تناقل الناس خشية قتال المسلمين، وأجاباه فقط رجلان من أعلام الأنصار أبو الهيثم بن التيهان-وهو بدري- وخزيمة بن ثابت وليس ذو الشهادتين إذ مات ذو الشهادتين في زمن عثمان

When ‘Alī رضي الله عنه delivered a sermon in Madīnah wherein he exhorted the people to march with him to Shām the people were reluctant due to their fear of fighting against Muslims. Only two men from the prominent Anṣār answered his call: Abū al-Haytham ibn al-Tayyihān (a Badrī Ṣaḥābī) and Khuzaymah ibn Thābit, but not *Dhū al-Shahādatayn*, for he passed away during the reign of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.²

And Ibn ‘Asākir narrates in his *Tārīkh* with his chain of transmission to al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī that he said:

لما كانت تلك الفتن جعل رجل يسأل عن أفضل أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في أنفسهم لا يسأل أحدا إلا قالوا له: سعد بن مالك، قال: وقد قيل له: إن سعدا رجل إن أنت رفقت به كنت قمنا أن تصيب منه حاجتك، وإن أنت حرقت به كنت قمنا إلا تصيب منه شيئا، قال: فجلس إليه أياما لا يسأله عن شيء حتى عرف مجلسه واستأنس إليه، ثم قال: أعود بالسميع العليم من الشيطان الرجيم: إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ «أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّاعِنُونَ». قال: قال سعد: مه لئن قلت: لا جرم لا تسألني عن شيء أعلمه إلا أخبرتك به، قال: فقال له: ما تقول في عثمان؟ قال: كان إذا كنا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من أحسننا وضوءا وأطولنا صلاة وأعظمتنا نفقة في سبيل الله عز وجل ثم ولي المسلمين زمانا لا ينكرون منه شيئا ثم أنكروا منه أشياء، فما أتوا إليه أعظم مما أتى إليهم، فقلت له: هذا علي يدعو الناس، وهذا معاوية يدعو الناس وقد جلس عنهما

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/447.

2 Ibid.

عامه أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم. فقال سعد: أما وإنني لا أحدثك ما سمعت من وراء وراء ما أحدثك إلا ما سمعته إذناي ووعاه قلبي، سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: إن استطعت أن تكون عبد الله المقتول، ولا تقتل أحدا من أهل القبلة فافعل.

When those trials transpired a person started inquiring about the best of the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allāh ﷺ amongst them themselves. Whoever he would ask, they would say to him, ‘Sa’d ibn Mālik,’ and he was also told, “Sa’d is a person with whom if you are soft you are most likely to obtain your need from him, and if you are harsh to him you are most likely to not get anything.” Hence, he sat by him for a few days without asking him anything till Sa’d ﷺ became acquainted and comfortable with him.

He then said, “I seek the refuge of the All-Hearing and the All-Knowing from the accursed devil. *Surely those who conceal what we sent down of clear proof and guidance after we made it clear for the people in the book, those are cursed by Allah ﷻ and are cursed by those who curse.*”¹

Sa’d ﷺ responded, “Hold on, if this is what you are saying, then whatever you will ask me I will surely inform you about it.”

He thus asked, “What do you say about ‘Uthmān?”

He replied, “He was, when we would be with Rasūl Allāh ﷺ, the best of us in ablution, the one who performed the longest prayers, and the one who spent the most in the path of Allah ﷻ. Thereafter he ruled the Muslims, for a while the people did not condemn any of his doings but subsequent to that they did. But what they did to him was graver than what he did to them.”

I asked him, “This is ‘Alī calling upon the people to join him and this is Mu’āwiyah calling upon the people to join him, but most of the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allāh ﷺ have sat away from them.”

1 Sūrah Baqarah: 159.

Sa'd رضي الله عنه said, "Behold I am not informing you of something I heard from distant people, I am only telling you what my ears heard and my heart preserved; I heard Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, "If you are able to be the slain servant of Allah and not kill anyone of the people of the Qiblah then do so."¹

And Ḥusayn ibn Khārijah² says:

لما قتل عثمان رضي الله عنه أشكلت علي الفتنة فقلت: اللهم أرني الحق أتمسك به. فرأيت فيما يرى النائم محمدا وإبراهيم صلى الله عليهما وسلم عنده شيخ وإذا محمد يقول: استغفر لأمتي، قال: إنك لا تدري ما أحدثوه بعدك. إنهم هرقوا دماءهم وقتلوا أمامهم ألا فعلوا كما فعل خليلي سعد؟ فقلت: قد أراني الله رؤيا لعل الله ينفعني بها أذهب فأنظر من كان سعد معه فأكون معه، فأتيت سعدا فقصصتها عليه، فما أكثر بها فرحا وقال: قد خاب من لم يكن له إبراهيم خليلا، فقلت: مع أي الطائفتين أنت؟ قال: ما أنا مع واحدة، فقلت: فما تأمرني؟ قال: هل لك غنم؟ قلت: لا، قال: فاشترها فكن فيها.

When 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred the Fitnah became difficult for me to understand, so I said, "O Allah show me the truth so that I may hold on to it." I, thus, saw a dream wherein I saw Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and Ibrāhīm عليه السلام as an old man by him. Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم said, "Seek forgiveness for my Ummah." He replied, "You do not know what they have innovated after you; they spilled their blood and killed their leader. Why didn't they do what my friend Sa'd did?"

I, thus, said that this is a dream which Allah سبحانه وتعالى has shown me hopefully he will benefit me with it. Let me go and see the individual Sa'd is with so that I may join him.

I came to Sa'd and related the dream to him and he became extremely happy and said, "He whose friend is not Ibrāhīm has indeed failed."

I asked, "With which group are you?"

1 Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 484-485.

2 Ḥusayn ibn Khārijah. A Tābī'ī who narrated from Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ and from who Nu'aym ibn Abī Hind narrated. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/382; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, 3/51.

He replied, “I am not with any of them.”

I asked, “What do you order me to do?”

He asked, “Do you own sheep?”

I said, “No.”

He responded, “So buy some sheep and be with them.”¹

And Ibn Sa’d, Abū Nu’aym, and al-Ṭabarānī have narrated the following from Ibn Sīrīn:

لما قيل لسعد بن أبي وقاص رضي الله عنه ألا تقاتل؟ إنك من أهل الشورى، وأنت أحق بهذا الأمر من غيرك؟ قال: لا أقاتل حتى يأتوني بسيف له عينان ولسان وشفتان يعرف المؤمن من الكافر، فقد جاهدت وأنا أعرف الجهاد

When Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ رضي الله عنه was asked, “Don’t you want to fight? You are from the people of the council, and are more deserving of this matter than those besides you.”

He replied, “I will not fight till they bring me a sword that has eyes, a tongue, and two lips, and is able to differentiate between a believer and a disbeliever. I have fought in Jihād and I know what Jihād is all about.”²

And Ibn ‘Asākir narrates from Zayd ibn Wahb:

جاءنا قتل عثمان، فجزع الناس من ذلك، فخرجت إلى صاحب لي كنت أستريح إليه، فقلت: قد صنع الناس ما ترى، وفينا رهط من أصحاب محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم فاذهب بنا إليهم، فدخلنا على أبي موسى، وهو أمير الكوفة فكام قوله نهيا عن الفتنة والأمر بالجلوس في البيوت.

1 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah*, 4/1251-1252; *Mustadrak Ḥākim*, 4/452. He has deemed the transmission Ṣaḥīḥ and al-Dhahabī has concurred.

2 Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/101; Abū Nu’aym: *Ḥilyah*, 1/94; al-Haythamī says in *Majma’ al-Zawā’id*: al-Ṭabarānī has narrated this narration and the men of its chain are the men of its Ṣaḥīḥ: 7/299.

The news of the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه reached us. Subsequent to that the people were disturbed. I, thus, came out to a friend of mine by who I would normally relax and said, “The people have done what you see and amongst us there is a group of the Ṣaḥābah of Muḥammad صلی الله علیه و آله, so go with me to them.”

We thus visited Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه, the governor of Kūfah. Part of what he said was that he prohibited from joining the Fitnah and ordered to remain at home.¹

Likewise, when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه sent Ibn ‘Abbās and al-Ashtar from Dhī Qār to Kūfah to induce the people to march, Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه stood up and addressed the people saying:

أيها الناس إن أصحاب النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم الذين صحبوه في المواطن أعلم بالله وبرسوله ممن لم يصحبه وإن لكم علينا حقا، فأنا مؤدبه إليكم، كان الرأي ألا تستخفوا بسلطان الله عزوجل، ولا تجترئوا على الله عز وجل، وكان الرأي الثاني أن تأخذوا من قدم عليكم من المدينة فتردوهم إليها حتى يجتمعوا... فأما إذا كان ما كان، فإنها فتنة صماء النائم فيها خير من اليقظان فيها خير من القاعد، والقاعد فيها خير من القائم، والقائم خير من الماشي، فكونوا جرثومة من جرائم العرب، فاغمدوا السيوف وانصلوا الأسنة واقطعوا الأوتار، وأووا المظلوم والمضطهد حتى يلتئم الأمر وتجلي الفتنة.

O people the Ṣaḥābah of Nabī صلی الله علیه و آله who accompanied him in the campaigns know Allah and his Rasūl صلی الله علیه و آله better than those who did not accompany him. You have a right over us and so I am here to fulfil your right. The ideal position was that you don’t undermine the authority of Allah and don’t become bold against Allah. And the second position was that you take those who came to you from Madīnah and return them back till they unite... But now that whatever has happened has happened, know that this is a deaf Fitnah. A sleeping person in it is better than an awake person, and awake person is better than a sitting person, a sitting person is better than a standing person, and a standing person is better than a walking person. So be a pure essence from the essences of the Arabs.

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 487-488.

Sheath your swords, remove the sharp iron of your spears, cut the ropes of your bows, give refuge to the oppressed and the persecuted till the matter normalises and the Fitnah clears up.¹

He also said:

إن أصحاب محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم أعلم بما سمعنا، إن الفتنة إذا أقبلت شبهت، وإذا أدبرت تبينت، وإن هذه الفتنة باقرة كداء البطن تجري بها الشمال والجنوب والصبأ والدبور، فتسكن أحيانا فلا يدري من أين يؤتى تدر الحليم كابن أمس، شيموا سيوفكم، وقصدوا رماحكم، وأرسلوا سهامكم، واقطعوا أوتاركم، والزموا بيوتكم

We, the Ṣaḥābah of Nabī ﷺ, are more informed regarding what we hear. When the Fitnah approaches it is confusing and when it subsides it becomes clear. This Fitnah is a stabbing one like the sickness of the stomach which is carried by the north blowing wind, the south blowing wind, the cool breeze, and the destructive wind; at times it is calm and, thus, it is not known how a person can be afflicted with it. It leaves a forbearing person like a person of yesterday. Sheath your swords, break your spears, release your arrows, cut your ropes, and stay in your homes.²

And when a person from the successors stood in the Masjid, ‘Abd Khayr al-Khaywānī, he said, “The people are in four groups: ‘Alī and those who are with him in Kūfah, Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr in Baṣrah, Mu‘āwiyah in Shām, and a group in Ḥijāz that is not fighting and is not in any predicament.” Abū Mūsā ﷺ said:

أولئك خير الفرق، وهذه فتنة

That is the best of groups, and this is a Fitnah.³

And al-Bukhārī narrates in his *Tārīkh* that ‘Āmir ibn Rabī‘ah ﷺ, a veteran of Badr, stood in prayer at night, and this was during the time when people started

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/482.

2 Ibid. 4/483-484.

3 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/237.

criticising ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, he was approached in his dream¹ and was told:

قم فاسأل الله أن يعيدك من الفتنة التي أعاد منها صالحى عباده

Stand and ask Allah to grant you refuge from a Fitnah from which he has granted refuge to his pious bondsmen.

He, thus, stood in Ṣalāh and thereafter fell ill as a result of which he did not leave his house but when his burial departed therefrom.²

And Sulaymān ibn Yasār³ narrates that Abū Usayd al-Sā’idī, a Ṣaḥābī رضي الله عنه, lost his sight before the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. So, he said:

الحمد لله الذي من علي بصري في حياة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فلما قبض الله نبيه أراد الفتنة في عباده كف بصري

All praise to Allah who blessed me with sight during the lifetime of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم. Then when he took the soul of his Nabī and intended that a Fitnah ensue in his servants he withheld my sight.⁴

And ‘Abd al-Razzāq has narrated from Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that he said:

يايها الناس أظلتكم فتنة كقطع الليل المظلم أنجى الناس فيها- أو قال منها- صاحب شاء يأكل من رسل غنمه، أو رجل جاء وراء الدرب آخذ بعنان فرسه يأكل من سيفه

O people, a Fitnah has dawned upon you which in its darkness is like the different sections of a dark night. The one who will flee the furthest from it will be a man of sheep whose milk he will consume, or a man who will come from behind the path, will hold the reigns of his horse and will eat from the booty of his sword.⁵

1 Ibn al-Athīr: *Usd al-Ghābah*, 3/122.

2 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaḡhīr*, 1/64.

3 Sulaymān ibn Yasār al-Hilālī, Abū Ayyūb al-Madanī, the freed slave of Maymūnah رضي الله عنها.

4 Ibid. 1/82.

5 *Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq*, 11/368.

He has also narrated with his chain of transmission from ‘Umārah ibn ‘Abd¹ from Ḥudhayfah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he said:

إياكم والفتن ألا شخص لها أحد، والله ما شخص فيها أحد إلا نسفته كما ينسف السيل الدمن، إنما مشبهة مقبلة حتى يقول الجاهل: هذه سنة، وتبين مدبرة، فإذا رأيتموها فاجثموا في بيوتكم، وكسروا سيوفكم، واقطعوا أوتاركم

Save yourselves from Fitnahs, no one should rise to it. For by Allah no one will rise to it but that it will wipe him out just as a flood wipes out the remains of a place. These Fitnahs are confusing when they occur, to the extent that an ignorant person will say that this is the Sunnah, and becomes clear only as they subside. So, stay in your houses, break your swords, and cut the ropes of your bows.²

And Ibn Abī Shaybah narrates from ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Rufay³ that he said:

لما سار علي إلى صفين استخلف أبا مسعود رضي الله عنه علي الناس، فخطبهم يوم الجمعة، فرأى فيهم قلة فقال: أيها الناس اخرجوا، فمن خرج فهو آمن، إنا نعلم والله أن منكم الكاره لهذا الوجه-الشام- والمتأقل عنه، اخرجوا، فمن خرج فهو آمن، والله ما نعدّها عاقبة أن يلتقي هذان العراءن يتقي أحدهما الآخر، ولكن نعدّها عافية أن يصلح الله أمة محمد ويجمع ألفتها... وقام إليه ناس من الناس فقالوا: لو عهدت لينا يا أبا مسعود فقال: عليكم بتقوى الله والجماعة، فإن الله لا يجمع أمة محمد على ضلالة.

When ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ set out for Şifīn, he appointed Abū Mas‘ūd al-Anşārī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as his deputy over the people. He addressed them on Friday and found that

1 ‘Umārah ibn ‘Abd al-Kūfī. Al-‘Ijlī said regarding him, “A Tābī‘ from Kūfah who is reliable.” Al-Jūzajānī quotes Aḥmad saying, “A man of accurate narrations.” Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in al-Thiqāt. See: al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 354; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 5/244; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 7/420.

2 *Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq*, chapter of Fitan, 11/359.

3 ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Rufay‘ al-Asadī, al-Makkī al-Ṭā‘ifī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh. From the Tābī‘īn. Aḥmad, Ibn Ma‘īn, Abū Ḥātim, and al-Nasā‘ī have deemed him reliable. Al-‘Ijlī said, “A reliable Tābī‘.” And Ya‘qūb ibn Shaybah said, “His ḥadīth can be used as authority.” And Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. He passed away in 103 A.H/721 A.D. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/11; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/365; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 304; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 5/123; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 6/373.

they were only few in number. He said, “O people go out, for whoever will go out will be safe. We know, by Allah, that amongst you some dislike this trip (Shām) and some are reluctant. Go out, for whoever will go out will be safe. By Allah, we do not consider this to be a punishment in which these two armies will encounter each other and will be wary of each other, but we consider it to be well-being wherein Allah ﷺ will reform the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ and unite their love..”

A certain group of people stood up to him and said, “Would it be fine for you to advise us?”

He said, “Hold on to the fear of Allah and to the congregation of the Muslims, for Allah ﷺ will never unite the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ upon deviance.”¹

And Aḥmad and al-Tirmidhī narrate from ‘Udaysah bint Uhbān ibn Ṣayfī² from her father that when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه came to Baṣrah he sent a message to him and asked, “What prevents you from following me?” He replied:

أوصاني خليلي وابن عمك فقال: إنه ستكون فرقة واختلاف، فاكسر سيفك، واتخذ سيفاً من خشب، واقعد في بيتك حتى تأتيتك يد خاطئة أو منية قاضية، ففعلت ما أمرني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

My friend and your cousin advised me saying, “There will be disunity and difference of opinion, so break your sword and make (for yourself) a sword of wood. Sit in your house till a hand of an evildoer comes to you (to kill you) or a decisive death.” I am, thus, doing what Rasūl Allāh ﷺ has told me to do.”³

1 *Muṣannaḥ Ibn Abī Shaybah*, 15/301-302.

2 ‘Udaysah bint Uhbān ibn Ṣayfī al-Ghifāriyyah. She has narrated from her father and ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and ‘Ubayd Allah al-Mu‘adhhdhin and Abū ‘Amr al-Qasmalī have narrated from her. Ibn Ḥajar has said regarding her, “An acceptable narrator from the third generation.” See: al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/431; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 12/438; *al-Taqrīb*, 2/606.

3 Aḥmad: *al-Musnad* (according to the sequence of al-Sā‘ātī), 23/138; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, chapter of Fitān, sub-chapter regarding making a sword of wood, 3/332, he has deemed the narration Ḥasan.

And Aḥmad has narrated from Sahl ibn Abī al-Ṣalt¹ that he said:

سمعت الحسن يقول: إن عليا بعث إلى محمد بن مسلمة فجيء به فقال: ما خلفك عن هذا الأمر؟ قال: دفع إلي ابن عمك يعني النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم سيفا فقال: قاتل به ما قوتل العدو، فإذا رأيت الناس - المسلمين - يقتل بعضهم بعضا فاعمد به إلى صخرة فاضربه بها، ثم الزم بيتك حتى تأتيتك منة قاضية أو يد خاطئة. قال - أي علي - خلوا عنه

I heard Ḥasan saying, “‘Alī sent a message to Muḥammad ibn Maslamah and, thus, he was summoned.

‘Alī asked, ‘What has kept you away from this matter?’

He replied, ‘Your cousin (i.e. Nabī ﷺ) gave me a sword and said, “Fight with it as long as the enemy is fought. Then when you see the people (the Muslims) killing each other take it to a bolder and strike it upon it. Thereafter stay in your home till decisive death or a hand of an evildoer comes to you (to kill you).’

He (‘Alī) said, ‘Leave him alone.’”²

1 Sahl ibn Abī al-Ṣalt al-‘Ayshī al-Baṣrī al-Sarrāj. Al-Bukhārī and Muslim said, “He was reliable.” The same is averred by al-Ājurri from Abū Dāwūd. Abū Ḥātim said, “A person of satisfactory ḥadīth with who there is no problem.” And al-Dūrī quotes Ibn Ma‘īn saying, “Reliable.” And al-Sājī said, “Truthful.” And Aḥmad said, “There was no problem with him.” See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/2/101; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/241; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 4/254; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mizān*, 2/239.

2 *Musnad Aḥmad*, 4/225. Its chain of transmission is inconsistent between al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. However, it is corroborated by the previous narration and also by the narration of Abū Burdah from Muḥammad ibn Maslamah رضي الله عنه which appears in: *Musnad Aḥmad*, 3/493; and *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, chapter of Fitan, sub-chapter regarding being wary in the Fitnah, 2/131, ḥadīth no. 3962. Hence, the ḥadīth is Ṣaḥīḥ in light of its multiple transmissions, as averred by al-Albānī in *al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 3/368, 369, ḥadīth no. 1380.

And al-Bukhārī narrates in his *Tārīkh* the following from Abū Burdah:¹

مررنا بالريذة زمن الفتنة فإذا فسطاط محمد بن مسلمة، قلنا: لو خرجت إلى الناس فأمرت ونهيت فقال قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: اجلس في بيتك

We passed by al-Rabadhah in the time of the Fitnah and we suddenly saw the tent of Muḥammad ibn Maslamah. We asked him, “If only you went out to the people and enjoined good and prohibited evil.”

He said that Nabī ﷺ said, “Sit in your house.”²

Likewise, Usāmah ibn Zayd, despite his strong bond with ‘Alī ﷺ, his freed slave Ḥarmalah has the following to say regarding him:

أرسلني أسامة إلى علي وقال: إن سيسألك الآن فيقول: ما خلف صاحبك؟ فقل له: يقول: لو كنت في شدة الأسد لأحببت أن أكون معك فيه، لكن هذا أمر لم أراه—أي قتال أهل القبلة

Usāmah sent me to ‘Alī and said, “He will ask you now and will say, ‘What kept your master behind,’ so tell him, ‘He says, “If you were in the jaw of a lion, I would love to be with you in it. But this is a matter I have not seen before,” (i.e. fighting the people of the Qiblah).³

Ibn Ḥajar quotes Ibn Baṭṭāl saying that the rationale for the stance of Usāmah ibn Zayd ﷺ was the vow that he took upon himself after he killed the person who proclaimed the testimony of faith that he will never thereafter kill a Muslim.⁴

1 Abū Burdah ibn Abī Mūsā al-Ash‘arī, the jurist. He narrated from his father, ‘Alī, Ḥudhayfah, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām, ‘Ā’ishah, and Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ amongst others. Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable and narrated a lot of ḥadīth.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “A Tābiī from Kūfah who is reliable.” Ibn Khirāsh said, “Truthful.” He was the judge of Kūfah after Shurayḥ al-Qāḍī during the era of the Banū Umayyah. He passed away in 104 A.H./722 A.D. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/268; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 491; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/273; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 12/18.

2 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-ṣaghīr*, 1/80.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter of Fitan, 8/99; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma’rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 1/221.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Fath*, 13/68.

‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه likewise adopted a stance of avoidance and separation and did not take part in any fight which ensued between the Muslims. Al-Bukhārī narrates from Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr:¹

خرج علينا عبد الله بن عمر فرجونا أن يحدثنا حديثا حسنا، قال: فبادرنا إليه رجل فقال: يا أبا عبد الرحمن! حدثنا عن القتال في الفتنة والله يقول: وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً، فقال: هل تدري ما الفتنة تكلمتكم أمك، وإنما كان محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم يقاتل المشركين، وكان الدخول في دينهم فتنة وليس قتلناكم.

‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar came out to us. We were hoping that he would narrate a beautiful ḥadīth to us. But a man hastened to him and said, “O Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān! Tell us regarding fighting in the Fitnah, for Allah says, “Fight them till there is no Fitnah.” He, thus, said, “Do you even know what the Fitnah is, may your mother cry your loss? Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم would fight the polytheists and embracing their religion was the actual Fitnah, not like your fighting.”²

As for Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه, he did not merely suffice upon withholding his hand, instead he prevented others and even condemned those who participated in the fighting. Al-Bukhārī and Muslim narrate from al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī that al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays informed him that he emerged with his weapons wanting to fight in the Fitnah, and that his intention was to side with ‘Alī رضي الله عنه in the Battle of Jamal. But Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه met him and prevented him from participating.³

1 Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr ibn Hishām al-Asadī al-Wālibī, Abū Muḥammad al-Kūfī. The teacher of the Qur’ān, the jurist and one of the prominent scholars. He was from the senior Tābi‘īn and was a student of Ibn ‘Abbās and Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. He is one of the earliest exegetes of the Qur’ān. He would finish the recitation of the Qur’ān every two nights. ‘Amr ibn Maymūn said, “Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr died when there was no one of the face of this earth but that he was in need of his knowledge.” And Abū al-Qāsim al-Ṭabarī said, “He was reliable, a leader, and an authority.” He passed away in 95 A.H./713 A.D. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/256; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 1/210; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 181; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 4/11.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, chapter of Fitān, 8/95.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/92; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, chapter of Fitān, 18/10.

These are some examples of the stances of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ who avoided the Fitnah and withdrew from fighting due to holding on to the emphatic narrations which have reached us in this regard; narrations which prevent against fighting between the Muslims knowing that avoidance was more prudent and reconciliation was more ideal. In summary, this is the stance of all the scholars of ḥadīth, and whoever will reflect over it will realise the strength of its proofs and the practicality of its consequences.

Ibn ‘Asākir has narrated in his *Tārīkh* that Ja‘far ibn Burqān¹ was asked regarding the disputing of the people regarding ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, and Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ and regarding the opinion of the general scholars about them. He said the following:

قال ميمون بن مهران: إن الناس افترقوا عن قتله-أي عثمان- على أربع فرق، ثم فصل منهم صنف آخر فصاروا خمسة أصناف، شيعة عثمان، وشيعة علي والمرجئة، ومن لزم الجماعة، ثم خرجت الخوارج بعد حيث حكم علي الحكمين، فصاروا خمسة أصناف. فأما شيعة عثمان فأهل الشام وأهل البصرة، قال أهل البصرة: ليس أحد أولى بطلب دم عثمان من طلحة والزبير، لأنهما من أهل الشورى، وقال أهل الشام: ليس أحد أولى بطلب دم عثمان من أسرة عثمان وقرابته-يعنون معاوية- إنهم جميعا برئوا من علي وشيعته، وأما شيعة علي فهم أهل الكوفة، وأما المرجئة فهم الشكاك الذين شكوا... قالوا: نحن لا نترأ منهما-من عثمان ومن علي- ولا نلعنهما ولا نشهد عليهما، ونرجئ أمرهما إلى الله، حتى يكون الله هو الذي يحكم بينهما، وأما من لزم الجماعة فمنهم سعد بن أبي وقاص وأبو أيوب الأنصاري وعبد الله بن عمر وأسامة بن زيد وحبیب بن مسلمة الفهري وصهيب بن سنان ومحمد بن مسلمة في أكثر من عشرة آلاف من أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم والتابعين لهم بإحسان، قالوا جميعا: تتولى عثمان

1 Ja‘far ibn Burqān al-Kilābī al-Raqqī, Abū ‘Abd Allāh. Ya‘qūb ibn Shaybah quoting Ibn Ma‘īn said, “He was reliable, accurate and truthful; his narrations from Maymūn ibn Mahrān and his students are very authentic.” And ‘Uthmān al-Dārimī said quoting Ibn Ma‘īn, “Reliable.” And Ibn Sa‘d said, “He was reliable and precise and was a person of narrating ḥadīth, jurisprudence and Fatwā.” He has been deemed reliable by Ibn Numayr, al-Fasawī, al-‘Ijlī and Ibn Ḥibbān. And al-Dāraquṭnī said, “As for his narrations from Maymūn ibn Mahrān and Yazīd ibn al-Aṣam they are established and authentic.” And Marwān ibn Muḥammad would say, “Ja‘far ibn Burqān the reliable and upstanding narrated to us.” He passed away in 451 A.H./770 A.D. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/482; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/186; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 96; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/455; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 85; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 6/136; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 2/84.

وعليا ولا نتبرأ منهما، ونشهد عليهما بالإيمان، ونرجوا لهم، ونخاف عليهم. وأما الصنف الخامس: فهم الحرورية قالوا: نشهد على المرجئة بالصواب، ومن قولهم حيث قالوا لا نتولى عليا ولا عثمان، ثم كفروا بعد، حيث لم يتبرؤوا ونشهد على أهل الجماعة بالكفر. قال ميمون بن مهران: وكان هذا أول ما وقع الاختلاف، وقد بلغوا أكثر من سبعين صنفا، فنسأل الله العصمة من كل هلكة ومزلة، وقد كان بعض من خرج من هذه الأصناف دعوا سعد بن أبي وقاص إلى الخروج معهم، فأبى عليهم سعد قال: لا، إلا أن تعطوني سيفاً له عينان بصيرتان ولسان ينطق بالكافر فأقتله، وبالمؤمن فأكف عنه. وضرب لهم سعد مثلاً فقال: مثلنا ومثلكم كمثل قوم كانوا على محجة، والمحجة البيضاء الواضحة، فبينما هم كذلك يسرون هاجت ريح عجاجة فضلوا الطريق، والتبس عليهم، فقتل بعضهم، الطريق ذات اليمين فأخذوا فيه فتأهوا وضلوا، وقال الآخرون: كنا على الطريق حيث هاجت الرياح، ففنيخ، فأنأخوا، وأصبحوا، وذهبت الرياح، وتبين الطريق فهؤلاً هم أهل الجماعة، قالوا: نلزم ما فارقتنا عليه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حتى نلقاه، ولا ندخل في شيء من الفتن حتى نلقاه، فصارت الجماعة. والفئة التي تدعى فئة الإسلام ما كان عليه سعد بن أبي وقاص وأصحابه الذين اعتزلوا الفتنة حتى أذهب الله الفرقة وجمع الألفة، فدخلوا الجماعة ولزموا الطاعة وانقادوا لها، فمن فعل ذلك ولزم نجا، ومن لم يلزمه وشك فيه وقع في المهالك.

The people were divided into four groups after the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. They were thereafter followed by a fifth group and so they became five: 1) the partisans of ‘Uthmān, 2) the partisans of ‘Alī, 3) the *Murji’ah* (those who suspended judgement), 4) and the group that held onto the congregation; 5) thereafter the Khawārij emerged when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه appointed the two arbitrators. Hence, they were five groups. As for the partisans of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, they were the people of Shām and Baṣrah. The people of Baṣrah said, “There isn’t anyone more deserving of seeking the blood of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه than Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه due to them being from the members of the council (appointed by ‘Umar رضي الله عنه.” And the people of Shām averred that no one is more deserving of seeking the blood of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه than his family and his relatives (referring to Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه. They had pronounced their disassociation from ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and his partisans.

As for the partisans of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, they were the people of Kūfah.

As for the *Murji’ah*, they were the doubters who had doubted... and said, “We will not disassociate from them (‘Alī and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه), will not curse them, will not testify against them, and will suspend their matter and leave it to Allah سبحانه وتعالى till he decides between them.

As for the group that held onto the congregation, amongst them were Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar, Usāmah ibn Zayd, Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah al-Fihri, Ṣuhayb ibn Sinān, and Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, amongst ten thousand and some odd Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم of Rasūl Allāh صلى الله عليه وسلم and those who followed them with meticulousness. They all said, "We will align with 'Uthmān and 'Alī رضي الله عنهما and will not disassociate from them. We testify regarding them and their partisans that they are people of īmān. We are hopeful for them and fearful regarding them as well.

As for the fifth group, they are the Ḥarūriyyah, the Khawārij. They said, "We testify that the *Murji'ah* are correct." They would also aver that we do not align with 'Alī and 'Uthmān رضي الله عنهما for they disbelieved subsequently due to not disassociating, and they said, "We testify against the people of the congregation being disbelievers."

Maymūn ibn Mahrān said, "This is only when the dispute first rose, (now) they have reached seventy groups, so we ask Allah for safety from every destruction and error. Some of these groups had invited Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ رضي الله عنه to join them. But Sa'd رضي الله عنه refused and said, 'No. Unless you give me a sword that has two eyes and a tongue which spells out a disbeliever so I can kill him and a believer so I can withdraw from him.' Sa'd رضي الله عنه gave them an example and said, 'Our example and your example are like a people who were treading upon a clear path. Whilst they were travelling a severe sand storm rose and, thus, they lost their path and it became complicated upon them. Hence, some of them said, "The path is to the right and they moved in that direction but ended up lost and astray." And the others said, "We were upon a path when the wind rose, so we will halt." Thus, they settled and they stayed there till morning when the wind had subsided and the path became clear to them. These are the people of the congregation.' They said, 'We will hold onto that upon which Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم parted from us till we reunite with him, and will not get involved in anything of these *Fitan* till we meet him.' They thus became the congregation.

The group which is dubbed the group of Islam is the group which Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ and his comrades were part of; those who avoided the Fitnah till Allah ﷻ eliminated the disunity and brought about love. Subsequent to that they joined the congregation of the Muslims, obeyed and became subjects to the authority. Hence, whoever will do this will attain salvation and whoever does not hold on to this and doubts will fall into the pits of destruction.¹

This is the position adopted by the Imām of the Ahl al-Sunnah Aḥmad Ibn Ḥambal as well. And it was upon this position that he based his stance regarding the discarding of revolting against the Abbasid dynasty.

Al-Khallāl² narrates the following from him:

ابن عمر وسعد ومن كف عن تلك الفتنة أليس هو عند بعض أحمد؟ هذا علي لم يضبط الناس، فكيف اليوم والناس على هذا الحال... السيف لا يعجبني.

Ibn 'Umar, Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, and those who stayed away from the Fitnah, was not their approach more praiseworthy according to some? Here we have 'Alī ﷺ who was unable to control the people, so what about today when this is the situation of the people... I do not like the sword.³

1 Ibn 'Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 503-505.

2 Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Hārūn ibn Yazīd al-Baghdādī, Abū Bakr al-Khallāl. The great scholar, retainer of ḥadīth, jurist, and one of the leading scholars of the Ḥanābilah. Al-Khaṭīb says in his *Tārīkh*, "Al-Khallāl gathered the knowledge of Aḥmad and sought it. For that reason, he travelled, gathered, and compiled his rulings in books. There was no one who subscribed to Ḥambalī School who collated them better than him. He wrote his book *al-Jāmi' fi al-Fiqh* which comprised of the verdicts of Aḥmad in twenty volumes. Likewise, he wrote *al-'Ilal* comprising of the statements of Aḥmad in three volumes, amongst other books that he authored. He passed away in 311 A.H/923 A.D. See: al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 5/112; al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā'*, p. 171; Ibn Abī Ya'lā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, 2/12; al-Dhahabī: *Tadhkirah al-Ḥuffāz*, 3/785; *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, 14/297.

3 Al-Khallāl: *Kitāb al-Īmān*, slate no. 12.

And Abū Bakr al-Marrudhī¹ says:

سمعت أبا عبد الله وقد ذكر عنده عبد الله بن مغفل رضي الله عنه، فقال: لم يتلبس بشيء من القتن، وذكر رجل آخر فقال: مات مستورا قبل أن يتلبس بشيء

I heard Abū ‘Abd Allāh (Aḥmad) saying when mention was made of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mughaffal before him, “He did not get involved in anything of the Fitān.”

And when another person was mentioned he said, “He died with his reputation undisclosed before he was trialled with anything.”²

And Sufyān al-Thawrī said:

نأخذ بقول عمر في الجماعة، ويقول ابنه عبد الله في الفرقة

We will take the stance of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه at the time of unity, and the stance of his son at the time of disunity.

And he would also emphatically say:

لو أدركت عليا ما خرجت معه

If I lived during the time of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه I would not have marched with him.

1 Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥajjājī, Abū Bakr al-Marrudhī al-Baghdādī al-Khawārizmī. The student of Aḥmad. Al-Dhahabī said the following regarding him, “The leader, the exemplar, the jurist, the scholar of ḥadīth and the Shaykh al-Islām... He was an authority in the Sunnah and meticulously followed it. He enjoyed unique prominence in Baghdād.” And al-Baghdādī said, “He is the preferred student of Aḥmad due to his piety and virtue. Aḥmad would enjoy his company and would be casual with him.” And Abū Bakr ibn Ṣadaqaḥ said, “I have not seen anyone who defended the Dīn of Allah سبحانه وتعالى more than al-Marrudhī.” He passed away in 275 A.H/888 A.D. See: al-Khaṭīb, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 4/423; al-Shīrāzī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Fuqahā’*, p. 170; Ibn Abī Ya’lā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, 1/56; al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 13/173.

2 Al-Khallāl: *Kitāb al-Īmān*, slate no. 12.

Yaḥyā ibn Ādam¹ says that he relayed this to al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ² and the latter said, “Tell him that this will be narrated from him.” Sufyān replied, “Announce it on my behalf from the minaret of the masjid.”³

Withdrawing from the Fitnah was also the position of al-Bukhārī. The titles of the chapters of the section of Fitan clearly suggest this. Likewise, Muslim and other scholars of ḥadīth also authored their books following the style and method of al-Bukhārī.

And al-Ṭabarī says:

1 Yaḥyā ibn Ādam ibn Sulaymān al-Kūfī Abū Zakariyyā. ‘Uthmān al-Dārimī has cited Ibn Ma‘īn saying that he is reliable. Likewise, al-Nasā‘ī and Ibn Sa‘d have deemed him reliable. Abū Ḥātim said, “He was a jurist and was reliable.” And Ya‘qūb ibn Shaybah said, “Reliable and has narrated ḥadīth excessively. I heard ‘Alī ibn al-Madīnī saying, “May Allah have mercy upon Yaḥyā ibn Ādam, for indeed he possessed astounding knowledge.” And he flattered him.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “He was reliable, and had amassed knowledge, was intelligent and reliable in ḥadīth.” And Yaḥyā ibn Abī Shaybah said, “Reliable, truthful, meticulous, and an authority.” He passed away in 203 A.H/818 A.D. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/227; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 402; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 468; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 9/128; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 11/175.

2 Al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ ibn Ḥayy al-Hamdānī al-Thawrī. Ibn Sa‘d said, “He was a devout worshipper, a jurist, and authority in ḥadīth who narrated it in abundance and had Shī‘ī leanings.” Al-‘Ijlī said, “A reliable and ascetic from Kūfah. A pious person who had a good grasp of Fiqh, and the Qur’ān would be finished in his house every night; his mother would read a third, ‘Alī would read a third, and Ḥasan would read a third. After his mother passed away the two of them would complete the Qur’ān. Thereafter ‘Alī passed away so Ḥasan would complete the Qur’ān every night.” Ibn Ḥibbān said, “Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ was a jurist, was pious, and lived a hard and coarse life. He was of those who had devoted themselves to worship and had avoided leadership completely.” And Aḥmad said, “al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣāliḥ was accurate in his narrations, was a jurist and protected himself in matters of ḥadīth and piety.” And ‘Uthmān al-Dārimī has cited Ibn Ma‘īn saying that he is reliable.” And Abū Ḥātim said, “Reliable, a memoriser of ḥadīth, and an expert.” He passed away in 199 A.H/814 A.D. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/375; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/295; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 3/18; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 6/164; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 93; al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 13/261.

3 Al-Khallāl: *Kitāb al-Īmān*, slate no. 12.

وإن أشكل الأمر-اي اشتبه ولم يكن التمييز فيه بين الحق والباطل- فهي الحالة التي ورد النهي عن القتال فيها

If the matter is complicating (and it is not possible to decipher truth from falsehood) then it is this condition in which the prohibition of fighting has occurred.¹

This is, similarly, the position which Ibn Taymiyyah has supported in various places in his writings. In his book *Minhāj al-Sunnah* he cites the statements of the scholars; one such statement is the following:

ومنهم من يقول: كان الصواب أن لا يكون قتال، وكان ترك القتال خيرا للطائفتين، فليس في الاقتتال صواب، ولكن علي رضي الله عنه كان أقرب إلى الحق من معاوية رضي الله عنه، والقتال قتال في فتنة، ليس بواجب ولا مستحب، وكان ترك القتال خيرا للطائفتين مع أن عليا كان أولى بالحق، وهذا قول أحمد وأكثر أهل الحديث وأكثر أئمة الفقهاء، وهو قول أكابر الصحابة والتابعين لهم بإحسان، وهو قول عمران بن حصين رضي الله عنه وكان ينهى عن بيع السلاح في ذلك القتال ويقول: هو بيع السلاح في الفتنة، وهو قول أسامة بن زيد ومحمد بن مسلمة وابن عمر وسعد بن أبي وقاص، وأكثر من بقي من السابقين الأولين من الأنصار والمهاجرين رضي الله عنهم.

Some of them suggest that the correct thing was that no fighting should have occurred, and that avoiding fighting was better for both the groups. For there was no correctness in fighting, but ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was closer to the truth than Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه. Fighting in a Fitnah is not necessary nor is it recommended. Avoiding fighting was better for both the groups, but despite that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was closer to the truth. This is the view of Aḥmad and most of the scholars of ḥadīth and the jurists. This was also the view of the senior Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and those who followed them scrupulously. It was also the view of Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn رضي الله عنه who would forbid the selling of arms in that strife and would say, “This is selling arms in the Fitnah (which is not permissible).” It was also the view of Usāmah ibn Zayd, Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, Ibn ‘Umar, Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, and most of the remaining forerunners from amongst the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār رضي الله عنهم.²

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *Al-Fatḥ*, 13/31.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, (Bolāq publication), 2/219-220

He also says in his *Fatāwā*:

والذين قعدوا عن القتال هم أعيان الصحابة كسعد وزيد وابن عمر، ومحمد بن مسلمة، وأبي بكر، وهم يروون النصوص عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في القعود عن القتال في الفتنة... ولا يختلف أصحابنا أن قعود علي عن القتال كان أفضل لو قعد، وهذا ظاهر من حاله في تلومه في القتال وتبرمه به، مراجعة الحسن ابنه له في ذلك، وقوله ألم أنك يا أبت؟...

Those who sat away from the fighting were the prominent Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم like Sa'd, Zayd, Ibn 'Umar, Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, and Abū Bakrah. They were the ones who narrated the ḥadīths of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم regarding avoiding fighting in the Fitnah... Our scholars do not differ in that it was better for 'Alī رضي الله عنه to stay away from fighting. And this is obviously understood from his condition, i.e. from his lamenting, his frustration about it, and his son Ḥasan رضي الله عنه confronting him regarding it and asking him, "Did I not stop you, O my father?"¹

He also says:

ولإجل هذه النصوص لا يختلف أصحابنا أن ترك القتال كان أفضل، لأن النصوص صرحت بأن القاعد فيها خير من القائم، والبعد عنها خير من الوقوع فيها، قالوا: ورجحان العمل يظهر برجحان عاقبته، ومن المعلوم أنهم إذا لم يبدأوه بقتال، فلو لم يقاتلهم لم يقع أكثر مما وقع من خروجهم عن طاعته، لكن بالقتال زاد البلاء، وسفكت الدماء، وتنافرت القلوب، وخرجت عليه الخوارج، وحكم الحكمان، فظهر من المفاسد ما لم يكن قبل القتال، ولم يحصل به مصلحة راجحة...

Because of these texts our scholars undisputedly aver that avoiding fighting was ideal. Because the texts emphatically state that a person who will sit in it will be better than the one standing, and that staying far from it is better than becoming ensnared by it. They say that the preference of an action is contingent on the desirability of its outcome. And it is a known fact that if they did not fight him and initiate the war with him and he did not fight them there would not have occurred more than what already transpired due them resisting his rule. But the problem worsened due to the fighting; blood was shed, the hearts developed hatred, the Khawārij

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, 4/440.

rebelled against him, and the arbitrators were appointed. Hence, such problems surfaced which were non-existent before the fighting, and even after the fighting an overwhelming benefit was not achieved.¹

Likewise, he says:

إن الأمر بقتال الطائفة الباغية مشروط بالقدرة والإمكان، إذ ليس قتالهم بأولى من قتال المشركين والكفار. ومعلوم أن ذلك مشروط بالقدرة والإمكان، فقد تكون المصلحة المشروعة أحيانا هي التآلف والمسألة والمعاهدة، كما فعله النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم غير مرة، والإمام إذا اعتقد وجود القدرة ولم تكن حاصلة، كان الترك في نفس الأمر أصلح.

The injunction of fighting the rebellious group is contingent upon strength and ability. For fighting them does not take precedence over fighting the polytheists and the disbelievers, and it is a known fact that that is contingent upon strength and ability. Sometimes the Sharḥī interest is to reach affinity, peace, and a pact; as did Nabī ﷺ do on several occasions. Also, if the Imām believes the presence of strength but in actual fact it is non-existent, then too it would be better to leave the fighting.²

Hence it is clear that Ibn Taymiyyah averred that withholding from fighting and avoiding the Fitnah was better, and that in the situation of warfare between two groups of the Muslims peace and negotiation is praiseworthy, as is established from Nabī ﷺ in an authentic narration that he said regarding Ḥasan رضي الله عنه:

إن ابني هذا سيد عسى الله أن يصلح به بين فئتين عظيمتين من المسلمين

This son of mine is a leader. It is hoped that Allah will bring about peace because of him between two major groups of the Muslims.

The praise of Nabī ﷺ for Ḥasan رضي الله عنه due to this peace was because what he was going to accomplish was that which was loved by Allah and his Rasūl ﷺ; for in it is the preservation of the blood of the Muslims. If the fighting

1 Ibid. 4/441.

2 Ibid. 4/441.

which transpired between the Muslims was what Allah and his Rasūl ﷺ had ordered the matter would be otherwise and Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ would be discarding his responsibility or at least that which is more preferred by Allah. This emphatic and authentic statement clearly states that what Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ did was praiseworthy and loved by Allah and his Rasūl ﷺ.

The validity of this position became even clearer when the people loathed fighting in the Fitnah and they realised that those who were advocating avoidance and resistance from fighting were well-wishers for the Muslims. And probably this is what propelled ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to appoint Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ as the representative of Iraq in the arbitration, i.e. the solution he was calling to was the ideal one, and, thus, he was summoned and taken out of his isolation.

In conclusion, the fighting in the Fitnah which occurred between the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ was one thing, and fighting the Khawārij was something different altogether. In the Battle of Nahrawān approximately four thousand of the Khawārij were killed, but no one lamented over them. Whereas in the battle of Jamal, Ka‘b Ibn Sūr was martyred and that prompted both the parties to grieve. Then what can be said regarding Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, and ‘Ammār رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. The instigators of havoc are the closest people to the Khawārij and no one felt any apprehension in fighting them, nor is there any resultant harm or disunity feared due to fighting them. In fact, in doing so is the preservation of the unity of the Muslims and their security and averting the attack of the transgressive attacker.

Hence, the statements regarding repelling the transgression of the Khawārij and mischief makers has reached us through mass transmission. As for a person choosing to be the slain servant of Allah instead of being the slaying servant of Allah, to adopt such a position in a Fitnah which ensues amongst the Muslims who differ with one another on the basis of their differing Ijtihād is completely permissible.

Again, this position is the strongest of the positions and the most preferred of them due to it being substantiated by the Sharī texts and the statements of the

pious predecessors which have previously been cited. It is stronger than the position of those who felt that the correct stance was to fight with 'Alī عليه السلام, and more so it is stronger than the position of those who felt that it was correct to fight alongside those who opposed him.

Module Three: The Second Fitnah

Section One: The Qurṛā', the predecessors of the Khawārij¹

The prophethood of Nabī Ḥallī Allāh ʿalayhī Wasallām started with the revelation of the Qur'ān to him. The first verses that were revealed to him were:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ عَلَّمَ
الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

*Recite in the name of your lord who created- created men from a clinging substance.
Recite and your lord is the most generous- who taught by the pen- Taught men that
which he knew not.*²

Thereafter, the descending of revelation continued upon him and he started to teach his Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ the Qur'ān.³ After his migration to Madīnah Munawwarah and the dominance of the Islamic message, Nabī Ḥallī Allāh ʿalayhī Wasallām started to send his Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ to various regions and tribes in order to invite the people to Islam and teach the people the Qur'ān.⁴

Naturally, whoever embraced the faith was required to read the Book of Allah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، this is not withstanding that their shares in the reading and learning of

1 As an additional note, I have not used the term the Qurṛā', the predecessors of the Khawārij' in its absolute sense. My reference by its usage is only to those who did not understand the Sunan and took the text of the Qur'ān in its literal sense. They interpreted them due to the influence of their extreme fanaticism and sternness in the Dīn. As a result of which they excommunicated the Muslims, shed blood, and desecrated the sanctity of the Muslims. As for the majority of the Qurṛā', the scholars, from amongst the Ṣaḥābah, the Tābi'īn, and their Tābi'īn they were exemplars of moderation in opinion and in action. They were lamp posts that should be followed in their jurisprudence, their deep understanding, and their sound deductions.

2 Sūrah al-'Alaq: 1-5.

3 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 6/102, chapter regarding the virtues of the Qur'ān.

4 Ibn Hishām: *al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyah*, 3/160.

the Qur'ān were not the same. Hence, some of them were more learned in it than others due to them enjoying the extended company of Rasūl Allah ﷺ and also because of spending most of their time in reading the Qur'ān and deliberating over its meanings and understanding its verses.

The earliest mention of the term *Qurrā'* (the reciters/those who are well-versed in the Qur'ān) as a distinctive attribute for a specific people emerged at the end of the third year after hijrah, in the ḥadīth of the Battle of Bi'r Ma'ūnah. Al-Bukhārī narrates from Anas ibn Mālik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he said:

بعث النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم سبعين رجلا لحاجة يقال لهم القراء. فعرض لهم حيان من بني سليم ورعل وذكوان عند بئر يقال لها: بئر معونة، فقال القوم: والله ما إياكم إردنا، إنما نحن مجتازون في حاجة للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقتلوهم، فدعا عليهم النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم شهرا في صلاة الغداة، وذلك بدء القنوت.

Nabī ﷺ sent seventy men who were known as the *Qurrā'* for a need. Two tribes of the Banū Salīm, the Ri'l, and the Dhakwān tribes, intercepted them at a well which was known as the well of Ma'ūnah. They told them, “By Allah! You are not the people we are intending. We are just passing by you in order to fulfil a need of Nabī ﷺ,” but they killed them. Nabī ﷺ supplicated against them for a month in the Fajr Ṣalāh, and that was the beginning of the *Qunūt*.¹

And in another narration of al-Wāqidī it is stated that the Ri'l, Dhakwān, Uṣayyah, and Banū Laḥyān tribes had sought reinforcements from Nabī ﷺ against an enemy. Nabī ﷺ, thus, sent to them seventy men of the Anṣār whom we would dub the *Qurrā'* in their time. They would gather firewood during the day and would stand in prayer during the night. These people killed them and betrayed them. When Nabī ﷺ learnt of this he performed the *Qunūt* in the Morning Prayer in which he supplicated against select tribes of the Arabs: Ri'l, Dhakwān, Uṣayyah, and the Banū Laḥyān.²

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 5/41, chapter of Maghāzī (the campaigns of Nabī ﷺ).

2 *Al-Wāqidī: al-Maghāzī*, 1/347.

Thereafter, we find mention of the Qurrā' in the era of Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ when the battle intensified between the Muslims and the renegades in the Battle of Yamāmah. Hence, it would be announced, "O the possessors of Sūrah Baqarah, O the people of the Qur'ān, beautify the Qur'ān with good actions."1 Subsequent to that with the martyrdom of a great number of Muslims in the Battle of Yamāmah, 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ made the following recommendation to Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

إن القتل قد استحر يوم اليمامة بقراء القرآن في المواطن كلها؛ فيذهب قرآن كثير، وإنني أرى أن تأمر بجمع القرآن

The killing of the Qurrā' was intense on the day of Yamāmah in all the places. This will result in much of the Qur'ān vanishing. I, thus, feel that you should order that the Qur'ān be compiled.²

And during the Khilāfah of 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ as well the mention of the Qurrā' has featured as those who were the confidants of 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and the people whose council he would seek.³

It is important to note that initially the term Qurrā' referred to those who read the Qur'ān, memorised it, understood its meaning, deliberated over its verses, and disciplined themselves with its character. Ibn Khaldūn has very beautifully defined them saying:

فقبل يومئذ لحملة القرآن القراء. فهم قراء كتاب الله والسنة المأثورة عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

At that time the bearers of the Qur'ān were known as the Qurrā'... They were the reciters of the Book of Allah and the narrated Sunnah of Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.⁴

1 Al-Balādhurī: *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, p. 99.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/119, chapter of *Aḥkām* (rulings).

3 *Ibid*, 8/141, chapter of holding on to the Sunnah.

4 Ibn Khaldūn: *al-Muqaddamah*, 2/1048, (with the research and annotations of 'Abd al-Wāḥid Wāḥī).

But very soon this definition of the Qurrā' became distorted and took on a whole new form. Now it was said to refer to those who had no understanding, abided by the literal implications of the texts, were hard in their opinions, and were extremists in their Dīn. To the extent that it does not perplex us to find in our early historical and ḥadīth references that the Qurrā' were the people who instigated the people of Kūfah against the Khalīfah 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. They also took part in the Battle of Şiffīn and thereafter shunned the arbitration. They became the Khawārij and went about wreaking havoc in the lands by killing, and plundering the wealth of the Muslims. They did all of this considering it to be permissible due to their claim that whoever opposed them was not a Muslim.

It is as though Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was seeing them from behind the veils of the unseen, for Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ had pre-informed him of their eventual condition in which they were going to rebel against the Ummah and shed their blood without any right. He, thus, warned against them, and gave glad tidings to those who will fight them and extirpate them.

Al-Bukhārī narrates in his *Şaḥīḥ* the following from Sahl Ibn Ḥunayf رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

سمعت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول وأهوى بيده قبل العراق: يخرج منه قوم يقرؤون القرآن لا يجاوز تراقيهم، يمرقون من الإسلام مروق السهم من الرمية.

I heard Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying, whilst pointing his hand toward Iraq, “Here from will emerge a people who will read the Qur’ān but it will not pass their collar bones. They will leave Islam just as an arrow leaves a targeted animal...”¹

And Muslim narrates from Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that he said:

بينما نحن عند رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو يقسم قسماً؛ أتاه ذو الخويصرة - وهو رجل من بني تميم - فقال: يا رسول الله اعدل. فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ويلك، ومن يعدل إن لم أعدل،

1 *Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 7/165-166, chapter of Zakāh.

قد خبت وخسرت إن لم أعدل. فقال عمر بن الخطاب يا رسول الله! ائذن لي أضرب عنقه، قال رسول الله: دعه- فإن له أصحابا يحقر أحدكم صلاته مع صلاتهم، وصيامه مع صيامهم، يقرؤون القرآن لا يجاوز تراقيهم، يمرقون من الإسلام كما يمرق السهم من الرمية...

Whilst we were by Rasūl Allah ﷺ and he was distributing something, Dhū al-Khuwayṣirah, a man of the Banū Tamīm, came to him and said, “O Rasūl Allah, be just.”

Rasūl Allah ﷺ said, “Woe unto you! Who will be just if I am not just? I will be a failure and a loser if I do not deal with justice.”

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “O Rasūl Allah! Give me permission to slay him.”

Rasūl Allah ﷺ said, “Leave him, for he will have such comrades that one of you will undermine his ṣalāh when compared to their ṣalāh, and his fasting when compared to their fasting. They will read the Qur’ān and it will not go pass their collar bones. They will leave Islam just as an arrow exits from a targeted animal.”¹

In another narration it appears:

إن من ضئضي هذا قوما يقرؤون القرآن لا يجاوز حناجرهم، يقتلون أهل الإسلام، ويدعون أهل الأوثان، يمرقون من الإسلام كما يمرق السهم من الرمية، لئن أدركتهم لأقتلنهم قتل عاد.

From the progeny of this person there will emerge a people who will read the Qur’ān and it will not go pass their throats. They will kill the people of Islam and will leave the idol worshippers. They will leave Islam just as an arrow leaves a targeted animal. If I live on to see them, I will kill them just as the people of ‘Ād were killed.²

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 7/165-166, chapter of Zakāh.

2 *Ibid.* 7/192.

And Abū Dāwūd narrates from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī and Anas ibn Mālīk رضي الله عنهما that Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

سيكون في أمتي اختلاف وفرقة، قوم يحسنون القيل، وسيئون الفعل، يقرؤون القرآن لا يجاوز تراقيهم، يمرقون من الدين كما يمرق السهم من الرمية، لا يرجعون حتى يرتد على فوقه، هم شر الخلق، طوبى لمن قتلهم وقتلوه، يدعون إلى كتاب الله وليسوا منه في شيء، من قاتلهم كان أولى بالله منهم، قالوا، يا رسول الله، ما سيماهم؟ قال: التحليق.

In my Ummah there will be difference of opinion and disunity. There will be a people who will be good in speech but terrible in practice. They will read the Qurʾān but it will not pass their collar bones. They will leave the Dīn just as an arrow leaves a targeted animal. Subsequent to that they will not return, till the arrow retreats to its ropes. They will be the worst of creation. Glad tidings for the one who will kill them and who they will kill. They will abandon the Book of Allah and will have nothing to do with it. Whoever will fight them will be closer to Allah than them.

They asked, “O Rasūl Allah what is their special sign?”

He said, “Shaving.”¹

And Aḥmad has narrated from Abū Bakrah رضي الله عنه that Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

ألا إنه سيخرج من أمتي أقوام أشداء أهداء، ذليقة ألسنتهم بالقرآن، لا يجاوز تراقيهم، إلا فإذا رأيتموهم فأيتموهم، ثم إذا رأيتموهم فأيتموهم، فألمأجور قاتلهم.

Behold, there will emerge from my Ummah people who will be very hard and very stern. Their tongues will be moist with the recital of the Qurʾān and it will not pass their collar bones. Behold, if you see them, then kill them. Thereafter, if you see them again, then kill them, for the one who will slay them will be rewarded.²

1 *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 4/243, chapter regarding fighting the Khawārij. The annotator of *Jāmiʿ al-Uṣūl* has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ, 10/89. And al-Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 3/903, Ḥadīth: 3987.

2 *Musnad Aḥmad*, 5/44.

And in another narration which is narrated by Aḥmad and al-Bazzār the following appears:

أكثر منافقي أمتي قراؤها

Most of the hypocrites of my Ummah will be its Qurrā'.¹

And in *Musnad al-Bazzār* the following is narrated from Sha'ibī, from Masrūq, from 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا:

هم شرار أمتي يقتلهم خيار أمتي

They are the worst of my Ummah. The best in my Ummah will kill them.²

Likewise, 'Ubayd ibn Rāfi رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ the freed slave of Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ states that he was with 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ when the Ḥarūriyyah rebelled. They chanted the slogan, "There is no rule but for Allah." 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ retorted:

كلمة حق أريد بها باطل، إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وصف أناسا إنني لأعرف صفتهم في هؤلاء، يقولون الحق بألسنتهم لا يجاوز هذا منهم -وأشار إلى حلقه- من أبغض خلق الله إليه.

This is a statement of truth whereby evil is intended. Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ described a people whose qualities I see in these people. They say the truth with their tongues but it does not pass this (pointing toward his throat) of theirs. They will be the most despised of the creation of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ رَبِّيَ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ to him...³

1 *Musnad Aḥmad*, 2/175. And al-Haythamī has said in *Majma' al-Zawā'id*, "It is narrated from Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī; the transmitters of one of its chains of transmission are reliable." See (6/229). And Aḥmad Shākir has also deemed its chain Ṣaḥīḥ in his annotation of the *Musnad* under the ḥadīths: 6633, 6637, and 6634 of 1/122-124. And al-Albānī has also deemed it authentic in *al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, p. 750.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Fatḥ*, 12/286. He has deemed its chain Ḥasan.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 7/173, chapter of Zakāh.

Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه also would consider them to be the worst of creation due to them applying the verses which were revealed regarding the disbelievers upon the believers.¹

And Aḥmad has narrated from Sayyār:²

جاء برؤوس الخوارج من قبل العراق، فنصبت عند باب المسجد-مسجد دمشق- وجاء أبو أمامة رضي الله عنه فرجع ركعتين، ثم خرج إليهم، فنظر إليهم، فرفع رأسه فقال: شر قتلى قتلوا تحت أديم السماء

The leaders of the Khawārij from Iraq were brought and they were made to stand by the door of the masjid-the Masjid of Dimashq. Abū Umāmah رضي الله عنه came, performed two raka‘āt, came out to them, and looked at them. He then raised his head and said, “The worst people that can be killed under the sun.”³

Moving on, the problems of the Qurra’ had started toward the latter part of the Khilāfah of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and their base was in Kūfah. Very often their complaints used to reach him regarding the upright rulers which infuriated ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and caused him to supplicate against them. Al-Fasawī has narrated in his *Tārīkh* the following from Abū ‘Adhbah al-Ḥimṣī:⁴

قدمت على عمر بن الخطاب رابع أربعة من الشام ونحن حجاج، فبينما نحن عند آتاه أت من قبل العراق، فأخبر أنهم قد حصبوا إمامهم، وقد كان عمر عوضهم منه مكان إمام كان قبله حصبوه، فخرج إلى الصلاة مغضبا فسها في صلاته، ثم أقبل على الناس فقال: ها هنا، من أهل الشام، فقامت أنا وأصحابي فقال: يا

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/51, chapter regarding demanding repentance from the renegades.

2 Sayyār al-Umawī al-Dimashqī was the freed slave of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه. He narrated from Abū al-Dardā, Abū Umāmah, and Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه. Al-Dhahabī has said, “Reliable.” And Ibn Ḥajar has said, “Truthful. From the third generation.” See: al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 1/332; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taqrīb*, 1/344.

3 *Musnad Aḥmad* (with the format of al-Sā‘ātī), 23/161. The annotator Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bannā has deemed its men reliable.

4 Abū ‘Adhbah. Al-Bukhārī has made mention of his in the section of people who were more commonly known by their agnomens. He says, “Abū ‘Adhbah from ‘Umar, “O Allah make the youngster of Thaḳīf rule over them very soon,” referring to the people of Iraq. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/441; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 9/62; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/529.

أهل الشام! تجهزوا لأهل العراق فإن الشيطان قد باض فيهم وفرخ، ثم قال: اللهم إنهم قد لبسوا علي فلبس عليهم، وعجل لهم الغلام الثقفي يحكم فيهم بحكم الجاهلية، لا يقبل من محسنهم، لا يتجاوز عن مسيئتهم.

I came to ‘Umar being the fourth of the four and we were pilgrims. Whilst we were by him a person came to him from Iraq and informed him that they threw stones at their governor. ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had already replaced the previous ruler whom they had also thrown stones at with the current one. Hence, he came out for Ṣalāh angrily and made a mistake in his Ṣalāh.

He thereafter faced the people and said, “Is there anyone from Shām in this congregation?”

I thus stood up with my companions.

He said, “O the people of Shām! Prepare for the people of Iraq, for Shayṭān has laid eggs in them and has caused them to hatch as well.”

He continued, “O Allah they have confused me so confuse them, and make the Thaqaḫī youngster rule over them very soon. For he will rule them with the law of the pre-Islamic era, will not accept the good of their good people, and will not overlook the evil of their evil doers.”¹

And al-Fasawī has also narrated that when ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ once intended to visit Iraq, Ka’b al-Aḥbār told him:

إن بها عصاة الحق وكل داء عضال، فقيل له: ما الداء العضال؟ قال: أهواء مختلفة ليس لها شفاء.

“In it are the transgressors against the truth and every difficult (incurable) sickness.”

He asked, “What is the difficult sickness?”

He replied, “Various deviant tendencies for which there is no cure.”²

1 Al-Fasawī: *al-Ma’rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/755.

2 Ibid, 2/751.

Whoever knows Kūfah and has some background knowledge regarding its unique situation, how frequently it lodged complaints regarding its rulers, its *Fitan*, and its various sectarian groups, will understand the mind-set of those Bedouins who were controlled by harshness, obstinateness, and extremism in Dīn. Al-Bukhārī narrates the following from Jābir ibn Samurah رضي الله عنه:

قال شكوا أهل الكوفة سعدا إلى عمر رضي الله عنه فعزله واستعمل عليهم عمارا فشكوا حتى ذكروا أنه لا يحسن يصلي فأرسل إليه فقال يا أبا إسحاق إن هؤلاء يزعمون أنك لا تحسن تصلي قال أبو إسحاق أما أنا والله فإني كنت أصلي بهم صلاة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ما أخرج عنها أصلي صلاة العشاء فأركد في الأوليين وأخف في الآخرين قال ذلك الظن بك يا أبا إسحاق، وفي رواية: فقال سعد: أتعلمني الأعراب الصلاة؟ فأرسل معه رجلا أو رجلا إلى الكوفة فسأل عنه أهل الكوفة ولم يدع مسجدا إلا سأل عنه ويشون معروفا حتى دخل مسجدا لبني عبس فقام رجل منهم يقال له أسامة بن قتادة يكتئب أبا سعدة قال أما إذ نشدتنا فإن سعدا كان لا يسير بالسرية ولا يقسم بالسوية ولا يعدل في القضية قال سعد أما والله لأدعون بثلاث اللهم إن كان عبدك هذا كاذبا قام رياء وسمعة فأطّل عمره وأطّل فقره وعرضه بالفتن وكان بعد إذا سئل يقول شيخ كبير ممتنون أصابتنني دعوة سعد قال عبد الملك فأنا رأيت بعد قد سقط حاجباه على عينيه من الكبر وإنه ليتعرض للجواري في الطرق يغمزهن.

The people of Kūfah complained regarding Sa'd رضي الله عنه to 'Umar رضي الله عنه. 'Umar رضي الله عنه, thus, dismissed him and appointed 'Ammār رضي الله عنه in his stead. They complained and went on to say that he does not perform Ṣalāh properly, referring to Sa'd. 'Umar رضي الله عنه summoned him and said, "O Abū Ishāq, these people are claiming that you do not perform Ṣalāh properly."

Abū Ishāq said, "By Allah, I would read with them the Ṣalāh of Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم and would not leave it (to another method); I would lengthen the first two Raka'āt and shorten the second two."

'Umar رضي الله عنه said, "That was my assumption regarding you, O Abū Ishāq."

And in another narration Sa'd said, "Are these Bedouins going to teach me how to perform Ṣalāh?"¹

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 4/173, chapter of Ṣalāh.

‘Umar رضي الله عنه thereafter sent a man with him to Kūfah and this man asked the people of Kūfah regarding him. He did not leave a single masjid but that he asked its people regarding him and they all praised him.

Then he entered the Masjid of the Banū ‘Abs and a man from them who was known as Usāmah ibn Qatādah and whose agnomen was Abū Sa’dah, stood up and said, “Now that you have implored us, I should say: Sa’d would not march with the army, he would not distribute wealth equally, and would not pass judgements with justice.”

Sa’d رضي الله عنه, thus, said, “By Allah I will make three prayers, O Allah if this servant of yours is a liar and has only stood up to show off, then prolong his life and his poverty, and make him vulnerable to trials.”

Hence, subsequent to that when he would be asked, he would say, “An old man who is being trialed; the prayer of Sa’d afflicted me.”

‘Abd al-Malik¹ says, “I saw him thereafter when his eyebrows had fallen upon his eyes due to old age and he would interfere with the slave girls and would wink at them.”²

It is also narrated that ‘Umar رضي الله عنه asked Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه, “How will they differ (i.e. the Muslims) when their Lord is one, their Book is one, and their Religion is one.” He replied:

إنه سيجيء قوم لا يفهمون القرآن كما نفهمه فيختلفون فيه، فإذا اختلفوا فيه اقتتلوا

There will come a people who will not understand the Qur’ān as we do. They will as a result dispute in it and when they do so they will be at logger heads with one another.³

1 This is ‘Abd al-Malik ibn ‘Umayr. His biography has passed on p. 578 of this book.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1/183-184, chapter of Ṣalāh.

3 Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/276.

The truth of this became apparent during the Khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه when droves of the Saba’iyyah marched to Madīnah to besiege the Khalīfah. Jābir ibn ‘Abd Allāh رضي الله عنه narrates the following:

بعثنا عثمان بن عفان رضي الله عنه في خمسين راكبا، أميرنا محمد بن مسلمة الأنصاري، حتى أتينا ذا خشب، فإذا رجل معلق المصحف في عنقه، تذرِفَ عيناه دموعا، بيده السيف، وهو يقول: ألا إن هذا- يعني المصحف- يأمرنا أن نضرب بهذا-يعني السيف- على ما في هذا-يعني ما في المصحف- فقال محمد بن مسلمة: اجلس، فقد ضربنا بهذا على ما في هذا قبلك، فجلس فلم يزل يكلمهم-أي ابن مسلمة حتى رجعوا.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه dispatched us in a group of fifty riders and our leader was Muḥammad ibn Maslamah al-Anṣārī. We came to Dhū Khushub and suddenly there was a man with a Qur’ān hanging around his neck who was crying and had a sword in his hand.

He was saying, “Behold this (referring to the Qur’ān) orders us to strike this (referring to the sword) on the basis of what is in this (the Qur’ān).”

Muḥammad ibn Maslamah said to him, “Sit. We have already struck with this on the basis of what is in this before you.”

He then continued talking to them till they retracted.¹

And al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī says:

كأنني أنظر إلى عثمان يخطب يوم الجمعة إذ قام رجل تلقاء وجهه فقال: أسألك كتاب الله، فقال عثمان: أو ما لكتاب الله طالب غيرك؟ اجلس، فجلس، فقال الحسن من قبل نفسه، كذبت يا عدو نفسه، لو كنت تطلب كتاب الله لم تطلبه يوم الجمعة والإمام يخطب.

It is as though I am looking at ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه delivering a sermon on Friday when suddenly a man stands up in front of him and says, “I ask you the book of Allah.”

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 321.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه replies, “Is there no one to seek the Book of Allah other than you? Sit,” and so he sat down.

Ḥasan added from his side, “You are lying, O the enemy of yourself. If you really were seeking the Book of Allah, you would not seek it on Friday whilst the Imām was delivering a sermon.”¹

And Hishām ibn ‘Urwah narrates the following from his uncle ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه:

لقيني ناس ممن كان يطعن على عثمان ممن يرى رأي الخوارج، فراجعوني في رأيهم وحاجوني القرآن، قال فلم أقم معهم ولم أقعد، فرجعت إلى الزبير منكسرا فذكرت ذلك له فقال الزبير رضي الله عنه: إن القرآن قد تأوله كل قوم على رأيهم وحملوه عليه، ولعمر الله إن القرآن لمعتدل مستقيم، وما التقصير إلا من قبلهم، ومن طعنوا عليه من الناس فإنهم لا يطعنون على أبي بكر وعمر، فخذهم سنتهما وسيرتهما، قال عبد الله: فكأنما أيقظني ذلك، فلقيتهم فحاججتهم بسنة أبي بكر وعمر، فلما أخذتهم بذلك قهرتهم وضعف قولهم حتى لكأنهم يمضغون شخبهم.

Some people who held the views of the Khawārij and criticised ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه met me. They debated with me regarding their view and argued with me regarding the Qur’ān. I was unable to stand with them or sit, and so I returned to al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه disheartened and told him of what transpired.

Al-Zubayr, thus, said, “The Qur’ān is such that people interpret it according to their opinion and understood it in that sense. By Allah the Qur’ān is moderate and straight, but the shortfall is on their path. Despite all those who they criticise they do not criticise Abū Bakr and ‘Umar, so inculpate them with the Sunnah of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar.”

‘Abd Allāh says, “It was as if that woke me up. Hence, thereafter when I gripped them with that, I defeated them and their argument became weak and it seemed as though they were children who were chewing their sticks.”²

1 Ibid. p. 329.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 506.

And ‘Abd al-Razzāq narrates from Qatādah that Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه said:

كيف بكم إذا لبستكم فتنة يربو فيها الصغير، ويهرم فيها الكبير، قالوا: ومتى ذلك يا أبا عبد الرحمن؟ قال: إذا قلت أمتاؤكم، وكثرت أمراؤكم، وقلت فقهاؤكم، وكثرت قراؤكم.

“What would your condition be when such a Fitnah envelopes you in which the young will grow and the elderly will age?”

They asked, “When will that be, O Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān?”

He replied, “When your trustworthy men will be less, your governors will decrease, your scholars will diminish, and your Qurrā’ will increase.”¹

And Ibn Abī Shaybah narrates from ‘Amr ibn Salamah² that he said:

كنا جلوسا عند باب عبد الله يعني ابن مسعود ننتظر أن يخرج إلينا، فخرج وقال: إن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حدثنا أن قوما يقرؤون القرآن لا يجاوز تراقيهم يمرقون من الإسلام كما يمرق السهم من الرمية، وإيم الله، لا أدري لعل أكثرهم منكم، فقال عمرو بن سلمة، فرأينا عامة أولئك يطاعنوننا يوم النهروان مع الخوارج.

We were sitting at the door of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd waiting for him to come out to us. He came out and said, “Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم informed us that a certain people will read the Qur’ān but it will not pass their collar bones. They will leave Islam just as an arrow leaves a targeted animal. By Allah, I don’t know, probably most of them will be from you.”

‘Amr ibn Salamah said, “I saw most of them striking us on the day of Nahrawān with the Khawārij.”³

1 *Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq*, 11/359-360.

2 ‘Amr ibn Salamah ibn al-Ḥārith al-Hamdānī al-Kindī al-Kūfī. Ibn Sa’d has made mention of him in the first generation of the Tābi‘īn from Kūfah. And al-‘Ijlī said, “He is a Tābi‘ī from Kūfah who is reliable.” He passed away in 85 A.H/704 A.D. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/171; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 1/189; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 364; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/445; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 8/42.

3 *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah*, 15/306.

And Abū al-Walīd¹ says, “Sālim ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar asked me, “From where are you?” I said, “From Kūfah.” He replied, “What an evil people, Saba’īs and Harūrīs.”²

And Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه would say:

قوم لا يرجعون إلى حق ولا يقصرون عن باطل

A people who do not revert to the truth and do not desist from falsehood.³

Furthermore, in the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه due to the copious number of Qurṛā’ and their disparate dialects with which they read the Qur’ān, dispute emerged regarding the recitation of the Qur’ān between the various cities. In fact, disputes ensued even in the people of one city (as to which recitation was correct and which not). Ibn Abī Dāwūd al-Sijistānī narrates an incident regarding the disputing of people in the recitation of the Qur’ān from Yazīd ibn Mu’āwiyah al-Nakha’ī:⁴

إني لفي المسجد مسجد الكوفة زمن الوليد بن عقبة في حلقة فيها حذيفة... إذ هتف هاتف: من كان يقرأ على قراءة أبي موسى فليأ الزاوية التي عند أبواب كندة، ومن كان يقرأ على قراءة عبد الله بن مسعود فليأت هذه الزاوية التي عند دار عبد الله...

I was in the masjid of Kūfah during the governorship of Walīd ibn ‘Uqbah in a gathering in which Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه was present... Suddenly an announcer announced, “Whoever reads the Qur’ān as per the reading of Abū Mūsā should come to the corner which is by the doors of Kindah, and whoever

1 Did not come across his biography in the references I have at my disposal.

2 Al-Fasawī: *al-Ma’rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/758.

3 Ibid. 2/756.

4 Yazīd ibn Mu’āwiyah al-Nakha’ī al-Kūfī. The worshipper. Al-‘Ijlī said, “Reliable.” And Ibn Ḥibbān has deemed him reliable and he has said, “He was killed whilst fighting in Persia.” Al-Bukhārī has narrated the story of his martyrdom in his *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/355; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 481; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 9/287; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 3/250; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 11/360.

reads the Qur'ān as per the reading of 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd should come to this corner which is by the house of 'Abd Allāh...'"¹

This dispute between the Qurrā' was almost about to cause a Fitnah, for the people of every city considered the copy of their teacher from whom they copied their copies and learnt their recital to be correct. This dispute clearly came to the fore in the battle of the Bāb in the year 30 A.H. What happened was that in this time the Qurrā' of Kūfah, Baṣrah, Ḥimṣ, and Dimashq got together. And when Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه saw the intensity of the disputing between them and the dangers that it entailed he hurriedly went to the Khalīfah 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه and suggested to him that he unite the Muslims upon one master copy of the Qur'ān, send replicas thereof to the various cities, and that all the other individual and personal copies be taken away from the people and not be circulated.²

'Uthmān رضي الله عنه found this suggestion to be sound and executed it. He sent replicas of the master copy to the various cities and they were accepted. However, he was faced with some remonstrations from some of the Qurrā', especially the students of 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه and those who agreed with them. Ibn Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه warned them of the repercussions of their dissent, but they were very rude to him in their response. He, thus, wrote to 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه and sought permission from him to return to Madīnah. He informed him that he despised staying in Kūfah due to the fear that hearsay, false news, and formalities would soon spread in its people.³

This point marked the beginning of the emergence of remonstrations against 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه and his governors in Kūfah.

Likewise, the Qurrā' are also described as a distinguished group of people who had specific political leanings in the year 33 A.H, during the governorship of

1 Al-Sijistānī: *al-Maṣāḥif*, p. 11.

2 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 3/991.

3 Al-Māliqī: *al-Tamhīd wa al-Bayān*, p. 50-51.

Sa'īd ibn al-Āṣ. Hence, Sayf ibn 'Umar narrates that when Sa'īd came to Kūfah he summoned its prominent men who were men of the challenging days and the Battle of Qādisiyyah. He addressed them saying:

أنتم وجوه من وراءكم، والوجه ينبئ عن الجسد، فأبلغونا حاجة ذي حاجة، وخلة ذي خلة، وأدخل معهم من يحتمل من اللواحق والروادف، وخلص بالقراء والمتسمين في سمره، فكأنما كانت الكوفة يبسا شملته النار، فانقطع إلى ذلك الضرب ضربهم، وفشت القالة والإذاعة.

You are the face of those whom you represent, and the face informs regarding the rest of the body. So, convey to us the need of the needy and the poverty of those who are poor.

He also included with them those whose company he could bear of their followers and subordinates. He would sit in privacy at night with the Qurra' and the elite. It is as though Kūfah was dry and a fire had enveloped it. People of similar inclinations started to incline toward this class of people, and as a result much hearsay and information started to spread.¹

As for al-Balādhurī he cites this narration from Abū Mikhnaf with the following words:

لما عزل عثمان رضي الله عنه الوليد بن عقبة عن الكوفة ولاها سعيد بن العاص، فكان يجالس قراءها ووجوه أهلها ويسامرهم.

When 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه dismissed al-Walīd ibn 'Uqbah from Kūfah, he appointed in place of him Sa'īd ibn al-Āṣ. He would sit with the Qurra' of Kūfah, its prominent members, and would hold conversations with them at night.²

Thereafter, Ibn Shabbah narrates the bickering which occurred between Sa'īd ibn al-Āṣ and these people which eventually prompted them to hit his guard. Sa'īd wrote to 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه informing him of what had transpired:

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/279, 317.

2 Al-Balādhurī: *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, 1/528.

إن قبلي قوما يدعون القراء، وهم سفهاء، وثبوا على صاحب شرطي فضربوه ظالمين له، وشموني واستخفوا بحقي، منهم عمرو بن زرارة، ومالك بن الحارث-الأشتر- وحر قوص بن زهير، وشريح بن أوفى.

Here by me there are a people who are called the Qurrā', whereas in actual fact they are foolish. They pounced upon a policeman and beat him unjustly. They swore at me and undermined my right. Some of them are: 'Amr ibn Zurārah,¹ Mālik ibn al-Ḥārith, Ḥurqūṣ ibn Zuhayr,² and Shurayḥ ibn Awfā..."³

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه wrote a letter addressing it to the aforementioned individuals wherein he ordered them to go to Shām and take part in the campaigns there. And he wrote the following to Sa'īd:

إني قد كفيتك مؤنتهم فأقرئهم كتابي، فإنهم لا يخالفون إن شاء الله، وعليك بتقوى الله وحسن السيرة.

I have sufficed you their burden. So read my letter to them and they will not oppose, if Allah wills. And hold on to the fear of Allah and good conduct.

Sa'īd, thus, read the letter to them. They set off for Dimashq. Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه honoured them and said to them:

إنكم قدمتم بلدا لا يعرف أهله إلا الطاعة، فلا تجادلوهم فتدخلوا الشك قلوبهم

You have come to a city whose people do not know anything but compliance. So do not debate with them, for you will enter doubt into their hearts.

'Amr ibn Zurārah and al-Ashtar replied:

1 I did not come across his biography.

2 He is from the Khawārij who fought against 'Alī رضي الله عنه on the day of Nahrawān. See: *Tārīkh Khalīfah*, p. 197..

3 He is from the Khawārij who fought against 'Alī رضي الله عنه on the day of Nahrawān. See: *Ibid*.

إن الله قد أخذ على العلماء موثقا أن يبينوا علمهم للناس، فإن سألنا سائل عن شيء نعلمه لم نكنتمه

Allah has taken a pledge from the scholars that they will explicate their knowledge to the people. Hence, if someone asks us something which we know we will not conceal it.

Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه remarked:

قد خفت أن تكونوا مرصدين للفتنة

I fear that you will be instigators of Fitnah.¹

Ibn Shabbah narrates from Kumayl ibn Ziyād al-Nakhaṭī² that he said:

أول من دعا إلى خلع عثمان عمرو بن زرارة، وكان من القراء

The first person to call for the dismissal of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was ‘Amr ibn Zurārah, and he was from the Qurrah.³

And Ibn Abī Shaybah has narrated from Bishr ibn Shaghāf⁴ the following:

سألني عبد الله بن سلام عن الخوارج، قلت: هم أطول الناس صلاة وأكثرهم صوما غير أنهم إذا خلفوا الجسر أهرقوا الدماء وأخذوا الأموال، فقال: - أي عبد الله بن سلام-: أما إني قد قلت لهم: لا تقتلوا

1 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah*, 3/1141.

2 Kumayl ibn Ziyād al-Nakhaṭī ibn Nuḥayk al-Nakhaṭī al-Kūfī. Ibn Sa‘d said regarding him, “He witnessed Ṣiffīn with ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, and was an honourable who was obeyed by his people. Al-‘Ijlī said, “A Tābīṭ from Kūfah who is reliable.” And al-Madā‘inī has considered him to be from the ascetics and the Qurrah of Kūfah. Likewise, Ibn Ḥibbān has deemed him reliable. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/179; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 398; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 5/341; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 8/447.

3 Ibn Shabbah: *Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, 3/1146.

4 Bishr ibn Shaghāf al-Ḍabbī al-Baṣrī, from the Tābīṭīn. He has narrated from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr, and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām رضي الله عنه. ‘Uthmān al-Dārimī has quoted Ibn Ma‘īn saying, “Reliable.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “A Tābīṭ from Baṣrah who reliable.” Likewise, Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/76; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 78; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 81; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 4/66; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 1/452.

عثمان، دعوه فوالله لئن تركتموه إحدى عشرة ليلة ليموتن على فراشه -يعني يجدون ذلك في التوراة- فلم يفعلوا، فإنه لم يقتل نبي إلا قتل به سبعون ألفا من الناس، ولم يقتل خليفة إلا قتل به خمسة وثلاثون ألفا.

‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām رضي الله عنه asked me regarding the Khawārij. I said, “They perform the lengthiest Ṣalāh and keep the most fasts, but when they leave the bridge behind them, they shed blood and usurp wealth.”

‘Abd Allāh ibn Salām رضي الله عنه, thus, said, “Behold! I had said to them, ‘Do not kill ‘Uthmān. Leave him, for by Allah if you leave him for just eleven nights he will pass away upon his bed (referring to what appears in the Torāh), but they did not listen. No Nabī was assassinated but that in lieu of him seventy thousand people were killed, and no Khalīfah was ever killed but that thirty-five thousand people were killed in return.”¹

The most evident example of the aforementioned is Ḥurqūṣ ibn Zuhayr. He was from the Qurrah’ who besieged ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. And when ‘Ā’ishah, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهم set out to Baṣrah in order to seek retribution for the blood of ‘Uthmān an announcer announced, “The people in whose tribes there were people who fought against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, they should bring them to us.” They were brought and subsequently killed. The only person who managed to escape from the people of Baṣrah was Ḥurqūṣ ibn Zuhayr who was able to hide due to the Banī Sa’d protecting him. Thereafter, after the incident of the arbitration he joined the Khawārij in Nahrawān. When ‘Alī رضي الله عنه fought them the army of Ibn Rabī’ah al-Kinānī, one of the comrades of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, attacked him and killed him.²

Ibn Ḥazm says the following whilst describing the Khawārij:

وأسلافهم -أي القراء- كانوا أعرابا قرؤوا القرآن قبل أن يتفقهوا في السنن الثابتة عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ولم يكن فيهم أحد من الفقهاء ولا من أصحاب أحد من علماء الصحابة، كعمر وعلي وابن مسعود وعائشة ومعاذ وأبي الدرداء وأبي موسى وزيد بن ثابت وابن عمر وابن عباس وسلمان وغيرهم. ولذا تجدهم يكفر بعضهم بعضا عند أقل نازلة تنزل بهم من دقائق الفتيا وصغارها.

1 Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah, 15/313.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: Tārīkh al-Rusul, 5/89.

Their predecessors, i.e. the Qurrā', were Bedouins who read the Qur'ān before gaining a good understanding of the established teachings of Nabī ﷺ. There was not amongst them any jurist, not anyone from the scholars of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, the likes of 'Umar, 'Alī, Ibn Mas'ūd, 'Ā'ishah, Mu'ādh, Abū al-Dardā', Abū Mūsā, Zayd ibn Thābit, Ibn 'Umar, Ibn 'Abbās, and Salmān رضي الله عنهم, amongst others. That is why you will find them excommunicating each other because of little issues which confronts them from the intricacies and the minor issues of Fatwā.¹

As for Ibn Ḥajar, he describes them as the roots of the Fitnah or at least one of its many causes. He says:

وأصل هذه الفتنة أو من أسبابها أن بعض أهل العراق أنكروا سيرة بعض أقارب عثمان، فطعنوا على عثمان بذلك، وكان يقال لهم: القراء لشدة اجتهادهم في التلاوة والعبادة إلا أنهم كانوا يتأولون القرآن على غير المراد منه، ويستبدون برأيهم، ويتنطعون في الزهد والخشوع وغير ذلك.

The roots of the Fitnah, or one of its many causes, was that some people of Iraq condemned the conduct of the some of the relatives of 'Uthmān. They, thus, criticised 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه because of them. They were known as the Qurrā' due to their extreme exertion in the recitation of the Qur'ān and in acts of worship. However, they would interpret the Qur'ān with interpretations not intended in the wording of the Qur'ān, hold arbitrary opinions, and would be difficult in asceticism and piety and other matters.²

What is worth mentioning is that these Qurrā' who afterwards became the Khawārij played a very pertinent role in the Khilāfah of 'Alī رضي الله عنه. For they took part to a very large extent in fuelling bickering and disunity amidst the army of 'Alī رضي الله عنه. So, although they were the most devout in worship, and recited the Qur'ān more than anyone else; however, quarrelling was deeply rooted in them and was their nature and way. Whatever Amīr al-Mu'minīn would do they would oppose him, as though they only intended to oppose him in order to disunite the

1 Ibn Ḥazm: *al-Fiṣal fi al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 4/156.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Fath*, 12/283.

Muslims, not to get clarification regarding the truth or to constrain themselves to that in which obedience was compulsory upon them.

There is no doubt that an army that is permeated with this type of bickering, which at times even resulted in some excommunicating others, can never be capable of victory. And even if it is victorious, but if the Khalīfah was surrounded by people of this sort who excommunicated him and the Muslims, would stability ever be achieved or would new wars erupt due to new causes?

Probably this was the reason behind the triumph of the people of Shām, for their matter was stable, and it was within the reach of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه to unite the Muslims upon one word.

Furthermore, there is no doubt that this negative stance which the Qurrā’ held against ‘Alī رضي الله عنه proved to be a decisive catalyst for the shifting of rulership from the Rightly Guided Khulafā’ to the Umayyads after the murder of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه at the hands of Ibn Muljam, the Khārijī.

But the shifting of the Khilāfah to the Umayyads did not put an end to all the problems, for the spirit of opposition continued amidst the Khawārij in very high and extreme proportions, in one-on-one encounters and in warfare. They were the cause of great loss for the Muslims in their lives, their wealth, and their unity.

Section Two: The Issue of Arbitration between Sayyidunā ‘Alī and Sayyidunā Mu‘āwiyah

There are four discussions in this section:

1. The role of the Qurrā’ in the Arbitration
2. The text of the document of the Arbitration and the debate between the two arbiters
3. Analysing the narration of the Arbitration
4. The reality of the Arbitration

1. The role of the Qurrā’ in the Arbitration

A study of the chronology of the events of Şiffīn reveal that the Qurrā’ played a significant role in the battle as those who fought on the side of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. Hence, the narration of al-Ṭabarī states that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه sent al-Ashtar al-Nakhaṭī, who was from the Qurrā’, as the commander of the cavalry of Kūfah, and Mis‘ar ibn Fadak al-Tamīmī¹ as the leader of the Qurrā’ of Baṣrah. The Qurrā’ of Kūfah were left under the wing of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Budayl and ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir رضي الله عنه.²

It is also narrated regarding the events of the final day of the fighting that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه had appointed ‘Abd Allāh ibn Budayl over the right section of the army, and ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه upon the left section. He left the Qurrā’ of Iraq with three individuals: ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, Qays ibn Sa’d—a Ṣaḥābī رضي الله عنه, and ‘Abd Allāh ibn Budayl. The people were under their flags as in their positions, and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was in the centre with the people of Madīnah between the people of Kūfah and the people of Baṣrah.³

1 Khalīfah has made mention of him amongst those Khawārij whom ‘Alī رضي الله عنه fought in Nahrawān in the year 38 A.H. See: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 197.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/15.

3 Ibid. 5/15.

There also appears in the narrations praise for the steadfastness of the Qurrā' and their outstanding performance during the fighting. For example:

وانكشفت أهل العراق من قبل الميمنة حتى لم يبق منهم إلا عبد الله بن بديل الخزاعي في مائتين أو ثلثمائة من القراء... ثم مضى هاشم بن عتبة بن أبي وقاص الزهري في عصابة من القراء، فقاتل قتالا شديدا هو وأصحابه عند المساء... ثم خرج عبد الله بن حصين الأزدي في القراء الذين مع عمار فأصيب معه

The people of Iraq dispersed from the right section of the army till there remained no one beside 'Abd Allāh ibn Budayl al-Khuzā'ī amongst two hundred/three hundred men of the Qurrā'...¹ Thereafter Hāshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abī Waqqāṣ al-Zuhrī² went forward with a group of the Qurrā' and he and his companions fought very ferociously till the evening...³ Thereafter, 'Abd Allāh ibn Ḥuṣayn al-Azdī⁴ emerged amidst the Qurrā' who were with 'Ammār رضي الله عنه and was eventually martyred...⁵

Furthermore, the narration of Abū Mikhnaf which is cited by al-Ṭabarī in his *Tārīkh* is the oldest narration which depicts the stance of the Qurrā' regarding the Arbitration. In this narration it is stated that when the people of Shām raised the copies of the Qur'ān upon their spears and called for making the Book of Allah the arbiter between them, 'Alī رضي الله عنه did not accept this proposal from them and warned that it was merely a deception and a plotting. He said to them:

عباد الله امضوا على حَقِّكم وصدقكم قتال عدوكم فإن معاوية وعمرو بن العاص وابن أبي معيط وحيب بن مسلمة وابن أبي سرح والضحاك بن قيس ليسوا بأصحاب دين ولا قرآن أنا أعرف بهم منكم قد

1 Ibid. 5/18.

2 Hāshim ibn 'Utbah ibn Abī Waqqāṣ al-Zuhrī. One of the commanders of 'Alī رضي الله عنه on the day of Ṣiffīn. He was born in the lifetime of Nabī صلی الله علیه و آله and participated in the Battle of Yamāmah and the Conquest of Shām. He was known for his bravery and for his fearless advancement in the battlefield. To the extent that he was known as al-Mirqāl, i.e. a person is very swift in attacking the enemy. He was martyred in the battle of Ṣiffīn in 37 A.H./657 A.D. See: Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 126; al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/42; al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdad*, 1/196; al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, 3/486.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/42.

4 I did not come across his biography in the books I have at my disposal.

5 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/43.

صحبتهم أطفالاً وصحبتهم رجالاً فكانوا شر أطفال وشر رجال ويحكم إنهم ما رفعوها ثم لا يرفعونها ولا يعلمون بما فيها وما رفعوها لكم إلا خديعة ودهنا ومكيدة فقالوا له ما يسعنا أن ندعى إلى كتاب الله عز وجل فنأبى أن نقبله فقال لهم فإني إنما قاتلتهم لبيدنيوا بحكم هذا الكتاب فإنهم قد عصوا الله عز وجل فيما أمرهم ونسوا عهده ونبذوا كتابه فقال له مسعر بن فدكي التميمي وزيد بن حصين الطائي ثم السنبسي في عصابة معهما من القراء الذين صاروا خوارج بعد ذلك يا علي أجب إلى كتاب الله عز وجل إذ دعيت إليه والاندفعك برمتك إلى القوم أو نفعل كما فعلنا بآب عفاً إنه علينا أن نعمل بما في كتاب الله عز وجل، فقبلناه، والله لتفعلنها أو لتفعلنها بك. قال: احفظوا مقالتيكم لي، أما أنا فإن تطيعوني تقتلوا وإن تعصوا فاصنعوا ما بدا لكم. قالوا له: أما لا، فابعت إلى الأشر فليأتاك.

“O the servants of Allah, continue upon your right and your truth in fighting your enemy, for Mu’āwiyah, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Ās, Ibn Abī Mu’ayt, Ḥabīb ibn Maslamah, Ibn Abī Sarah, and al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Qays are not people of piety nor are they men of the Qur’ān. I know them better than you do; I accompanied them when they were kids and I was with them as adults. They were the worst of children and the worst of men. Woe on to you! They have not raised the copies but to deceive, to compromise and to plot.”

They replied, “It is not correct for us to refuse to accept the book of Allah after we are being called to it.”

He retorted, “I have also only fought them so that they concede the ruling of the book of Allah; they have disobeyed Allah ﷻ in their matter, forgot his emphasised order, and discarded his book.”

Thereupon Mis‘ar ibn Fadak al-Tamīmī and Zayd ibn Ḥuṣayn al-Tā’īl who were with a group of the Qurra’ who later became the Khawārij said to him, “O ‘Alī! Answer the call to the Book of Allah, or else we will hand you over completely to them or we will do to you what we did to Ibn ‘Affān. It is our duty to practice what comes in the Book of Allah and, thus, we have accepted. By Allah you will do that, or else we will do that (what they threatened him with) to you.”

1 Khalīfah has mentioned him as a member of the Khawārij who were killed on the day of Nahrawān. See: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 197.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه, thus, replied, “Remember that I stopped you and also remember what you have said to me. As for me, if you want to obey me, then you should fight. And if you want to disobey me, then do as you like.”

They responded, “If you are not willing to accept then send a message to al-Ashtar and he should see you.”¹

Likewise, all the narrations which al-Ṭabarī has cited regarding the Arbitration, which are narrated by Abū Mikhnaf, are no different than the aforementioned narration. They all state that it was the Qurra’ who compelled ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to accept the arbitration despite ‘Alī رضي الله عنه trying to convince them that the raising of the Qur’ān was a deceptive ploy employed by Mu‘āwiyah and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنهما. They also state that it was them who nominated Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه as the arbiter in spite of the disapproval of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. Hence, al-Ash‘ath ibn Qays al-Kindī² and those who later became the Khawārij said, “We are happy with Abū Mūsā.”

قال علي فإنكم قد عصيتموني في أول الأمر فلا تصونوني الآن إني لا أرى أن أولي أبا موسى فقال الأشعث وزيد بن حصين الطائي ومسعر بن فدكي لا نرضى إلا به فإنه ما كان يحذرنا منه وقعنا فيه قال علي فإنه ليس لي بثقة قد فارقتي وخذل الناس عني ثم هرب مني حتى أمنتته بعد أشهر ولكن هذا ابن عباس نوليه ذلك قالوا ما نبالي أنت كنت أم ابن عباس لا نريد إلا رجلا هو منك ومن معاوية سواء ليس إلى واحد منكما بأدنى منه إلى الآخر فقال علي فإني أجعل الأشتري... فقال الأشعث: وهل سعر الأرض غير الأشتري... قال علي: فقد أبيتتم إلا أبا موسى، قالوا: نعم، قال: فاصنعوا ما أردتم.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه replied saying, “You have disobeyed in the first matter already, so do not disobey me now. I do not feel that I should appoint Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه.”

So Ash‘ath, Zayd ibn Ḥuṣayn, and Miṣ‘ar ibn Fadak said, “We are only happy with him, for whatever he warned against, we have become victims thereof.”

‘Alī رضي الله عنه replied, “He is not trustable, for he separated from me and averted the people from joining me. Thereafter he ran away from me till I gave him amnesty after few months. But here is Ibn ‘Abbās who we can charge with this matter.”

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/49.

2 He enjoys Ṣuḥbah, the companionship of Nabī صلی الله علیه وسلم.

They said, “We are not bothered about you or Ibn ‘Abbās. We do not want but a person who is impartial and equal between you and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه; such a person that nor you or Mu‘āwiyah is closer to him than each other.”

‘Alī retorted, “Then I will appoint al-Ashtar...”

And al-Ash‘ath replied, “Has anyone else other than al-Ashtar fuelled the earth...”

‘Alī رضي الله عنه asked, “Do you refuse to accept anyone but Abū Mūsā?”

They said, “Yes.”

He said, “Then do as you like.”¹

What is astonishing though is that other narrations from Abū Mikhnaf himself give the readers an impression of a completely contrary role than the first, i.e. they state that the Qurrā’, refused to accept the Arbitration completely. He says:

خرج الأشعث بذلك الكتاب يقرؤه على الناس، ويعرضه عليهم فيقرؤنه حتى مر به على طائفة من بني تميم فيهم عروة بن أديّة وهو أخو أبي بلال فقرأه عليهم فقال عروة بن أديّة: تحكمون في أمر الله عز وجل الرجال؟! لا حكم إلا لله، ثم شد بسيفه فضرب به عجز دابته ضربة خفيفة واندفعت الدابة، وصاح به أصحابه أن أملك يدك

Al-Ash‘ath came out with that letter and read it to the people. He presented it to them and they also read it themselves. Till he passed by a group of the Banū Tamīm amidst who was ‘Urwah ibn Udayyah,² the brother of Abū Bilāl,³ and read it to them.

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/51.

2 One of the leaders of the Khawārij who was executed during the governorship of ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyād. See: al-Jūzajānī: *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, p. 35; al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/312.

3 One of the leaders of the Khawārij. He denied the Arbitration, took part in the Battle of Nahrawān, and was killed during the governorship of ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyād. See: Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 197, 256; al-Jūzajānī: *Aḥwāl al-Rijāl*, p. 35; al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/55.

So ‘Urwah ibn Udayyah said, “Do you appoint men as arbiters in the matter of Allah? There is no rule but for Allah.”

He thereafter struck the buttocks of his animal lightly with his sword which caused the animal to jolt. His companions, thus, shouted at him and told him, “Control you hand...”¹

And Abū Mikhnaf narrates the following as well:

أن عليا لما أراد أن يبعث أبا موسى للحكومة أنه رجلا من الخوارج زرعة بن البرج الطائي وحر قوص ابن زهير السعدي فدخل عليه فقال له لا حكم الا لله فقال على لا حكم إلا لله فقال له حر قوص تب من خطيبتك وارجع عن قضيتك واخرج بنا إلى عدونا نقاتلهم حتى نلقى ربنا فقال لهم على قد أردتكم على ذلك فعصيتموني وقد كتبنا بيننا وبينهم كتابا وشرطنا شروطا وأعطينا عليها عهدونا وموائفتنا وقد قال الله عز وجل: وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ إِذَا عَاهَدْتُمْ وَلَا تَنْقُضُوا الْأَيْمَانَ بَعْدَ تَوْكِيدِهَا وَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمُ اللَّهَ عَلَيْكُمْ كَفِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُعَلِّمُ مَا تُفْعَلُونَ فقال له حر قوص ذلك ذنب ينبغي أن تتوب منه فقال على ما هو ذنب ولكنه عجز من الرأي وضعف من الفعل وقد تقدمت إليكم فيما كان منه ونهيتكم عنه فقال له زرعة بن البرج أما والله يا علي لئن لم تدع تحكيم الرجال في كتاب الله عز وجل قاتلتك أطلب بذلك وجه الله ورضوانه

When ‘Alī عليه السلام intended to send Abū Mūsā عليه السلام for the Arbitration two men of the Khawārij came to him, namely: Zur‘ah ibn Burj al-Ṭā’ī² and Ḥurqūṣ ibn Zuhayr al-Sa’dī, and said to him, “There is no rule but for Allah. Repent from your sin, retract your decision, and march with us to our enemy so that we may fight them till we meet our lord.”

‘Alī عليه السلام replied, “That is what I wanted from you initially, but you disobeyed me. Now we have written a document amongst us and we have placed clauses. We have also given them upon that our promises and pledges, and Allah سبحانه وتعالى says, ‘And fulfil the covenant of Allah when you have taken it. And do not break oaths after confirmation while you have made Allah, over you, a security, i.e. a witness. Indeed, Allah knows what you do.’”³

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/55.

2 I did not come across his biography in the references available to me.

3 Sūrah al-Naḥl: 91.

Ḥurqūṣ said to him, “This is a sin from which we should repent.”

So ‘Alī رضي الله عنه replied, “It is not a sin, but it is inability of having sound judgement and it is weakness of action. For I have already previously told you regarding it, and I warned you against it.”

Thereafter Zur‘ah ibn al-Burj said, “By Allah, O ‘Alī, if you do not give up appointing men as arbiters in the Book of Allah, I will kill you and in doing so I will seek the pleasure of Allah.”¹

If this is really how matters had unfolded, then why did the Khawārij suddenly remonstrate against all the proceedings and events which they imposed upon ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to accept the Arbitration; for they rebelled against him and detracted from him and from their tribes which made up the army of Iraq. Likewise, if they appointed Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه for two reasons: due to him forewarning them from that which they became victims of, and due to him being neutral between both ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, then why didn’t they wait for the results of the Arbitration? Was it because their minds were like the minds of kids, and, thus, they were driven to act so contradictingly and drastically?

Also, if that was really the case, then why didn’t they have a similar position in the events that passed, like Jamal, for example? Likewise, if they managed to impose the appointment of Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه on ‘Alī رضي الله عنه as the arbiter of the people of Iraq, then why didn’t they choose someone from amongst themselves? For it is obvious that that particular individual would have represented them in their interests and views better than Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه; they wanted the fighting not to cease, as is established in authentic narrations, and Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه was against the Fitnah and the fratricidal war of the Muslim, and was striving to put an end to the war and achieving unity amongst the Muslims.

The appointment of Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه as the arbiter of the people of Iraq from the side of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه is completely harmonious with the events that were unfolding.

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/72.

For the next stage was the stage of conciliation and the reaching of unity amongst the Muslims, and Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه was from the advocates of conciliation and peace just as he was loved and trusted by the tribes of Iraq. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه had appointed him as the governor of Baṣrah and immediately thereafter as the governor of Kūfah.¹ Thereafter, when the people of Kūfah, under the leadership of al-Ashtar, prevented Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ from entering it and returned him to Madīnah, they autonomously appointed Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه had no choice but to maintain him in order to please them.² Not only that, when Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه started dismissing the governors of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه al-Ashtar asked him to maintain Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه over Kūfah and he acceded to his request.³

Furthermore, the early references (contradict the previously cited narrations regarding the Khawārij nominating Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه and) state that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه himself had chosen Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه. Khalīfah says in his *Tārīkh*:

وفيها- سنة ٣٧ هـ - اجتمع الحكمان: أبو موسى الأشعري من قبل علي وعمرو بن العاص من قبل معاوية

In it (the year 37 A.H.) the two arbiters convened, Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī from the side of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه from the side of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه.⁴

And Ibn Sa‘īd says in his *Ṭabaqāt*:

فكره الناس الحرب وتداعوا إلى الصلح، وحكموا الحكمين، فحكم علي أبا موسى الأشعري، وحكم معاوية عمرو بن العاص...

The people disliked fighting and called for conciliation. They appointed the two arbiters, ‘Alī رضي الله عنه appointed Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه appointed ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه.⁵

1 Ibn Sa‘īd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 4/109; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 9/429.

2 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-ṣaghīr*, 1/84; al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/332.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/442.

4 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, 191, 192.

5 Ibn Sa‘īd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/32.

And Ibn Abī Shaybah narrates from Abū Ṣāliḥ that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه said to Abū Mūsā:

احكم ولو بجز عنقي

Decide, even if it be about the cutting of my neck.¹

Based on all of the aforementioned, it would be plausible to assume that the role of stopping the fighting, calling for arbitration, and imposing Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه as the arbiter, are all nothing but historical fallacies which were forged by the Shī‘ī historians who were very disturbed by the fact that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was willing to cooperate with Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and the people of Shām, and that he was interested in conciliation with his [alleged] open enemies. Hence, they inculpated their enemies, the Khawārij, and tried to avoid this seeming contention; they made the claims of the Khawārij appear contradictory, so they were the ones who forced ‘Alī رضي الله عنه to accept the proposal of the arbitration and they were the ones who remonstrated against ‘Alī رضي الله عنه due to him accepting that proposal.

It is also important to note that the causes and catalysts for the emergence of such narrations were the circumstances Kūfah, the stronghold of the Shī‘ah, was passing through at that time, in the second half of the first century. For it had transitioned into a city which was now under the rule of the people of Shām who sent to it their rulers who were dictators, like Ziyād, his son ‘Ubayd Allah²,

1 *Muṣannaf ibn Abī Shaybah*, 15/293.

2 ‘Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyād ibn ‘Ubayd al-Thaqaḥī, one of the governors of the Banū Umayyah, He was a tyrant and a transgressive ruler. Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه charged him with the governorship of Khurāsān and, thereafter, Baṣrah. His son, Yazīd, had maintained him upon the governorship of Baṣrah in 60 A.H./679 A.D. Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه was killed at his hands. It is also assumed that Yazīd did not order him to do so, for he had written to him the following, “It has reached me that Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī is heading toward Iraq, so create watch posts and arsenals of weapons. Exercise precaution even upon mere assumption and take to task even upon suspicion. However, do not fight but the people who fight you, and write to me regarding everything that transpires.” When Yazīd passed away the people of Baṣrah revolted against ‘Ubayd Allah who was consequently compelled to flee to Shām. Thereafter, he intended returning to Iraq, but Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ashtar intercepted him with an army, which had set out to avenge the murder of Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه, and killed him in 67 A.H./686 A.D. See: al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/168, 300, 401 and 6/38-130; Ibn Qutaybah: *Uyūn al-Akhbār*, 1/29.

and al-Ḥajjāj; who were sent to diffuse their strength. Kūfah in subsequent times had, thus, become the centre of opposition and a hatching den for revolutions against the Umayyads. Not only that, the painful attacks of the Khawārij were more injurious to them than the extirpation of the Umayyads. This prompted the Shī'ah to cast the blame of these events upon their enemies due to them being heavily influenced by their dogmatic fanaticism.

To further elaborate, the authentically established position conveys that 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had accepted the call for arbitration willingly by himself without any pressure. This was due to his adherence to the injunctions of Islam which encouraged the reinstatement of congenial relations, mercy, compassion, and returning to the Qur'ān and the Sunnah at the time of dispute and contention, as in the verse:

فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ

*Should you dispute regarding something, then return it to Allah and his Rasūl.*¹

Hence, it is established in an authentic narration that the stance of the Qurrā' from the very beginning had not changed. It was to persist in fighting the people of Shām and shun the Arbitration altogether. This is what the heart inclines to as well, for it is harmonious with the extremist mentality of the Khawārij which called upon them to excommunicate the Muslims, and violate their blood and their wealth. They were always in the various phases of their presence spearheading movements, which due to their rebellion weakened the body of the Islamic empire and destroyed much of the stored strength of the Muslims.

Aḥmad and Ibn Abī Shaybah both narrate the following with an authentic chain of transmission from Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit:

أتيت أبا وائل في مسجد أهله أسأله عن هؤلاء القوم الذين قتلهم علي بالنهروان، فيما استجابوا له، وفيما فارقوه، وفيما استحل قتالهم، قال : كنا بصغين فلما استحر القتل بأهل الشام اعتصموا بتل، فقال عمرو بن

1 Sūrah al-Nisā': 59.

العاص لمعاوية أرسل إلى علي بمصحف، وادعه إلى كتاب الله، فإنه لن يأبى عليك، فجاء به رجل، فقال : بيننا وبينكم كتاب الله: أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْا فَرِيقًا مِّنْهُمْ وَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ [آل عمران: ٢٣]، فقال علي نعم أنا أولى بذلك، بيننا وبينكم كتاب الله. قال : فجاءته الخوارج، ونحن ندعوهم يومئذ القراء، وسيوفهم على عواتقهم، فقالوا : يا أمير المؤمنين، ما نتظر بهؤلاء القوم الذين على التل ألا نمشي إليهم بسيوفنا، حتى يحكم الله بيننا وبينهم، فتكلم سهل بن حنيف، فقال : يا أيها الناس اتهموا أنفسكم، فلقد رأيتنا يوم الحديبية، يعني الصلح الذي كان بين رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وبين المشركين، ولو نرى قتالا لقاتلنا، فجاء عمر إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال : يا رسول الله ألسنا على حق، وهم على باطل، أليس قتالنا في الجنة وقتلاهم في النار؟ قال : بلى، قال : فقيم نعطي الدنية في ديننا، ونرجع ولما يحكم الله بيننا، وبينهم؟ فقال : يا ابن الخطاب، إني رسول الله، ولن يضيعني أبدا، قال : فرجع وهو متغيظ، فلم يصبر، حتى أتى أبا بكر، فقال : يا أبا بكر ألسنا على حق، وهم على باطل، أليس قتالنا في الجنة وقتلاهم في النار؟ قال : بلى، قال : فقيم نعطي الدنية في ديننا ونرجع، ولما يحكم الله بيننا وبينهم؟ فقال : يا ابن الخطاب إنه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، ولن يضيعه أبدا، قال : فتزلت سورة الفتح قال : فأرسلني رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى عمر، فأقرأها إياه، قال : يا رسول الله وفتح هو؟ قال : نعم. وطابت نفسه ورجع. وزاد ابن أبي شيبة: فقال علي: في صفين-: أيها الناس! إن هذا فتح، فقبل علي القضية ورجع ورجع الناس ثم إنهم خرجوا بحرواء ألك العصابة من الخوارج.

I came to Abū Wā'il at the masjid of his locality to ask him regarding these people who 'Alī رضي الله عنه fought in Nahrawān, i.e. regarding the aspects in which they agreed with him, the aspects in which they disagreed with him, and the rationale on the basis of which he considered it permissible to fight them. He said, "We were in Şiffīn. When the killing intensified against the people of Shām they resorted to a hill. Thereupon 'Amr ibn al-Āṣ رضي الله عنه said to Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه, 'Send a copy of the Qur'ān to 'Alī and call him to the Book of Allah for he will never refuse.' Hence a person came and said, 'Between us and you is the Book of Allah, 'Do you not consider those who were given a portion of the scripture? They are invited to the scripture of Allah that it should arbitrate between them; then a party of them turns away and they are refusing.'¹ 'Alī رضي الله عنه said, 'Yes, I am more deserving of that. Between us and you is the Book of Allah.'"

The narrator says, "The Khawārij, thus, came to him, we would call them the Khawārij, with their swords upon their shoulders and said, 'O Amīr al-

1 Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 23.

Mu'minīn! What are we waiting for regarding these people who are upon the hill? Should we not march to them with our swords till Allah ﷻ decides between us and them?"

Sahl ibn Ḥunayf spoke and said, 'O people! Doubt yourselves, for I saw us on the day of Ḥudaybiyyah (referring to the conciliation which was reached between Nabī ﷺ and the polytheists). If we considered fighting to be practical, we would have fought; 'Umar ﷺ came to Rasūl Allah ﷺ and said, 'O Rasūl Allah! Are we not upon the truth and are they not upon falsehood? Are not our martyrs in Jannah and their slain people in Hell-fire?" He replied, 'Yes.' He further inquired, 'So why should we succumb in our Dīn and return whereas Allah has not yet decided between us?' He replied, 'O the son of Khaṭṭāb! I am the Messenger of Allah and he will never forsake me.' He returned angrily and was unable to contain himself till he approached Abū Bakr ﷺ and said, 'O Abū Bakr! Are we not upon the truth and are they not upon falsehood? Are not our martyrs in Jannah and their slain people in Hell-fire?' He replied, 'Yes.' He further inquired, 'So why should we succumb in our Dīn and return whereas Allah has not yet decided between us?' He replied, 'O the son of Khaṭṭāb! He is the Messenger of Allah and Allah will never forsake him.'"

The narrator says, "Subsequently, Sūrah Fatḥ was revealed and Nabī ﷺ summoned 'Umar ﷺ and got it read to him. He asked, 'O Rasūl Allah! Is this really a victory?' He responded, 'Yes.' 'Umar ﷺ was satisfied and he returned."¹

Ibn Abī Shaybah has added, "'Alī ﷺ said (in Ṣiffīn), 'O People! This is a victory.' 'Alī ﷺ accepted the matter. He returned and so did the people. Thereafter they marched to Ḥarūrā', i.e. that group of the Khawārij."²

This narration is corroborated by another narration of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Al-Bukhārī narrates the following from Ḥabīb ibn Abī Thābit:

1 *Musnad Aḥmad* (with the format of al-Sā'ātī), 23/145-146.

2 *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah*: 15/318.

أتيت أبا وائل أسأله فقال كنا بصفين فقال رجل ألم تر إلى الذين يدعون إلى كتاب الله فقال علي نعم فقال سهل بن حنيف اتهموا أنفسكم فلقد رأيتنا يوم الحديبية يعني الصلح الذي كان بين النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم والمشركين ولو نرى قتالا لقاتلنا فجاء عمر فقال أسنا على الحق وهم على الباطل أليس قتالنا في الجنة وقتلهم في النار قال بلى قال ففيم نعطي الدنيا في ديننا ونرجع ولما يحكم الله بيننا فقال يا ابن الخطاب إني رسول الله ولن يضيعني الله أبدا فرجع متغيظا فلم يصبر حتى جاء أبا بكر فقال يا أبا بكر أسنا على الحق وهم على الباطل قال يا ابن الخطاب إنه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ولن يضيعه الله أبدا فنزلت سورة الفتح.

I came to Abū Wā'il to inquire from him. He said, "We were in Şiffin. A man said, 'Do you not consider those who are invited to the Book of Allah?'"

‘Alī رضي الله عنه said, ‘Yes.’

Thereafter, Sahl ibn Ḥunayf said (i.e. to the Qurṛā'), 'Suspect yourselves, (and another narration states, "Suspect your opinion.") For I saw us on the day of Ḥudaybiyyah (referring to the conciliation which was reached between Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم and the polytheists) if we considered it appropriate to fight, we would have fought. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه came and said, 'Are we not upon the truth and are they not upon falsehood? Are not our martyrs in Jannah and their slain people in Hell-fire?' He replied, 'Of course.' ‘Umar رضي الله عنه further asked, 'So why should we succumb in our Dīn and return when Allah has not as yet decided between us?' He replied, 'O the son of Khaṭṭāb! I am the Messenger of Allah and he will never forsake me.' He returned angrily and was unable to contain himself till he approached Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه and said, 'O Abū Bakr! Are we not upon the truth and are they not upon falsehood?' He replied, 'O the son of Khaṭṭāb! He is the Messenger of Allah and Allah will never forsake him.' Thereafter Sūrah al-Faṭḥ was revealed."¹

Sahl ibn Ḥunayf رضي الله عنه cited the narration of Ḥudaybiyyah because the Qurṛā' were insisting upon continuing the fight and shunned the Arbitration. Hence, he suggested to them that they should obey ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and that his suggestion should

1 *Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: chapter of Tafsīr: 6/45, and chapter of holding on to the Sunnah: sub-chapter regarding the condemnation of opinion and the forcing of logic: 8/148.

not be opposed due to him knowing better the interests of the Muslims. He informed them that in Ḥudaybiyyah the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ also felt that they should fight and oppose the call for conciliation, but subsequent to that it became clear that the initiative of Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ regarding the conciliation was more ideal.

And al-Kirmānī says:

كأنهم-البراء- اتهموا سهلا بالتقصير في القتال حينئذ، فقال لهم: اتهموا أتم رأيكم، فإني لا أقصر كما لم أكن مقصرا يوم الحديبية من أجل أني لا أخالف حكم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، كذلك أتوقف اليوم لأجل مصلحة المسلمين.

It seems as if they (the Qurra) suspected Sahl of slackening in fighting that day. So, he said to them, “You should suspect your own opinion. For I am not slackening just as I did not slacken on the Day of Ḥudaybiyyah because I did not oppose the instruction of Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Likewise, today as well I am desisting due to the interest of the Muslims.¹

2. The wording of the Document of the Arbitration, and the Debate of the two Arbiters

The leaders of both the parties witnessed the enacting of the Arbitration which took place on Wednesday the 13th of Ṣafar in the year 37 A.H. The following is the wording of the document:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم هذا ما تقاضى عليه علي بن أبي طالب ومعاوية ابن أبي سفيان قاضى على على أهل الكوفة ومن معهم من شيعتهم من المؤمنين والمسلمين وقاضى معاوية على أهل الشام ومن كان معهم من المؤمنين والمسلمين أنا نزل عند حكم الله عز وجل وكتابه ولا يجمع بيننا غيره وأن كتاب الله عز وجل بيننا من فاتحته إلى خاتمته نحبي ما أحيا ونميت ما أمات فما وجد الحكمان في كتاب الله عز وجل وهما أبو موسى الأشعري عبد الله بن قيس وعمرو بن العاص القرشي عملا به وما لم يجدا في كتاب الله عز وجل فالسنة العادلة الجامعة غير المفرقة وأخذ الحكمان من علي ومعاوية ومن الجندين من العهود والميثاق والثقة من الناس أنهما أمانان على أنفسهما وأهلهم والأمة لهما أنصار على الذي

1 Ibn Hajr: Faḥḥ al-Bārī, 13/289.

يتقاضيان عليه وعلى المؤمنين والمسلمين من الطائفتين كليهما عهد الله وميثاقه أنا على ما في هذه الصحيفة وأن قد وجبت قضيتهما على المؤمنين فان الامن والاستقامة ووضع السلاح بينهم أينما ساروا على أنفسهم وأهليهم وأموالهم وشاهدهم وغائبهم وعلى عبد الله بن قيس وعمرو بن العاص عهد الله وميثاقه أن يحكما بين هذه الأمة ولا يردها في حرب ولا فرقة حتى يعصيا وأجل القضاء إلى رمضان وإن أحبا أن يؤخرا ذلك أخرآ على تراض منهما وإن توفى أحد الحكامين فان أمير الشيعة يختار مكانه ولا يآلو من أهل المعدلة والقسط وإن مكان قضيتهما الذي يقضيان فيه مكان عدل بين أهل الكوفة وأهل الشام وإن رضيا وأحبا فلا تحضهما فيه إلا من أرادا ويأخذ الحكمان من أرادا من الشهود ثم يكتبان شهادتهما على ما في هذه الصحيفة وهم أنصار على من ترك ما في هذه الصحيفة وأراد فيه إلحادا وظلما اللهم إنا نستصرك على من ترك ما في هذه الصحيفة.

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

This is what 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and Mu'āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān have decided; 'Alī on behalf of the people of Kūfah and the partisans who are with him from the believers and the Muslims, and Mu'āwiyah on behalf of the people of Shām and those who are with him from the believers and the Muslims. We will confine ourselves to the command of Allah and to his Book, nothing else besides that will unite us. The Book of Allah is between us from its beginning to its end. We will revive what it has revived and we will abolish what it has abolished. Hence, whatever the two arbiters, Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī 'Abd Allāh ibn Qays and 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ al-Qurashī, will find in it they will practice upon it. And if they do not find in the Book of Allah then the just Sunnah will unite them and not divide them. The two arbiters took pledges and covenants from both 'Alī, Mu'āwiyah and their armies that they will enjoy amnesty for themselves and their families and that the Ummah will be their helpers in the decision they reach. Likewise, upon the believers is a pledge to Allah that we will hold onto whatever is in this document and that their decision will be binding upon the believers. For safety, stability, and the dropping of weapons against their lives, their families and their wealth, also against those who present and those are absent, is binding upon them wherever they go. Likewise, it is the obligation of 'Abd Allāh ibn Qays and 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ to pledge to Allah that they will arbitrate between this Ummah and that they will not return it to warfare and bickering unless they are disobeyed. The decision has been suspended till Ramaḍān, and if they wish to delay it further, they have the option to do so with mutual consent. Similarly, if one of the arbiters passes

away then the leader will nominate another person in his stead and will not fall short of appointing a person of integrity and impartiality. Also, the place of their decision will be a place which is equally situated between the people of Kūfah and the people of Shām. And if they are happy and they prefer, then only those whom they want will attend their meeting. Thereafter the arbiters will choose whomsoever they want as witnesses and they will record their testimony regarding whatever is recorded in this document. They will be helpers against those who will discard what is in the document and intend heresy or transgression. O Allah, we seek your help against every person who discards what is in this document.¹

The Historians have differed about the place where the arbitration took place. From the writings of some, like al-Ṭabarī, al-Mas'ūdī, Ibn al-Athīr, and Ibn Kathīr it seems that Dūmat al-Jandal was the convening point.² Whereas Khalīfah and Ibn Sa'd, both earlier scholars than the aforementioned, state that the arbiters had convened in Adhruḥ.³ This is supported by the poem of Dhū al-Rimmah⁴ which he said in praise of Bilāl ibn Abī Burdah ibn Abī Mūsā al-Ash'arī:⁵

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/53-54.

2 *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/57; al-Mas'ūdī: *Murūj al-Dhahab*, 2/406; Ibn al-Athīr: *al-Kāmil*, 3/321; Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/282.

3 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 192; Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 3/32.

4 Ghaylān ibn 'Uqbah ibn Nuḥayr al-'Adawī al-Muḍarī, Abū al-Ḥārith, famously known as Dhū al-Rimmah. One of the most prolific poets of the Umayyad era. Most of his poetry is regarding love and crying over the ruins of his beloved. Jarīr said regarding him, "Even if Dhū al-Rimmah became dumb after his poem, What is with your eyes... he would still be the greatest poet. He passed away in 117 A.H /735 A.D. See: Ibn Ḥabīb: *al-Muḥabbar*, p. 57; Abū al-Faraj, 17/306; Ibn Sallām: *al-Amwāl*, p. 69; al-Maydānī: *Majma' al-Amthāl*, 1/26.

5 Bilāl ibn Abī Burdah 'Āmir ibn Abī Mūsā al-Ash'arī. He was the governor of Baṣrah and its judge during the governorship of Khālīd al-Qasrī. He was eloquent and prolific and narrated ḥadīth. He passed away after 120 A.H. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/109; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, 2/397; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 1/111; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 1/500.

أبوك تلافي الدين والناس بعدما
فشد إصار الدين أيام أذرح

تساؤوا وبيت الدين منقلع الكسر
ورد حروبا لقد لقحن إلى عقر

Your father rescued the Dīn and the people after they were offensive to each other and the house of Dīn was demolished.

He, thus, fortified the relations of Dīn during the days of Adhruh and repelled wars which previously bore no positive results.¹

Furthermore, al-Ṭabarī reports the narration of the dialogue which ensued between the arbiters via the transmission of Abū Mikhnaf, from Abū Janāb al-Kalbī that:

أن عمرا وأبا موسى حيث التقيا بدومة الجندل أخذ عمرو يقدم أبا موسى في الكلام يقول إنك صاحب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأنت أسن مني فتكلم وأنتكلم فكان عمرو قد عاد أبا موسى أن يقدمه في كل شيء اغتذى بذلك كله أن يقدمه فيبدأ بخلع على قال فنظر في أمرهما وما اجتماعا عليه فأراه عمرو على معاوية فأبى وأراه على ابنه فأبى وأراد أبو موسى عمرا على عبد الله بن عمر فأبى عليه فقال له عمرو خبرني ما رأيك قال رأيي أن نخلع هذين الرجلين ونجعل الأمر شورى بين المسلمين فيختار المسلمون لأنفسهم من أحبوا فقال له عمرو فان الرأي ما رأيت فأقبلا إلى الناس وهم يجتمعون فقال يا أبا موسى أعلمهم بأن رأينا قد اجتمع واتفق فتكلم أبو موسى فقال إن رأيي ورأى عمر وقد اتفق على أمر نرجو أن يصلح الله عز وجل به أمر هذه الأمة فقال عمرو صدق وبر يا أبا موسى فتقدم فتكلم فتقدم أبو موسى ليتكلم فقال له ابن عباس ويحك والله اني لأظنه قد خدعك إن كنتما قد اتفقتما على أمر فقدمه فليتكلم بذلك الأمر قبلك ثم تكلم أنت بعده فان عمرا رجل غادر ولا آمن أن يكون قد أعطاك الرضا فيما بينك وبينه فإذا قمت في الناس خالفك وكان أبو موسى مغفلا فقال له إنا قد اتفقتنا فتقدم أبو موسى فحمد الله عز وجل وأثنى عليه ثم قال يا أيها الناس إنا قد نظرنا في أمر هذه الأمة فلم نر أصحح لأمرها ولا ألم لشعثها من أمر قد جمع رأيي ورأى عمرو وهو أن نخلع عليا ومعاوية وتستقبل هذه الأمة هذا الأمر فيولوا منهم من أحبوا عليهم واني قد خلعت عليا ومعاوية فاستقبلوا أمركم وولوا عليكم من رأيتموه لهذا الأمر أهلا ثم تتحى وأقبل عمرو بن العاص فقام مقامه فحمد الله وأثنى عليه وقال إن هذا قد قال ما سمعتم وخلع صاحبه وأنا أخلع صاحبه كما خلعه وأثبت صاحبي معاوية فإنه ولي عثمان بن عفان رضي الله عنه والطالب بدمه وأحق الناس بمقامه فقال أبو موسى مالك لا وفكك الله غدرت وفجرت انما مثلك كمثل الكلب إن تحمل عليه يلهث أو تتركه يلهث قال عمرو انما مثلك كمثل الحمار يحمل أسفارا وحمل شريح بن هانئ على عمرو فقتعه بالسوط وحمل على شريح ابن لعمر وفضربه بالسوط وقام الناس فحجزوا بينهم وكان شريح

1 Dhū al-Rimmah: Dīwān, p. 974.

بعد ذلك يقول ما ندمت على شيء ندامتي على ضرب عمرو بالسوط ألا أكون ضربه بالسيف أتيا به الدهر ما أتى والتمس أهل الشام أبا موسى فركب راحلته ولحق بمكة قال ابن عباس قبيح الله رأى أبي موسى حذرته وأمرته بالرأي فما عقل فكان أبو موسى يقول حذرتي ابن عباس غدرة الفاسق ولكني اطمأنت إليه وظننت أنه لن يؤثر شيئا على نصيحة الأمة ثم انصرف عمرو وأهل الشام إلى معاوية وسلموا عليه بالخلافة ورجع ابن عباس وشريح بن هانئ إلى علي وكان إذا صلى الغداة بقنت فيقول اللهم العن معاوية وعمرا وأبا الأعور السلمي وحبيبا وعبد الرحمن بن خالد والضحاك بن قيس والوليد فبلغ ذلك معاوية فكان إذا قنت لعن عليا وابن عباس والأشتر وحسنا وحسينا-ابنا علي-.

When ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ and Abū Mūsā met at Dūmat al-Jandal, ‘Amr begun giving preference to Abū Mūsā in speech. He said to him, “You are the companion of Rasūl Allah ﷺ and my senior, so speak and thereafter I shall speak.”

‘Amr in this manner had made Abū Mūsā accustomed to being given preference in everything, thereby intending to eventually make him speak first and dismiss ‘Alī.

He, the narrator, says, “They both deliberated over their matter and what they could agree upon. Hence ‘Amr wanted him to accept Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as the ruler but he refused. He then wanted him to accept his son as a ruler but he refused again. Likewise, Abū Mūsā wanted ‘Amr to accept ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar as the leader but he refused.

‘Amr then asked him, “Tell me what is your opinion?”

He said, “We dismiss these two men and we leave the matter to the council of the Muslims so that the Muslims can choose for themselves whom they prefer.”

‘Amr said, “Your opinion is the opinion.”

Thereafter they came to the people whilst they were gathered and ‘Amr again said, “O Abū Mūsā! Inform them that we have reached a common opinion.”

Hence, Abū Mūsā spoke and said, “I and ‘Amr have reached a common opinion through which we hope that Allah will reform the matter of this Ummah.”

‘Amr affirmed, “He has spoken the truth and is honest. O Abū Mūsā! Go ahead and speak.”

Abū Mūsā, thus, came forward to speak, but was interrupted by Ibn ‘Abbās who said to him, “Woe unto you! By Allah I think he has deceived you. If the two of you have really reached consensus, then push him forward and let him speak before you and subsequent to that you can speak. For ‘Amr is a cunning person and I suspect that he has given you his word between the two of you, but when you stand up in front of the people, he will oppose you.”

Abū Mūsā was a heedless person and, thus, he said, “We have agreed.”

He, thus, went forth, praised Allah *سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ* and said, “O people! We looked into the matter of this Ummah and did not find anything more feasible for it and more restoring for its unity than a matter upon which me and ‘Amr have agreed. We have decided that we dismiss ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah, and this Ummah will choose who it prefers as its leader anew. I have dismissed ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah so decide your matter anew and appoint who you feel is best suited for this matter.”

He then stepped aside and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ came forward. He stood in his spot, praised Allah and then said, “This person has said what you heard and he dismissed his companion. I also dismiss his companion just as he did but I approve of my companion, for he is the guardian of ‘Uthmān, the seeker of his blood, and the most rightful person to fill his position.”

Abū Mūsā said, “What is wrong with you? You have deceived and lied. Your example is like that of a dog, if you attack it, it pants, and if you leave it, it still pants.”

‘Amr retorted, “Your example is like that of a donkey which carries books.”

As a result, Shurayḥ ibn Hānī¹ attacked ‘Amr and struck him with his whip. In return a son of ‘Amr attacked him and struck him with his whip. The people then rose and stopped them.

Shurayḥ would thereafter say, “I have not regretted anything as much as I have regretted hitting ‘Amr with the whip. Why did not I strike him with the sword immediately?”

The people of Shām thereafter sought Abū Mūsā, but he had mounted his beast and had already set off for Makkah.

Ibn ‘Abbās said, “My Allah condemn the opinion of Abū Mūsā. I warned him and told him to be shrewd but he did not understand.”

Abū Mūsā would later say, “Ibn ‘Abbās had warned me of the treachery of the imposter, but I trusted him and assumed that he will not give preference to anything over the well-being of the Ummah.”

Eventually they all dispersed. ‘Amr and the people of Shām returned to Mu‘āwiyah and greeted him with the glad tidings of Khilāfah, and Ibn ‘Abbās and Shurayḥ ibn Hānī’ returned to ‘Alī. ‘Alī would in the Fajr Ṣalāh make the following supplication in his *Qunūt*, “O Allah curse Mu‘āwiyah, ‘Amr, Abū al-A‘war al-Sulamī, Ḥabīb -ibn Maslamah, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Khālīd, al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Qays, and al-al-Walīd ibn ‘Uqbah.”

This reached Mu‘āwiyah and, thus, he would also curse ‘Alī, Ibn ‘Abbās, al-Ashtar, Hasan, and Ḥusayn in his *Qunūt*.²

1 Shurayḥ ibn Hānī’ ibn Yazīd ibn Nuḥayk al-Harathī al-Kūfī. From the comrades of ‘Alī عليه السلام who participated with him in the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn. He was in charge of his police. Ibn Sa‘d has made mention of him in his *al-Ṭabaqāt* in the first generation of the Tābi‘īn of Kūfah and has deemed him reliable. Aḥmad, Ibn Ma‘īn and al-Nasā‘ī also deemed him reliable. And Ibn Khirāsh said, “Truthful.” Muslim has likewise made mention of him among the Mukhaḍramīn, those who lived in both the pre-Islamic and Islamic eras but only accepted Islam after the demise of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم. And Khalīfah says, “He was killed with ibn Abī Bakrah in Sijistān in 78 A.H. /697 A.D. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/228; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/251.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/70-71.

3. Analyses of the Narration of the Arbitration

Because the arbitration is something of crucial importance in the political history of the Islamic empire, it is important to clarify the reality of what unfolded therein. For it has been terribly depicted as equally as it has been terribly interpreted as well. This has resulted in much confusion and in the violation of the lofty status of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. For the popular narrative of the arbitration accuses some of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم of being deceitful and heedless and others of resisting and clashing due to their desire for rulership.

But after this narrative is subjected to scrutiny two matters are very clearly discernible: firstly, the weakness of its chain of transmission, and secondly its inconsistencies.

As for its chain of transmission, in it are two narrators whose integrity is questionable. They are: Abū Mikhnaf Lūṭ ibn Yaḥyā, and Abū Janāb al-Kalbī. The first is weak and unreliable as has passed already,¹ and regarding the second:

- » Ibn Sa'd says, "He was weak."²
- » Al-Bukhārī and Abū Ḥātim say, "Yaḥyā al-Qaṭṭān would deem him weak."³
- » 'Uthmān al-Dārimī says, "Weak."⁴
- » The same is averred by al-Nasā'ī as well.⁵

As for the text thereof, three things are worth noticing: the first concerns the dispute of 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه which ultimately led to the war between

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/70-71.

2 Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/360.

3 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/2/267; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, 9/138.

4 Al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 238.

5 Al-Nasā'ī: *al-Ḍu'afā' wa al-Matrūkūn*, p. 253.

them, the second concerns the status of each one of them, and the third concerns the personalities of Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī and ‘Amr ibn ‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه.

a. The Dispute of ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه.

It is a unanimously accepted and obvious fact according to all historians that the dispute between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه revolved around seeking retribution from the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه assumed that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was falling short of fulfilling his responsibility of avenging the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه by killing his murderers and therefore refused to pledge to him and enter into his obedience. For according to him seeking retribution took precedence over pledging to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, especially when he was the guardian of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه due to his relation to him.

On the other hand, due to this resistance from pledging to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه in anticipation for the execution of the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, and due to his orders not being carried out in Shām, Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and the people of Shām were revolutionists against the Khilāfah according to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. This is because his opinion was that his election was enacted with the consent of those present from the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār in Madīnah. It was therefore binding upon the rest of the Muslims in all the regions of the empire. He considered Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and the people of Shām to be rebels who were rebelling against him, whereas he was the Imām to whom the pledges were given. Consequently, he decided to subdue them and return them to the majority, even it be by way of force.

Ibn Ḥazm says the following in this regard:

إن عليا قاتل معاوية لامتناعه من تنفيذ أوامره في جميع أرض الشام، وهو الإمام الواجب طاعته، ولم ينكر معاوية قط فضل علي واستحقاقه الخلافة، لكن اجتهاده أداه إلى أن رأى تقديم أخذ القود من قتلة عثمان على البيعة، ورأى نفسه أحق بطلب دم عثمان والكلام فيه من أولاد عثمان وأولاد الحكم بن أبي العاص لسنه وقوته على الطلب بذلك وأصاب في هذا، وإنما أخطأ في تقديمه ذلك على البيعة فقط.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه fought Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه due to him refusing to carry out his orders in the entire region of Shām despite him being the Imām obedience to

whom was incumbent. Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه on the other hand never denied the merits of 'Alī رضي الله عنه and the fact that he was deserving of the Khilāfah. However, his *Jtihād* induced him to give preference to seeking retribution from the killers of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه over giving his pledge. He saw himself more deserving of seeking the blood of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه and of discussing the matter than even the children of 'Uthmān and the children of al-Ḥakam ibn Abī al-'Āṣ due to his seniority and ability to seek. He was correct in this matter; however, he was incorrect in giving preference to it over pledging.¹

Understanding the dispute according to this perspective reveals the extent of the error of the aforementioned narrative regarding the decision of the two arbiters. The arbiters were appointed to reach a decisive conclusion regarding the dispute of 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه. It was never regarding the Khilāfah and who was most deserving of it, but it was regarding the execution of the retribution against the killers of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه which has nothing to do with the Khilāfah. Hence, if the arbiters discarded this primary matter, which is what they were called to decide regarding, and took a decision regarding the Khilāfah as is alleged in the popular narration, then that would entail that they did not understand the focal point of the contention and did not comprehensively comprehend the claims of either side. This is something which is very unlikely.

b. The positions of 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه:

Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه governed over Shām as the representative of 'Umar رضي الله عنه and remained its governor till 'Umar رضي الله عنه passed away.² After 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه took charge of the Khilāfah he kept Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه in his position.³ Thereafter, when 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه was martyred and 'Alī رضي الله عنه took charge of the Khilāfah he did not maintain him in his position.⁴ As a result Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه lost the centre of his

1 Ibn Ḥazm: *al-Fiṣal fi al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, 4/160.

2 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 155.

3 *Ibid.* p. 178.

4 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/442.

dominion and strength as the governor of the lands of Shām, although he did not lose his actual influence as an un-appointed ruler due to the people following him and being convinced that his resistance from pledging allegiance to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was based on a valid reason, i.e. seeking his right of retribution from the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه due to him being the guardian.

If this was the case, which in fact it is, then as per the popular narration the decision of the arbiters entailed the dismissal of both ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, which in the case of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه this dismissal was definitely out of place. For even if we, hypothetically, assume that they were given the prerogative to dismiss both of them, it is still possible to envision the dismissal of ‘Alī from the position of Khilāfah, but from which position did they dismiss Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه? Did they have the authority to dismiss him from his kinship or from seeking his right based on it? And has history ever witnessed in any of its annals that a revolutionist gets dismissed from his spearheading of an insurrection due to the decision of two arbiters? There is no doubt that this is another reason for the disapproval of the popular narration of the arbitration and the decision that was taken therein.

c. The personalities of Abū Mūsā and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه:

The idea that Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه was a victim of the deceit of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه in the arbitration contradicts the historical realities which establish his merit, acumen, and his deep understanding of the Dīn. All of these traits are established for him due to him presiding over some positions of governance and law in the Islamic world from the time of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم onwards.

Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم appointed him as the governor of Zubayd and ‘Adan.¹ ‘Umar رضي الله عنه appointed him as the governor of Baṣrah which he governed right up to the demise of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه.² ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, similarly, appointed him as the governor of

1 Khalīfah: *al-Tārikh*, p. 97.

2 Ibid. p. 154; Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārikh Dimashq* (manuscript), 9/429.

Başrah and subsequent to that the governor of Kūfah which he governed till the martyrdom of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.¹ ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had maintained him upon this position thereafter.² Would it then be possible to imagine that a person who was trusted by Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and his Khulafā’ thereafter was beguiled by a deception like the one stated in the incident of the arbitration.

Furthermore, the Ṣaḥābah and many scholars of the successors have attested to the thorough knowledge of Abū Mūsā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, his competence in governance, and his shrewdness in matters of law. Hence, Anas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ informs us of the testimony of ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

بعثني الأشعري إلى عمر، فقال لي: كيف تركت الأشعري؟ قلت: تركته يعلم الناس القرآن، فقال: أما إنه كيس ولا تسمعها إياه.

Al-Ash‘arī sent me to ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He asked me, “How did you leave al-Ash‘arī?”

I replied, “I left him whilst he was teaching the people the Qur‘ān.”

He said, “Behold he is an intelligent man, but do not tell him that.”³

And al-Sha‘bī said:

كتب عمر في وصيته: ألا لا يقر لي عامل أكثر من سنة، وأقروا الأشعري أربع سنين

‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ wrote in his bequest, “No governor should be maintained for more than a year,” but they maintained al-Ash‘arī for four years.⁴

1 Khalīfah: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 178.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/442.

3 Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 4/108.

4 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 9/522.

And al-Fasawī narrates the following from Abū al-Bakhtarī:¹

أتينا عليا فسألناه عن أصحاب محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: عن أيهم تسألوني... قلنا: أبو موسى؟ قال: صبغ في العلم صبغة.

We came to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and we asked him regarding the Ṣaḥābah of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم.

He asked, “Regarding who of them are you asking me?”

We said, “Abū Mūsā?”

He replied, “He was immersed thoroughly in knowledge.”²

And Masrūq said:

كان القضاء في الصحابة إلى ستة: عمر، وعلي، وابن مسعود، وأبي، وزيد، وأبي موسى

Judicial rulings amongst the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were referred to six of them: ‘Umar, ‘Alī, Ibn Mas‘ūd, Ubayy, Zayd, and Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه.³

And al-Aswad ibn Yazīd⁴ said:

1 Sa‘īd ibn Fīrawz al-Ṭā‘ī, Abū al-Bakhtarī al-Kūfī. He narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās, Ibn ‘Umar, and Abū Barzah. He was from the virtuous people of Kūfah and has been deemed reliable by Ibn Ma‘īn and Abū Zur‘ah. Abū Ḥātim said, “Truthful.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “A reliable Ṭābi‘ī who was martyred in the Battle of Dayr al-Jamājim which was between al-Hajjāj and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ash‘ath in 83 A.H/702 A.D. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/292; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 187; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/206; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 2/54.

2 Al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 2/540.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 9/500.

4 Aswad ibn Yazīd ibn Qays al-Nakhaṭī, Abū ‘Umar. From the Ṭābi‘īn. He narrated from Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Alī, Ibn Mas‘ūd, and Ḥudhayfah رضي الله عنه. ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها said about him, “There is no one in Kūfah who I am fonder of than al-Aswad,” and she would honour him. He was also from the students of Ibn Mas‘ūd رضي الله عنه who would teach the Qur‘ān and issue fatwas. Ibn Sa‘d has said, “Reliable.” And ‘Ijlī said, “A reliable person of Kūfah. He was a man of piety, worship and jurisprudence. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/70; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/449; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/38; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 67; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taḥdhīb*, 1/342.

لم أر بالكوفة أعلم من علي وأبي موسى

I have not seen anyone more knowledgeable than ‘Alī and Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنهما in Kūfah.¹

And Ṣafwān ibn Sulaym² says:

لم يكن يفتي في المسجد في زمن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم غير هؤلاء: عمر وعلي ومعاذ وأبي موسى

No one besides these people would issue fatwas in the masjid during the era of Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم: ‘Umar, ‘Alī, Mu‘ādh, and Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنهما.³

And al-Zubayr ibn al-Kharrīt⁴ narrates the following from Abū ‘Ubayd:⁵

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 9/499.

2 Ṣafwān ibn Sulaym, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Madanī al-Zuhrī. From the jurists of the Tābī‘īn. He was from the pious bondsmen of Allah. He has been deemed reliable by al-Nasā‘ī and Abū Ḥātim. And Ya‘qūb ibn Shaybah said, “Reliable, meticulous and well-known for worship.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “A reliable and pious person of Madīnah.” He passed away in 132 A.H/749 A.D. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt* (the section added to complete the biographies of the people of Madīnah), p. 324; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 228; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/2/307; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 4/423; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 4/425.

3 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq* (manuscript), 9/502.

4 Al-Zubayr ibn al-Kharrīt al-Baṣrī. From the followers of the Tābī‘īn. Al-‘Ijlī said regarding him, “A reliable and meticulous narrator from the people of Baṣrah.” He was an adherent of the Sunnah, and has been deemed reliable by Aḥmad, Abū Ḥātim, and al-Nasā‘ī. Al-Dārimī quotes Ibn Ma‘īn, “There is no problem with him.” And Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. See: al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 163; al-Dārimī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 115; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 3/581; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 6/332; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 3/314.

5 Sa‘d ibn ‘Ubayd al-Zuhrī. He is from the Tābī‘īn and has narrated from ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, and Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه. He was from the experts of the Qur’ān and jurisprudence. Ibn Sa‘d said, “He was reliable and has a few narrations.” And al-Ṭabarī said, “His reliability is agreed upon.” And Muslim said, “He was reliable.” He has also been deemed reliable by Ibn Ma‘īn and Ibn al-Barqī. He passed away in 98 A.H/716 A.D. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 5/86; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/192; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/2/60; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 3/477.

ما كنا نشبهه كلام أبي موسى إلا بالجزار الذي ما يخطئ المفصل

We would not liken the speech of Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه but to a butcher who in his strike would not miss the joint.¹

It is also established regarding Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه that he was from those who memorised the entire Qur’ān during the era of Nabī صلی الله علیه وسلم. He was also famous for tutoring the people. Now, if it is established that the lives of the people in that time, in war and in peace, revolved around the understanding of the Qur’ān and the Sunnah, and that Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه was a person of such stature that ‘Umar رضي الله عنه specifically wrote to him his famous letter regarding matters of law and politics, then how is it possible to imagine that he was so heedless that he did not understand the reality of the dispute which he was appointed to settle? Thus, he allegedly made a decision which was pointless, i.e. a decision to dismiss the Sharī Khalīfah without any justifying rationale to do so and a decision to allegedly dismiss Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه as well. Thereafter the alleged reviling and swearing transpired between him and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه, something that is in complete contrast with what is categorically known of their good conduct and their well-mannered speech.

Similarly, if the knowledge of Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه and his experience in law prevented him from erring in the issue which was handed over to him, then that exactly can be assumed regarding ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه as well who was considered to be from the intellectuals of the Arabs and their wise men. Nabī صلی الله علیه وسلم had on one occasion ordered him to decide between two disputants in his presence. And he gave him a glad tiding when he asked, “O Rasūl Allah! Should I decide in your presence?” He said:

إذا حكم الحاكم فاجتهد ثم أصاب فله أجران، وإذا حكم فاجتهد ثم أخطأ فله أجر

When a judge passes a decision after exercising *Ijtihād* and reaching the correct conclusion he gets two rewards, and when he passes a decision

1 Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 2/245.

after exercising *Ijtihād* and reaching the wrong conclusion he gets one reward.¹

So, accepting this narrative would entail that ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه was a man who was driven by his ego when fulfilling his responsibilities. Owing to which his ego would override not only his intellect and experience, but also his piety and abstinence. Whereas he was from the senior Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and their notables and enjoyed many merits and virtues. Aḥmad narrated the following from Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubayd Allah رضي الله عنه from Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم:

عمرو بن العاص من صالحى قريش

‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ is from the pious of the Quraysh.²

He also narrates from ‘Uqbah ibn ‘Āmir رضي الله عنه that Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

اسلم الناس وأمن عمرو

The people have merely accepted Islam and ‘Amr has truly embraced *īmān*.³

And in the narration of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥaṇṭab رضي الله عنه from Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم the following appears:

نعم أهل البيت عبد الله وأبو عبد الله وأم عبد الله

Outstanding is the household of ‘Abd Allāh, the father of ‘Abd Allāh and the mother of ‘Abd Allāh.⁴

1 Ṣaḥīḥ *al-Bukhārī*: chapter of holding on to the Sunnah: 8/157.

2 Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 2/911. There is a break in its chain.

3 Ibid. 2/912. The annotator has said, “Its chain is correct. It is cited by al-Tirmidhī in his *Sunan* (Istanbul print), 9/380, Ḥadīth: 3843, chapter of merits, sub-chapter regarding the merits of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه; Aḥmad: *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 2/912, Ḥadīth: 1744; and al-Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 3/236, Ḥadīth: 3020.

4 Ibid. p. 912. The annotator says, “Its men are reliable; however, it is Mursal.”

And Qabīṣah ibn Jābir¹ says:

صحبت عمرو بن العاص فما رأيت رجلا أبين أو أنصح رأيا، ولا أكرم جلسيا منه، ولا أشبه سريرة بعلانية
منه

I accompanied ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ and I did not see anyone who was clearer in his opinion, whose companions were more honourable than his, and whose internal resembled his external more than his.²

And Ibn Taymiyyah states in his *Fatāwā* that no one of the Salaf has accused ‘Amr ibn ‘Āṣ and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه of hypocrisy or deceit. He says:

فعمرو بن العاص وأمثاله ممن قدم مهاجرا إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بعد الحديبية هاجروا إليه من بلادهم طوعا لا كرها، والمهاجرون لم يكن فيهم منافق، وإنما كان النفاق في بعض أهل المدينة، إذ لما دخل الإسلام أشرافهم وجمهورهم احتاج الباقون أن يظهروا الإسلام نفاقا لعز الإسلام وظهوره في قومهم، وأما أهل مكة كان أشرافهم وجمهورهم كفاراً، فلم يكن يظهر الإيمان إلا من هو مؤمن ظاهراً وباطناً، فإنه كان من يظهر الإسلام يؤذى ويهجر، وإنما المنافق يظهر الإسلام لمصلحة دنياه، ولو كان عمرو بن العاص ومعاوية وأمثالهما ممن يتخوف منهما لم يولوا على المسلمين، فعمرو بن العاص أمره النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في غزوة ذات السلاسل، واستعمل أبا سفيان بن حرب على نجران، وقد اتفق

1 Qabīṣah ibn Jābir ibn Wahb ibn Mālik al-Kūfī, Abū al-‘Alā’. He narrated from ‘Umar and was present in the sermon of Jābiyah. Ibn Sa’d said, “He was reliable.” And Ya’qūb ibn Shaybah has considered him among the first generation of the jurists of Kūfah. And al-‘Ijlī said, “He was considered to be from among the eloquent.” And Ibn Khirāsh said, “He was a great person who was from the jurists of the Tābi‘īn.” Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*, and al-Fasawī has said that he participated in the Battle of Jamal. And ‘Abd al-Malik ibn ‘Umayr narrates the following from him, “Should I not inform you of who I accompanied? I accompanied ‘Umar and did not see anyone who understands the Book of Allah more than him. I accompanied Ṭalḥah and did not see anyone who spent more than him. I accompanied Mu‘āwiyah and did not see anyone with greater forbearance than him. I accompanied Ziyād and did not see anyone whose courtiers were more honourable than his. I accompanied Mughīrah, if there was a city with locked doors from which one could only exit but by way of cunning and plotting, he would be able to escape from all its doors.” He passed away in 69 A.H./688 A.D. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/145; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 4/1/175; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 388; al-Fasawī: *al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, 1/ 458 and 3/313; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 5/318; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 8/344.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, 1/57.

المسلمون على أن إسلام معاوية خير من إسلام أبيه، فكيف يكون هؤلاء منافقون والنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يأتئهم على أحوال المسلمين في العلم والعمل.

‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ and his likes who migrated to Nabī ﷺ after Ḥudaybiyyah migrated to him happily and not due to being forced. And amongst the Muhājirīn there were no hypocrites, hypocrisy was only found in some people of Madīnah. For when Islam entered their notables and their broader community the rest of them now felt the need to display Islam hypocritically due to the dominance of Islam and its prevalence in their people. As for the people of Makkah, their notables and broader community were mostly disbelievers, and thus only a person who was internally and externally Muslim would openly proclaim his faith; for whoever would proclaim his faith would be harassed and forsook. As opposed to a hypocrite who displayed Islam in order to serve his worldly interests. So, if ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ and Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were really suspected and feared they would not be given charge of the matters of the Muslims; Nabī ﷺ appointed ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as the leader in the campaign of Dhāt al-Salāsīl, and he appointed Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as the governor of Najrān. And the Muslims all concur that the Islam of Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was better than the Islam of his father. So how can these people be hypocrites when Nabī ﷺ trusted them upon the conditions of the Muslims in knowledge and in practice?¹

As for the allegation that ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would curse Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his comrades in his Qunūt, and that Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would also curse ‘Alī, Ibn ‘Abbās, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. This is invalid. Because the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were most concerned about abiding by the commandments of the Sharīah one of which is the impermissibility of reviling a Muslim and cursing him. It is narrated from Rasūl Allah ﷺ that he said:

من لعن مؤمنا فهو كقتله

Whoever curses a believer it is as though he killed him.²

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, 35/65-66.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 7/84, chapter of etiquette.

Likewise, he is also reported to have said:

لا يكون اللعانون شفعاء ولا شهداء يوم القيامة

The cursers will not be intercessors nor witnesses on the Day of Judgement.¹

Also:

ليس المؤمن بطعان ولا بلعان

A believer is not one who criticises and curses excessively.²

Furthermore, it is narrated from ‘Alī رضي الله عنه that when he heard two of his followers openly reviling Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and cursing the people of Shām, he sent a message to them ordering them to stop. They came to him and asked, “Are we not upon the truth and them upon falsehood?” He said, “Of course, by the Lord of the sacred Ka‘bah.” They further asked, “So why are you preventing us from cursing them and reviling them?” He said:

كرهت لكم أن تكونوا لعانين، ولكن قولوا: اللهم احقن دماءنا ودماءهم، وأصلح ذات بيننا وبينهم،
وأبعدهم من ضلالتهم حتى يعرف الحق من جهله ويرعوي عن الغي من ليجج به.

I dislike that you be cursers. But say: O Allah preserve our blood and their blood, amend our mutual relations, take them away from their deviance so that the one who is ignorant of the truth comes to learn it, and so that the one persisting upon deviance gives it up.³

From the aforementioned the falsity of the popular narrative of the Arbitration becomes completely evident; it is clear that it cannot be established according to any standard of objective scrutiny of historical texts.

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 16/149, chapter of kindness, fostering kinship, and etiquette.

2 *Musnad Aḥmad*, 1/405; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 3/250, chapter of kindness, subchapter regarding condemning and cursing; al-Albānī has deemed it *Ṣaḥīḥ* in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 2/189, Ḥadīth: 1110.

3 Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnawarī: *al-Akḥbār al-Ṭiwāl*, p. 165.

4. The reality of the Arbitration

What further emphasises the invalidity of the aforementioned narration regarding the arbitration is that the scholars have critiqued it and have reported narrations contrary to it in their books. Al-Dāraquṭnī has cited the following from Ḥuḍayn ibn al-Mundhir that:¹

أنه جاء فضرب فسطاطه قريبا من فسطاط معاوية، فبلغ نبأ معاوية، فأرسل إليه، فقال: إنه بلغني عن هذا العمرو بن العاص - الذي بلغني عنه فأتيته فقلت: أخبرني عن الأمر الذي وليت أنت وأبو موسى كيف صنعتما فيه؟ قال: قد قال الناس في ذلك ما قالوا: والله ما كان الأمر على ما قالوا، ولكن قلت لأبي موسى ما ترى في هذا الأمر؟ قال: أرى أنه في النفر الذين توفي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو راض عنهم، قلت: فأين تجعلني أنا ومعاوية؟ فقال: إن يسعتن بكما ففیکما معونة، وإن يستغن عنكما فطالما استغنى أمر الله عنكما.

He came and erected his tent close to the tent of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه. His news reached Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and, thus, he summoned him.

He said, “Such and such has reached me regarding this person (referring to ‘Amr ibn ‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه) so, I came to him and said, “Inform me regarding this matter which you and Abū Mūsā took charge of, what did the two of you do about it?”

He said, “The people have said whatever they have said regarding it, by Allah the matter was not as they have said.

But I asked Abū Mūsā, ‘What do you feel about this matter?’

1 Ḥuḍayn ibn al-Mundhir ibn al-Ḥārith al-Raqqāshī, Abū Sāsān. He has narrated from ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, and Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه. Al-‘Ijlī said, “He is a reliable Tābi‘ and was a pious person.” Al-Nasā‘ī and Ibn Ḥibbān have also deemed him reliable. And Ibn Khirāsh said, “Truthful.” And Abū Aḥmad al-‘Askarī said, “He was the bearer of flag of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه on the Day of Ṣiffīn. ‘Alī رضي الله عنه thereafter appointed him over Iṣṭakhar, and he was from the prominent men of Rabī‘ah.” And al-Dhahabī said, “He was from the commanders of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه on the Day of Ṣiffīn and was brave, a poet, and an eloquent person. He passed away in 97 A.H/715 A.D. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Ṣaghīr*, 1/347; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 123, 124; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 4/191; al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 1/177; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 2/395.

He replied, 'I see it to be the prerogative of those individuals who Nabī ﷺ was pleased with when he passed away.'

I asked, 'So where do you place me and Mu'āwiyah?'

He replied, 'If he seeks your assistance then you will surely be of assistance, and if he does not utilise you then the matter of Allah has always been independent from you.'"¹

There is no doubt that the issue of contention which the arbiters decided to subject to the Ummah or to the Ahl al-Shūrā amongst them was nothing other than the dispute between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه regarding the killers of 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه. This is something agreed upon by all the Islamic sources. As for the dispute regarding the Khilāfah it had not risen as yet, and Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه was not claiming Khilāfah nor was he denying the right of 'Alī رضي الله عنه, as has been established already. He only resisted from pledging allegiance to him and carrying out his orders in the lands of Shām due to him being dominant there, although not according to the law. He benefitted from the obedience of the people after having governed over them for at least twenty years.

The scholars who specialise in the verification and falsification of narrations have already preceded us in critiquing the narration of the Arbitration. Foremost amongst them is Abū Bakr ibn al-'Arabī who has said the following regarding it:

وقد تحكّم الناس في التحكيم فقالوا فيه ما لا يرضاه الله وإذا لحظتموه بعين المروءة أدون الديانة أرايتم أنها سخافة حمل على سطرها في الكتب في الأكثر عدم الدين، وفي الأقل جهل متين وكان أبو موسى رجلاً نقيّاً فقيهاً عالماً حسبما بيناه في كتاب (سراج المرّيدين)، وأرسله النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى اليمن مع معاذ، وقدمه عمرو وأثنى عليه بالفهم. وزعمت الطائفة التاريخية الركيكة أنه كان أبه ضعيف الرأي مخدوعاً في القول، وأن ابن العاص كان ذا دهاءٍ وأرب حتى ضربت الأمثال بدهائه تأكيداً لما أرادت من الفساد، اتبع في ذلك بعض الجهال بعضاً وصنفوا فيه حكايات (هذا كله كذب صراح ما جرى منه حرف قط وإنما هو شيء أخبر عنه المبتدعة، ووضعته التاريخية للملوك، فتوارثه أهل المجانة والجهارة بمعاصي الله والبدع...

1 Ibn al-'Arabī: *al-'Awāsim*, p. 178.

People have spoken with carelessness regarding the Arbitration and have said that which is not pleasing to Allah. Even if you have to study it with the eye of dignity (not even religion) you will realise that it is a fallacy which was forged due to the absence of Dīn, or at least deeply grounded ignorance... Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه was a pious, well-educated, and learned person, as we have detailed in the book *Sirāj al-Murīdīn*. Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم sent him to Yemen with Mu'ādh رضي الله عنه and 'Umar رضي الله عنه appointed him and praised him for his understanding. Whereas this inadequate group of historians claim that he was dim-witted, weak in opinion, and deceivable in speech. It also claims that Ibn al-Āṣ رضي الله عنه was a person of cunningness and greed, so much so that it came out with proverbs to further emphasise its evil motives. The ignorant followed each other in this matter and they forged narrations and tales... These are all clear lies, nothing of which has ever occurred. They are all things which the innovators have informed regarding and which some historians forged to please the kings. Thereafter it was all inherited by the people of impudence and those who boldly displayed the disobedience of Allah and innovations...¹

And Ibn Dihyah al-Kalbī says the following in his books *A'lām al-Naṣr al-Mubīn fī al-Mufaḍḍalah bayn Šifīn*:

قال أبو بكر محمد بن الطيب الأشعري الباقلائي في مناقب الأئمة: فما اتفق الحكمان قط على خلعه - علي بن أبي طالب -... وعلي أنهما لو اتفقا على خلعه لم ينخلع حتى يكون الكتاب والسنة والمجتمع عليهما يوجبان خلعه أو أحد منهما على ما شرطاً في الموافقة بينهما أو إلى أن يبيننا ما يوجب خلعه من الكتاب والسنة، ونص كتاب علي عليه السلام اشترط على الحكيمين أن يحكما بما في كتاب الله عز وجل من فاتحته إلى خاتمته لا يجاوزان ذلك ولا يحيدان عنه، ولا يميلان إلى هوى ولا إدهان، وأخذ عليهما أغلظ العهود والمواثيق، وإن هما جاوزا بالحكم كتاب الله فلا حكم لهما، والكتاب والسنة يثبتان إمامته، ويعظمانه ويثنيان عليه، ويشهدان بصدقه وعدالته، وإمامته وسابقته في الدين، وعظيم عنائه في جهاد المشركين، وقرابته من سيد المرسلين، وما خص به من القدم في العلم والمعرفة بالحكم، ووفور الحلم، وأنه حقيق بالإمامة، وأهل لحمل أعباء الخلافة.

Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ṭayyib al-Ash'arī (al-Bāqillānī) states in *Manāqib al-A'immaḥ*, "The arbiters did not ever agree to dismiss him (i.e. 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه... Even if they did agree to dismiss him his dismissal

1 Al-'Awāšim min al-Qawāšim, p. 172-177.

would not be valid unless the agreed upon Qur'ān and the Sunnah necessitated his dismissal or at least one of them, as they had placed as a requisite in their mutual agreement; or until they could state what necessitated his dismissal from the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. The text of the document of 'Alī made it binding upon the arbiters to decide based on the Book of Allah from its beginning to its end without exceeding it, abandoning it, or inclining toward the ego or compromise. He took from them upon it the most emphasised of pledges and covenants. And he also clarified that if they exceeded the Book of Allah in their decision it will not be valid... The Qur'ān and the Sunnah both establish his leadership, they venerate him, and extoll his merits. They attest to his integrity and truthfulness, his leadership and early contributions in the Dīn, his great sacrifices in combatting the polytheists, his kinship to the master of all the prophets ﷺ, the excellence he was granted in knowledge, recognition, and wisdom, his abundant forbearance, and to the fact that he was worthy of rulership and was capable of bearing the burdens of the Khilāfah...¹

Lastly, it is important to note that the Arbitration was the direct cause for the conflict between 'Alī رضي الله عنه and the Khawārij. Eventually 'Alī رضي الله عنه fought them and defeated them with an overwhelming defeat in the Battle of Nahrawān. Thus, they plotted by night to kill him and only managed to do so by launching a surprise attack on him. He رضي الله عنه was martyred at the time of Fajr Ṣalāh on Friday the twenty third of Ramaḍān when the most wretched of them 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muljam struck him.² The Khawārij also appointed two individuals to kill Mu'āwiyah and 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ رضي الله عنهما but death missed them.³ Subsequent to that trials started to sweep across the Ummah and sects with unique political and theological tendencies begun to emerge. There was no way to revert back to the ancient path which the two arbiters tried to place the Ummah upon, and there was no way to resolve the dispute between the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم and their partisans as a result.

1 Ibn Diḥyah: *A'lām al-Naṣr al-Mubīn fī al-Mufaḍḍalah bayn Ahl Ṣiffīn*, slate no. 21.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/143-145.

3 Ibid. 5/149.

Section Three: The Outcomes of the Fitnah

There are four discussions in this section:

1. The Political Outcomes

- A. The Position of the Khawārij
- B. The Position of the *Murji'ah*
- C. The Position of the Shī'ah

The negative results of the emergence of these political differences

2. The Theological Outcomes

- A. The Innovation of the Khawārij
- B. The Innovation of the *Murji'ah*
- C. The innovation of the Shī'ah

The negative effects of the emergence of these theological differences

3. The Jurisprudential Outcome: The Rulings regarding the Rebels

4. The Splendid Position of the Ahl al-Sunnah regarding the Fitnah.

1. The Political Outcomes

Even after the Battle of Jamal, and thereafter the Battle of Šiffīn, the entire Ummah was upon a unified theological path and one political course which was adhered to by both combatting armies. It was the path of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, i.e. the path which Nabī ﷺ and his Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were upon; they all remained steadfast upon guidance and the truth and did not alter that in anyway.

The Battle of Şifḥīn can be considered the historical point of the emergence of sects with unique political tendencies, and more specifically the incident of the Arbitration which was a small flame which subsequently transitioned into a volcano. This is owing to the fact that this incident and whatever followed thereafter led to the rise of various sects, rather to the emergence of two courses each of which comprised of multiple sects, namely: *Tashayyu'* and *Khurūj*. Each one of them was the product of a common flaw: extremism. But the extremism of each was diametrically opposite to the extremism of the other, and the extremism of one became a justification for the extremism of the other in the opposite direction.

This divergence and the clash that it resulted in thereafter led to the emergence of a neutral position which is normally found in any clash of similar characteristics. For it is from the established trends of society that a dispute between any two groups will result in the emergence of a third group that will be completely neutral. This was the *Murji'ah* who were unable to decisively adopt an opinion, follow it and support its proponents. They, as a result, gave preference to neutrality.

It is also crucial to note that those who diverged from the majority, or the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, were small groups and limited sects in whose ranks there wasn't a single individual of merit and early contribution. Instead all of them were Bedouins and people who had in the very recent past reverted to Islam from the people of the conquered nations. So, across the three meritorious generations¹ the innovators were nothing but swamps upon the banks of the great river of Islam. And not a single prominent authority from the scholars recognised by history was part of them, with the grace of Allah.

1 The ḥadīth regarding them is as follows:

خير القرون قرني، ثم الذين يلونهم، ثم الذين يلونهم

The best of generations is my generation, then those who follow them, and then those who follow them.

See: *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 4/189, chapter about the merits of the Ṣaḥābah.

And even though these sects had emerged as an inexorable outcome of the blind Fitnah whereby the instigators thereof had plotted to destroy Islam, but, as a matter of fact, the belief of the Salaf did not get tainted at all. And the triumphant group continued combatting them and will continue to do so till the decree of Allah dawns upon us, as appears in a ḥadīth:

لا تزال طائفة من أمتي على الحق لا يضرهم من خالفهم حتى يأتي أمر الله

A group of my Ummah will always remain upon the truth. Those who oppose them will never harm them till the decree of Allah comes.¹

The Position of the Khawārij

The incident of the Arbitration between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه in the year 37 A.H/658 A.D. prompted the emergence of sects with unique political leanings. One of these sects was the Khawārij who refused to accept the Arbitration. This is because they said that there is no rule but for Allah, and that it was not permissible to divert away from the command of Allah to the decision of men; and the command of Allah regarding the rebelling group was that they be fought till they return to the command of Allah.²

‘Alī رضي الله عنه was the first to debunk this slogan of the Khawārij. It is narrated that one day they objected at him in the Masjid and said, “There is no rule but for Allah.” ‘Alī رضي الله عنه replied by saying, “This is a slogan of truth which is being advanced for a sinister reason.”³ The sinister reason which they intended was that they said, “There is no ruler but Allah,” which is why ‘Alī رضي الله عنه responded to them saying:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: refer to 1/487. Also p. 567 and p. 966 of this book.

2 This is clear from the conversation they had with ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. They said to him, “O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn! What are we waiting for regarding these people? Should we not go with our swords till Allah decides between us and them?” See: *Musnad Aḥmad* (with the format of al-Sā‘ātī), 8/587.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 7/173.

نعم لا حكم إلا لله، ولكن هؤلاء يقولون: لا إمرأة إلا لله، وأنه لا بد للناس من أمير

Yes, there is no rule but for Allah. But what these people are actually saying is, “There is rulership but for Allah,” whereas the people require a ruler.¹

‘Alī رضي الله عنه intended to explain to them the shallowness of their thinking and the hollowness of their minds, as they have been described in a ḥadīth: ‘People of foolish minds’.² He thus gathered the people, asked for a copy of the Qur’ān and started to strike it with his hand and say:

أيها المصحف؟ حدث الناس، فقالوا: ما هذا إنسان؟ إنما هو مداد وورق، ونحن نتكلم بما روينا عنه، فقال: كتاب الله بيني وبين هؤلاء، يقول الله في امرأة ورجل: وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْتَغُوا حَكْمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكْمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا وَأَمَةٌ مُحَمَّدٍ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ وَرَجُلٌ، ونقموا علي أن كاتب معاوية، وقد كاتب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم سهيل بن عمرو، ولقد كان لكم في رسول الله أسوة حسنة.

“O Qur’ān! Speak to the people.”

The people said, “This is not a human. It is only ink and paper. But we speak about what we narrate of it.”

He said, “The Book of Allah is between me and these people, Allah says regarding a woman and a man, ‘*And if you fear dissention between the two, send an arbitrator from his people and an arbitrator from her people. If they both desire reconciliation, Allah will cause it between them.*’³ The Ummah of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is greater than a woman and a man. They are dismayed because I cooperated with Mu’āwiyah, whereas Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم cooperated with Suhayl ibn ‘Amr,⁴ and indeed for you in the Messenger of Allah is a good example.”⁵

1 Al-Māwardī: *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah*, p. 57.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/52, chapter regarding seeking repentance from the renegades.

3 Sūrah al-Nisā’: 35.

4 A *Ṣaḥābī* رضي الله عنه.

5 Sūrah Aḥzāb: 21. And the narration is reported by Aḥmad in his *Musnad* (with the format of al-Sā’atī), 22/159; and Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah*, 7/280-182. He has said that Aḥmad is the only one that narrates it and its chain is *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

This slogan has remained the distinguishing symbol of the Khawārij in spite of all their various sects and their multiplicity. Their interpretations thereof, however, have differed from sect to sect. Hence, the Khawārij on the basis of their warped understanding and their forced interpretation of the texts perpetrated many crimes, and wreaked havoc on the earth by killing and looting the wealth of the Muslims. They did this considering it to be permissible due to their belief that whoever opposed them was not a Muslim. And they are the predecessors of the excommunicating sects of this Ummah till today.

In order to explicate how this slogan fuelled havoc, it is enough to note the offences the Khawārij perpetrated because of it. It also divided the Khawārij themselves into more than twenty sects. The rationale behind this is quite clear; as long as the slogan ‘there is no rule but for Allah’ remains, as understood by the Khawārij, and as long as people, due to their disparate temperaments, will not agree upon accepting a specific understanding in each debated issue, then holding a different view will always be deemed rebelling against the rule of Allah or even disbelief. There will never be room for entertaining divergent opinions as long as clashes and debates between holders of disparate views remain, for each one will be considering himself as striving to establish the rule of Allah on earth.

Consequently, the books of their history are filled with strange examples of their beliefs and their methodology. For they would advance and be pushed to establish an issue which would be wrong from its very basis thinking that not establishing it was disbelief and deviance. And when later it would become evident to them that they were wrong they would admit and say, “We were wrong, in fact even disbelievers when we did that,” and subsequent to that they would revolt and go to extreme extents with more intensity in order to debunk what they previously established and now they would consider that to be disbelief.¹

Amidst all this advancement and retraction some would break away from others and would go to extreme extents in attacking the mother sect and

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/84.

excommunicating it due to its instability, sudden change, or because of one of the two views: the previous or the one that followed thereafter. In reacting to that, the mother sect would excommunicate them without any discretion due to detracting from it.

Then, in most instances due to the intensity of the feud between them a third sect would emerge which would have a moderate stance and would suspend judgement regarding the opinions of both. But very soon it would be excommunicated, because each sect demanded that it be with it or else it will be deemed disbelieving.

In this manner a whole series of blowing positions or individual Ijtihāds, out of proportion, threatening the opponents, and defaming them came into existence amidst foundational detractions and complete separations.¹

Furthermore, one of the specialities of the sects of the Khawārij was *Murūq* (leaving the Dīn very quickly), fanaticism, exceeding of bounds and being nit-picky. They also held a distinguished identity due to their reactionary methodology which was characterised by hastiness and carelessness, and their swift ability to divide and instigate problems. Callousness was their temperament and narrow-mindedness was their speciality. Whenever they would be given a choice between two things, they would always choose the more difficult; whenever they coincidentally encountered two matters, they would choose the more unlikely; and whenever they saw two paths, they treaded the more challenging one.

Moving on, the Khawārij have splintered into multiple sects and all of them have only two principles in common:

The First principle: Passing judgement regarding ‘Alī عليه السلام and the Khulafā’ who preceded him. They approbated Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmān عليه السلام in the beginning of his rule, toward the end of his rule they denounced him.

1 See: al-Ash‘arī: *al-Maqālāt*, 1/164-176-177-188.

Likewise, they approbated ‘Alī عليه السلام till he accepted the Arbitration, after the Arbitration they denounced him as well. In accordance with this principle they excommunicated ‘Alī, ‘Uthmān, the people of Jamal, whoever was happy with the Arbitration from the people of Şiffīn, and whoever approbated one of the two groups or both of them.¹

And because the Khawārij were a breed of unique humans who were difficult, had very limited perception, narrow horizons, and an inability to understand differences, owing to which they would revolt for the most inessential of reasons without pondering over the catalysts and the ramifications thereof, and without deliberation; this induced them to excommunicate the entire Muslim congregation and display hatred and enmity for the denominations that opposed them.

The Second Principle: Revolting against a tyrannical ruler is an obligation which cannot be discarded. Hence, it is binding upon every capable person to revolt even if he is alone, and whether he is confident that his rebellion will produce a positive result or not.² Thus, they do not place numbers and ability to change a vice as a requisite to revolt, which is why their history is filled with series of insurrections and incessant wars. In doing so they were extirpated or they were almost close to annihilation.

Furthermore, researchers have at length discussed the reasons for the phenomenon of *Khurūj*, but with cotemporary standards and with an imported methodology. Nonetheless, they have proposed various ideas. One of them is that the basis of *Khurūj* is the *Khilāfah*, tribal chauvinism, and vying with the Quraysh for this lofty station. But, to a thorough and impartial researcher the *Khilāfah* was but a secondary issue according to most sects; it was not the basis for the inception of all the sects, with the exception of the *Shī‘ah* who consider it to be a fundamental from the fundamentals of *Dīn* even though the basis of their

1 Al-Baghdādī: *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*, p. 55.

2 Al-Ash‘arī: *al-Maqālāt*, 1/189; al-Baghdādī: *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*, p. 55.

inception was not the Khilāfah itself. So it would be correct to aver that refusing to accept the confinement of the Khilāfah to the Quraysh, and remonstrating against the oppression and transgression of the Banū Umayyah and the Banū ‘Abbās were from the distinguishing factors of the Khawārīj in terms of ideology and practice; however, this came about from the natural development of the ideology and the movement. This is because in the beginning their demand was that someone like ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ be elected; they said:

فلسنا نتابعك أو تأتوننا بمثل عمر

We will not follow you unless you bring for us someone like ‘Umar.¹

Their demand was not that the Khalīfah be from among them. But when they saw the Ummah condemning them for choosing ‘Abd Allāh ibn Wahb al-Rāsibī for ruling over the Ummah in spite of him being a Bedouin who urinated upon his heels, who did not enjoy the Companionship of Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, did not have understanding, and about whose goodness no one attested,² they began defending their action. In defending it they went to the extent of saying that the Khilāfah is permissible for any Muslim to assume, whether Qurashī or non-Qurashī.³

1 Al-Tabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/83.

2 Ibn Hazm: *al-Fiṣal fī al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 4/157.

3 This assumption of theirs is debunked in many Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth. Al-Bukhārī (8:105, chapter of rulings, sub-chapter regarding the rulers being from the Quraysh) has narrated the following from Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

إن هذا الأمر في قريش، لا يعاديهم أحد إلا أكبه الله في النار علي وجهه ما أقاموا الدين.

“This matter is for the Quraysh, no one will oppose them but that Allah will throw him headlong into the fire of Jahannam, as long as they establish the Dīn.”

And Aḥmad narrates in his *Musnad* (4/421):

الأئمة من قريش

The rulers are from the Quraysh.

continued...

So this idea was conjured just to justify what had transpired, it was not a theological foundation upon which the reality could be constructed.

Also, interpreting their rebellion with tribal chauvinism and vying with the Quraysh is something that is rejected by historical facts which state that most of the Khawārij were from the Banū Tamīm, a sub-tribe of Muḍar;¹ they were not from Rabī'ah or from Yemen. This necessitates that their chauvinism be for the Quraysh and not for their opponents, for the Quraysh also belonged to Muḍar, as is categorically established according to the scholars of genealogy,² and is established in a Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth from Rasūl Allah ﷺ, as narrated by Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

ما زلت أحب بني تميم منذ ثلاث: سمعت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: هم أشد إمتي على الدجال - قال - وجاءت صدقاتهم فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: هذه صدقات قومنا، وكانت سببية منهم عند عائشة فقال: أعتقيها فإنها من ولد إسماعيل.

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And al-Bayhaqī and al-Shāfi'ī (*al-Fath*, 13/116) narrate through the transmission of 'Aṭā' ibn Yasār with an authentic chain that Nabī ﷺ said:

أنتم أولى الناس بهذا الأمر ما كنتم على الحق، إلا أن تعدلوا عنه فتلحون كما تلحى هذه الجريدة.

You are the most deserving of the people of this matter, as long as you remain upon the truth, unless you divert from it whereafter you will be peeled just as this branch is peeled.

Likewise, Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ made mention of the merits of the Anṣār in the orchard of the Banū Sā'idah (See: Ibn Hishām: *al-Sīrah*, 4/339) and thereafter said to them:

ولن تعرف العرب هذا الأمر إلا لهذا الحي من قريش، هم أوسط الناس نسبا ودارا.

The Arabs will not concede this matter but for this tribe of the Quraysh. For they are the most noble of people in lineage and location.

All of the Ahl al-Sunnah concur on this view due to a wisdom that demanded that, i.e. bringing about unity in the ranks of the Muslims.

1 A tribe belonging to the 'Adnāniyyah from the progeny of Ismā'īl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. See: Ibn al-Athīr: *al-Lubāb*, 3/222.

2 Ibn Ḥazm: *Jamharah Ansāb al-'Arab*, p. 11; al-Qalqashandī: *Nihāyah al-'Arab fī Ma'rifah Ansāb al-'Arab*, p. 422.

I have always loved the Banū Tamīm since three things occurred. I heard Nabī ﷺ saying, “They will be the staunchest of my Ummah against Dajjāl.” And when their charities came, Rasūl Allah ﷺ said, “These are the charities of our people.” And there was a female captive from their people by ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها, so he said, “Free her, for she is from the children of Ismā’īl.”¹

Likewise, it is also famously reported from the Banū Tamīm that they boasted about Nubuwwah and Khilāfah being in the progeny of Muḍar. And Farazdaq and Jarīr, two of the greatest poets of that era, would boast about their affiliation to the Banū Tamīm and they would ridicule al-Akhṭal due to his tribe being Rabī’ah which was deprived of this honour. Jarīr says the following in his poem:

إن الذي حرم المكارم تغلبا جعل النبوة والخلافة فينا

The one who deprived the Taghlib tribe from great accolades has placed Nubuwwah and Khilāfah in us.²

Another contemporary view is one proposed by the Ba‘athis and some people of the left who are influenced by the western materialistic worldview. They suggest that the cause of the emergence of the Khawārij was the dry desert environment and the bitter reality which they had to live in, due to the hierarchical privileges which the Khulafā’ and their close people enjoyed.³

This is an unacceptable opinion; because the Khawārij were the most disinclined from this world even in an environment where it was offered to them and was available for them. Their sternness in the Dīn and their extremism therein dictated to them a life of abstinence, difficulty, and aversion from the bounties of this world. Likewise, the great sacrifices that they made in holding up their

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3/123, chapter of emancipating slave.

2 Jarīr: *Dīwān*, p. 476.

3 See: Shākīr Muṣṭafā: *Dawlah Banī ‘Abbās*, 1/36; Zāhiyah Qadūrāh: *al-Shu ‘ūbiyyah wa Atharuhā al-Ijtimā’ī wa al-Siyāsī fī al-‘Asr al-‘Abbāsī al-Awwal*; ‘Ammār Ṭālibī: *Ārā’ al-Khawārij al-Kalāmiyyah*, p. 52.

principles without any ulterior motives and leanings based on personal interests is also one evidence of this.

The aforementioned opinion is also debunked by the fact that all the historical sources agree that the ideology of the Khawārij was based upon excommunicating on the basis of sin, a completely theological issue. Al-Bukhārī has in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* cited all the narrations which discuss extremism, being difficult in the Dīn, and leaving the Dīn, thereby indicating toward the Khawārij.¹

In fact, even the *Ṣaḥīḥ* ḥadīth which discusses the origins of their ideology debunks this opinion. Al-Bukhārī narrates the following from Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

بينما النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقسم جاء عبد الله بن ذي الخويصرة التميمي فقال: اعدل يا رسول الله، فقال: ويلك، ومن يعدل إذا لم أعدل. قال: عمر بن الخطاب: دعني أضرب عنقه، قال: دعه، فإن له أصحابا يحقر أحدكم صلاته مع صلاته وصيامه مع صيامه، يمرقون من الدين كما يمرق السهم من الرمية... آيتهم رجل إحدى يديه - أو قال - ثدييه مثل ثدي المرأة أو قال: مثل البضعة تدردر، يخرجون على حين فرقة من الناس

Whilst Nabī ﷺ was distributing [the spoils] ‘Abd Allāh ibn Dhī al-Khuwayṣirah al-Tamīmī came and said, “Be just, O Rasūl Allah!”

He said, “Woe to you! Who can be just if I am not just?”

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “Let me chop off his neck.”

Rasūl Allah ﷺ said, “Leave him, for he will have such comrades that one of you will undermine your Ṣalāh when compared to theirs and your fasting when compared to theirs. They will exit the Dīn just as an arrow exits a targeted animal... Their sign will be a person one of whose hands, or

1 See: *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/51, chapter regarding seeking repentance from the renegades, 8/148, chapter of holding on to the Sunnah; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 7/174, chapter of Zakāh, sub-chapter regarding the encouragement to fight the Khawārij.

he said: one of whose breasts, will be the like the breast of a woman, or he said, ‘Like a piece of flesh that is dangling.’ They will emerge at the time of the disunity of the people.”¹

This religious matter brought into existence, due to its role, a political position which stands upon splitting the unity of the Muslims and revolting against the Imam. Al-Khaṭṭābī² says:

فمعنى قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم يمرقون من الدين أراد بالدين أنهم يخرجون من طاعة الإمام المفترض الطاعة وينسلخون منها

So, the purport of his statement عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ: “They will exit the Dīn.” is that he intended by the word Dīn³ that they will leave the obedience of the Imām whose obedience will be necessary and they will withdraw from it. [*Jāmi‘ al-Uṣūl*, 10/97.]

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/52, chapter regarding seeking repentance from the renegades.

2 Ḥamd ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn al-Khaṭṭāb al-Bustī, Abū Sulaymān. The ḥadīth scholar who travelled extensively. Al-Dhahabī said about him, “He was reliable, meticulous, and was a vessel of knowledge.” Some of his books are: *Iṣlāḥ Ghalaṭ al-Muḥaddithīn*, *Gharīb al-Ḥadīth*, *Ma‘ālim al-Sunan*, *Sharḥ Asmā’ Allah al-Ḥusnā*. He passed away in 388 A.H/998 A.D. See: Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A‘yān*, 2/214; al-Qifṭī: *Inbāḥ al-Ruwāt*, 1/125; al-Dhahabī: *al-Tadhkirah*, 3/1018.

3 The popular understanding of the term Dīn between the people today, a deeply rooted misconception due to the ideological war against the lands of the Muslims, does not exceed the relationship of a person with Allah whose boundaries are the symbols of worship. Correcting this understanding in light of language and Sharīah is pivotal for those who subscribe to Islam but live as if in state of schizophrenia and live a life of grave ambivalence which has resulted in separating Dīn from politics and the empire. The retrogression, disunity, and the differences that the Muslims have suffered as a result can only be corrected with sound knowledge and holding onto the commands of Allah and his Sharīah in all the spheres of life.

Dīn in the Arabic language means obedience. They say: *Dāna lahū Dīn*, i.e. he obeyed him, due to the poem of the poet:

وكان الناس إلّا نحن دينا

ويوم الحزن إذ حشدت معد

And on the day of grief when Ma‘add gathered its people, and everyone besides us was obedient.

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And al-A'shā says:

ن دراکا بغزوة وصيال

هو دان الرباب إذ كرهوا الذي

He is the subjugator of the group when they disliked obeying him, by apprehending them with fighting and attacking.

Dīn also means the Sharī'ah and the law of Allah due to the verse:

مَا كَانَ لِتَأْخُذَ أَخَاهُ فِي دِينِ الْمَلِكِ

He could not have taken his brother according to the law of the king. [Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr, 2/485]

It is also used in the meaning of reckoning, might, overpowering, authority, kingdom, rulership, and planning. Therefrom the name of Allah al-Dayyān is derived, which means the Mighty, the Judge, the Ruler, the Administrator, the Reckoner, and the Compensator who will not neglect a single deed.

As for the Sharī' terminology, the word Dīn entails everything by way of which Allah is worshiped. It means abiding by his commands and his Sharī'ah in all matters of life, humbling oneself before him, and not opposing him. al-Ṭabarī says under the verse:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

Surely the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam.

It means that obedience which is acceptable by Allah is obedience which entails abiding by his commands, acknowledging servitude to him with the tongues and the hearts, humbling oneself before him and becoming completely subservient to him in his orders and prohibitions. It means to humble oneself without displaying arrogance to him and diverting away from him and without ascribing any partners to him from his creation in worship. See: *Tāfsīr al-Ṭabarī*, 3/141.

And servitude to Allah means that Allah exclusively be considered the sovereign legislator, whether as rulers or as subjects, due to the verse:

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يُحِجَّهُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed-then it is those who are the disbelievers.

And the verse:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِئْتَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

But no, by your Lord, they will not truly believe until they make you judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in (full, willing) submission.

continued

All of this was happening during the Khilāfah of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ before oppression, the tyranny of the rulers, and the hierarchical privileges came into existence. Hence, the real reason for the rebellion of the Khawārij was a purely psychological one; for the hearts of humans cannot always strictly abide by the moderate and neutral methodology, rather they lean, at times, toward the right and at times toward the left. And the eventual result is either exceeding of limits and destructive extremism, or assimilation and gross dereliction. The Khawārij were victims of the first.

The perfection of Islam, its balance, and its human-disposition-suitability is very evident from the approach it adopts in dealing with both types of deviances; so, because dereliction dominates most people, Islam has warned against it in the form of commandments and prohibitions and has reminded about them. It has also instituted enjoining of good, forbidding of evil, and mutual well-wishing amongst the Muslims, and has sounded warnings to the apathetic.

And because fanaticism by its very nature is something that can only be upheld by a very few people who adopt it based on a false assumption, and many a times

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It also means exclusively befriending Allah, due to the verse:

قُلْ أَعْيَبَ اللَّهُ أَخَذَ وَلِيًّا فَاطِرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

Say, “Is it other than Allah I should take as a protector, creator of the heavens and the earth?”

And the verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ

O you who believe, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies.

And the verse:

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ

And the believing men and the believing women, some of them are the friends of others.

It also means exclusively worshipping Allah (i.e. only slaughtering for him, vowing for him, seeking help from him, supplicating to him, and interceding to him), due to the verse:

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, lord of the worlds.

become conceited and amazed at what they abide by,¹ and because an onlooker might at times assume that this is the real representation of Dīn and its loftiness, the Sharī texts rectify this assumption, correct understandings, expose the true traits of these people, and explain the misconceptions brought about by that assumption. This is why the Sharīah has very emphatically warned against the Khawārij, deeming them to be a sect that will exit the Dīn and will have a distinct methodology in theology.

From the aforementioned, the error of the opinion that the emergence of the Khawārij was just a historical event which can be interpreted with local and limited interpretations has become clear. Because it is important to analyse it as a phenomenon and not just as a mere event. *Khurūj* is a theological ideology which can occur and affirm its presence in every time and every era. As such, it is a religious phenomenon which can be found in every religion and in every time, as is evident after doing a holistic study of all the texts regarding them.

Al-Nasā'ī narrates the following from Abū Barzah رضي الله عنه:

يخرج في آخر الزمان قوم... يقرؤون القرآن لا يجاوز تراقيهم يمرقون من الإسلام كما يمرق السهم من الرمية، سيماهم التحليق، لا يزالون يخرجون حتى يخرج آخرهم مع المسيح الدجال.

In the end of time there will emerge a people... They will read the Qur'ān but it will not pass their collar bones. They will leave Islam just as an arrow leaves a targeted animal. Their distinctive sign will be shaving. And they will continue to emerge till the final batch of them emerges with Dajjāl.²

1 'Alī رضي الله عنه passed by the Khawārij and said, "May suffering be for you. The one who has deceived you has indeed harmed you." They said, "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn who has deceived them?" He said, "The devil and their evil selves who deceived them with hopes and has beautified for them sins and informed them that they are victorious." Ibn al-Athīr: *Jāmi' al-Uṣūl*, 3/348.

2 *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, 7/119, chapter regarding the impermissibility of shedding blood, sub-chapter regarding the one who unsheathes his sword and strikes the people with it. The annotator of *Jāmi' al-Uṣūl* has deemed the ḥadīth Ḥasan. See: 10/92.

Extremism is a very big phenomenon in the history of nations and religions. To the extent that Nabī ﷺ said:

إنما أهلك من كان قبلكم الغلو في الدين

Those who were before you were destroyed because of extremism in Dīn.¹

The deification of 'Īsā and 'Uzayr عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and the monasticism of the Christians are nothing but examples of this same phenomenon. Allah ﷻ says:

وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ

*And monasticism which they innovated; we did not prescribe it for them.*²

Moving on, some researchers have opined a different opinion. Hence, some of them have considered the Khawārij to be a completely political movement,³ whilst others have considered them to be a completely religious movement.⁴

The rationale behind this is the distinction these people make between Dīn and between politics. A person who studies their writings will be amazed at the superficial contradiction between the understandings of Dīn and politics which has confused their opinions and has disoriented their ideas regarding the various Islamic sects, especially in case of the Khawārij. For they debate and ask whether the Khawārij were a religious sect or a political one.

Those who consider the Khawārij to be a purely political movement consider tribal chauvinism and what they call dictatorship to be the cause of the emergence of the Khawārij and the propellant of their movement. And those who consider

1 Sunan al-Nasā'ī, 5/268, chapter of Ḥajj; Sunan Ibn Mājah, 2/1008, chapter of Ḥajj; Musnad Aḥmad, 1/215; and al-Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in his Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Nasā'ī, 2/640, Ḥadīth: 2863.

2 Sūrah al-Ḥadīd: 27.

3 See: Aḥmad Amīn: *Fajr al-Islām*, p. 259; Maḥmūd Ma'rūf: *al-Khawārij fi al-'Asr al-Umawī*, p. 59.

4 See: Wellhausen: *The Kharijites and the Shiites*, p. 13-14; Nicholson: *A Literary History of the Arabs*, 207-213.

them to be a purely religious movement have considered religious fanaticism and extreme abstinence from this world to be the real cause of their existence.

However, these people have forgotten that politics, as a very pertinent and foundational sphere from the spheres of Islam, cannot be separated completely from ideological leanings in the Islamic reality. Hence, all historical resources unanimously agree that the Khawārij, since their rebellion on the day of Şifḥīn, always believed in the disbelief of ‘Alī عليه السلام, due to him appointing men as arbiters in the Dīn of Allah. Thereafter they convened and appointed over them a leader.

Hence, it is the responsibility of those who consider them to be purely political to explain how they based their ideas upon the principle of excommunicating on the basis of sin. They have to explain under which clause of the many political clauses is excommunication on the basis of sin incorporated.

Likewise, it is the responsibility of those who consider them to be purely religious to explain why they convened to bring about an insurrection and pledge to one of them as the Amīr al-Mu’minīn if it was a purely religious movement according to their secular understanding. So, they have to explain under which symbol of the many symbols of Dīn is this type of activity which came into being with their movement incorporated.

As a side note, although there is no impediment in the utilisation of these terms for purposes of technical division, as we have done in this discussion, but to make that a cause for or a methodology to arbitrarily distinguish between Dīn and politics would be a meaningless application. It is also important to point out the open error of those who apply the standards of this era and its principles to Islam and its outstanding history.¹ So together with entertaining good assumptions regarding them, overlooking their blind following and their purposeful distortions, it would be plausible to aver that the mistake in their methodology lies in that they apply the reality of the current era and its conceptions to the

1 See: *Maṣādir Tafṣīr al-Ḥawāḍith*, 1/101.

previous era, whereas every era has its distinct specialities which in the academic research language is dubbed ‘the spirit of the era’.

So due to us living in an era wherein political clashes and utilitarian based political cliques prevail, these people went on to apply this reality to that era in which faith and principle were the driving factors for the activity of most groups, sects, and people. The reason for this is that contemporary writings of history, with the exception of few, have been tainted with the western methodology which is merely a product of its environment; an environment which is deeply steeped in the muds of materialism, suffers from the bitterness of utilitarian clashes, does not believe in morals values and principles and is, above all, deeply immersed in its bigoted hatred for Islam.

The position of the Murji’ah:

Al-Ṭabarī describes the *Murji’ah* in his book *Tahdhīb al-Āthār* in the following manner:

فإن قال لنا قائل: ومن هم المرجئة؟ وما صفتهم؟ قيل: إن المرجئة هم قوم موصوفون بإرجاء أمر مختلف فيما ذلك الأمر؟ فأما إرجاؤه فتأخيره، وهو من قول العرب: أرجأ فلان هذا الأمر فهو يرجئه إرجاء، وهو مرجئه، بهمز. وأرجاه فلان يرجيه أرجاء، بغير الهمز فهو مرجيه، ومن قول الله تعالى ذكره: وَأَخْرَجُوا مُرَجِّوْنَ لِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ. يقرأ بالهمزة و غير الهمز بمعنى مؤخرون لأمر الله، وقوله مخبراً عن الملائكة من قوم فرعون: قَالُوا أُرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ. فأما الأمر الذي بتأخيره سميت المرجئة مرجئة، فإن ابن عيينة كان يقول فيما حدثني عبدالله بن عمير الرازي قال: سمعت إبراهيم بن موسى - يعني الفراء الرازي - قال: سئل ابن عيينة عن الإرجاء؟ فقال: الإرجاء على وجهين: قوم أرجوا أمر علي و عثمان، فقد مضى أولئك. فأما المرجئة اليوم فهم يقولون: الإيمان قول بلا عمل. فلا تجالسوهم و لا تؤاكلوهم و لا تشاربوهم و لا تصلوا معهم و لا تصلوا عليهم.

If someone has to ask, “Who are the Murji’ah? And what are their characteristics?” It will be said to him, “The Murji’ah are a people who are described as suspending judgement regarding a matter which is disputed. As for the word *Irjā’* it means to defer, and it is from the speech of the Arabs who say: So, and so made *Irjā’* of the matter or is a *Murji’* (with a Hamzah), or so and so made *Irjā’* of the matter or is a *Murjī* (without a Hamzah).

The following verse is from the same root: ‘*And there are others deferred until the command of Allah.*’¹ The word in the verse is read with a Hamzah and without a Hamzah and it means that decision regarding them is suspended till the command of Allah. And the following verse as well: ‘*Postpone (the matter of) him and his brother.*’²

As for the matter due to the suspension of which the Murji’ah were dubbed the Murji’ah, Ibn ‘Uyaynah says, as narrated to me by ‘Umayr al-Rāzī³ who said, “I heard Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsā, i.e. al-Farrā’ al-Rāzī,⁴ saying, “Ibn ‘Uyaynah was asked regarding *Irjā’*. He said, “*Irjā’* is of two types: a people who postponed the matter of ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنهما, these people have passed away already. As for the Murji’ah today, they say, “*‘Imān* is confession without practice.” So do not sit with them, do not eat with them, do not drink with them, do not pray with them and do not perform their Janāzah Ṣalāh.”⁵

Among those to whom the first type of *Irjā’* is attributed was Muḥārib ibn Dithār, the judge of Kūfah, who passed away in 116 A.H/734 A.D. Ibn Sa’d says regarding him:

كان من المرجئة الأولى الذين كانوا يرجئون عليا وعثمان، ولا يشهدون بإيمان ولا كفر

He was from the early Murji’ah who would suspend judgement regarding ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنهما and would not testify regarding belief or disbelief.⁶

1 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 106.

2 Sūrah al-A’rāf: 111.

3 I did not come across his biography.

4 Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsā ibn Yazīd ibn Zādhān al-Tamīmī, Abū Ishāq al-Rāzī al-Farrā’, famously known as *al-Ṣaghīr* (the junior). Abū Zur’ah said about him, “He is more conversant than Abū Bakr ibn Abī Shaybah and his ḥadīth are more authentic.” And Abū Ḥātim said, “From the reliable men.” And al-Nasā’ī said, “Reliable.” Aḥmad would condemn those who would call him *al-Ṣaghīr* and would say that he is *Kabīr* (senior) in his knowledge and greatness. He passed away in 220 A.H/835 A.D. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/327; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 1/137; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 1/170.

5 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tahdhīb al-Āthār*, 2/658.

6 See his biography in: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/307; Khalīfah: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, p. 160; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 10/49.

Likewise, Khālid ibn Salamah al-Fa'fa' who narrates from al-Sha'bī and from who Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah narrates. Al-Dhahabī said regarding him:

كان مرجئيا ينال من علي رضي الله عنه

He was a Murji' who would denigrate 'Alī عليه السلام.¹

And Ibn Hajar says:

صدوق رمي بالإرجاء والنصب

A truthful narrator who has been accused of *Irjā'* and *Naṣb*.²

The first person to talk about *Irjā'* was al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Ḥanafiyah who passed away in 99 A.H/717 A.D. Ibn Sa'd has said the following in his biography:

وهو أول من تكلم في الإرجاء- ثم يذكر أن زاذان وميسرة دخلا عليه فلاماه على الكتاب الذي وضع في الإرجاء، فقال لزاذان: يا أبا عمر! لو ددت أني كنت مت ولم أكتبه.

“He is the first person to talk about *Irjā'*.” Thereafter he mentions that Zādhān³ and Maysarah⁴ visited him and reproached him for the book that

1 Al-Dhahabī: *al-Mizān*, 1/631.

2 See his biography in: Ibn Ma'tīn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/144; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/1/154; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mizān*, 1/631; Ibn Hajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 3/95.

3 Zādhān, Abū al-Kūfī al-Ḍarīr al-Bazzār. He was present in the sermon of 'Umar عليه السلام in Jābiyah. He has narrated from a group of the Ṣaḥābah عليهم السلام, some of them being: 'Alī, Ibn Mas'ūd, Ḥudhayfah, and Ibn 'Umar, among others. Ibn Ma'tīn said regarding him, “Reliable, regarding someone like him no questions should be asked.” And Ibn Sa'd says, “He was reliable and has narrated many ḥadīth.” And al-'Ijlī said, “A reliable Tābi'ī from Kūfah.” He is also deemed reliable by al-Khaṭīb. And Ibn Hajar said, “He had Shī'ī leanings.” He passed away in 82 A.H/701 A.D. See: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 6/178; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 2/1/328; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 4/258; Ibn Hajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 3/302; and *al-Taqrīb*, 1/256.

4 Maysarah, Abū Ṣāliḥ al-Kindī al-Kūfī, the Tābi'ī. He narrated from 'Alī, and Suwayd ibn Ghafalah, and 'Aṭā' ibn al-Sā'ib, Hilāl ibn Khabbāb, and Salamah ibn Kuhayl narrated from him. Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. See: Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 5/303; Ibn Ma'tīn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/598; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 5/426; Ibn Hajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 10/387.

was authored regarding *Irjā'*. He said to Zādhān, "O Abū 'Umar! I wish I died and I did not author it."¹

And al-Mizzī² narrates from 'Uthmān ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥāṭib³ the following:

أول من تكلم في الإرجاء الأول الحسن بن محمد، كنت حاضرا يوم تكلم وكنت في حلقة مع عمر عمي، وكان في الحلقة جحدب معه، فتكلموا في علي وعثمان وطلحة والزبير فأكثرُوا، والحسن ساكت ثم تكلم فقال: قد سمعت مقاتلكم ولم أر شيئا أمثل من أن يرجى علي وعثمان وطلحة والزبير، فلا يتولوا ولا تتراً منهم، ثم قام وقمنا، فقال لي عمي: يا بني ليتخذن هؤلاء هذا الكلام إماما، قال عثمان... فبلغ أباه محمد بن الحنفية ما قال، فضربه بعضا فشجه وقال: لا تتولى أباك عليا! وكتب الرسالة التي نبذ فيها الإرجاء بعد ذلك.

The first person to speak regarding *Irjā'* was al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad. I was present the day he spoke and I was with my uncle 'Umar in another gathering. In the gathering Jaḥdab⁴ was with him. They began speaking regarding 'Alī, 'Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه and they said a lot. All this time al-Ḥasan remained silent, and when he spoke, he said, "I have heard whatever you have said, and I do not see anything more ideal than suspending judgement regarding 'Alī, 'Uthmān, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه. Hence, we should not associate with them nor disassociate from them." He thereafter stood and we dispersed as well. My uncle told me, "O my son, these people are going to make this statement their guide."

1 Ibn Sa'd: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 5/328.

2 Yūsuf ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Yūsuf al-Qudhā'ī al-Kalbī al-Mizzī, attributed to Mizzah which is a place on the outskirts of Dimashq, Abū al-Hajjāj. From the great retainers of ḥadīth and the leading scholar of Shām in his era. Some of his books are: *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmā' al-Rijāl*, and *Tuḥfah al-Ashrāf fī Ma'rifah al-Aṭrāf*. His student al-Dhahabī has praised him and has remembered him with the most lavish titles. He passed away in 742 A.H/1341 A.D. See: Ibn Taghrī Bardī: *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 10/76; al-Dhahabī: *al-Tadhkirah*, 4/1498; al-Kattānī: *Fihris al-Fahāris*, 1/107.

3 'Uthmān ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥāṭib al-Jumāhī al-Qurashī. He saw Ibn 'Umar and Sharīk, Ya'lā ibn 'Ubayd and some of people of Iraq narrate from him. Abū Ḥātim said, "His narrations can be written for he is satisfactory scholar." See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/212; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, 6/144.

4 Jaḥdab, or Juḥdub al-Tamīmī. He has narrated from 'Aṭā' and al-Thawrī, and Qays ibn al-Rabī have narrated from him. See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/2/255; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, 2/551.

‘Uthmān says, “... His father Muḥammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah learnt about what he said. He, thus, hit him and wounded him and said, “You are not going to associate with your father ‘Alī?” Thereafter al-Ḥasan wrote his book in which he denounced *al-Irjā’*.”¹

Ibn Ḥajar commenting upon the aforementioned says the following in his *Tahdhīb*:

قلت: المراد بالارجاء الذي تكلم الحسن بن محمد فيه غير الارجاء الذي يعيبه أهل السنة المتعلق بالايمان وذلك أني وقفت على كتاب الحسن ابن محمد المذكور أخرجه ابن أبي عمر العدني في كتاب الايمان له في آخره قال حدثنا إبراهيم بن عيينة عن عبد الواحد بن أيمن قال كان الحسن بن محمد يأمرني أن اقرأ هذا الكتاب على الناس أما بعد فانا نوصيكم بتقوى الله فذكر كلاما كثيرا في الموعظة والوصية لكتاب الله واتباع ما فيه وذكر اعتقاده ثم قال في آخره ونوالي أبا بكر وعمر رضي الله عنهما ونجاهد فيهما لأنهما لم تقتل عليهما الأمة ولم تشك في أمرهما ونرجئ من بعدهما ممن دخل في الفتنة فنكل أمرهم إلى الله إلى آخر الكلام

I say that the *Irjā’* al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad proposed is other than the *Irjā’* which is reprehensible according to the Ahl al-Sunnah which is related to Ṫmān. I have come across the aforementioned book of al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad, it has been cited by Ibn Abī ‘Umar al-‘Adanī² at the end of his *Kitāb al-Ṫmān*. He says, “Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Uyaynah³ narrated to us from ‘Abd al-

1 Al-Mizzī: *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, 1/279.

2 Muḥammad ibn Yaḥyā ibn Abī ‘Umar, Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Adanī al-Darāwardī. From the retainers of ḥadīth. He acted as a judge in ‘Adan and thereafter settled in Makkah. It is said that he performed Ḥajj 77 times. He was pious and a devout worshipper and would never get tired of performing Ṭawāf. Abū Ḥātim said, “He is pious but had a little bit of negligence.” One of his books is al-Musnad. He passed away in 243 A.H/858 A.D. See: al-Dhahabī: *al-Tadhkirah*, 2/501; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 9/518; ‘Abd Allāh Bā Makhramah: *Tārīkh Thagr ‘Adan*, p. 230.

3 Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Uyaynah ibn Abī ‘Umar al-Hilālī al-Kūfī, Abū Ishāq. He has narrated from al-Thawrī, Shu‘bah, and Mis‘ar, and Ibn Abī ‘Umar al-‘Adanī, Ibrāhīm ibn Bashshār have narrated from him. His narrations appear in the Sunans of Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasā‘ī, and Ibn Mājah. Ibn Mā‘īn said, “He was a Muslim and was truthful, but was not from the experts of ḥadīth.” And al-‘Ijlī said, “A truthful narrator from Kūfah.” And Ibn Ḥajar says, “A truthful person who errs at times. He was from the eighth class.” He passed away in 197 A.H/812 A.D. And in the *Tārīkh* of al-Bukhārī it is stated that he passed away in 199 A.H/814 A.D. See: Ibn Mā‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 1/150; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 1/1/310; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 53; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 2/118; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Taqrīb*, 1/41.

Wāhid ibn Ayman,¹ “Al-Hasan ibn Muḥammad would instruct me to read this book to the people. (It contained the following), “We emphasise upon you to fear Allah,” and thereafter he goes onto advise about holding onto the Book of Allah and following what comes therein, and made mention of his belief and then said at the end, “We associate with Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما and will strive to defend them; because the Ummah did not fight regarding them and did not doubt regarding them. And we suspend judgement regarding those who succeeded them of those who got involved in the Fitnah, we leave their matter to Allah...” till the end of his speech.²

However, Ibn Ḥajar will have to be corrected in his view that al-Ḥasan is blameless due to him not discussing the *Irjā’* which is reproachable by the Ahl al-Sunnah, i.e. the one related to *Īmān*. Because denying association with the Khalīfahs ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī رضي الله عنهما, or suspending judgement regarding them is condemnable and renders the proponent thereof blameworthy; for Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has attested to them deserving Jannah, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۗ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

*And the first forerunners amongst the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār and those who followed them with good conduct, Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with him, and he has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment.*³

1 ‘Abd al-Wāhid ibn Ayman al-Makhzūmī al-Makkī, Abū al-Qāsim. Ibn Ma‘īn said, “Reliable.” Abū Ḥātīm said, “He is satisfactory in ḥadīth.” And al-Nasā’ī says, “There is no problem with him.” and Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. See: Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/376; al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/59; Ibn Abī Ḥātīm: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, 6/19; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 6/433.

2 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 2/320-322. *Kitāb al-Īmān* has been published and the cited text appears on p. 148. But it is not as clear as Ibn Ḥajar has understood it and cited it. So, either Ibn Ḥajar cited the overall meaning of his speech and not the actual text, or he came across another manuscript other than the one we have before us and then the difference would be due to the interference of some of the narrators.

3 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 100.

And ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Talḥah, and al-Zubayr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ were from the first forerunners. In fact, this verse in general encompasses all the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, as narrated by Muḥammad ibn Ka‘b al-Quraḏī:¹

عن يزيد بن زياد أنه قال: قلت يوماً لمحمد بن كعب القرظي: ألا تخبرني عن أصحاب الرسول عليه السلام فيما كان بينهم؟ وأردت الفتن. فقال لي: إن الله تعالى قد غفر لجميعهم، وأوجب لهم الجنة في كتابه محسنهم ومسيئهم، قلت له: وفي أي موضع أوجب لهم الجنة؟ قال: سبحان الله! ألا تقرأ قوله تعالى: وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ.

Yazīd ibn Ziyād² says:

One day I said to Muḥammad ibn Ka‘b al-Quraḏī, “Will you not inform me regarding the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, regarding what occurred between them?” thereby intending the *Fitan*.

He replied, “Allah has forgiven all of them and has made Jannah binding for them in his Book, for the good doers amongst them and for those who erred.”

I asked him, “Where has Allah made Jannah binding for them?”

1 Muḥammad ibn Ka‘b ibn Salīm ibn Asad al-Quraḏī al-Madanī. His father was from the captives of the Banū Qurayzah. Ibn Sa‘d said regarding him, “He was reliable, was a scholar, narrated ḥadīth excessively and was pious.” And ‘Awn ibn ‘Abd Allāh said, “I have not seen anyone more learned regarding the interpretation of the Qur’ān than him.” And Ibn Hibbān said, “He was from the virtuous people of Madīnah in terms of knowledge and jurisprudence.” And al-‘Ijlī says, “He was a Tābī‘ī from Madīnah who was reliable and was learned in the Qur’ān.” There is difference of opinion as to when he passed away, some say in 120 A.H./737 A.D. and some suggest another date. See: Ibn Sa‘d: *al-Ṭabaqāt* (the section culminating the Tābī‘īn of Madīnah), p. 134; Ibn Ma‘īn: *al-Tārīkh*, 2/536; al-‘Ijlī: *Tārīkh al-Thiqāt*, p. 411; Ibn Ḥibbān: *Mashāhīr ‘Ulama’ al-Amṣar*, p. 65; Ibn Hajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 9/420.

2 Yazīd ibn Ziyād, and some say: Ibn Abī Ziyād, al-Madanī al-Makhzūmī due to affiliation. Al-Nasā‘ī has said, “Reliable.” And Ibn Ḥibbān has made mention of him in *al-Thiqāt*. And al-Bukhārī says, “Yazīd ibn Ziyād had a better memory than ‘Aṭā’ ibn al-Sā‘ib.” And Abū Ḥātim said, “He is not strong.” See: al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*, 3/2/334; Ibn Abī Ḥātim: *al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta‘dīl*, 9/265; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 4/423; Ibn Hajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 11/328.

He replied, “*Subhān Allah*, do you not read this verse of Allah: ‘And the first forerunners from the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār?’”¹

And al-Tirmidhī and Abū Dāwūd have narrated the following from Saʿīd ibn Zayd

رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: أبو بكر في الجنة، وعمر في الجنة، وعثمان في الجنة، وعلي في الجنة، وطلحة في الجنة، والزبير في الجنة، وسعد بن مالك في الجنة، وعبد الرحمن بن عوف في الجنة، وأبو عبيدة بن الجراح في الجنة، وسكت عن العاشر، وقالوا: ومن هو العاشر؟ فقال: سعيد بن زيد.

I heard Rasūl Allah ﷺ saying, “Abū Bakr is in Jannah; ‘Umar is in Jannah; ‘Uthmān is in Jannah; Alī is in Jannah; Ṭalḥah is in Jannah; al-Zubayr is in Jannah; Saʿd ibn Mālik (Ibn Abī Waqqāṣ) is in Jannah; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf is in Jannah; Abū ‘Ubaydah al-Jarrāḥ is in Jannah,”

Saʿīd remained silent regarding the tenth, so they asked, “Who is the tenth?”

He replied, “Saʿīd ibn Zayd.”²

And al-Bukhārī has narrated in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that he joined Nabī ﷺ by the well of Arīs and was his door attendant for the day. Nabī ﷺ ordered him to give glad tidings to ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ of Jannah with a calamity that will befall him.³

Furthermore, why would al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad not be blameworthy (before his regret and repentance) when his father hit him and said, “Will you not

1 Al-Tabbānī: *Iṭḥāf Dhawī al-Najābah bimā fi al-Qurʾān min Faḍāʾil al-Ṣaḥābah*, p. 40.

2 *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 4/211, chapter of Sunnah, sub-chapter regarding the Khulafāʾ; *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 5/315, chapter of merits, he has said that the ḥadīth is Ḥasan Ṣaḥīḥ; Khaythamah: *Faḍāʾil al-Ṣaḥābah*, slate no. 245; and al-Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 3/879, Ḥadīth: 3886.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 4/201, chapter regarding the Ṣaḥābah of Nabī ﷺ.

associate with you father ‘Alī?’” Thereafter he regretted, repented and wrote the book in which denounced *Irjā’*.

Moving on, *Irjā’* originated at the borders of Jihād and the outskirts of the cities where groups of the Muslims were fighting the disbelievers and were conquering cities. These groups did not know anything about how matters were progressing. Hence, when the disheartening news of the Fitnah reached them agony prevented them from thinking, and the longevity of the distance saved them from the evil of delving into the Fitnah. Thereafter they were surprised by even more events that followed, and were unable to formulate an opinion and follow it; they could not give preference to one side and support it. Hence, they gave preference to being at peace with both the combatant groups and inclined toward neutrality.

Ibn ‘Asākir has said the following regarding them from Maymūn ibn Mahrān:

انهم الشكاك الذين شكوا فكانوا في المعازي فلما قدموا المدينة بعد قتل عثمان وكان عهدهم بالناس وأمرهم واحد ليس فيهم اختلاف فقالوا تركناكم وأمركم واحد ليس فيكم اختلاف وقدما عليكم وأنتم مختلفون فبعضكم يقول قتل عثمان مظلوماً وكان أولى بالعدل وأصحابه وبعضكم يقول كان علي أولى بالحق وأصحابه كلهم ثقة وعندنا مصدق فنحن لا نتبرأ منهما ولا نلعنهما ولا نشهد عليهما ونرجع أمرهما إلى الله حتى يكون الله هو الذي يحكم بينهما

They are the doubters who doubted. They were in the campaigns. So, when they returned to Madīnah, whereas prior to that they had only knew the people to be united without any differences, they thus said, “We left you when your matter was united and there was no dispute amongst you, and now we have come to you and you are disputing. Some of you are saying that ‘Uthmān was wrongfully killed whereas he and his comrades were more deserving of justice. And others amongst you are saying that ‘Alī and his comrades were closer to the truth. Each of them is reliable and deemed truthful by us. So, we do not disassociate from them, we do not curse them, we do not testify against them, and we leave their matter to Allah till he be the one to decide between them.¹

1 Ibn ‘Asākir: *Tārīkh Dimashq*, p. 503.

It is clear from the above that the Murji'ah were a people who were unable to grasp the reality of the issue and it was beyond them to give preference to one of the two sides. They, thus, adopted a neutral stance between averring that they were people of merit and early contribution and between averring that they were upon the truth whilst that is in complete contrast with the disputing and fighting which ensued between them.

This stance according to them was the way out from this contention. So, they excused themselves from standing with or against any of them and they left the matter of all to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى who will be the one to question all of them. In other words, they are under the will of Allah (if He wishes He will forgive them and if He wishes he will take them to task). Hence, they were diametrically opposed to most of the Khawārij who excommunicated the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, the Shī'ah who exceeded all bounds regarding 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and denigrated and excommunicated 'Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, and the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah as well in their stance.

Thābir Quṭnah,¹ the acclaimed poet of the Murji'ah, depicts the belief of the Murji'ah and their ideology in a poem wherein he has expounded upon the *Irjā'* related to the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, the *Irjā'* which is dubbed 'the *Irjā'* of the first Murji'ah'. He says:

يا هند فاستمع لي أنّ سيرتنا * أن نعبد الله لم نشرك به أحداً
نرجى الأمور إذا كانت مشبهة * ونصدق القول فيمن جار أو عندا
المسلمون على الاسلام كلهموا * والمشركون اشتوا في دينهم قددا
ولا أرى أنّ ذنباً بالغ أحداً * م الناس شركا إذا ما وّحدوا الصمدا
لانسفك الدم إلّا أن يراد بنا * سفك الدماء طريقا واحداً جددا
من يتق الله في الدنيا فإنّ له * أجر التقى إذا وقى الحساب غدا

1 Thābit ibn Ka'b ibn Jābir al-'Atakī, Abū al-'Alā', popularly known as Thābit Quṭnah. He was given this title after his eye was injured in one of the battles of Khurāsān whereupon he placed upon it a *Quṭnah* (a piece of cotton wool), since then he was known by it. He was from the brave men of the Arabs and their horsemen in the Umayyad era. He continued fighting the Turks in the lands of Transoxiana till he was martyred in 110 A.H/728 A.D. See: al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/549; al-Aṣḥāhānī: *al-Aghānī*, 14/263; Ibn al-Athīr: *al-Kāmil*, 5/93.

و ما قضى الله من أمر فليس له * ردّ و ما يقض من شيء يكن رشدا
كلّ الخوارج مُخط في مقالته * ولو تعبد فيما قال و اجتهدا
أما عليّ و عثمان فأنهما * عبدان لم يشركا بالله مذ عبدا
و كان بينهما شغب و قد شهدا * شقّ العصا و بعين الله ما شهدا
يجزى عليّاً و عثماناً بسعيهما * و لست أدري بحق آية وردا
الله يعلم ماذا يحضران به * وكلّ عبد سيلقى الله منفردا

O Hind listen to me. Our way is that we worship Allah and we do not ascribe anyone as a partner to him.

We suspend judgement in matters when they are confusing, and we make truthful decisions regarding those who turn away from the path.

The Muslims are all upon Islam and the polytheists have divided their religion into sectarian groups.

And I do not consider any sin making a person reach Shirk as long as he believes in the oneness of the independent.

We do not shed blood unless the shedding of our blood is intended by others. (We do so) in order to tread the one straight path. (Thereby we will be saved from slipping and erring).

Whoever fears Allah in this world, for him will be the reward of his fear when tomorrow he has to give reckoning before Allah.

Whatever Allah has decreed can never be averted and whatever decision he makes is always good.

Each one of the Khawārij is wrong in his statement, even though he considers his statement to be an act of worship and strives to establish it.

As for 'Alī and 'Uthmān, they were two servants who did not ascribe partners to Allah since they worshipped.

Between them there was some bickering and they witnessed the splitting of the unity, but they did not observe with the eye of Allah.

‘Alī and ‘Uthmān will be rewarded for their efforts, and I do not know what the final abode of each of them will be.

Allah knows what they will come forth with, and every bondsman will meet Allah alone.¹

This poem very clearly represents the belief of the Murji’ah and their stance regarding the Fitnah. It states that they establish Īmān for every person who displays it as long as he does not ascribe partners to Allah and does not apostasize. They also believe, contrary to the Khawārij, that sins and offences do not take a person out of the Dīn and thus according to them no Muslim will be excommunicated on the basis of sin, unless his sin reaches the extent of ascribing partners to Allah *سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ*. Likewise, their default position is to desist from shedding the blood of Muslims unless fighting is required for purposes of self-defence. They deem the Khawārij to have erred irrespective of their devotion and exertion in worship due to them excommunicating the Muslims. They also believe Shirk has not been proven from ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا* since they accepted Islam and, therefore, it is not permissible to excommunicate them. Yes, bickering had occurred between them, but Allah *سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ* knows their internal conditions better and will recompense them for their efforts. They have both passed on to their Lord and we do not know who of them is from the people of Jannah and who of them is from the people of Hell-fire, for only Allah knows what they will come forth with on the Day of Judgement when every person will be questioned individually about his doings.

But contradiction is evident from the text of the poem. Because its compiler firstly emphatically deems the Khawārij wrong and establishes that a monotheist sinner will not be excommunicated, but thereafter he suspends judgement regarding ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا* and doubts in whether they will enter Jannah or

1 Abū al-Faraj al-Aṣfahānī: *al-Aghānī*, 14/262.

not. Notwithstanding that this is an extreme position and is completely against what is established in the Shar'ī texts, as has passed already. It is very well known that there is consensus regarding the merit of 'Uthmān and 'Alī رضي الله عنهما and that they have been promised Jannah. This is one of the innovations of the Murji'ah and their deviances.

Anyway, Sifr al-Ḥawālī says the following regarding the inception of *al-Irjā'* (he proposes a different idea regarding their roots) in his book *Zāhirah al-Irjā' fī al-Fikr al-Islāmī*. He explains that the debate between the extremist Khawārij and their moderate ones regarding the combatants amongst the Saḥābah رضي الله عنهم led to the emergence of the Murji'ah Khawārij who averred that the matter of 'Uthmān and 'Alī رضي الله عنهما be deferred. These people drifted very far from the starting point and shifted from the Khārijī ideology to its complete opposite. In fact, some of them even opposed the Khawārij very strongly, as is always the case in the dissecting of dissecting sects, in spite of them still possessing a trait from their traits. He says:

وقد استوفقتني هذه الحقيقة كثيراً أعني: حقيقة أن أصل المرجئة هم الخوارج لا بطريق التضاد في الغلو بل ذاتاً، وحقيقة وليس سبب ذلك عدم ثبوتها، ولكنه عدم وضوح تعليلها الذي تبين بعد بالتبعية الدقيق لفرق الخوارج. ومن هنا ظهرت ضرورة التوسع في دراسة إحدى الظاهرتين، لمعرفة حقيقة الأخرى. وإذا ما أردنا الوصول إلى الحقيقة، فإن علينا أن نعرف تلك الظاهرة البارزة في تاريخ الخوارج، وهي الاختلاف والتشقق إلى أكثر من رأي عادة، وفي كل قضية تقريباً، وهو ما أنتج بمجموعه ثلاثة اتجاهات كبرى في مواقف فرق الخوارج، منذ حادثة التحكيم إلى بروز منهج الإرجاء قائماً بنفسه وهي:

الاتجاه الغالي المطرد في غلوه.

الاتجاه المترجع إلى حد التساهل (نسبياً)

الاتجاه التوسطي أو المحايد (التوقف والتبيين).

إذا علمنا ذلك برزت لنا حقيقة مهمة وهي أن طائفة من الخوارج تشمل فرقا أو بعض فرق تقف من الحكم على الأصحاب المختلفين في الفتنة موقفاً متوسطاً بين القول المحكممة والأزارقة الذين يكفرونهم، وبين قول الإباضية ونحوهم ممن يقول هم كفار نعمة، وهذا الموقف هو الوقف والإرجاء، أي إرجاء حكمهم في الآخرة إلى الله تعالى مع إثبات اسم الأيمان لهم في الدنيا بناء على الأصل الذي اتخذته أكثر فرق التوقف، وهو أن كل معصية دون الكفر لا يطلق على صاحبها اسم الكفر ولا ينفي عنه اسم الإيمان...

فإذا أرادوا تطبيق هذا الأصل على ما تقرر لديهم من كون الصحابة المختلفين في الفتنة مرتكبين لكبائر كانت النتيجة: أن عثمان وعلياً وطلحة والزبير ومعاوية... مؤمنون، لأنهم لم يشركوا بالله، فلا ننفي عنهم اسم الإيمان، ولكن لا ولاية لهم ولا محبة نظراً لما ارتكبوه، ومقتضى ذلك كما رأينا من واقع انشقاقاتهم أن يقولوا: إن الخوارج مخطئون في تكفيرهم لهم.

This reality has made me pause a lot, I mean the reality that the roots of the Murji'ah are the Khawārij, not due to extremism in the opposite direction, but in terms of sharing the same being and reality. It has made me pause not because it is not established, but due to the vagueness of its rationale which is yet to explicate through a detailed study all the sects of the Khawārij. Therefore, there the need to expand in studying one of the two phenomena was realised in order to understand the reality of the other.

And if we intend reaching the reality, then it is incumbent upon us to know the most glaring aspect of the history of the Khawārij, i.e. differing and splintering into more than one view in most instances and in almost every issue. All of these as a whole produced three primary leanings in the stances of the sects of the Khawārij since the Arbitration till the inception of the methodology of *Ijā'*. They are:

1. The extremist tendency which was principled.
2. The retracting tendency, even to the extent of compromise.
3. The neutral or impartial tendency.

Once we know this, a very important reality will dawn upon us. The Khawārij (inclusive of some sects) adopted regarding the Ṣaḥābah who differed in the Fitnah a neutral position; a neutral position between the view of the Muḥakkimah and the Azāriqah who excommunicated them, and between the Ibāḍiyyah and their like who averred that they were deniers of the bounty of Allah. This position is the actual *Ijā'*, i.e. deferring judgement on them to Allah سبحانه وتعالى in the afterlife coupled with affirming the title of Īmān for them in this world. This is due to the principle which was adopted by most of the hesitant sects, which is that Kufr will not apply to any person whose sin is less than disbelief and Īmān will not be removed from him.

Now when they apply this principle to what is established by them regarding the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم being perpetrators of major sins the outcome is the following: ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, and Mu‘āwiyah... رضي الله عنهم are believers because they did not ascribe partners to Allah and, thus, they will not be denied the title of Īmān. However, they do not deserve association and love owing to what they did. The necessary result of this according to what we have seen of their splintering is that they aver that the Khawārij are mistaken in their excommunication of them.

Nonetheless, whether *Irjā’* was an independent position which came about because of the Fitnah or it was a product of the Khārījī ideology and its offshoot, it, due to it being a psychological position, that could have existed in this blind Fitnah and whatever followed. It can similarly come about in any other issue or offshoot from any other ideology. Because one of the trends of a society is that any debate between two sects or groups necessarily leads to the emergence of a third group which is impartial for whatever reason. Likewise, in the era of the Fitnah such people existed who adopted neutrality. But this neutrality is nothing but a negative stance which is followed by scepticism and doubt regarding the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who were embroiled in the dispute.

The Position of the Shī‘ah

The time after the first Fitnah also witnessed the emergence of the Shī‘ah who were likewise distinct in their views and their exclusive opinions in the political sphere. The Shī‘ī sect is primarily linked to a sentimental matter which is love for the Ahl al-Bayt. This sentiment progressed and as a result the ideas which were born because of it started to become firmly grounded and take the form of a distinct school or a sect with unique ideas in the principles of Sharī‘ah, rulership, jurisprudence.

The word ‘Shī‘ah’ in language is only used to refer to followers of a person and his partisans. Hence, it is said, ‘So and so is from the Shī‘ah so and so’, i.e. he has the same leanings as him. Likewise, any people who converge upon a common matter

are also known as 'Shi'ah'. And any person who helps another person or supports him is his Shi'ah. It emanates from *Mushāya'ah* which means to cooperate and to follow.¹

Therefore, the usage of this word in the initial days of Islam was only in this sense, for it was used after the first Fitnah to refer to the followers of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his partisans, and the followers of Mu'āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his partisans. The Shi'ah of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were those who considered him to be the fourth rightly guided Khalīfah and deemed Mu'āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and the people of Shām to be rebels whom it was necessary to subdue by way of the sword. And the Shi'ah of Mu'āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were those who felt that the killers of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had sought amnesty in the army of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and, thus, pledging to 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was not binding upon them till he executed them or handed them over.

However, the distinction of the Shi'ah started when a group of the army of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ remained by his side after the detraction of the Khawārij, and expressed their support for 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ after the decision of the arbiters and said:

في إعناقنا بيعة ثانية، نحن أولياء من واليت وأعداء من عاديت

In our necks is a second pledge. We are the friends of those who you befriend and enemies of those who you oppose.²

It would also be good to point out that the early Shi'ah did not criticise the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ of Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, revile them, or denigrate them. In fact, they would give preference to Abū Bakr and 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا over 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, as is mentioned by Ibn Taymiyyah:

كانت الشيعة المتقدمون الذين صحبوا عليا، أو كانوا في ذلك الزمان لم يتنازعوا في تفضيل أبي بكر وعمر، وإنما كان نزاعهم في تفضيل علي وعثمان. وهذا مما يعترف به علماء الشيعة الأكابر

1 Al-Zubaydī: *Tāj al-'Arūs*, 5/405.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/64.

The early Shī'ah who accompanied 'Alī رضي الله عنه, or lived during that time did not dispute in giving preference to Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنه. Their differing was only regarding preference between 'Alī and 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه. This is something acknowledged by the senior Shī'ī scholars.¹

He says in another place:

ونقل عن واحد من الشيعة الأولى وهو شريك بن عبد الله أنه سأله سائل: أيهما أفضل أبو بكر أم علي؟ فقال أبو بكر: فقال له السائل: تقول هذا وأنت شيعي! فقال له: نعم، من لم يقل هذا فليس شيعيا، والله لقد رقى هذه الأعواد علي، قال: ألا خير هذه الأمة بعد نبيها أبو بكر ثم عمر، فكيف نرد قوله وكيف نكذبه! والله ما كان كذابا

It is narrated from one of the early Shī'ah, Sharīk ibn 'Abd Allāh, that someone asked him, "Who is better: Abū Bakr or 'Alī?"

He replied, "Abū Bakr."

The questioner asked, "You are saying this whereas you a Shī'ī?"

He said, "Yes. Whoever does not say this is not a Shī'ī. By Allah 'Alī رضي الله عنه ascended these steps and said, 'Behold, the best of this Ummah after its Nabī was Abū Bakr and 'Umar.' So how can we reject his word and how can we belie him. By Allah he was not a liar."²

Subsequent to that the *Mufaḍḍilah* emerged who gave preference to 'Alī رضي الله عنه over even Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنه. It is categorically narrated that when 'Alī رضي الله عنه received the news he said:

خير هذه الأمة بعد نبيها أبو بكر ثم عمر

The best of this Ummah after its Nabī is Abū Bakr and then 'Umar.³

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, 1/4.

2 Ibid, 13/34.

3 *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, 28/473. A similar ḥadīth appears in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* from Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه, 4/191.

And it is narrated from him with chains of transmission which are Ḥasan that he would say:

لا أوتى بأحد يفضلني على أبي بكر وعمر إلا جلدته جلد الممتري

No person who give preference to me over Abū Bakr and ‘Umar is brought to me, but that I will lash him just as an accuser is lashed.¹

Thereafter, Shī‘ism took on novel and grave extremes, for now it was gripped by extremism, the denouncing of the Khilāfah of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما, reviling the Ṣaḥābah of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم, criticising them, claiming infallibility for the Ahl al-Bayt, believing in *Raj‘ah* (the return of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, the emphatic appointment of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, and many other foreign beliefs which Islam does not approve of at all. This is when the Shī‘ah who followed this dogma were dubbed the ‘Rāfiḍah’.

Moving on, it should be noted that several factors contributed to the development of the Shī‘ī dogma, some of them are the following:

Firstly, the historical events which led to the inception of the dogma and its perpetuation. These events were the evil consequences of the murder of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه by the Khārijī ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muljam,² thereafter, the relinquishing of al-Ḥasan رضي الله عنه of the Khilāfah,³ and the painful end of the march of Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه during the era of Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah.⁴ These events left indelible impressions in the hearts of the Shī‘ah that the times will never omit.

These events represented the historical catalyst which prompted increase in the sentiment of love and affiliation to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and his household. And that contributed to the Shī‘ah emerging as one of the strongest sects with political leanings. It distinguished them with such characteristics that nobody else has

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, 4/191.

2 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/143.

3 Ibid, 5/162.

4 Ibid, 5/400.

anything in common with them despite the multitudes of sects, their differences, and their disputes.

Secondly, the societal and cultural effects which came about because of the emancipated Persian slaves becoming part of the Muslims society. The most important impact was that these Persians supported the idea of Shī'ism and most of them embraced it for personal and historical reasons.¹ One such reason was that the conquest of Iran which took place under the reign of 'Umar and 'Uthmān رضي الله عنهما had shattered the groups of the Persians and had destroyed their strength, and the loss of their glory and dominion had deeply disturbed some of them. They, thus, entered Islam outwardly and inwardly concealed their Zoroastrian hatred. The martyrdom of 'Umar رضي الله عنه at the hands of the Zoroastrian Abū Lu'lu' is just one example of their deep-rooted hatred. Subsequent to that they embraced 'Alī رضي الله عنه and his sons to reach their motives. Hence, they claimed to love the Ahl al-Bayt and associate with them, and claimed that rulership and Khilāfah were the prerogative of 'Alī and his children. Especially because they believed that the blood which flowed in the vessels of 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn (popularly known as Zayn al-'Ābidīn) and his progeny was Persian blood because of the blood of his mother Shaharbānū the daughter of the Persian king Yazdegerd who was from the Descendants of the Holy Sasanid Kings.

A Western researcher who stayed in Iran for a long time and sufficiently studied its history has the following to say in this regard:

من أهم أسباب عداوة أهل إيران للخليفة الراشد الثاني عمر، هو أنه فتح بلاد العجم وكشر شوكتهم، غير أنهم أعطوا العداثة صبغة دينية مذهبية، وليس هذا من الحقيقة في شيء

One of the main reasons for the hatred of the people Iran for the second guided Khalīfah 'Umar is that he conquered the lands of the Persians and destroyed their might. However, they gave their acrimony a religious and dogmatic form, and this has nothing to do with reality.²

1 Aḥmad Amīn: *Ḍuḥā al-Islām*, 3/209.

2 Edward Brown: *Tārīkh al-Adab fī Īrān*, 1/213.

What is also worth noting is that the one belief which is found across all the Shī'ī sects is the belief that 'Alī رضي الله عنه was the best and that he was most deserving of the Khilāfah. This is not something which is based on common interest and thus is left to the discretion of the general people, but is rather is pillar from the pillars of Dīn. In order to justify this belief, they conjured the *Waṣīyyah*, i.e. the idea that Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم emphatically appointed 'Alī رضي الله عنه as his immediate successor after him. They went on to fabricate narrations to support this, such narrations about which Ibn Khaldūn says, "They are unknown to the masters of the Sunnah and the transmitters of the Sharī'ah."¹ In fact they are unknown even to the students of the science of Ḥadīth, let alone the great Ḥadīth experts and the narrators thereof.

They also aver that Khilāfah after 'Alī رضي الله عنه is confined to his posterity and shifts from one Imām to his successor by way of emphatic appointment. This is notwithstanding their debate as to the line of Imāms who followed after 'Alī رضي الله عنه.²

However, even though the Zaydiyyah consider 'Alī رضي الله عنه to be most deserving of the Khilāfah, but they do not go to the extent of saying the Khilāfah for him is established via emphatic text, as do the Imāmiyyah. According to them Imāmah is not something for which emphatic text is required, rather it is permissible for every scholarly Fāṭimī who is brave, an ascetic, and generous. Together with that he has the ability to fight and demand his right of rulership.³

Imāmah according to them is not a passive process, as it is according to the Imāmiyyah who belief in an Imām who is in occultation in the basement of Surr Man Ra'ā⁴ and will one day emerge and fill the earth with justice just as it was before that filled with injustice.

1 Ibn Khaldūn: *al-Muqaddimah*, p. 197.

2 Al-Ash'arī: *al-Maqālāt*, 1/89.

3 Al-Shahrestānī: *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/207.

4 An ancient city of Iraq whose name was Sāmīrā. When al-Mu'taṣim revived it in 220 A.H./835 A.D. he named it Surr Man Ra'ā. See: al-Bakrī: *Mu'jam ma Ustu'jima min Asmā' al-Mawāḍi' wa al-Bilād*, p. 3/734; Yāqūt: *Mu'jam al-Buldān*, 3/215.

The Negative Results of the Emergence of these Political Differences

Overall, the emergence of these sects to the political realm had negative outcomes, for it instated the symptoms of division and disunity between the Muslims. And of course together with that it is a cause of weakness and helplessness. The clash between various sects intensified and directly impacted upon the hindrance of the progress of the Islamic conquests; because the incessant activity of the Khawārij and the Shī'ah occupied the governors and barred them from sending reinforcements for the armies of conquest, even though for a while. As such, there was significant delay in the conquest of many regions.

The era which followed after the Fitnah stands out as the era of excessive disputes and many wars which were fuelled by movements that did not benefit whatsoever from it themselves. Because they had exhausted their energies and efforts in fighting the Muslims instead of utilising them in striving in the path of Allah. And their proponents like the Khawārij and the Shī'ah displayed amazing courage and valour, but did not use them in their appropriate places, for they were not a torment for the disbelievers and the polytheists, but were a cause of violating the blood and the wealth of the Muslims instead.

A person who thoroughly studies the historical event of the Muslim world after the Fitnah will reach many definitive conclusions. He will realise that the external threat was not the greatest and the most difficult threat to deal with, rather the internal threat was the impending threat which was weakening the edifice of the Islamic empire. For the various movements and perpetual insurrections had exhausted the structure of this empire and had depleted its stored strengths.

There is no doubt that the memories of the Khilāfah Rāshidah were still before the eyes of the people who desired that matters revert to as they were. Hence there was a constant yearning for that Rāshidī model of rulership and the ruler would always be measured with the standards of Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما. As a result, movements would emerge one after the other because of the Khilāfah transitioning to an oppressive monarchy which was filled with harshness and

oppression, in spite of it possessing strength and striving against the enemies of Allah. Its example was like that of a person who has accumulated good deeds and equally evil deeds as well. However, not all movements had the reinstating of the Khilāfah Rāshidah at heart, instead some of them had other ulterior motives which concerned dominion, status, and wealth.

Notwithstanding that this transition from Khilāfah to monarchism is the system of Allah in this live, and at times it can be a punishment for the Muslims because of their sins and the doings of their hands so that they may revert. Ibn Taymiyyah says:

ومصير الأمر إلى المملوك ليس لنقص فيهم فقط، بل لنقص في الراعي والرعيه، فإنه كما تكونوا يول عليكم، وكذلك نُؤلِّي بَعْضَ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضًا

The matter ending up by the kings is not because of deficiency in them themselves, but because of deficiency in the ruler and the subjects. For ‘As you will be, will be the rulers appointed over you’¹ and *‘In this manner do we make some oppressors rule over others.’*²

A person who deliberates over the movements which emerged after the Fitnah, as the immediate outcome thereof, will find that they were either opportunists or propelled by a true Islamic passion, although they were emotional and reactionary. As such, they vanished very quickly because they required good administration, planning, and deliberation over the outcomes and consequences.

1 It is mentioned as a Prophetic ḥadīth, but al-Suyūṭī says, “There is a break in its chain.” See: *al-Durar al-Muntathirah fī al-Aḥādīth al-Mushtahirah*, p. 162. The annotator has said the following in the footnotes; Abū Bakr al-Ṭurṭūshī says, “This ḥadīth reached me ‘As you will be so will the rulers appointed over you be’ so I started searching for its chain, but I came across the following verse whilst I was reciting:

وَكَذَلِكَ نُؤَلِّي بَعْضَ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

And thus, we will make some of the wrongdoers rulers of others for what they used to earn.

So, I sufficed upon the ḥadīth.” See: p. 162. So, the Āyah is harmonious with the ḥadīth in meaning.

2 Sūrah al-An‘ām: 129. Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, 35/20.

Nonetheless, they were a source of great loss for the Muslims in their blood, their wealth, and their unity of word.

The Sharῑ texts, thus, indicate to the importance of obedience to the ruler whose rulership has been enacted and prevents against remonstrating against him even if he is tyrannical¹ due to many problems coming about because of it.

Al-Bukhārī narrates the following from Abū al-Minhāl:²

لما كان ابن زياد ومروان بالشأم ووثب ابن الزبير بمكة ووثب القراء بالبصرة فانطلقت مع أبي إلى أبي برزة الأسلمي حتى دخلنا عليه في داره وهو جالس في ظل عليه له من قصب فجلسنا إليه فأنشأ أبي يستطعمه الحديث فقال يا أبا برزة ألا ترى ما وقع فيه الناس فأول شيء سمعته تكلم به إني احتسبت عند الله أني أصبحت ساخطا على أحياء قريش إنكم يا معشر العرب كنتم على الحال الذي علمتم من الذلة والقلة والضلالة وإن الله أنقذكم بالإسلام وبمحمد صلى الله عليه وسلم حتى بلغ بكم ما ترون وهذه الدنيا التي أفسدت بينكم إن ذلك الذي بالشأم والله إن يقاتل إلا على الدنيا وإن هؤلاء الذين بين أظهركم والله إن يقاتلون إلا على الدنيا وإن ذلك الذي بمكة والله إن يقاتل إلا على الدنيا

When Ibn Ziyād and Marwān were in Shām, Ibn al-Zubayr revolted in Makkah and the Qurrah’ revolted in Baṣrah. I, therefore, went with my father to Abū Barzah al-Aslamī رضي الله عنه till we entered his house. He was sitting in the shade of an upper room which was made of bamboo. We sat by him and my father started to solicit a conversation from him, he said to him, “O Abū Barzah! Do you not see what the people are embroiled in?”

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/87, chapter of Fitan. Ibn Hajar says in *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, Ibn al-Tīn has reported from al-Dāwūdī that he said, “The scholars suggest regarding the tyrannical rulers that if it is possible to dismiss him without a Fitnah and without oppression, then it is the necessary to do so, otherwise it is incumbent to be patient.

2 Sayyār ibn Salāmah al-Rayāḥī, Abū al-Minhāl al-Baṣrī. He narrated from Abū Barzah al-Aslamī, Sulaymān al-Taymī, and others narrate from him. Ibn Sa’d has said, “He was reliable.” He has also been deemed reliable by Ibn Maῑn al-Nasā’ī. And Abū Ḥātim said, “A truthful narrator.” And al-’Ijlī said, “A reliable narrator from Baṣrah.” Ibn Ḥibbān has also made mention of him in his *al-Thiqāt*. He passed away in 129 A.H/746 A.D. See: Ibn Sa’d: *al-Ṭabaqāt*, 7/236; Ibn Maῑn: *al-Tārikh*, 2/244; al-’Ijlī: *Tārikh al-Thiqāt*, p. 212; Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Thiqāt*, 4/335; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 4/290.

The first thing he said was, “I am hopeful of reward from Allah for being disillusioned with the tribes of the Quraysh. O you the congregation of Arabs, you were previously in a condition known to yourself of humility, fewness of number, and deviance. Allah ﷻ rescued you by way of Islam and Muḥammad ﷺ and made you reach the heights you see. It is this world that has corrupted you. That individual in Shām is not fighting but for the world, these people who are before you are not fighting but for this world, and that individual who is in Makkah is not fighting but for this world.”¹

This narration suggests that Abū Barzah deemed avoidance of the Fitnah and not getting involved in the feud of the Muslims to be ideal, especially because it was due to coveting kingdom. This was during the era of Fitnah and great unrest which swept across the cities; for the Umayyads had a dynasty, Ibn al-Zubayr had a dynasty, and the Khawārij had a dynasty as well, as has passed in the narration of Abū Barzah رضي الله عنه.

This is why most scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah are not proponents of initiating insurrections against the rulers. Because the harms are always more than the benefits so long as they do not possess a strong clique that is able to change the rule without causing civil strife and shedding blood.

Here we have Anas رضي الله عنه, when the people complained to him about the oppression, they were experiencing from Ḥajjāj, he said:

اصبروا فإنه لا يأتي عليكم زمان إلا والذي بعده شر منه حتى تلقوا ربكم، سمعته من نبيكم

Exercise patience, for no time will dawn upon you, but that the time that will follow will be worse than it till you meet your Lord. I heard that from your Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم.²

Likewise, Rabī'ah al-Ra'y, the teacher of Mālik, whenever he would be alone with his student he would cry and become emotional due to the Khilāfah Rāshidah

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/99, chapter of Fitan.

2 *Ibid.* 8/89.

ending. He would cry over the proliferation of oppression from those who succeeded them and would desire to see the day wherein he could freely enjoin good and prevent evil.¹

So, the conclusion is that the emergence of these sects and the events and political positions that ensued thereafter were very grave happenings which the Muslims encountered after the Fitnah. It opened the door of evil between them and drove their united congregation to division and disunity.

Furthermore, despite the fact that the year 40 A.H/660 A.D. was considered the year of the congregation;² however, the congregation was not completely realised. For there always remained those who opposed verbally or through action the settling of events which transpired in the time after the martyrdom of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and the prevailing circumstances of the Umayyad dynasty. Together with that there were those who overtly displayed agreement but covertly concealed dissension. This is evident from what Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه said to ‘Ā’ishah bint ‘Uthmān when he came to Madīnah after the year of the congregation; he entered the house of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and his daughter ‘Ā’ishah started shouting, crying, and calling out to her father, whereupon Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه said:

يا ابنة أخي إن الناس أعطونا طاعة واعطيناهم أمانا، وأظهرنا لهم حلما تحته غضب، وأظهروا لنا ذلا تحته حقد، ومع كل إنسان سيفه ويرى موضع أصحابه، فإن نكثناهم نكثوا بنا لا ندري أعلينا تكون أم لنا.

O my niece! People have given us obedience and we have given them amnesty. And we have displayed for them forbearance under which is anger, and they have displayed for us subjugation under which is acrimony. With every person is his sword and he is always watchful of the position of his friends. So if we breach our agreement with them they will breach their agreement with us and we do not know whether the result will be for us or against us.³

1 Muḥammad al-‘Abdah: *Ḥarakah al-Nafs al-Zakiyyah*, p. 11.

2 Abū Zur‘ah al-Dimashqī: *al-Tārīkh*, p. 188.

3 Ibn ‘Abd Rabbihī: *al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, 5/106.

2. The Theological Outcomes

The Innovation of the Khawārij

The innovation of the Khawārij was because of incorrect understanding and absence of jurisprudence. They did not purposely intend to oppose the Qur’ān, but understood from it what it did not intend. Hence, they assumed that it necessitated the excommunication of the sinners; because a believer according to them was someone who is noble and pious and they therefore assumed that whoever is not noble and pious is a disbeliever and will be doomed to Hell-fire forever.

That is why they said that ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, and whoever supported them were not believers due to them ruling with other than what Allah ﷻ revealed. Their innovation was based on to premises:

1. Whoever opposes the Qur’ān in practice or in his opinion has erred is a disbeliever (by Qur’ān they meant the literal purport of the Qur’ān).
2. ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī and those who supported them were like that.¹

Another of their innovations was that they excommunicated the perpetrators of major sins and averred that they will be doomed to Hell-fire forever.² In this they went to very extreme limits. But that is not all, the greatest problem is that the perpetrator of a major sin according to them was not a fornicator, thief, a liar, or other sinners like them from the Ummah; rather ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, al-Zubayr, Ṭalḥah, ‘Ā’ishah, Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and others like them from the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ of Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ were perpetrators of major sins, according to them.

Because of this extremism and being difficult in the Dīn, the Khawārij deviated from the truth. For in the Book of Allah there are verses which suggest non-

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, 13/30-32.

2 Al-Ash‘arī: *al-Maqālāt*, 1/157; Ibn Ḥazm: *al-Fiṣal fī al-Mīlāl wa al-Niḥāl*, 2/113.

eternity in Hell-fire due to a sin as long as it does not reach Shirk. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with him, but he forgives what is less than that for whom he wills.¹

And Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

قُلْ يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِن رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا
إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

Say, "I my servants who have transgress against themselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is he who is forgiving and merciful.²

Similarly, in the ḥadīths which are cited by al-Bukhārī and Muslims there are narrations which suggest that amongst the monotheist there will be those who will be punished in Hell-fire and subsequently they will be taken out from it group after group because of the intercession of Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the angels, and the believers. So much so that all the believers will be taken out therefrom and only those whom the Qur'ān has withheld will remain, i.e. those who passed away upon Shirk.

Consider the following portion of lengthy narration narrated by al-Bukhārī:

حتى إذا فرغ الله من القضاء بين عباده وأراد أن يخرج من النار من أراد أن يخرج ممن كان يشهد أن لا إله إلا الله أمر الملائكة أن يخرجوهم فيعرفونهم بعلامة آثار السجود وحرّم الله على النار أن تأكل من ابن آدم أثر السجود فيخرجونهم قد امتحشوا فيصب عليهم ماء يقال له ماء الحياة فينبون نبات الحبة في حميل السيل

1 Sūrah al-Nisā": 48.

2 Sūrah al-Zumar: 53.

Then when Allah will have completed deciding between his bondsmen and will intend removing from Hell-fire those whom he will intend to remove from the people who testified that there is none worthy of worship besides Allah, he will order the angels to take them out. They will recognise them from the signs of prostration, for Allah ﷻ will have made it forbidden upon the fire to eat the sign of prostration. They will then be removed therefrom after being completely burnt. Thereafter water which is called the water of life will be poured upon them and they will grow like how a seed grows on the bank of a rainwater stream.¹

Al-Bukhārī also narrates the following from ‘Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ from Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

يُخْرَجُ قَوْمٌ مِنَ النَّارِ بِشَفَاعَةِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَيَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ يُسَمَّوْنَ الْجَهَنَّمِيِّينَ

A people will be taken out from Hell-fire through the intercession of Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. They will enter Jannah and will be dubbed the Jahannāmīs.²

Furthermore, whoever studies the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ will know that a consumer of wine, an adulterer, and a slanderer were not deemed renegades by Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ whom it was necessary to slay. In fact, the Qur’ān and narrations transmitted through mass transmission from Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ establish that these people deserve punishments other than the punishment of a renegade. And Allah ﷻ has also made mention of the capital punishments for a slanderer, an adulterer, and a thief in the Qur’ān.

This is something upon which the scholars of Islam concur due to drawing evidence from the text of the Qur’ān and the categorically established practice of Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Had they been disbelieving renegades, Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would have killed them. From this it is clear that the view of the Khawārij was flawed regarding the perpetrator of major sins.

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 7/203, chapter of *Riqāq* (narrations that soften the heart).

2 *Ibid*, 7/203.

‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ himself debunked the claims of the Khawārij in one of his sermons; he condemned them for excommunicating a perpetrator of major sins, advanced the practice of Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as evidence against them, and informed them that if such a person was a disbeliever Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would not have performed their Janāzah Ṣalāh and would not have allowed them to inherit, get married, and be entitled to a share from the booty.¹

Therefore, Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا would consider them to be the worst of humanity, because they went on to apply verses which were primarily revealed regarding the disbelievers and applied them to the Muslims.²

Abū al-Hasan al-Ash‘arī sums up the position of the Salaf, the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah, stating that no one of the people of the Qiblah will be excommunicated, nor will they be doomed to Hell-fire for eternity, and that intercession will be accepted in their favour. Because it is narrated from Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that the sinners will come out of Hell-fire.³

Nonetheless, as a result of their innovative belief regarding a perpetrator of major sins and his eternity in the Hell-fire, the Khawārij went on to deny the intercession of Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ for his Ummah on the Day of Judgement, in spite of the Ṣaḥīḥ narrations which are transmitted with mass transmission in this regard; these narrations can be found in the books of theology, ḥadīth, and jurisprudence.

The Innovation of the Murji‘ah:

The speech of the first person who had proposed *Irjā’* was confined to deferring judgement regarding the combatants amongst the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Thereafter the concept of *Irjā’* developed from specifically referring to the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, as was the view of the early Murji‘ah, to a more general meaning.

1 Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd: *Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*, 2/306.

2 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 8/51, chapter regarding seeking repentance from the renegades.

3 Abū al-Hasan al-Ash‘arī: *al-‘Ibānah ‘an Uṣūl al-Diyānah*, p. 98.

It was thereafter used to refer to a perpetrator of major sins and a *Fāsiq* (open transgressor), as was the view of the later people among them; they averred that it is possible that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى forgive a *Fāsiq* just as it is equally possible that Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى punish him, the reality of that is unknown but to Allah.¹

To further elaborate, when the *Khawārij* adopted a radical position in sounding warnings to the people, the *Murji'ah* adopted an extreme position in sounding glad tidings and deferring judgement regarding the sinners till the Day of Judgement coupled with consigning their matter to Allah; i.e. if he wants, he will forgive them and if he wants, he will punish them. Hence the crux of the belief of these people was that every perpetrator of major sins other than *Shirk* is under the will of Allah; if he wants, he can punish him and if he wants, he can forgive him. As for in this world, we definitively pass the ruling of *Kufr* regarding only those who ascribe partners to Allah, as for those beside them we establish for them the title of *Īmān*.

However, they progressed further than that and broadened the definition of *Īmān* to its furthest extent. Which means that they deemed *Īmān* to be merely associated to the heart and that there are no clauses of fulfilling commandments and refraining from prohibitions that will be binding upon a person. This led them to aver that no vice is detrimental with *Īmān* just as no virtue is beneficial with disbelief.² This view of the *Murji'ah* is indeed condemnable. Some of them even went to the extent of saying that every Muslim, even though he dies upon sinning, will be from the people of *Jannah* and that he will never see the Hell-fire, for Hell-fire is only for the disbelievers.³

A person who deliberates over this view of the *Murji'ah* will know that it is against what appears in the *Qur'ān*, the *Sunnah* of Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the statements of the *Salaf*. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

1 Al-Shahrestānī: *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/139.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibn Ḥazm: *al-Fiṣal fī al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/115.

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا كُفْرَانَ لِسَعْيِهِ

So, whoever does righteous deeds while he is a believer, no denial will there be for his effort.¹

And he also says:

وَمَنْ يَأْتِهِ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ عَمِلَ الصَّالِحَاتِ فَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ الدَّرَجَاتُ الْعُلَى

But whoever comes to him as a believer, having done righteous deeds, for those will be the highest degrees.²

This indicates that action is linked to *īmān* and that *īmān* is linked to action, each one of them is inseparable from the other.

And Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī³ says:

لا إيمان لمن لا إسلام له، ولا إسلام لمن لا إيمان له، إذ لا يخلو المسلم من إيمان: به يصحح إسلامه ولا يخلو المؤمن من إسلام، به يحقق إيمانه من حيث اشتراط الله لأعمال الصالحة للإيمان، واشتراط الإيمان للأعمال الصالحة... فمن كان ظاهره أعمال الإسلام ولا يرجع إلى عقود الإيمان بالغيب؛ فهو منافق نفاقا ينقل عن الملة، ومن عنده الإيمان بالغيب ولا يعمل بأحكام الإيمان وشرائع الإسلام، فهو كافر كفرا لا يثبت معه توحيد.

There is no *īmān* for a person who has no Islam (submission in action) and there is no Islam for a person who has no *īmān*. For no Muslim can be

1 Sūrah al-Ambiyā': 94.

2 Sūrah Ṭāhā: 75.

3 Muḥammad ibn 'Alī ibn 'Aṭīyyah al-Ḥārithī, Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī. He grew up and gained acclaim in Makkah. He was from the advisors and ascetics. Al-'Utayqī says regarding him, "He was a pious person who exerted himself in worship. He has written a few books, al-Khaṭīb says, "He wrote a book called Qūt al-Qulūb, as per the jargon of the Sufis. Therein he has made mention of many reprehensible things regarding the attributes of Allah." And Abū Ṭāhir al-'Allāf says, "Abū Ṭālib would advise the people in Baghdād and he would mix up his speech." He passed away in 386 A.H/994 A.D. See: al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 3/9; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mizān*, 3/655.

without īmān by way of which his Islam will be rectified, and no Mu'min is without Islam by way of which his īmān can be firmly grounded. This is because Allah ﷻ has made good actions a requisite for īmān and has made īmān a requisite for good actions. Hence, whoever's outward is the actions of Islam, but he does not revert to the tenets of īmān in the unseen, then he is a hypocrite whose hypocrisy will remove him from the religion; and whoever possesses īmān in the unseen but does not practice upon the injunctions of īmān and its rulings, then he is a disbeliever with whose disbelief Tawḥīd will not be established.¹

And Allah ﷻ says:

وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

*And that is Paradise which you are made to inherit for what you used to do.*²

Ibn Ḥajar says the following under this verse:

وقد نقل جماعة من المفسرين أن قوله: تعملون معناه تؤمنون

A group of the exegetes have reported that 'what you used to do' means 'what you used to believe.'³

And Allah ﷻ says:

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ

*And never would Allah have caused you to lose your faith.*⁴

1 Kitāb al-Īmān of Ibn Taymiyyah, p. 316.

2 Sūrah al-Zukhruf: 72.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Fatḥ*, 1/77.

4 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 143.

By Īmān Ṣalāh is intended¹ and Ṣalāh is an action.

And Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ says:

وَيَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالرَّسُولِ وَأَطَعْنَا ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّى فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَمَا أُولَئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ

*But they say, "We have believed in Allah and the Messenger and we obey," then a party of them turns away after that. And those are not believers.*²

Ibn Taymiyyah states:

فعلم أن التولي ليس هو التكذيب، بل هو التولي عن الطاعة، فإن الناس عليهم أن يصدقوا الرسول فيما أخبر، ويطيعوه فيما أمر، وضد التصديق التكذيب، وضد الطاعة، التولي

So, it has become known that turning away is not belying, rather it is turning away from obedience. For it was the responsibility of the people to believe Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in that which he informed about and to obey him in that which he ordered. And the opposite of believing is belying and the opposite of obeying is turning away.³

And Abū Bakr al-Ājurī says:

واعلموا - رحمتنا الله تعالى وإياكم - أني قد تصفحت القرآن فوجدت فيه ما ذكرته في ستة وخمسين موضعا من كتاب الله عز وجل: أن الله تبارك وتعالى لم يدخل المؤمنين الجنة بالإيمان وحده بل أدخلهم الجنة برحمته إياهم وبما وفقهم له من الإيمان به والعمل الصالح

Know, may Allah have mercy on us and on you, that after paging through the Qur'an I have found what I mentioned in fifty-six places thereof. I found that Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ will not enter the believers into Jannah because of their Īmān alone, rather he will enter them into Jannah because of His

1 See: *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1/95, chapter of Īmān.

2 Sūrah al-Nūr: 47.

3 Ibn Taymiyyah: *al-Īmān*, p. 136-137.

mercy and because of the *īmān* and the good actions which he inspired them to do.¹

And in the Sunnah also there are ḥadīths which establish the link of actions with *Īmān*. Nabī ﷺ said:

الإيمان بضع وسبعون أو بضع وستون شعبة فأفضلها قول لا إله إلا الله، وأدناها إماطة الأذى عن الطريق

Īmān has seventy some odd, or sixty some odd, branches. The most virtuous of them is proclaiming *Lā ilāh ill Allāh*, and the lowest of them is removing something harmful from the path.²

Some scholars have tried to enumerate these branches, but the essence of them all is the actions of the heart, the actions of the tongue, and the actions of the body.

Furthermore, ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz wrote the following to ‘Adī ibn ‘Adī, i.e. Ibn ‘Umayrah al-Kindī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, who was governor over the Arabian Peninsula:

إن للإيمان فرائض وشرائع وحدودا وسننا، فمن استكملها استكمل الإيمان، ومن لم يستكملها لم يستكمل الإيمان، فإن أعش فسأ بينها لكم حتى تعملوا بها، وإن أمت فما أنا على صحبتكم بحريص

Īmān has incumbent obligations, other injunctions, boundaries, and preferable actions. Whoever completes all of them has completed *Īmān*. If I live, I will expound upon them for you so that you practice upon them, and if I pass away then I have no yearning to be in your company.³

Likewise, in the chapter of *īmān* in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* there are several indications toward actions being part of *īmān*. For example he says, “Sub-chapter regarding the one who says that *īmān* is practice,”⁴ “Sub-chapter regarding Jihād being

1 Al-Ājurrī: *al-Sharīah*, p. 122.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2/6, chapter of *Īmān*.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Faṭḥ*, 1/52.

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1/8, chapter of *īmān*.

from *īmān*,”¹ “Sub-chapter regarding the fasting of Ramaḍān being from *īmān*,”² and “Sub-chapter regarding the most beloved of Dīn to Allah being the one which is practiced with consistency.”³ Ibn Ḥajar commenting upon this says:

مراد المصنف الاستدلال على أن الإيمان يطلق على الأعمال، لأن المراد بالدين هنا العمل، والدين الحقيقي هو الإسلام، والإسلام مرادف للإيمان، فيصح بهذا مقصوده

The intent of the author is to advance evidence to prove that the term *īmān* at times is also used to refer to actions. Because the intended purport of ‘Dīn’ here is practice, and the real Dīn is Islam, and Islam is synonymous to *īmān*. Thus, his intent can be correctly established.⁴

And al-Lālikāṭī narrates with a sound chain from al-Bukhārī that he said:

لقيت أكثر من ألف رجل من العلماء بالأمصار فما رأيت أحدا منهم يختلف في أن الإيمان قول وعمل، يزيد وينقص

I met more than a thousand men of the scholars in various cities and I did not see any of them differ in that *īmān* is confession and practice and that it increases and decreases.⁵

Also, it is narrated from Nabī ﷺ that he said:

لكل قول حقيقة

Every statement has a reality.⁶

1 Ibid, 1/12.

2 Ibid, 1/14.

3 Ibid, 1/16.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: al-Fatḥ, 1/101.

5 Al-Lālikāṭī: *Sharḥ Uṣūl I’tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah*, 1/173. From him Ibn Ḥajar has cited this in *Fatḥ* 1/47.

6 Ibn Ḥajar has cited it in *al-Iṣṣābah*, 1/289, and has said, “Al-Ṭabarānī has narrated it via the transmission of Sa’īd ibn Abī Hilāl, Ibn Mandah via the transmission of Sulaymān ibn Sa’d, ‘Abd al-Razzāq in his *Muṣannaf*, and Ibn al-Mubārak in al-Zuhd.

And Abū ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-Barr has cited the unanimity of the Ummah upon this. He says:

أجمع أهل الفقه والحديث على أن الإيمان قول وعمل

The scholars of jurisprudence and ḥadīth concur that īmān is confession and practice.¹

And Ibn Taymiyyah mentions:

و قدر أن قوما قالوا للنبي صلى الله عليه وسلم نحن نؤمن بما جئتنا به بقلوبنا من غير شك ; ونقر بألسنتنا بالشهادتين إلا أنا لا نطيعك في شيء مما أمرت به ونهيت عنه فلا نصلي ولا نصوم ولا نحج ولا نصدق الحديث ولا نؤدي الأمانة ولا نفي بالعهد ولا نصل الرحم ولا نفعل شيئا من الخير الذي أمرت به ونشرب الخمر ; ونكح ذوات المحارم بالزنا الظاهر... هل كان يتوهم عاقل أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول لهم : أنتم مؤمنون كاملو الإيمان وأنتم من أهل شفاعتي يوم القيامة ويرجى لكم ألا يدخل أحد منكم النار بل كل مسلم يعلم بالاضطرار أنه يقول لهم : أنتم أكفر الناس بما جئت به ويضرب رقابهم إن لم يتوبوا من ذلك

If it is hypothesised that a people said to Nabī ﷺ, “We believe in what you have brought to us with our hearts without doubt, and we confess with our tongues as well. But we do not obey you in anything that you have ordained or prohibited. So we do not perform Ṣalāh, fast, or perform Ḥajj; we do not speak the truth, upkeep our trust, fulfil our covenants, foster family ties, and we do not do any good that you have ordered to do; we also drink wine, and commit incest... would it be envisioned that his reply would be, “You are believers with complete īmān, you are the people of my intercession of the Day of Judgement, and it is hoped that none of you will enter Hell-fire.” Instead every Muslim necessarily knows that he would say to them, “You are the greatest disbelievers of what I have brought,” and he would decapitate them if they did not repent.²

1 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *al-Tamhīd Limā fi al-Muwaṭṭa’ min al-Asānīd*, 9/238.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *al-Īmān*, p. 272.

In conclusion, the true standard for passing a decision regarding any situation is the standard of the first century and the reality of the pious Salaf before the Ummah got embroiled in bickering in the time which followed after the Fitnah. That standard is that the reality of *īmān* is a compound reality which comprises of both confession and practice, just as the reality of a human comprises of the body and the soul. This is something agreed upon by the Salaf. It is something that is categorically supported by the Sharī texts and is sufficiently substantiated by rational and revelation based evidences. Only an innovator who deviated from the path, ignored the suggestions of the texts of revelation and the evidences of disposition and reason, and reverted to the assumptions of the philosophers, and in who the misconceptions of the theologians were deeply embedded, has opposed and diverged in this matter.

The reality is that this virus of *Iṛjā'* which crept into the Islamic thought many centuries ago, in fact since the initial days of Islam, and which was always accompanied by grave inconsistencies, had an evil impact upon the Ummah in the past and in the present. Those who restricted *īmān* to confession and did not make it inclusive of practice are the people who have left this historical ill effect which has contributed to the confusion which our current generations are suffering from since the advent of secularism and its ideological war against the lands of the Muslims, their Sharī'ah, their ideology and their systems.

The Innovation of the Shī'ah

The Saba'iyyah are the ancestors of the Shī'ah. The greatest evidence to prove this is that the beliefs of the Shī'ah are harmonious with some of the ideas and beliefs proposed by 'Abd Allah ibn Saba', like believing in the *Waṣiyyah* (immediate appointment of 'Alī رضي الله عنه, his *Raj'ah* (his return), *Badā'* (otherwise occurring to Allah), the reviling of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and disassociation from them, and extremism regarding 'Alī رضي الله عنه.¹

1 See: al-Ash'arī: *al-Maqālāt*; al-Malaṭī: *al-Tanbīh wa al-Radd 'alā Ahl al-Bida' wa al-Ahwā'*; al-Baghdādī: *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*; Ibn Ḥazm: *al-Fiṣal fi al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*; and compare what appears in these books to what comes in their books like: al-Kulainī: *al-Kāfi*; al-Mufid: *Awā'il al-Maqālāt*, al-Muẓaffar: *'Aqā'id al-Imāmiyyah*, etc.

Likewise, some individuals of the Shī'ah were also affiliated to the Saba'iyyah, like Jābir al-Ju'fī whom Ibn Ḥibbān has considered to be from the Saba'iyyah.¹ Al-Dhahabī says:

من إكابر علماء الشيعة

From the senior scholars of the Shī'ah.²

Ibn Ḥajar has also considered him among the Rāfiḍah.³

Another example is Muḥammad ibn al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī whom Ibn Khallikān and al-Dhahabī have considered to be from the Saba'iyyah,⁴ and the scholars of impugning narrators and approving them have considered to be from the extremist Shī'ah.⁵

Similarly, there are many historical texts that suggest that Ibn Saba' was the founding father of Shī'ism. Al-Asfarā'īnī says the 'Abd Allah ibn Saba' was from the extremist Rāfiḍah⁶ and al-Dhahabī has reported the same as well.⁷ Ibn Taymiyyah unveils the reason for this connection, he says:

إن أول من ابتدع الرفض والقول بالنص على علي وعصمته كان منافقا زنديقا أراد فساد دين الإسلام

The first person to invent *Rafḍ* and idea of the emphatic appointment of 'Alī عليه السلام and his infallibility was a hypocrite and heretic who intended destroying the Dīn of Islam.⁸

1 Ibn Ḥibbān: *al-Majrūhīn*, 1/208.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *al-Kāshif*, 1/208.

3 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 2/49.

4 Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, 4/3100; al-Dhahabī: *al-Mīzān*, 3/558.

5 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 9/180.

6 Al-Isfarā'īnī: *al-Tabṣīr fī al-Dīn*, p. 108.

7 Al-Dhahabī: *al-Mughnī fī al-Ḍu'afā'*, 1/339.

8 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, 3/261.

He also says:

إن مبدأ الرفض إنما كان من الزنديق عبد الله بن سبأ

The inception of *Rafd* was at the hands of the heretic Ibn Saba'.¹

Moving on, one of the innovations of the Shī'ah is reviling the Ṣaḥābah and denigrating them. In fact, excommunicating them has become one of the fundamental and essential components of their Dīn. The rationale their advance for this is that they claim that Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم opposed the alleged emphatic appointment of 'Alī رضي الله عنه as the immediate Imām. Hence, they excommunicate the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم due to them not pledging to 'Alī رضي الله عنه and they disassociate from them, with the exception of the a few individuals.

Al-Kashshī allegedly narrates from Abū Ja'far Muḥammad al-Bāqir that he said:

كان الناس أهل الردة بعد النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم إلا ثلاثة، فقلت: ومن الثلاثة؟ فقال: المقداد بن الأسود وأبو ذر الغفاري وسلمان الفارسي.

"The people apostatized after Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم besides three individuals."

I asked, "Who are the three?"

He said, "Al-Miqdād ibn al-Aswad, Abū Dhar, and Salmān al-Fārisī."²

He also says:

ويروى عن أبي جعفر أنه قال: المهاجرون والأنصار ذهبوا إلا -وأشار بيده- ثلاثة.

And it is narrated from Abū Ja'far that he said, "The Muhājirīn and the Anṣār all left besides" he indicated with his hand "Three."³

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *al-Fatāwā*, 28/483.

2 Al-Kashshī: *al-Rijāl*, p. 12.

3 *Ibid.* p 13

In this belief of theirs they have opposed the absolute texts of the Qur'ān, and the Prophetic Sunnah which declare the purity of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, their integrity, their merit, and their nobility. They have also violated the consensus of those whose consensus counts in the Ummah regarding this matter, who aver that it is from the theological principles of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah.

Another of their innovations is their belief in *Badā'*, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is completely above what they say. *Badā'* means for such a matter to occur to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى after him having previously been unaware of it that necessitates him changing his decree.¹ Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī says:

لا على معنى النسخ، ولكن على أنه لم يكن في الوقت الأول عالما بما يحدث له

Not the same as abrogation, but rather in the sense that at the first instance he was unaware of what was going to happen.²

Al-Kulaynī,³ the supreme scholar of the Shīrī ḥadīth legacy, has established a chapter in his book *al-Kāfī*, one of their canonical books which is the equivalent of the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* of the Ahl al-Sunnah, a chapter titled *al-Badā'*. In this chapter he has cited multiple narrations from their infallible Imāms, as they allege. One such narration is the following:

عن الريان بن الصلت قال: سمعت الرضي (علي بن موسى الإمام الثامن عندهم) يقول: ما بعث الله نبيا قط إلا بتحريم الخمر وإن يقر لله البداء.

1 Al-Shahrastānī: *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 1/148.

2 Al-Ash'arī: *al-Maqālāt*, 2/162.

3 Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb ibn Ishāq, Abū Ja'far al-Kulaynī (attributed to Kulayn in Ray). He was from the jurists and the ḥadīth scholars of the Imāmiyyah. He was the leading scholar of the Shīrah in Baghdad.

Al-Rayyān ibn al-Ṣalt said, “I heard al-Raḍī (the eighth Imām according to them)¹ saying, “Allah has never sent a Nabī, but with the prohibition of wine and that he acknowledge *Badā’* for Allah.”²

It is without doubt that this belief necessitates the possibility of ignorance, erring, and forgetting for Allah ﷻ. This is a false belief which is debunked by the Sharḥ texts. Allah ﷻ describes himself saying:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ

*He is Allah, other than who there is no deity, knower of the unseen and the witnessed.*³

And he describes His All Encompassing knowledge saying:

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنَ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ

*And with him are the keys of the unseen, none knows them except him. And he knows what is on the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but that he knows it. And not grain is there within the darknesses of, and not moist of dry (thing) but that it is in a clear record.*⁴

And Allah ﷻ says via the tongue of Mūsā عليه السلام:

1 Ibn Ḥajar has said, “He is truthful, and the problem is with those who narrate from him.” He passed away 203 A.H/818 A.D. See: *al-Taqrīb*, 2/45.

2 Al-Kulaynī: *al-Kāfī*, 1/148, chapter of Tawḥīd: sub-chapter regarding *Badā’*. Some of his books are: *al-Kāfī fī Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, and *al-Rijāl*. He died in 329 A.H/941 A.D. See: Ibn al-Athīr: *al-Lubāb*, 3/108; al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 15/280; Ibn Ḥajar: *Lisān al-Mizān*, 5/433.

3 Sūrah al-Ḥashr: 22.

4 Sūrah al-An’ām: 59.

لَا يَضِلُّ رَبِّي وَلَا يَنْسَى

*My Lord neither errs nor forgets.*¹

And in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* the following is narrated from ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Amr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا from Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

كتب الله مقادير الخلائق قبل أن يخلق السماوات والأرض بخمسين ألف سنة ، قال : وعرشه على الماء

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى wrote the destinies of the creation fifty thousand years before the creation of the heavens the earth. And He said, “Then his throne was on water.”²

Likewise, another of their innovations is their extremist conception of their Imāms whom they accord a rank higher than that of the Ambiyā’ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ. They believe that they are infallible, that that they know the deeds of people and their lifespans, and that they have knowledge of the unseen. In this regard they have narrated the following false narration which is attributed to ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ via the transmission of Mufaḍḍal ibn ‘Umar³ from Abū ‘Abd Allah (Ja’far al-Ṣādiq):

أنا قسيم الله بين الجنة والنار... ولقد أقرت لي جميع الملائكة والروح والرسل بمثل ما أقرأوا لمحمد صلى الله عليه وسلم... ولقد أعطيت، ما سبقني إليها أحد من قبلي، علمت المنايا والبلايا والأنساب وفصل الخطاب، فلم يفتني ما سبقني ولم يعزب عني ما غاب عني.

I am the counterpart of Allah in deciding between Jannah and Hell-fire...
All the angels, the Holy Spirit, and the Prophets have conceded for me what

1 Sūrah Ṭāhā: 53.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 16/203, chapter of Qadr.

3 Mufaḍḍal ibn ‘Umar al-Ju’fī, one of those who is suspected of holding extreme leanings and embracing the ideology of the Khaṭṭābiyyah. Al-Najāshī has said about him, “A person with a corrupt religion and inconsistent narrations who should not be bothered about. It is said that he was a Khaṭṭābī. Ja’far al-Ṣādiq attributed Kufr and Shirk to him and prevented from narrating from him.” See: al-Kashshī: al-Rijāl, p. 272; al-Najāshī: *al-Rijāl*, p. 295; ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Zarī: *Rijāl al-Shī‘ah fī al-Mīzān*, p. 96.

they conceded for Muḥammad ﷺ... I have been granted that which no one before me was granted; I have been given the knowledge of deaths, calamities, lineages, and decisive speech. Hence, what preceded me has not missed me and what was absent from me did not disappear from me.¹

Contrast this with what Allah ﷻ says in the Qur’ān:

قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

Say, “None in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen except Allah.”²

Allah ﷻ similarly ordered Nabī ﷺ to proclaim that he did not possess knowledge of the unseen in the following verse:

قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ. وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَأَسْتَكْنَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّيَ السُّوءَ إِنَّ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Say, “I hold not for myself (the power of) benefit or harm, except what Allah has willed. And if I knew the unseen, I could have acquired much wealth, and no harm would have touched me. I am not but a warner and a bringer of glad tidings to a people who believe.”³

And Allah ﷻ says the following regarding the hypocrites whilst addressing Nabī ﷺ:

وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مُنَافِقُونَ وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ مَرَدُوا عَلَى النِّفَاقِ لَا تَعْلَمُهُمْ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ سَنُعَذِّبُهُمْ مَّرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ

And among those who are around you of the Bedouins are hypocrites, and also from

1 Al-Kulaynī: al-Kāfī, 1/223.

2 Sūrah al-Naml: 65.

3 Sūrah al-A’rāf: 188.

*the people of Madīnah. They have accustomed to hypocrisy. You (o Muḥammad) do not know them, but we know them. We will punish them twice (in this world); then they will be returned to a great punishment.*¹

Lastly, another of their innovations is that they adopted the stance of the Jahmiyyah² regarding the attributes of Allah, and the stance of the Qadariyyah³ regarding the actions of men.⁴

1 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 101.

2 Attributed to Jahm ibn Ṣafwān who was from the innovators who held anomalous views and emerged toward the end of the era of the Banū Umayyah. This was the time when innovations came to the fore and the mother sects diversified into more sects. The scholars have gathered a lot regarding him, all of it is condemning him and excommunicating him. To the extent that al-Bukhārī did not consider his sect to be from the sect of the people of the Qiblah. He says, “I deliberated over the speech of the Jews, the Christians, and the Fire worshippers, and I did not find anyone more deviant in their disbelief than them. I consider the person who does not consider them to be disbelievers ignorant, with the exception of those who are unaware of their beliefs” (*Khalq Afāl al-‘Ībād*, p. 33). One of his innovations was that īmān is all about recognition and has nothing to do with confession with the tongue and practice with the limbs (See: al-Ash‘arī: *al-Maqālāt*, 1/312). This is like the view of the Heretics influenced by philosophy according to who īmān does not exceed the theoretical acknowledgement of the existence of Allah. Another of his innovations was the denial of the attributes of Allah, to the extent that Ta‘ṭīl has been attributed to him (rendering the attributes of Allah useless). And also believing that the Qur‘ān is created, believing in the perishing of Jannah and Hell-fire, and that Allah only comes to possess knowledge of something after it happens (see: al-Ash‘arī: *al-Maqālāt*, 1/312; al-Baghdādī: *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq*, 199-200).

Ibn Abī Hātim has narrated via the transmission of Ṣāliḥ ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal that he said, “I read in the files of Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik to his governor in Khurāsān Naṣr ibn Yasār the following, “A person of the atheists and heretics by the name Jahm ibn Ṣafwān has emerged in your region. If you get hold of him kill him.” See: Abū Zayd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Nutayfī: *Naṣr al-Akyās fī al-Radd ‘alā Jahmiyyah al-Bayḍā’ wa al-Fās*.

3 The stance of the Qadariyyah is made of two things: denying the foreknowledge of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى regarding occurring events (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* with the commentary of al-Nawawī, 1/156), and their belief that man is the creator of his own actions (Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Fath*, 1/119).

4 Al-Dhahabī: *al-Muntaqā*, p. 503.

The Negative Outcomes which came about because Theological Differences

Debates between various sects within the realm of what is known as *ʿilm al-Kalām* (Islamic theology) opened the doors of dialogue and debating. This exhausted the Muslims and ensnared them in an unabating cycle of arguing, theoretical debate, and it caused them to become distant from productive work.

As such the theoretical angle was blown out of proportion to the detriment of the practical angle which the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم emphasised upon. They were the ones who understood the spirit of the message and deeply fathomed Islam, owing to which their hearts opened up to practice and were satisfied with constraining themselves from delving into the ambiguous texts, and the verses of the Qurʾān and the ḥadīth which concern the attributes of Allah. And in doing so, they preserved the pristineness of the faith and its radiance.

As opposed to the people of philosophers who because of their arguments and Byzantine dialogues—which concerned researching and investigating areas which are beyond the scope of the mind—destroyed the clarity of the faith and the transparency of the ideology. Their efforts did not produce any positive result other than inducing division, disputes, and shattering of the Islamic edifice because of inessential knowledge.

This is why Allah and His Rasūl صلی الله علیه وسلم have prohibited us from delving into, discussing, and arguing about the verses pertaining to Allah at which it is necessary to stop, and which one is required to believe without ascribing modality, rendering useless, assigning similarity and distorting.

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

It is He who has sent down to you, [O Muḥammad], the Book; in it are verses [that are] precise – they are the foundation of the Book – and others unspecific. As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unspecific, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them]. And no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah. But those firm in knowledge say, “We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Lord.” And no one will be reminded except those of understanding.¹

And al-Bukhārī has narrated the following from ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. She says that Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

فإذا رأيتم الذين يتبعون ما تشابه منه فأولئك الذين سمى الله فاحذروهم

When you see those, who delve into what is ambiguous thereof, they are the people Allah has defined, so avoid them.²

Majority of the scholars from the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, their successors, and the prominent members of the Salaf have condemned engaging in *Kalām*³, have warned against it, and against associating with those who engage in it.

‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is reported to have said:

سيأتي أناس سيجادلونكم بشبهات القرآن، خذوهم بالسنن؛ فإن أصحاب السنن أعلم بكتاب الله

There will come a people who will argue with you using the ambiguous aspects of the Qur’ān. So, grip them with the teachings of Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, for those who are knowledgeable in the Sunnah know the Book of Allah better.⁴

And it is narrated from Sufyān al-Thawrī that he said:

1 Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān: 7.

2 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 5/166, chapter of Tafsīr.

3 A form of Islamic theology used to explain the origins of faith and basis of religion by logical reasoning (rational proof and evidence) instead of relying on revealed texts.

4 Al-Lālikā’ī: I’tiqāṭ Ahl al-Sunnah, 1/123.

إياك والأهواء، إياك والخصومة، وإياك والسلطان

Avoid deviant ideas, avoid arguing, and avoid visiting the ruler.¹

And al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī is reported to have said:

إنما أهلكتهم العجمة - المتكلمين - فحرفوا على حساب هواهم

The non-Arabs theologians have destroyed them, for they distorted based on their leanings.²

And when Abū Ḥanīfah was asked about it, he said:

عليك بالأثر وطريقة السلف وإياك وكل محدثة

Hold on to the Sunnah and the way of the Salaf. And stay away from what has been invented, for every invention is an innovation.³

And Mālik says:

من طلب الدين بالكلام تنندق

Whoever seeks to understand Dīn through Kalām will become a heretic.⁴

And Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal said:

أئمة الكلام زنادقة

The scholars of Kalām are heretics.⁵

1 Ibid. 1/123.

2 Al-Suyūṭī: *Ṣawn al-Manṭūq wa al-Kalām 'an Fan al-Manṭiq wa al-Kalām*, p. 22; Yaḥyā al-Ghazzāwī: *Faṣl al-Kalām fī Dham 'ilm al-Kalām*, p. 97, he states that al-Bukhārī has narrated this in his *al-Tārīkh al-Kabīr*.

3 Al-Suyūṭī: *Ṣawn al-Manṭūq*, p. 60-61.

4 Ibid. 57.

5 Ibid. 150.

And al-Shāfi'ī is reported to have said:

يا أبا موسى -يونس بن عبد الأعلى- لأن يلتقى الله العبد بكل ذنب ما خلا الشرك بالله خير من أن يلقاه بشيء من الكلام

O Abū Mūsā (Yūnus ibn 'Abd al-A'īā)! For a person to meet Allah with every sin other than Shirk is better for him than meeting Allah with something of *Kalām*.

He has also said:

ما جهل الناس واختلّفوا إلا لتركهم لسان العرب وميلهم إلى لسان أرسطاطاليس

The people did not become ignorant and dispute but because of leaving the language of the Arabs and inclining to the language of Aristotle.

And he has also said:

حكمني في أهل الكلام أن يضربوا بالجريد ويحملوا على الإبل ويضاف بهم في العشائر والقبائل وينادي عليهم: هذا جزء من ترك الكتاب والسنة وأقبل على الكلام.

My verdict regarding the people of *Kalām* is that they should be hit with palm branches, be carried upon camels, made to go around households and tribes, and it should be announced, "This is the punishment of the one who abandons the Qur'ān and the Sunnah and engages in *Kalām*."¹

And Abū 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Barr says:

أجمع أهل الفقه والأثر في جميع الأمصار أن أهل الكلام أهل بدع وزيف ولا يعدون عند الجميع، في جميع الأمصار، في طبقات العلماء. وإنما العلماء أهل الأثر والفقه فيه، ويتفاضلون فيه بالإتقان والميز والفهم.

The Jurist and ḥadīth scholars in all the cities unanimously agree that the people of *Kalām* are people of innovation and deviance. They are not

1 Ibid. 65-66.

considered according to all from the class of the scholars. For the scholars are only the people of ḥadīth and understanding thereof, and they differ therein in terms of perfection, distinction, and understanding.¹

And the following is reported from Junayd:²

أقل ما في الكلام سقوط هيبة الرب من القلب، والقلب إذا تعرى من الهيبة عري من الإيمان.

The least harm of *Kalām* is forfeiting the awe of Allah from the heart, and when the heart is void of awe it eventually becomes void of *īmān*.³

And Abū al-Ma‘ālī al-Juwaynī would say to his students:

لا تشتغلوا بالكلام، فلو عرفت أن الكلام يبلغ بي ما بلغ ما تشاغلته به

Do not busy yourselves in *Kalām*, for if I had known that *Kalām* would make me reach the extent I reached I would not have engaged in it.⁴

And al-Dhahabī is reported to have said:

1 Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr: *Jāmi’ Bayān al-‘ilm wa Faḍlih*, 2/95.

2 Junayd ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Junayd al-Baghdādī al-Khazzāz (a silk maker), Abū al-Qāsim. He was a scholar, an ascetic, and a virtuous person. Ibn al-Athīr has said the following regarding him, “The Imām of the world in his time, and the scholars have considered him to be the leading scholar of the Ṣūfī school due to his Sufism being governed by the laws of the Qur’ān and the Sunnah, and due to him being saved from evil beliefs. He was protected from the misconceptions of the extremists, and from anything that could necessitate the reprehension of the Sharī‘ah.” And one of his contemporaries says, “My eyes did not see anyone like him. The scribes would attend his gatherings to record his words, the poets due to his eloquence, and the theologians because of his knowledge.” He has written several booklets regarding *Tawḥīd* and *Taṣawwuf*. He passed away in 289 A.H/911 A.D. See: al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 7/241; Ibn al-Athīr: *al-Kāmil*, 8/62; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, 1/373.

3 Al-Suyūṭī: *Ṣawn al-Manṭūq*, p. 74.

4 Ibid, p. 184.

من أمعن النظر في علم الكلام إلا وأداه اجتهاده إلى القول بما يخالف محض السنة، ولهذا ذم علماء السلف النظر في علم الأوائل، فإن علم الكلام مولد من علم الحكماء الدهرية

Whoever deeply ponders into the science of *Kalām* his analyses will always lead him to say something which is contrary to the pristine Sunnah. And that is why the scholars of the Salaf have condemned studying the sciences of the ancient people, for the science of *Kalām* is born from the science of the atheist philosophers.¹

3. The jurisprudential outcome: The Rulings regarding the Rebels

‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ felt that his election was enacted with the consent of those who were present from the people of *al-Ḥall wa al-‘Aqd* (influential members of the society) in Madīnah Munawwarah, and that pledging to him became binding upon the rest of the Muslims in the all the cities; for he was a Sharī Khalīfah who had the right to administer the matters of the Muslims after he was elected as the Khalīfah.

However, Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, and those who were alongside them marched to Baṣrah in order to seek retribution for the blood of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, and Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and those who were with him from the people of Shām refused to pledge from the very beginning until the killers of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ were not executed.

Hence, ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ considered them to be rebels who were revolting against him and decided to subdue them so that they may join the ranks of the majority. He considered them to be autonomously acting upon their position against his authority and rebelling. Therefore, according to him the laws of rebellion applied to them and it was necessary to combat them and subdue them even if it be by way of force. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

1 Ibid, p. 19.

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَت إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ فَاءَ مَا قَاتَلْتُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَاقْسَطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

And if two factions amongst the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them opposes the other, then fight against the one that opposes until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.¹

And when ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was asked regarding the people of Jamal:

أمشركون هم؟ قال: لا، من الشرك فروا. فقيل: أمنافقون؟ قال: لا؛ لأن المنافقين لا يذكرون الله إلا قليلاً.
قيل له: فما حالهم؟ قال: إخواننا بغوا علينا

“Are they polytheists?”

He said, “No they have fled from Shirk.”

It was said, “Are they hypocrites?”

He said, “No. Because hypocrites do not remember Allah but very little.”

It was then asked, “So what is their status?”

He said, “They are our brothers who have rebelled against us.”²

Notwithstanding that fratricidal feud between the Muslims is unlike warfare between Muslims and disbelievers. For the laws of amnesty do not apply to the disbelievers; a *Ḥarbī* (a person who lives in an abode which is at war with the Muslims) does not enjoy any amnesty in his blood, his life, and his wealth. In a *Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*, Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is reported to have said:

1 Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 9.

2 Al-Bayhaqī: *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 8/173.

أمرت أن أقاتل الناس ، حتى يشهدوا أن لا إله إلا الله ، وأن محمدا رسول الله ، ويقيموا الصلاة ، ويؤتوا الزكاة ، فإذا فعلوا ذلك عصموا مني دماءهم وأموالهم إلا بحق الإسلام ، وحسابهم على الله تعالى

I have been ordered to fight the people till they testify that there is none worthy of worship besides Allah and the Muḥammad is the Rasūl of Allah, and till they do not establish Ṣalāh, and discharge Zakāh. Once they do that, they have protected from me their blood, their wealth, but for the right of Islam, and their reckoning will be left to Allah.¹

As for the abode of Islam, its default status is amnesty of blood and life due to the ḥadīth of Nabī ﷺ:

كل المسلم على المسلم حرام دمه وعرضه وماله

Every Muslim upon another Muslim is Ḥarām (i.e. it is not permissible for him to violate his brother), his blood, his honour, and his wealth.²

Hence, the law therein is based upon default innocence, for the default status of every person who resides in the abode of Islam is that he is a Muslim owing to which it would be not permissible to accuse any Muslim of disbelief without evidence which justifies that, like apostasy. And it is not permissible to fight him but with a Sharī justification.

So when two groups of the Muslims fight, the Legislator (Allah) has not ordained fighting against them from the very beginning, rather he has ordered that first their matter be resolved, as in the verse:

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا

*And if two factions amongst the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two.*³

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 1/11-12, chapter of Īmān.

2 Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 16/121, chapter of kindness.

3 Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 9.

Subsequent to that if one of them rebels then it will be fought due to the verse:

فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ

But if one of them opposes the other, then fight against the one that opposes until it returns to the ordinance of Allah.¹

This is because it did not give up fighting and did not accept the reconciliation, and also because its evils cannot be repelled but by way of fighting. So, fighting it is equivalent to fighting an assailant or a transgressor whose transgression cannot be averted but by way of fighting.

Similarly, the rebels will not be excommunicated due to the text of the Qur’ān which explicitly acknowledges their imān and their brotherhood in spite of their fighting and rebellion:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ

The believer are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers.²

Nabī ﷺ has said:

إن ابني هذا سيد، ولعل الله أن يصلح به بين فئتين من المسلمين

This son of mine is a leader. Probably Allah will bring about reconciliation because of him between two groups of the Muslims.³

Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah would often say after this ḥadīth, “His statement ‘of the Muslims’ is very pleasing to us.”⁴

1 Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 9.

2 Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 10.

3 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 8/94, chapter of Fitan.

4 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Fath*, 13/66.

The aforementioned is evidence of the fact that any action which can be classed as rebellion or transgression does not take one out of *īmān*. Ibn Taymiyyah says:

أما إذا كان الباغي مجتهداً متأولاً ولم يتبين له أنه باغ-لأن العلم بالحكم يكون ظلماً وإثماً، والإصرار عليه فسقاً بل اعتقد أنه على الحق وإن كان مخطئاً في اعتقاده، لم تكن تسميته باغياً موجبة لإثمه فضلاً عن أن توجب فسقه، والذين يقولون بقتال البغاة المتأولين يقولون: مع الأمر بقتالهم على العدالة لا يفسقون، ويقولون: هم كغير المكلف، كما يمنع الصبي والمجنون والناسي والمغمى عليه والنائم من العدوان إن لا يصدر منهم، بل تمنع البهائم من العدوان، ويجب على من قتل مؤمناً خطأ الدية بنص القرآن مع أنه لا إثم عليه في ذلك، وهكذا من رفع إلى الإمام من أهل الحدود وتاب بعد القدرة عليه فأقام عليه الحد، والتائب من الذنب كمن لا ذنب له، والباغي المتأول يجلد عند مالك والشافعي وأحمد ونظائره متعددة.

As for when the rebel is exercising *ljtihād* and it has not become clear to him that he is a rebel (because rebelling despite knowing the ruling would be transgression and sin, and persisting upon it would be *Fisq*, perpetual sinning). Rather he assumes that he is upon the truth, even though he might be wrong in that assumption. Then dubbing him a rebel does not necessitate him sinning or even being a *Fāsiq* (an open sinner who persistently sins). As for those who are of the opinion that such rebels should be fought, they aver, “Due to there being a command to fight them we should fight them in order to repel the harm of their rebellion, not in order to punish them but to prevent their transgression.” They also say, “They say that such rebels will still be men of upstanding character and will not be sinners,” and they say, “They are like those who are exempted. So (they will be prevented) just as a child, an insane person, a forgetful person, an unconscious person, and a sleeping person is prevented from transgression so that it does not come forth from them, in fact even animals are also prevented.” Similarly, the Qur’ān imposes blood money upon a person who kills a believer mistakenly without there being any sin upon such a person. Likewise, is the case of a person who is brought to the *Imām* from those who deserve a capital punishment after having repented and the capital punishment is still executed upon him, where as a repentant from a sin is as though he has no sin. And according to *Mālik*, *al-Shāfi’ī*, and *Aḥmad* a rebel who rebels based on *ljtihād* will be lashed, and there are many such examples.”¹

1 *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, 35/76.

It is known in the Sharī'ah that the default law is inviolability of the blood of the Muslims, their integrity, and their wealth, and that fighting them is permissible to repel their oppression and transgression, and in order to return them to the congregation. It is for this reason that the Legislator (Allah) has not allowed taking their women as captives, their wealth as booty, killing their prisoners, and following those of them who are fleeing, etc. Because the wisdom in fighting them is that Allah ﷻ has ordered us to be a congregation and to be united, both of which are from the causes of strength and stability, and has prohibited from diverging and differing, both of which are from the causes of weakness and helplessness. Allah ﷻ says:

وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ وَلِتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

*And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favour of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favour, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus, does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be guided. And let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful. And do not be like the ones who became divided and differed after the clear proofs had come to them. And those will have a great punishment.*¹

Ibn Taymiyyah states:

الخوارج المارقون الذين أمر النبي بقتالهم أمير المؤمنين علي بن أبي طالب أحد الخلفاء الراشدين، واتفق علي قتالهم أئمة الدين من الصحابة والتابعين من بعدهم. لم يكفرهم علي بن أبي طالب وسعد بن

1 Sūrah Āl 'Imrān: 103-105.

أبي وقاص وغيرهما من الصحابة رضي الله عنهم بل جعلوهم مسلمين مع قتالهم ولم يقاتلهم علي حتى سفكوا الدم الحرام وأغاروا على أموال المسلمين، فقاتلهم لدفع ظلمهم وبغيهم لا لأنهم كفار ولهذا لم يسب حريمهم، ولم يغنم أموالهم

The Khawārij who very swiftly exited the Dīn, who Nabī ﷺ had ordered to fight, were fought by Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, one of the four Rightly Guided Khalīfahs. The scholars of the Dīn from the Ṣaḥābah and their successors also concurred upon fighting them. But 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, and the other Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم did not excommunicate them. In fact, they deemed them Muslims despite fighting them. And 'Alī رضي الله عنه did not fight them until they started spilling unlawful blood and plundered the wealth of the Muslims. That is when he fought them in order to repel their oppression and rebellion, not because they were disbelievers. And thus, he did not take their women as captives and their wealth as booty.

If these people, whose deviance was established through the texts of the Sharīah and the consensus of the Ummah, were not excommunicated despite Allah and his Rasūl ﷺ ordering us to fight them, then what about those groups who differed with each other and to who the truth was unclear in issues in which even people senior to them erred. Hence, the default ruling is that the blood of the Muslims, their wealth and their integrities are forbidden and cannot be violated but with permission from Allah and his Rasūl ﷺ. Nabī ﷺ said the following in his address in the farewell Ḥajj:

إن دماءكم وأموالكم وأعراضكم حرام عليكم كحرمة يومكم هذا في شهركم هذا...

You blood, you wealth, and you integrities are forbidden upon you, just as this day of yours (the violation thereof) is forbidden upon you, in this month of yours...¹

And Nabī ﷺ also said:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/91, chapter of Fitan.

من صلى صلاتنا واستقبل قبلتنا، وأكل ذبيحتنا فذلك المسلم الذي له ذمة الله، وذمة رسوله

Whoever offers our Ṣalāh, faces our Qiblah, and eats of our slaughtered animal, he is a Muslim for who is the covenant of Allah and his Rasūl.¹

Likewise, if a Muslim is exercising Ijtihād in fighting or in excommunicating another, he will also **not** be excommunicated because of that. For example, ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said regarding Ḥaṭīb ibn Abī Balṭa‘ah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “O Rasūl Allah! Allow me to strike the neck of this hypocrite.” Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ replied:

إنه قد شهد بدرا وما يدريك لعل الله اطلع على أهل بدر فقال اعملوا ما شئتم فقد غفرت لكم

Indeed, he has participated in Badr. And what do you know, probably Allah looked down at the people of Badr and said, “Do what you want to, for I have forgiven you.”²

Likewise, the Salaf fought each other in Jamal and Ṣiffīn, but they are all Muslims and believers, as stated by Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى:

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

*And if two factions amongst the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them opposes the other, then fight against the one that opposes until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly.*³

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has stated in this verse that they are, despite their fighting and transgressing against one another, believing brothers, and has ordered that settlement be made between them with justice.

1 Ibid, 1/102, chapter of Ṣalāh

2 Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 16/56.

3 Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 9.

Therefore, the Salaf used to associate with one another on the basis of Dīn, and would not oppose each other as one is required to oppose the disbelievers; hence, they would accept the testification of each other, inherit one another, intermarry, and interact with one another as Muslims, in spite of the fighting that ensued between them.¹

Furthermore, on the basis of this disparity between the rulings of the Abode of disbelief and the Abode of Islam, ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was able to institute laws and rulings based on his copious knowledge, and vast jurisprudential prowess, not forgetting that he was the most adept in judicial issues.² These are Sharī principles which pertain to fighting the rebels. Subsequent to that the leading scholars of knowledge and jurists followed in his footsteps in dealing with the rebels; they deduced rulings and jurisprudential principles from his conduct in this regard. To the extent that some great scholars have averred:

لو لا حرب علي لما عرفت السنة في قتال أهل القبلة

Had it not been for the warfare of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, the Sunnah regarding fighting the people of the Qiblah would never become known.³

In fact ‘Alī رضي الله عنه himself is reported to have said:

أرأيتم لو أني غبت عن الناس، من كان يسير فيهم بهذه السيرة

Consider, if I was absent from the people, was there anyone who could deal with them with this conduct.⁴

1 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, 3/284-285.

2 This is narrated through the transmission of Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said, “The most learned in the Qur’ān is Ubayy and the most adept in judicial matters is ‘Alī.” See: *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 5/149, chapter of Tafṣīr.

3 Al-Bāqillānī: *al-Tamhīd fī al-Radd ‘alā al-Mulḥidah*, p. 229.

4 *Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq*, 10/124, chapter regarding the ruling that a wounded person should not be killed.

And Aḥnaf said to ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

يا علي إن قومنا بالبصرة يزعمون إنك عن ظهرت عليهم غدا أنك تقتل رجالهم وتسبي نساءهم، فقال: ما مثلي يخاف هذا منه، وهل يحل هذا إلا ممن تولى كفر.

“O ‘Alī, our people in Baṣrah are saying that tomorrow if you are victorious you will kill their men and take their women as captives.”

He said, “This is not something that should be feared from a person like me. This is not permissible to do but to those who turn away and disbelieve.”¹

Hereunder are some of the ways in which fighting the rebels is unlike fighting the disbelievers and the renegades:

1. The motive for fighting them is to deter them and not to kill them. Because the objective is to return them to compliance and repel their evil and not to kill them. Whereas on the other hand it is completely permissible to intend killing disbelievers and renegades.²
2. If slaves, women, and children fight with the rebels, then the ruling regarding them will be the same as the ruling regarding a free and mature man, i.e. they will be fought whilst advancing and left whilst retreating. Because fighting them is to repel their assault. Whereas it is permissible to kill the people of disbelief and the renegades whether they are advancing or fleeing [in battle].³
3. If the rebels give up fighting, either because of reverting to compliance, dropping their weapons, being defeated, inability due to sustaining injuries, sickness, or imprisonment, then it will not be permissible to finish

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 4/496.

2 Ibn Qudāmah: *al-Mughnī*, 8/108-126.

3 *al-Mughnī*, 8/110; Al-Māwardī: *al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyyah*, p. 60.

off their wounded and kill their imprisoned. Whereas it is permissible to finish off the wounded combatants of the disbelievers and the renegades just as it is permissible to execute their imprisoned. Ibn Abī Shaybah has narrated the following in his *Muṣannaf* from ‘Alī رضي الله عنه that he said on the Day of Jamal:

لا تتبعوا مدبرا، ولا تجهزوا على جريح، ومن ألقى سلاحه فهو آمن

Do not follow a fleeing person, do not finish off a wounded person, and whoever drops his weapons is safe.¹

And in the narration of ‘Abd al-Razzāq² it is stated that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه ordered his announcer to announce the following on the day of Baṣrah:

لا يتبع مدبر، ولا يذفف على جريح، ولا يقتل أسير، ومن أغلق بابه وألقى سلاحه فهو آمن، ولم يأخذ من متاعهم شيئا

“A fleeing person should not be followed, a wounded person will not be finished off, an imprisoned person will not be killed, and whoever shuts his door and drops his weapon will be safe.” And he did not take anything of their belongings.³

And in another narration of Ibn Abī Shaybah it is stated that when ‘Alī رضي الله عنه defeated Ṭalḥah and his comrades he ordered an announcer to announce:

1 *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah*, 15/263, chapter Jamal. Ibn Ḥajar has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in *al-Faṭḥ*, 13/57.

2 ‘Abd al-Razzāq ibn Hammām ibn Nāfi’ al-Ḥimyarī al-Ṣan‘ānī. One of the reliable retainers of ḥadīth and a vessel of knowledge. Al-Dhahabī has said about him, “Several people have deemed him reliable and his narrations are cited in the Ṣiḥāḥ. They condemned him for his Shī‘ī leanings and his extremist tendencies in that regard.” And Salamah ibn Shabīb says, “I heard ‘Abd al-Razzāq saying, “My heart was never satisfied with giving preference to ‘Alī over Abū Bakr and ‘Umar.” He passed away in 211 A.H/827 A.D. See: Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, 3/216; Ibn Abī Ya’lā: *Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, p. 152; al-Dhahabī: *al-Tadhkirah*, 1/364; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 6/310.

3 *Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq*, 10/123-124, chapter regarding the ruling that a wounded person should not be finished off.

أن لا يقتل مقبل ولا مدبر ولا يفتح باب، ولا يستحل فرج ولا مال

An advancing person nor a fleeing person should be killed, no door should be opened, and not chastity of a woman or wealth should be violated.¹

And in the *Tārīkh* of al-Ṭabarī and Baḥshal² it appears that Nabī ﷺ said on the day of Jamal:

لا تتبعوا مدبرا ولا تجهزوا على جريح، ولا تقتلوا أسيرا، وإياكم والنساء وإن شتمن أعضاكم وسبين
أمرءكم، فلقد رأيتنا في الجاهلية وإن الرجل ليتناول المرأة بالجريدة أو الهراوة فيعير بها هو وعقبه من
بعده

Do not follow a fleeing person, do not finish off an injured person, do not kill a captive, and stay away from the women even if they criticise your integrities and revile your leaders. For I saw us in the pre-Islamic era when a person who would beat his wife with the branch of a palm or with a stick, he and his progeny after him would be taunted because of that.³

And al-Shāfi'ī has narrated the following from 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

دخلت على مروان بن الحكم فقال: ما رأيت أحدا أكرم غلبة من أبيك يعني عليا- ما هو إلا أن ولينا يوم
الجملة فنأدى مناديه: لا يقتل مدبر، ولا يذف على جريح.

I visited Marwān ibn al-Ḥakam, so he said, “I have not seen anyone who was more dignified in his victory than your father (referring to 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ). As soon as we started fleeing on the Day of Jamal his announcer called out,

1 *Muṣannaḥ Ibn Abī Shaybah*, 15/267, chapter Jamal.

2 Aslam ibn Sahl ibn Salm al-Wāsiṭī al-Razzāz, Abū al-Ḥasan, famously known as Baḥshal. A retainer of ḥadīth who was truthful and the historian of the city of Wāsiṭ. Khamīs al-Ḥawzī has said regarding him, “He is attributed to the Razzāzīn, his masjid was there. He was reliable and meticulous, was an Imām and his was fit to be a narrator of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*.” He wrote *Tārīkh Wāsiṭ*. He passed away in 292 A.H. /904 A.D. See: al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Silafī: *Su'ālāt al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Silafī*, p. 90; Yāqūt: *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, 6/127; al-Dhahabī: *al-Tadhkirah*, 2/664; Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Tahdhīb*, 1/388.

3 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/11; al-Zayla'ī: *Naṣb al-Rāyah*, 3/463.

“A fleeing person should not be killed, and a wounded person should be finished off.”¹

And Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī رضي الله عنه says:

شهدت صفين وكانوا لا يجهزون على جريح ولا يقتلون موليا، ولا يسلبون قتيلًا.

I was present in Şiffīn. They would not finish off a wounded person, would not kill a fleeing person, and would not take the booty of a killed person.²

4. The tendencies of those who are imprisoned from the rebels will be analysed. If there is assurance regarding someone that he will not return to fighting he will be released, and if there is no assurance regarding him then he will with be withheld till the war is completely over and will only be released thereafter. It will not be necessary to detain him thereafter, although it will be permissible to detain a disbeliever.³
5. In fighting them, assistance will not be solicited from a disbeliever with who there is a pact or who lives under the Muslim rule, although it is permissible to seek their assistance when fighting the renegades and disbelievers who are at war with the Muslims.⁴
6. The ruler should not hold any truce negotiations with them for a specific time and should not enter into conciliation with them in lieu of wealth. If he enters into a truce negotiation with them it will not be binding upon him, and if he enters into conciliation with them in lieu of wealth that conciliation will be in valid. As for the wealth, if it is from their booty or

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Fath*, 13/57. He has attributed it to al-Shāfi‘ī who narrates it via the transmission of ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه.

2 Ḥākim: *al-Mustadrak*, 2/155, al-Dhahabī has agreed with him; *Sunan al-Bayhaqī*, 8/182.

3 Al-Māwardī: *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah*, p. 60.

4 Ibid, p. 60.

from their charity monies he will not return it to them, and if it is from their personal wealth it will not be permissible for him to possess it and will thus have to return it to them,¹ for ‘Alī عليه السلام had not considered the wealth of the people of Jamal to be permissible.²

7. If they revolt against the ruler on the basis of a plausible reason he should communicate with them via correspondence. If they make mention of an oppression he should alleviate it from them; and if they make mention of misconceptions he should provide clarity for them, as ‘Alī عليه السلام had done with the Khawārij and their misconceptions subsequent to which many of them returned to the ranks of the congregation.³ If they desist thereafter, then well and good, otherwise it will be incumbent upon him and the Muslims to fight them.⁴
8. If they do not openly denounce compliance to the ruler, and do not have an abode where they seclude themselves, and they are only few individuals who can easily be apprehended, then they will be left and will not be fought. All the laws of justice will apply to them in the rights that are upon them and in the rights that they deserve.⁵
9. The rebels will not be combatted with weaponry whose destruction is very vast, like fire and catapults, etc. Likewise, their houses will not be burnt and their palms and trees will not be chopped, although doing that with the disbelievers and the polytheists is permissible. Because the abode of Islam protects whatever is in it even if its owners rebel. Yes, it would be permissible to do so when there is a pressing need, like in the instance where they fortify themselves and cannot be defeated, then it would be

1 Ibid.

2 *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah*, 15/267.

3 Al-Bayhaqī: *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 8/180.

4 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, 4/450.

5 Al-Māwardī: *al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyyah*, p. 58.

permissible for the ruler to attack them with catapults according to al-Shāfi‘ī and Abū Ḥanīfah.¹

10. It is not permissible to take their wealth as booty, and their women and children as captives due to the ḥadīth of Nabī ﷺ:

لا يحل مال امرئ مسلم إلا بطيب نفس منه

The wealth of a Muslim person is not permissible by with the happiness of his heart.²

And on the day of Jamal, ‘Alī رضي الله عنه is reported to have said:

من عرف شيئاً من ماله مع أحد فليأخذه

Whoever recognises anything of his wealth with someone he should take it.³

This last aspect was one of the things the Khawārij had a problem with in the policies of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. They said, “He fought, but did not take captives and did not take booty. If their blood was permissible for him then so should their wealth be permissible for him. And if their wealth was impermissible for him then so should their blood be impermissible for him. ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنهما retorted saying:

أفتسيون أمكم؟- يعني عائشة- أم تستحلون منها ما تستحلون من غيرها؟ فإن قلت: ليست أمكم كفرتم، وإن قلت: إنما أمكم واستحلتم منها ما سببها كفرتم.

So, were you willing to take your mother as a captive? (Referring to ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها) or do you deem permissible of her what you deem permissible

1 Ibn Qudāmah: *al-Mughnī*, 8/110.

2 *Musnad Aḥmad*, 5/72; *Sunan al-Bayhaqī*, 6/100; *Sunan al-Dāraquṭnī*, 3/26; and al-Albānī has deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in *Irwā’ al-Ghalīl*, 5/279, Ḥadīth: 1459.

3 Ibn Qudāmah: *al-Mughnī*, 8/115.

of others besides her? If you say that she is not your mother, you have disbelieved. And if you say that she is your mother but you deem taking her as a captive permissible you have still disbelieved.¹

Commenting upon this injunction Ibn Qudāmah² says:

ولأن قتال البغاة إنما هو لدفعهم وردهم إلى الحق لا لكفرهم، فلا يستباح منهم إلا ما حصل بضرورة الدفع كالصائل وقاطع الطريق، وبقي حكم المال والذرية على أصل العصمة

And because fighting the rebels is merely to avert them and return them to the truth, and not because of their disbelief; hence, only that of theirs will be permissible which is acquired due to the necessity of averting, like how an assailant or a highway robber is averted. As for the wealth, the women, and children, they will remain upon the default protection.

Furthermore, what is ostensible from the apparent suggestions of the narrations from ‘Alī رضي الله عنه is that it is permissible to benefit from their weapons. Ibn Abī Shaybah narrates the following from Abū al-Bakhtarī:

لما انهزم أهل الجمل قال علي: لا تطلبوا من كان خارجا من المعسكر وما كان من دابة أو سلاح فهو لكم

When the people of Jamal were defeated ‘Alī رضي الله عنه said, “Do not search for those who have left the camp, and whatever weapons or animals are there are for you.”³

1 Al-Bayhaqī: *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 8/179.

2 ‘Abd Allah ibn Muḥammad ibn Qudāmah al-Jammā’ī (attributed to Jammā’ī which is a village in Palestine) al-Maqdisī al-Ḥanbalī, Muwaffaq al-Dīn, Abū Muḥammad. He was from the senior scholars of the Ḥanbalī School. He has written many books, some being: *al-Mughnī*, *Faḍā’il al-Ṣaḥābah*, *Lum’ah al-I’tiqād*, *Rawḍah al-Nāzir*, *Dhamm ‘alayh Mudda’ū al-Taṣawwuf*, and *Dhamm al-Ta’wīl*. He passed away in 620 A.H. /1223 A.D. See: Ibn Kathīr: *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, 13/99; Ibn al-‘Imād: *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, 5/88; Ibn Shākir al-Kutbī: *Fawāt al-Wafayāt*, 2/158.

3 *Muṣannaf Ibn Abī Shaybah*, 15/263.

And al-Ṭabarī has narrated the following in his *Tārīkh*:

ولا تأخذوا شيئاً من أموالهم إلا ما وجدتم في عسكرهم

And do not take anything from their belongings, besides what you find in their camp.¹

And it is narrated from Aḥmad that he has indicated to the permissibility of benefitting from their weapons, but not in fighting them. And Abū al-Khaṭṭāb² has said:

متى انقضت الحرب وجب رده إليهم كما ترد إليهم سائر أموالهم لقول النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: لا يحل مال امرئ مسلم إلا عن طيب نفس منه.

As soon as the war is over it will be necessary to return that to them, just as it is incumbent to return all their other belongings to them due to the ḥadīth of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم, “The wealth of a Muslim is not permissible but with the happiness of his heart.”³

11. Whoever of the rebels is killed will be bathed, shrouded in a winding sheet, and his Janāzah Ṣalāh will be performed, as per the schools of al-Shāfi‘ī and the proponents of Ra’y (analyses and deduction). And the school of Aḥmad suggests that the Janāzah Ṣalāh of the Khawārij rebels

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 5/11.

2 Maḥfūz ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan al-Kalūdhānī al-Baghdādī Abū al-Khaṭṭāb. He has written books in the Ḥanbalī School, principles of Sharī‘ah, differences of the scholars, and poetry. Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Silafī has said about him, “He is a reliable and praiseworthy disciple of Aḥmad.” And al-Dhahabī says, “Abū al-Khaṭṭāb is from the good scholars, he was virtuous, truthful, a bearer of good conduct, interesting anomalies, and was from the intelligent men.” He has written: *al-Hidāyah*, *Ru’ūs al-Masā’il*, *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*. He passed away in 510 A.H/1116 A.D. See: al-Sam’ānī: *al-Ansāb*, 10/461; Ibn al-Jawzī: *al-Muntaẓam*, 9/190; al-Dhahabī: *al-Tadhkirah*, 4/1261; *Duwal al-Islām*, 2/37; Ibn Rajab: *Dhuyūl Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah*, 1/116.

3 The reference for this has passed already on p. 959.

and also the Jahmiyyah and the Rāfiḍah will not be performed. For Nabī ﷺ refused to perform Ṣalāh for reasons lighter than this. And Mālik is of the opinion that the Janāzah Ṣalāh of the Ibāḍiyyah from the Khawārij, the Qadariyyah, and all the people of deviant sects will not be performed.¹

12. If the rebels are not from the innovators then they are not *Fāsiqs* (open and perpetual sinners), and the Imām and the people of integrity fighting them is only owing to their mistake in their *Ijtihād*; their example is like that of the jurists who exercise *Ijtihād* in rulings. Whoever of them testifies his testification will be accepted if he is a person of integrity. This is the view of al-Shāfiʿī. As for the Khawārij and the other innovators, if they rebel against the ruler their testification will not be accepted, for they are *Fāsiqs*.²
13. It is permissible for an upright person to kill his rebel relative, because he will be killing him on a legitimate basis; for it is like establishing the capital punishment upon him, even though it is disliked to intend doing so.³
14. If the rebels dominate a region and collect land taxes, head taxes, and *Zakāh*, and they establish the capital punishments of the Sharʿah, they will not be asked to return any of what they collected after the people of integrity defeat them and apprehend them. For when ‘Alī ﷺ subdued the people of Baṣrah after the Battle of Jamal he did demand anything from them.⁴
15. If the rebels during their resistance perpetrate a crime which necessitates the establishing of a capital punishment upon them, then it will be

1 Ibn Qudāmah: *al-Mughnī*, 8/117.

2 *Ibid*, 8/118.

3 *Ibid*, 8/118.

4 *Ibid*, 8/119.

established upon them after they are subdued. The ruling will not change because of the abodes being different, according to Mālik and al-Shāfi'ī.¹

16. A rebel who kills an upright person will not inherit him, and an upright person who kills a rebel will not inherit him. Nabī ﷺ has said:

القاتل لا يرث

A killer will not inherit.²

And Abū Ḥanīfah says, “I will make an upright person inherit a rebel, but will not make a rebel inherit an upright person.” And Abū Yūsuf³ says, “I will make each one of them inherit the other, due to each one exercising *Ijtihād* and considering the killing of the other to be permissible.”⁴ This is also the preference of al-Nawawī.⁵

17. If it is not possible to avert the rebels but by way of killing them, it will be permissible to kill them. And there will be no sin, liability, or *Kaffārah* (expiatory action) upon the one who kills them. This is because he has merely done what he was ordered to do and he killed for the pleasure of Allah:

1 Ibid, 8/120.

2 *Musnad Ahmad*, 1/49; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 2/883, chapter of blood moneys; and al-Albānī has deemed it *Ṣaḥīḥ* in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 2/98, Ḥadīth: 214.

3 Ya'qūb ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ḥabīb al-Anṣārī al-Kūfī al-Baghdādī, Abū Yūsuf. The companion of Abū Ḥanīfah and his student. He was a retainer of ḥadīth and was a jurist as per the school of the *Ahl al-Ra'y* (the proponents of analyses and deduction). He had very vast knowledge regarding Tafsīr, the campaigns of Nabī ﷺ, and the history of the Arabs. He acted as the judge in Baghdād for al-Rashīd. Some of his books: *al-Kharāj*, *Adab al-Qādī*, and *Ikhtilāf al-Amṣār*. He passed away in 182 A.H. 798 A.D. See: al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 14/242; Wakī: *Akhhār al-Quḍāt*, 3/253; Ibn al-Nadīm: *al-Fihrist*, p. 286; al-Qurashī: *al-Jawāhir al-Muḍī'ah*, 2/220.

4 Al-Māwardī: *al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyyah*, p. 61.

5 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* with the commentary of al-Nawawī, 7/170.

فَقَاتِلُوا اللَّيَّءَ حَتَّىٰ تَبْغِي حَتَّىٰ تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ

Then fight against the one that opposes until it returns to the ordinance of Allah.

For if the life of a Muslim is targeted it is permissible for him to defend it even if it be by killing the assailant if he does not resist. Also, whatever the people of integrity destroy of the rebels during the war there will be no liability upon them for that.¹ And the opposite is true as well, i.e. there will no liability upon the rebels for what they sabotage during the war, whether it be life or wealth according to the more preferred opinion, as stated by al-Nawawī.²

The following narration of al-Zuhrī supports the aforementioned:

هاجت الفتنة الأولى وأصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم متوافرون، وفيهم البدريون، فأجمعوا أنه لا يقاد أحد ولا يؤخذ ما أحد على تأويل القرآن.

When the first Fitnah erupted, the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were abundantly present and among them were the veterans of Badr as well. They unanimously concurred that no retribution will be executed upon anyone, nor will the wealth of any person be taken as long as he fought based on an interpretation of the Qur'ān.³

And the narration of 'Abd al-Razzāq states the following:

فإن الفتنة الأولى ثارت وأصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ممن شهد بدرا كثير، فاجتمع رأيهم على أن لا يقيموا على أحد حدا في فرج استحلوه بتأويل القرآن، ولا قصاص في دم استحلوه بتأويل القرآن، ولا يرد ما استحلوه بتأويل القرآن، إلا أن يوجد شيء بعينه فيرد على صاحبه.

When the first Fitnah erupted, many of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who participated in Badr were present. They unanimously agreed that they will not establish the capital punishment upon anyone who violated the chastity of

1 Ibn Qudāmah: *al-Mughnī*, 8/112.

2 Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim with the commentary of al-Nawawī, 7/170.

3 Al-Bayhaqī: *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, /174

a woman based on an interpretation of the Qur'ān, likewise no retribution will be taken from those who violated the blood of people based on an interpretation of the Qur'ān. Likewise, whatever wealth they took considering it to be permissible based on an interpretation of the Qur'ān will not be retrieved from them, unless something specific is found which will then be returned to its owner.¹

4. The Splendid Position of the Ahl al-Sunnah regarding the Fitnah

Apart from the innovative and deviant sects, which were from the remnants of the Fitnah, the general Muslims and most of the jurists, scholars, and bearers of the Sunnah represented the majority, or the congregation, or the Ahl al-Sunnah, as they came to be known in subsequent times.

In Ṣaḥīḥ aḥādīth mention appears of this Ummah splintering into various sects and groups. They also state that Allah will preserve his Dīn by bringing about a group that will attain salvation and will be helped. This group will uphold the injunctions of Allah amidst all these disputes and these vicissitudes. It will hold onto the path of Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in its belief, its conduct, and in all its matters. Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

وإن بني إسرائيل تفرقت على ثنتين وسبعين ملة وتفترق أمتي على ثلاث وسبعين ملة كلهم في النار إلا ملة واحدة قالوا ومن هي يا رسول الله قال ما أنا عليه وأصحابي

“And the Banū Isrā’īl splintered into seventy-two sects and my Ummah will splinter in seventy-three sects. Each of them will be in Hell-fire besides one group.”

They asked, “Which group will that be?”

He said, “The group that will be upon the path me and my Ṣaḥābah are on.”²

1 *Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq*, 10/121, chapter regarding fighting the Ḥarūrā’.

2 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 4/134, chapter of Īmān, subchapter regarding the splintering of the Ummah. Al-Tirmidhī has said, “This is a ḥadīth which is Ḥasan Gharīb.” Al-Albānī has also deemed it Ṣaḥīḥ in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 2/334, Ḥadīth: 2129.

Likewise, he has also said:

لا تزال طائفة من امتي على الحق لا يضرهم من خالفهم حتى يأتي أمر الله

A group of my Ummah will constantly remain upon the truth. Those who oppose them will not harm them till the decree of Allah comes.¹

In light of the theoretical and practical characteristics of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah we will find the following matters: their belief is harmonious with that upon which Nabī ﷺ and the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ were in all aspects, in belief, like in the names of Allah and his attributes, in having belief in pre-destiny and all the other fundamental aspects thereof. They rely, in jurisprudence and the deduction of rulings, upon the revealed revelation or those evidences which are endorsed by the revelation: like *Ijma'* (consensus of the Ummah), *Qiyās* (analyses and deduction), or taking into account the *Maṣlaḥah Rājiḥah* (overwhelming interest) which does not clash with the Shar'ī texts. They are also very passionate about practicing the Shar'īah and carrying out its injunctions and refraining from its prohibitions; for the sound recognition which the Ahl al-Sunnah are so keen on acquiring is not only the theological recognition, but it is also the living recognition of the heart, the actions of the heart, as a result of which fear, hope, and submission before the order of Allah come about.

The Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah always remain distant from extremism in everything and they give preference to moderation in opinion and in practice. They also strictly hold on to what their predecessors from the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ understood from the verses of the Qur'ān and the ḥadīth of Nabī ﷺ.

So, when the disputes and battles which transpired between the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ are mentioned their position is the following:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/146, chapter regarding holding onto the Sunnah, subchapter regarding the ḥadīth of Nabī ﷺ, "A group of my Ummah will constantly remain victorious upon the truth."; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1/193, chapter of Īmān, subchapter regarding the descending of 'Isā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام.

ونحب أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ، ولا نفرط في حب أحد منهم ، ولا نتبرأ من أحد منهم . ونبغض من يبغضهم ، وبغير الخير يذكرهم . ولا نذكرهم إلا بخير . وحبهام دين وإيمان وإحسان ، وبغضهم كفر ونفاق وطغيان وثبت الخلافة بعد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أولاً لأبي بكر الصديق رضي الله عنه ، تفضيلاً له وتقديماً على جميع الأمة، ثم لعمر بن الخطاب، ثم لعثمان بن عفان، ثم لعلي بن أبي طالب، وهم الخلفاء الراشدون والأئمة المهديون الذين قضوا بالحق وبه يعدلون. ونحب العشرة الذين سماهم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وبشرهم بالجنة، وشهد لهم بالجنة، وهم أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان وعلي وطلحة والزبير وسعد وسعيد وعبد الرحمن بن عوف وأبو عبيدة بن الجراح ومن أحسن القول في أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وأزواجه وذريته فقد برئ من النفاق.

We love the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allah ﷺ and we do not exceed limits in loving any of them, just as we do not disassociate from any of them. We despise those who despise them and mention them without goodness. And we do not mention them but with goodness. Loving them is Dīn, part of Īmān and *Ihsān* (perfection of Dīn), and hating them is disbelief, hypocrisy and transgression. We establish Khilāfah after Rasūl Allah ﷺ for Abū Bakr ﷺ giving him preference and putting him forward before the rest of the Ummah, thereafter for ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, thereafter for ‘Uthmān, and thereafter for ‘Alī ﷺ. They are the Rightly Guided Khalīfahs and the guided leaders, who decided according to the truth and acted justly according to it. And we love the ten Ṣaḥābah ﷺ whom Nabī ﷺ named and gave glad tidings of Jannah to. They are: Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, Sa’d, Sa’īd ibn Zayd, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, and Abū ‘Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ ﷺ. And whoever makes good mention of the Ṣaḥābah of Rasūl Allah ﷺ, his wives, and his progeny, is free from hypocrisy.¹

Regarding the attributes of Allah are mentioned they say:

أمرها كما جاءت بلا كيف

Pass (transitive) them as they have come without modality.²

1 Al-Ṭaḥāwī: *al-‘Aqīdah al-Ṭaḥāwīyyah*, p. 23-24.

2 Al-Walīd ibn Muslim has narrated this from the Imāms: Mālik, al-Layth, al-Thawrī, and al-Awzā’ī. See: al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 8/162.

They affirm for Allah *سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ* all his attributes as they befit his majesty and his grandeur. They describe him with that with which he has described himself in the Qurʾān and with which Nabī *صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ* has described him. They do so without distorting these attributes, rendering them useless, and without assigning modality to them, similarity, and anthropomorphism.¹

Similarly, when a ruler is oppressive or transgressive, they do not rebel against him but after a few requisites are met. One such requisite is: assurance regarding the non-occurrence of a Fitnah and the realisation of what is best for the Muslims. Also, most of them do not consider leading an insurrection to be permissible only unless there is explicit disbelief which they are able to substantiate by way of evidence from Allah. Hence, they say:

ولا نرى الخروج على أئمتنا وولاية أمورنا وإن جاروا و ظلموا ولا ننزع يدا من طاعتهم ونرى طاعتهم من طاعة الله عز وجل فريضة ما لم يأمرنا بمعصية وندعو لهم بالصلاح والمعافاة ونتبع السنة والجماعة ونجتنب الشذوذ والخلاف والفرقة. ونحب أهل العدل والأمانة ونبغض أهل الجور والخيانة

We do not consider it permissible to rebel against our rulers and those in charge of our affairs even if they are oppressive. We will not withdraw our hand from complying with them and we consider obeying them to be obeying Allah and see that as an obligation, as long as they do not order evil. We supplicate for their piety and wellbeing. We follow the Sunnah and the congregation and we avoid anomaly, disputing and disunity. We love the people of justice and trustworthiness, and hate the people of oppression and treachery.²

It is crucial to note that this does not necessitate that the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah and their thinkers did not hold views regarding political issues, nor does it entail that they always stepped aside from any political activity. For they have always responded to the call of truth and have expressed their views where they

1 See: Ibn Taymiyyah: *al-ʿAqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah*; Ibn Qudāmah: *Lumʿah al-ʿIṭiqād al-Hādī ilā Sabīl al-Rashād*, etc.

2 *Al-ʿAqīdah al-Ṭahāwiyyah*, p. 20.

were required to. They actively participated in every pivotal matter and many a times individuals amongst them issued Fatwās regarding matters like pledging to a Khalīfah, the oppression of the rulers and governors, the rebellion of the subjects, the renouncing of the pledge, enjoining good and forbidding evil, and many other matters which pertain to politics.

The matter once had reached an extent that some of them had even joined the insurrection which was initiated against al-Ḥajjāj. Hence, Saʿīd ibn Jubayr, al-Shaʿbī, and other scholars had joined the insurrection of Ibn al-Ashʿath against al-Ḥajjāj and they fought alongside him in the Battle of Dayr al-Jamājim.¹ But this type of participation in rebellions was not the general trend of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah. For the overwhelming view according to most of them was shunning rebellion and combatting the ruler with the sword due to the *Fitan* (tribulations), calamities, and losses that it induced in lives and in belongings. Hence, they would opt for the lesser of the two evils and would go with the lighter of the two harms, applying thereby the famous jurisprudential principle: when two harms come together then embark on the lighter of the two.

Likewise, in the books of *Ṣiḥāḥ*, *Sunan*, and *Masānīd*, the scholars of ḥadīth and the jurists have established chapters dedicated to *Fitan*. Whoever thoroughly understands them in a correct manner will achieve thereby a very great key to understanding the reality of the present and to understand the history of Islam and its interpretation. Al-Bukhārī has narrated the following in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbbās رضي الله عنه from Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم:

من كره من أميره شيئاً فليصبر فإنه من خرج من السلطان شبراً مات ميتة جاهلية

Whoever dislikes something of his ruler should exercise patience, for whoever will leave the authority even to the extent of a hand span will die a death of ignorance.²

1 Al-Ṭabarī: *Tārīkh al-Rusul*, 6/346.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/87, chapter of *Fitan*, sub-chapter regarding the ḥadīth of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم, “After me you will witness matters which you will condemn.”

And he has also narrated the following ḥadīth of ‘Ubādah ibn al-Ṣāmit رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

دعانا النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فبايعناه فقال فيما أخذ علينا أن بايعنا على السمع والطاعة في منشطنا ومكرهنا وعسرنا ويسرنا وأثره علينا وأن لا ننازع الأمر أهله إلا أن تروا كفرا بواحا عندكم من الله فيه برهان

Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ called us and so we pledged allegiance to him. Amongst the pledges he took from us were that we pledge to him to listen and obey, in activeness and in dislike, in ease and in difficulty, and when preference was given to others over us. We pledged that we will not dispute for the matter with its holders unless you see open disbelief for which you have evidence from Allah.¹

Whereas in other places Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is reported to have said:

إذا رأيت أمتي تهاب أن تقول للظالم يا ظالم فقد تودع منهم

When you see my Ummah fearful of saying to an oppressor, “O oppressor,” then (know that) they have been forsaken.²

And he has also said:

أفضل الجهاد كلمة حق عند سلطان جائر

The best Jihād is to say a word of truth before a tyrant ruler.³

So, what do you think the Muslims will understand from these conflicting Prophetic directives? There is no doubt that the jurists and scholars understood

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/88, chapter of Fitān.

2 *Musnad Aḥmad*, 2/163, 190; *Mustadrak Ḥākim*, 4/96. The ḥadīth is weak and there is a break in its transmission, it has been deemed weak by al-Albānī in *al-Da‘īfah*, 3/421, Ḥadīth: 1264.

3 *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, 3/318, chapter of Fitān; *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 4/124, chapter of *Malāḥim* (wars that will ensue before the end of time); *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 2/1320, chapter of Fitān. Al-Albānī has deemed the narration Ṣaḥīḥ in his *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 3/820, Ḥadīth: 3650.

thereby that all circumstances and conditions should be studied with the eye of deliberation. Therefore, if there is assurance of Fitnah not occurring and no loss being sustained in belongings and in lives, and the people of integrity feel that they will have the upper hand if they revolt against the tyrant ruler, then there is no problem in repelling his oppression and tyranny, diffusing the strength of the tyrant, and enjoining good and forbidding evil in order to actualise the best for the Muslims. And if the Muslims feel that their insurrection will cause a Fitnah, and will lead to the violation of wealth and integrity, and the emergence of disunity and bickering, then it will be more prudent not to rebel and not to instigate a Fitnah.

In this there is a lesson for the Muslims that they should understand, deeply deliberate over the teachings of Nabī ﷺ, and utilise wisdom and acumen. This is because the primary objective is to build unity and unite the ranks, even if that be to the detriment of some rights, and even if it be by way of overlooking some offences.

When weighing the pros and cons the, the unity of the Ummah will be placed beyond all other considerations. This explains why the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah have considered the rulership of an inferior valid even in the presence of his superior.¹ In fact they have even validated the rulership of a dictator if rebelling against him will shatter the ranks of the Muslims and will destroy their unity. They have also approbated the rulership of a Fāsiq when revolting against him would lead to a harm greater than the harm of his Fisq. And Ibn Taymiyyah has actually given preference to the rulership of a strong imposter over the rulership of a weak pious person; because the interest of the Muslims will be realised in the first case and not in the second; for the Fisq of the first is restricted to himself and his strength is to the advantage of the Muslims, whereas the piety of the second is confined to himself and his weakness is to the detriment of the Muslims.²

1 Ibn Ḥazm: *al-Fiṣal fī al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, 4/163.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *al-Siyāsah al-Shar'īyah*, p. 21.

In this there is a great chapter of jurisprudence, for the jurists have placed outstanding principles in this regard. For example: ‘Acting in the matters of the masses in contingent upon interest’, ‘Specific harm will be borne in order to repel general harm’, ‘Repelling evils takes precedence over attracting benefits’, ‘When two evils clash, the greater of them in harm will be taken into consideration’, ‘The lesser of the two evils will be chosen’, among many other principles on which many rulings are based.

Moving on, the Ahl al-Sunnah believe, contrary to the Khawārij that the perpetrators of major sins will go to Hell-fire, but they will not be doomed to it for eternity if they die believing in the Oneness of Allah. Rather they will be under the will of Allah, if He wishes He can forgive them:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

Allah will not forgive association with him, and will forgive less than that for whoever he wants.

And if He wishes He can punish them out of his justice. Thereafter they will be taken out therefrom owing to His mercy and the intercession of his obedient bondsmen, and thereafter he will enter them into Jannah, as has occurred in a Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth.¹

Furthermore, they do not oppose the congregation of the Muslims and do not excommunicate anyone from the people of the Qiblah because of a sin, as long as he does not deem it permissible. They do not say that no sin is harmful with the presence of īmān for the one who commits it, as is the view of the Murji’ah. Yes, they are hopeful for a good doer and fearful regarding an evil doer.²

Also, it would be plausible to aver that the specific tendency of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah is that knowledge and practice are more fruitful and beneficial

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 7/203, 205, chapter regarding Riqāq (ḥadīth that soften the heart).

2 Sharḥ al-‘Aqīdah al-Taḥāwīyyah, p. 15, 1.

then mere debating and argumentation. And that is why they emphasise that the reality of Shar‘ī īmān is confession and practice, and that it increases and decreases; increases with acts of obedience and decreases with sins.

Hence, the ideological and jurisprudential legacy of the Ahl al-Sunnah has till the present day remained an ideal example of moderation in understanding events, weighing matters with the balance of Islam, and staying distant from the deviations of the extremist of the various sects in all contentious issues.

In conclusion, the final verdict is that the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah were the ones who deduced a sound academic balance from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of his Rasūl صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ by way of which all ideas, information and deeds could be weighed and distinction could be made between the correct and the incorrect of them. Allah سُبحانه وتعالى says:

وَأَسْتَقِيمُ كَمَا أُمِرْتُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ

*And remain on a right course as you are commanded and do not follow their inclinations.*¹

And Allah سُبحانه وتعالى says:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمِيزَانَ

*It is Allah who has sent down the book in truth, and also the balance.*²

So they are the people of this balance which they inherited from the Ambiyā’ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ, for they did not tread the path of deviance or ignorance in debunking any ideology or belief. They merely studied, analysed, and passed rulings based on a very detailed academic balance in everything that confronted them, be it

1 Sūrah al-Shūrā: 15.

2 Ibid, 17.

beliefs, philosophies or schools. They, by virtue of that, were the spearheaders and initiators of such academic thought which became the means of gushing forth springs of human recognition in a way that was unprecedented in the history of humanity. This is something to which even the disbelievers have attested. A Western researcher, professor Bairen, who delivered a sermon in an international conference regarding the sciences of history which was held in Oslo, the Norwegian capital (on the 14th to the 16th of August 1928) states that the emergence of Islam was the end of the ancient centuries and the beginning of the renaissance of humanity in the medieval centuries; because the interaction of the West with Islam is the differentiating factor between these two phases of history, the ancient and the medieval. It was only then that Europe developed a new civilisation and a new life, because of which it is necessary to consider this occurrence the beginning of the medieval era.¹

They were the ones who shunned Hellenistic philosophy, not like how an ignoramus shuns something the value of which he does not know, but rather like a research scholar who knows well its fallacies from its realities. In this manner they freed the mind from its shackles and allowed it to make a path for itself in various spheres of research and knowledge. In doing so they truly represented the mind in what they learnt from the Book of Allah, i.e. they learnt a methodology of deep and sound reasoning which guarded the minds against slipping into the slopes of conjecture and deviance.

1 Muḥammad Faṭḥī 'Uṭhmān: *Aḍwā' 'alā al-Tārīkh al-Islāmī*, p. 293.

Conclusion

This study has revealed the following:

- Mention of some rules which can help a historian in avoiding mistakes, a necessary result of accepting all historical reports. These were elaborated upon under the discussion regarding the causes which necessitate lying in reports.
- The proliferation of forgeries in the initial days of Islam can be attributed to racial, political, sectarian, and material causes.
- The Shī'ah have been the most impactful sect in distorting Islamic history. Because they were an amalgamation of Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, and heretics who were proponents of esoteric interpretation who made partisanship for the Ahl al-Bayt a pretext to reach their motive of destroying Islam and its teachings. From all the sects they lied the most against their opponents. This is because they had the greatest number of historians and narrators who took it upon themselves to propagate false narrations and forgeries.
- Mention of the methodology of studying Islamic history which is of two types:
 - a. A department which is specific to authenticating. This entails the methods of establishing facts. For the scholars have outlined a methodology for this which is extremely sophisticated and precise. Notwithstanding that the application of the rules of critiquing a historical narration is subjective and is determined by the nature of the narrations.
 - b. A department which is specific to interpreting events and passing judgements regarding them. This is related to the assumptions and

principles in light of which events can be interpreted. And in order to ensure the correctness of the methodology of interpretation and the validity of the historical judgements, it is crucial to draw from the frame of Sharī sources and rules. For this reason, a number of important rules which a researcher who is writing regarding Islamic history and its interpretation should take into consideration were stated.

- Shedding light on the methodology which is necessary to follow when looking into the *Fiqh* (understanding) of the history of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. The methodology of ‘understanding the history of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم’ refers to those rules and rulings which ought to be applied when interacting with the history of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. This understanding is made up from a cluster of Sharī rulings which are deduced from the primary sources of Sharīah: the Qur’ān, the Sunnah, and the consensus of the Ummah. Some of these rulings are: The undisputed integrity of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, the duty of the Muslims toward them, the ruling of a person who reviles them, and that all of the above are from the primary principles of the belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah without any debate.
- Introducing al-Ṭabarī. For his *Tārīkh* was the main source of this study. I reached the conclusion that he was abstinent, clean, disinclined from this world, pious, a person of high self-esteem, bold in proclaiming the truth, humble, and proud in that he refused to act as a judge, and refused to accept gifts from the rulers.
- A discussion regarding his academic trips, a list of the places to which he travelled and the scholars he met. For he met hundreds of scholars who were experts in various sciences, but most of his teachers were from the teachers of al-Bukhārī and Muslim regarding whose integrity there can be no doubt.

- Unveiling his multi-colourful culture and his outstanding excellence in many sciences, especially *Tafsīr*, *Ḥadīth*, the various readings of the Qur’ān, jurisprudence, history, and the sciences of the Arabic language. He had his own school which later became known as the Jarīrī School and also had followers and students, but they came to an end after the fourth and the fifth centuries after Hijrah.
- The discussion regarding the accusation of Shī’ism which has been levelled against him. It has become evidently clear that this accusation was the result of fanaticism based on following a specific school at times, due to sectarian clashes at times, and at times due to criticising Islam and its scholars. Hence, all the reasons which led to him being suspected of Shī’ism are not based upon any valid premise and are based merely upon assumption, conjecture, and possibility. Thereafter, in order to support the falsity of this accusation a comparison was drawn between the views of al-Ṭabarī and the views of the Shī’ah in some aspects of belief wherefrom it became evident that al-Ṭabarī is intrinsically different from them; for he does not accept the testimony of the Shī’ah and their reports, he excommunicates many of them, and was of the opinion that a person who believed that Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما were not just rulers should be executed. He also loved the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and would praise them, especially the Khulafā’ whose ranks in virtue are in line with their ranks in rulership. All of this further supports the falsity of the accusation of Shī’ism.

His belief in general was harmonious with the famous tenets of faith of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā’ah, starting from the era of the Salaf right up to our time.

- It was also noted that al-Ṭabarī authored his *Tārīkh* in order to emphasise the primary most idea which stemmed from his belief and his faith based assumption, i.e. his faith in the orders of Allah, his prohibitions, his justice,

his decree, and his destiny; his conviction that Allah has systems and laws which are unalterable; his belief in the freedom of men and his ability to choose, and that he is charged with the task of worshipping Allah, being the vicegerents of Allah on this earth, and burdened with the task of populating the earth with the Sharī'ah of Allah and his way; his faith that Allah will reward the obliging obedient and will punish the violating disobedient.

Therefore, his overview of history was encompassed under this glaring idea and this radiant and believing mentality which recognised the Sharī'ah of Allah and his rulings.

Likewise, his documentation of history according to the eras of the prophets and the kings who were charged with the responsibility of guiding and given the authority of implementing was so that this format help in clarifying lessons and reflections for the people of intellect. He wanted to demonstrate to them how the systems of Allah are realised in humanity, i.e. how He helps the believers, the Prophets and their followers, who implement his Sharī'ah, and how he destroys the transgressors who oppose Allah and His prophets or grants them respite and delays their punishment till the Day of Judgement.

- Al-Ṭabarī in his book has relied upon two types of sources: oral sources which he assimilated from his teachers like Ibn Shabbah for example, and written sources which he was given *Ijāzah* (official permission) to narrate or which he found and cited from, like the books al-Wāqidi and Sayf ibn Ḳumar.

Not forgetting that al-Ṭabarī found before him many historical sources, but he selected therefrom what he included in his great *Tarīkh*. In doing so he displayed his outstanding ability to reconcile between various sources, his thorough knowledge of the books that were written before him, and also his ability to critique narrations.

It would also be appropriate to state that the vastness of the hearts of the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah like al-Ṭabarī to narrate even the narrations of the opponents like the Shī'ah and others, is evidence of their understanding, their trustworthiness, and their desire that their readership be capable of learning every detail related to the matter. They felt confident that it will not miss a bright and informed reader that the likes of Abū Mikhnaf, Ibn al-Kalbī, and others are the locus of suspicion in narrations related to issues about which they were fanatics. As such thorough deliberation and investigation will be required in order to filter facts which have been jumbled up with hearsay and forgeries.

- Fitnah was defined in light of language, the Qur'ān, and the Prophetic ḥadīth. It was stated that the intent thereby in our study was the fighting, disputes and disunity which ensued between the Muslims in the initial stage of Islam. This was owing to the consideration that the disputed issues were confounding and complex, to an extent that they induced the emergence of disparate positions and differing views.
- The allegations levelled at 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه, which have been reported via the transmission of unknown people and weak historians (especially the Shī'ah), were and continue to remain a great dilemma which distort facts about the conduct of the Khulafā', especially in times of turbulence and the Fitnah. And unfortunately, the conduct of Amīr al-Mu'minīn 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān رضي الله عنه has suffered the most in this regard. Hence, the reporting of events and the forging of false narrations is some of the tarnishing this radiant conduct suffered at the hands of the deviants and the fanatics who did so in order to instigate people against him and render him infamous.

Notwithstanding that these allegations, some of them 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه answered himself, some were debunked by those who witnessed them from the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and their successors, some of them we have have substantively opposed and refuted with evidences in the discussion

pertaining to the allegations levelled at ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, and some are not valid to even quote and its chains of transmission are not Ṣaḥīḥ, rather they have been narrated by suspicious people and were exploited when the Fitnah erupted to serve the interests of the Khawārij.

- After holistically covering the sources, whether ancient or recent, whether of the Sunnah or the Shī‘ah, the existence of ‘Abd Allah ibn Saba’ is a confirmed fact which is supported by historical evidence. The books of theology extensively make mention of him as well and so do the books of ḥadīth, transmitter biographies, genealogy, classes of people, literature, and the Arabic language. This is a view adopted by many researchers, investigators, and scholars of Ḥadīth. The amount of references which I referred to and which all concur upon his existence has reached sixty.

Ostensibly the first person to doubt the existence of Ibn Saba’ was an orientalist. Thereafter this hypothesis was supported by most of the contemporary Shī‘ah, some among who even went on to deny his existence completely. Likewise, amongst the contemporary researchers many became obsessed with the views of the Orientalists and became influenced by the writings of the Shī‘ah. But all these people do not have evidence to substantiate their doubts and their denial other than doubt itself and resorting to mere assumptions and hypotheses.

- The prominent heresiographers, historians, the Salaf of the Ummah, and their successors all agree that ‘Abd Allah ibn Saba’, who was a Jewish person from Ṣan‘ā’, overtly proclaimed Islam and travelled around the Muslim world with beliefs, ideas, and sinister ploys in order to deter them from their Dīn and from obedience to their ruler. He endeavoured to instigate between them disunity and bickering. The riffraff answered his call and eventually the Saba’ī cult came about which was one of the causes of the occurrence of the Fitnah, which ended with the martyrdom of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.

- From the narrations, the influence of the Bedouins in the Fitnah is quite clear. For they participated, with virtuous or sinister motives in the beginning of the first Fitnah. Thereafter they became the means of fuelling it even more, due to the 'holy' and shallow people amongst them assuming innocently (referring to the Qur'ā) that 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه was in the wrong, and due to the covetous among them believing that they deserved more rights over and above their share from the national treasury which they were entitled to procure.

The Sabai'iyah were the ones who took most advantage of this reality, i.e. they exploited the presence of a people who could not differentiate between truth and falsehood and the presence of a people who were being propelled by wealth and greed; they exploited the simplicity of these people and the greed of these people in order to orchestrate the Fitnah.

- As a consequence of the nature of the empire transitioning, and the emergence of various types of subjects and people who affiliated to it, there came about a new generation of Muslims who were considered inferior to the first generation who had shouldered the responsibility of building the empire and administering it. The first generation of Muslims were different because of the strength of their īmān, their sound understanding of the essence of the Islamic faith, and their willingness to subjugate themselves to the system of Islam which was represented by the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. These distinguishing factors were less present in the new generation which came about after the expansive conquests of the Muslims. In this generation personal interests, and chauvinism were more apparent. Together with that it bore much of the remnants of the pre-Islamic life which its people were upon, for they did not receive such Islamic upbringing as did the first generation of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who were fashioned by Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم. This is because they were too many and the conquerors were too occupied with wars and new conquests. So, these new Muslims started falling prey to everything they heard on the

one hand, and started propagating the remnants of their pre-Islamic ideas on the other hand.

- The circumstances of the material world had also changed. People, thus, moved on from a life of abstinence and difficulty which they lived during the era of Nubuwwah and the reign of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما to a life of ease and opulence due to the bounties and the good which the conquests brought about. There is no need to mention that that had an impact upon the society, for people now became occupied in the worldly things and became ensnared by it. Also, wealth induced rivalry and hatred, especially amongst the Bedouins and the Muslims of the conquests who were already immersed in the adornments of this world and had made them their ultimate goal for which they vied, and because their hearts were not polished by Īmān and who were not disciplined with piety.

So, when ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه fulfilled his responsibility toward these people who had initiated an opulent and morally degenerative life, these thoughtless people joined the ranks of the protestors who comprised of the riffraff and others.

- The immediate advent of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه after ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and their disparate temperaments had led to their methodologies differing in interacting with their subjects. So, whilst ‘Umar رضي الله عنه was stern and firm, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was more lenient and softer in his interaction. This had some impact in the appearance of disparity according to the new Muslims in his reign and the reign of his predecessor.
- Tribal chauvinism was something which instigated the hearts and mobilised them, which is why it served as the key to Fitnah, because some tribes saw for themselves superiority and virtue in the conquests and despised the ruling of Quraysh over them. This coincided with the era of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Hence, they would level allegations against his governors in the various cities and they would extensively condemn ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.

This ushered in the beginning of the Fitnah in Kūfah, the first city in which Shayṭān caused friction between its people, as stated by al-Shaʿbī.

- It occurred to many people, whether innocently or maliciously, that ʿUthmān رضي الله عنه was weak in his positions with regard to the events which swept across the Islamic empire, or that he was exploitable and could be driven to whatever was wanted. This is a historical error regarding the third best Ṣaḥābī رضي الله عنه of Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم in terms of virtue and religiosity.

Having said that, some orientalists and those researchers who tread in their footsteps have exploited fabricated narrations which deem ʿUthmān رضي الله عنه weak, narrations which were forged by the liars. Thus, they focused their attention on expanding in studying them, in fact it was like a treasure which they rushed to distribute as long as it served their motives of criticising the Dīn and its men. They also exploited the softness of ʿUthmān رضي الله عنه, his mercy and his compassion for his subjects, in order to add another misconception to their misconceptions, i.e. that ʿUthmān رضي الله عنه had a weak personality.

This is a vacuous claim because it is not supported by any substantive evidence. Furthermore, from the context of the narrations of al-Bukhārī and that of al-Ṭabarī pertaining to the *Shūrah* (council of the six Ṣaḥābah) it is evident that the election of ʿUthmān رضي الله عنه was only because he was the most ideal, the most just, and the most capable of those who could bear the responsibility before Allah and the Muslims.

Although ʿUthmān رضي الله عنه was compassionate and merciful with the people, true attributes of a just ruler, but he was never weak when it came to establishing the injunctions of Allah. He followed the policy of ʿUmar رضي الله عنه when investigating about the governors from the delegations of Ḥajj and would ask the subjects regarding their superiors. Hence, he would write

letters to the people of the various cities telling them to meet him in the days of Ḥajj if they had any offences to report. Consequently, they would report these offences to him in front of their governor and he would thereafter decide justly between them.

He was stern in following the deeds of his governors and would limit their authority to what would ensure the interests of the Muslims and prove to be a mercy for them and a source of compassion for the subjects. Together with that he would instate confidence, candidness in saying the truth, and not to have cowardice and fear in the hearts of the people so that they could always monitor the governors to see if they were upholding the trust which Allah ﷻ entrusted them with or not.

‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was not incapable of appointing a “Ḥajjāj” for himself whom he could impose upon the Ummah with the whips of domination and tyranny and thereby freely shed its blood till it relented and became subservient. Likewise, he was not incapable of instituting punishments for the people far worse than what they initiated and penalising those who revolted against him. He was not incapable of doing this and things of its sort, nor was he weak or vulnerable, but he was a Rightly Guided Khalīfah whom the justice of the Khilāfah Rāshidah had prevented from the crimes of tyrannical monarchy.

- The position of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه regarding the events that had engulfed the Muslims was the most ideal model of what sacrifice an individual can offer to preserve the edifice of the congregation, the integrity of the Ummah, and the blood of the Muslims. For it was possible for him to save and rescue himself had he intended his own self and not the Ummah. Because if he really was selfish and not selfless he would have advanced with those who volunteered to defend him from the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, and the sons of the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār to slay those who were revolting against him and had withdrew from obeying him. But he wanted to gather

the scattered matter of the Ummah and, thus, he sacrificed himself whilst exercising patience and being hopeful of reward; he prevented those who unsheathed their swords due to the fear of division, and in order to preserve the love which guaranteed the preservation of unity, even if that led to his destruction.

- Coupled with his patience and his zeal for reward in preserving the structure of the Ummah from fragmentation and perishing, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه adopted another position which was even stronger. He did not accede to the demand of the rebels that he dismiss himself from the station of the Khalīfah. In doing so, he represented steadfastness and the perpetual nature of the system; for if he acceded to their demand, the station of rulership would have become a toy in the hands of those infatuated with power who go around causing corruption in the earth. Consequently, pandemonium would prevail and the order of the lands would deteriorate, for it would result in giving dominion to the riffraff and simpletons over the rulers and governors.

It is without doubt that this stance of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was the greatest and strongest that an individual to whom the Ummah had handed over its matters could do. For he resorted to the lesser of the two evils and the lighter of the two harms in order to support through this sacrifice the order of Khalīfah and its authority.

- The killing of the Khalīfah ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was not the ultimate objective of those who plotted the siege. If the matter was such, it would have been light, the Fitnah would have subsided, one Khalīfah would be replaced by another, and matters would have returned to their usual norm. But some of the spearheaders of the Fitnah had an objective with deeper effects and further implications other than just the killing of the Khalīfah and replacing him with another. Their objective was to destroy the reality of Islam, tarnish its belief, and distort its principles in the disguise of the

murdered Khalīfah, and also to give rise to acrimony and division amongst the Muslims.

The sinister plots of the Saba'iyyah incessantly continued during the Khilāfah of 'Uthmān and 'Alī رضي الله عنهما. Their only objective was to ravage this Dīn, doing so by exploiting the directionless movement which comprised of the Bedouins of the desert and the new Muslims of the conquests whose hearts were not polished with īmān. This is usually the trend in much of these movement which serve as fertile ground for the exploitation of the havoc wreakers. But Islam, with the grace of Allah, emerged stronger than these attacks, greater than these challenges, and more resilient and steadfast. For Ibn Saba' and his likes have vanished and Islam has remained. As for his destructive ideas, although they still continue to find space in the hearts of a sect of the people of the Qiblah, the Shī'ah, however they are a shunned sect owing to their despicable beliefs and sinister doings. Whereas on the other hand the majority of the Muslims have remained upon the belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah.

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has ordained for Islam men who repelled from it the impurity of these ideas and exposed their corruption and consequently the Muslims held on to Tawhīd and followed the path of the pious Salaf. In this was also the realisation of the prophecy of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم wherein he says:

A group of my Ummah will continue to remain upon the truth, those who oppose them will not harm them till the decree of Allah comes.

- Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم had forewarned regarding the occurrence of the Fitnah, and it has been categorically established by way of revelation that 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه was upon the truth and that he was going to be unjustly killed. Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم ordered that he be followed, and informed that Allah will make him wear a garb, referring to the Khilāfah, and prophesised that the hypocrites will want him to remove it and ordered him not to remove it.

This is the greatest evidence that he was upon the truth. Hence, whoever opposed him surely deviated from the path. Why should it not be that way when Nabī ﷺ has described those who wanted him to step down as hypocrites. Hence, it is necessarily known that all the demerits which are narrated regarding him are either forgeries or interpretable, if they are authentically established, as the conclusions he reached based on his Ijtihād, and that the truth was on his side. This is in order to confirm the veracity of the report of Nubuwwah which is true without any doubt.

- A person who follows the events of the Fitnah in the *Tārīkh* of al-Ṭabarī and the other books of history via the narrations of Abū Mikhnaf, al-Wāqidī, Ibn A‘tham, and others will get the impression that the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم were the ones who were instigating the conspiracy and inducing the Fitnah.

Then, contrary to the narrations of these people who were not prudent in depicting the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم as the conspirators, the instigators against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, and those who were responsible for his murder, the books of the Ḥadīth scholars, with the grace of Allah, have preserved the authentic narrations. In them the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم are depicted as the supporters and defenders of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. They strove to protect him and support him and were willing to sacrifice themselves for him. But he prevented them from fighting and said that he preferred meeting Allah as an innocent but oppressed person. Had he given his consent they would have fought on his behalf.

- The stance of the Tābi‘īn and those who followed was no different than the stance of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in defending ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, being considerate of his rights, stating that he was wrongly killed, deeming his murder to be a horrendous crime and proclaiming their innocence from his murderers, and condemning them. For they had made endorsing the Sunnah and eradicating innovations without personal leanings and specific tendencies

their objective. Hence, many of their narrations pertaining to the First Fitnah depicted ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه as a pure heart which was clean and free from what the prejudiced people and the gossipers wanted.

- Likewise, contrary to some narrations which state that a group of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم stayed away from pledging to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه or unwillingly pledged to him, it has been established with indubitable evidence that the election of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was a Sharī election. This is supported by the prophetic Sunnah which indicated to his Khilāfah, by what is narrated from the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم in this regard, and by what the historians, experts of Ḥadīth, jurists, and scholars have stated regarding the legitimacy of the Khilāfah of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and its validity according to *Ahl al-Ḥall wa al-‘Aqd* of the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār.

His election was not tainted with any type of pressure of coercion, for Ibn Abī Shaybah has narrated in his *Muṣannaf* with a Ṣaḥīḥ transmission that Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما willingly pledged to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه without being overpowered or forced.

Furthermore, al-Bāqillānī has clarified the stance of some of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who delayed in supporting ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and entering into his obedience. He averred that that was not because they denounced his Khilāfah and his election; but because they feared fighting the people of the Qiblah and substantiated their position by what was narrated from Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم regarding the prohibition of fighting in the Fitnah.

My view in this regard is that the opposition which stood in the face of ‘Alī was prompted by well-known political reasons. It was not an opposition which criticised his rule as much as it was one that was demanding the execution of the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.

Nonetheless, it would be plausible to aver that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was the strongest candidate of the Khilāfah after the martyrdom of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. Al-Fārūq

had deemed him eligible for it when he appointed him as a member of the council. Not forgetting that four of the members of council, viz. ‘Abd al-Rahmān, Sa’d, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه relinquished their right for him and for ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and, thus, only he and ‘Uthmān remained. This is sort of a consensus of the members of the council that if ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه was not present ‘Alī رضي الله عنه would be most deserving. And after the demise of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه when he was nominated by the people of Madīnah he became worthy thereof.

Furthermore, his early contributions to Islam, his kinship with Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم and his relationship by marriage were not the only specialities which made ‘Alī رضي الله عنه eligible for this overwhelming task, but added to that was his ability and competence as well which cannot be denied. For his valour, advancing in attacking the enemy, acumen, rare judicial prowess, his resoluteness in his positions, firmness upon the truth, and his foresight in administering matters which had even motivated ‘Umar رضي الله عنه to solicit his opinions in confusing matters, all of these factors had made him the only uncontended candidate for ruling over the Muslims in that sensitive time of their lives.

- Some historians and researchers allege that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was not a man of rulership and politics who had a good grasp of the flow of events. Whereas there is no doubt that ample evidence suggests that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was shrewd, well-acquainted with matters, and judicious. To the extent that Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه also knew that about him, owing to which they made him their advisor in political matters. In fact, ‘Umar رضي الله عنه would even seek refuge from a matter for which Abū al-Ḥasan was not available.

The policy of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه in his positions was to use wisdom and to handle the matter with leniency as long as it was possible to do so. But when he would not manage to do so he would resort to warfare.

The fact of the matter is that the issue was not about weakness, inadequacy of opinion, and deficiency of political prowess, but the circumstances had changed from what they were previously. This change had entailed a change in the groups which thronged around the Khalīfah, for they were people other than the companions of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما and comprised mostly of Bedouins and affiliates of tribes, a rather big difference between the two groups.

This change had also entailed change in the centre of the Khilāfah which shifted from Ḥijāz, the locus of the Prophetic Sunnah, to Iraq, the place where interests, personal tendencies and leanings prevailed.

One will also sense a change in ideas and the emergence of multiplicity in schools which were the result of the Fitnah. There is no doubt that this division in views and disparity and standpoints had led to added bickering and disunity which necessarily enfeebled the centre of the Khalīfah and his control over the matters.

And even though the storms of change had brought about a difference in the circumstances during the reign of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه; however, his position, in spite of all of that, did not change according to the temperament of that generation. He was uninterested in conforming with the new developments, which is why he gave preference to deficiency in everything else over deficiency in his guidance and justice.

Anyway, if political prowess means conforming with the spirit of the time, exploiting advantages, and procuring personal interests and ulterior benefits for the ruler and the groups that surround him, then ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was not a politician in this sense. But if it means sound understanding, insight, acumen, and striving to actualise the common interest of the Ummah, then ‘Alī رضي الله عنه surely enjoyed a very great portion thereof.

The decisive conclusion in this regard is that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was from the best politicians and rulers, had the era of the Khilāfah Rāshidah remained as it was in its initial days. As for when the spirit of the times was taking a course other than its usual one, his methodology in politics no more remained relevant to those circumstances, which is why some have not considered him a politician.

- The narrations of the *Tārīkh* of al-Ṭabarī concur that the march of ‘Ā’ishah, Ṭalḥah, and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنه to Iraq was in order to bring about reformation, avenge the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه who was killed wrongly, and glorify Islam by executing the violating Khawārij. In fact, even ‘Alī رضي الله عنه did not have anything in mind other than bringing about reform and uniting the word of the Muslims.

After the embassy of al-Qa‘qā’ ibn ‘Amr رضي الله عنه, Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, and ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها did not consider anything more ideal than reconciliation. For Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما later became convinced with the argument of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه regarding exercising patience and not rushing in the matter of retribution from the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه till circumstances normalised and the centre of the Khilāfah gained strength whereafter justice could run its course.

The people spent that night with the intentions of reconciliation and well-being in both armies and they were not doubting that that will ensue. However, those who instigated the Fitnah spent the worst possible night due to them being on the brink of destruction. Especially after ‘Alī رضي الله عنه addressed the people and asked them to travel the next day and also demanded that whoever helped in the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in anyway should not travel with him. Ibn Saba’ spoke and suggested that clandestinely a war be instigated by night.

It is important to note that the impact of the Saba’iyyah in Jamal and in fuelling the war is something that is almost unanimously accepted by the

historians and scholars, irrespective of whether they dub them as the riffraff, the mischief makers, the deviants, the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, or even the Saba’iyyah.

- Another fact worthy of consideration is that all the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم concurred upon establishing the capital punishment upon the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, but they differed in doing that immediately or deferring it. Hence Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, ‘Ā’ishah, and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه opined that it should be established immediately upon those who besieged the Khalīfah and wrongfully killed him, and that starting with them was ideal. Whilst Amīr al-Mu’minīn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and those with him opined that it should be delayed till the centre of the Khilāfah was consolidated and the circumstances normalised. Thereafter the guardians of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه should come forth with a claim against specific individuals whereafter the decision will be passed in their favour after the evidence is furnished. Because these besiegers were not from a specific tribe, but were from multiple tribes.

It is also a known fact that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was more accurate in his opinion and more correct in his statement. Because had he started establishing the capital punishment upon them, their tribes would have stood by their side to unjustly support them, which in turn would lead to civil strife. This is exactly what happened in Baṣrah when Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما wanted to execute some of the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Thousands of people supported them and they united against Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr رضي الله عنهما.

- As has passed, the focal point of the contention between the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم was establishing the capital punishment upon the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه as has been reported with mass transmission. But it has become popular among the people that the cause for the contention between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنهما was the greed of the latter for the Khilāfah. This

is incorrect, for the authentic narrations which feature in the books of history and Ḥadīth state that Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه did not rebel but in order to seek retribution for the murder of ‘Uthmān. They also mention that he emphatically stated that he was willing to enter into the obedience of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه once the capital punishment was established against the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه.

- The allegation that was raised regarding the murderers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه being in the army of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was a matter which was obscure. For in the army of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه there were Khawārij who were not specifically known, there were those who were backed by their people, there were those against whom the evidence was not established, and there were others who were hypocrites and whom ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was not able to fully expose.

But by doing a holistic study of the narrations it is evident that the stance of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه regarding the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه who were in his army was one of prudence, precaution, and disassociation from them.

- From the evidences it can be concluded that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was closer to the truth than Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه. Hence, in the ḥadīth narrated by Muslim regarding the Khawārij which states that ‘the closer of the two groups to the truth will kill them’ there is a clear suggestion that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was closer to the truth than his opponents in Jamal and Ṣiffīn. However, he did not entirely reach the truth, for safety was in refraining from fighting due to judgement being based upon the outcomes and results.

There is no doubt in that the result of the fighting was very painful. Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم, thus, praised Ḥasan رضي الله عنه because Allah سبحانه وتعالى united two major groups of the Muslims by way of him and preserved their blood, he said, “This son of mine is a leader. Soon Allah سبحانه وتعالى will reconcile between two groups of the Muslims because of him.” But he did not praise his father for waging war against the people of Shām; the most that he said

about him was that he was closer to the truth. As opposed to fighting the Khawārij, for he had emphatically praised that saying, “Where ever you meet them kill them, for in killing them there is reward for those who kill them till they Day of Judgment.” Likewise, ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ himself was happy and delightful after fighting the Khawārij but was distraught and disheartened after fighting the people of Jamal and Şifḫīn.

- The more prudent stance and the more ideal one was the stance of those Şaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who avoided the Fitnah and gave preference to not fighting the people of the Qiblah.

These people relied upon a Sharḫ principle which is established in the emphatic texts from Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, some of which are even instructions to specific individuals, i.e. the principle of refraining from fighting in the Fitnah.

Similarly, it was from the outstanding jurisprudence of the Şaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ that they differentiated between the validity of the Khilāfah of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and the obligation of fighting by his side, in fact the validity of fighting the people of the Qiblah. For, according to them, although he was the Sharḫ ruler it did not necessarily follow from there that he was absolutely correct in his battles against the people of Jamal and Şifḫīn.

In brief, refraining from fighting and avoiding the Fitnah was the position of most of the Ahl al-Ḥadīth. Whoever ponders over this position the strength of its evidences and the favourability of its outcomes will become clear to him.

The Sharḫ texts have featured with mass transmission regarding repelling the transgression of the Khawārij and those who wreak havoc in the earth. However, to opt to be the slain servant of Allah instead of the slaying servant of Allah is permissible in a Fitnah which erupts between Muslims

who differ with one another due to the Ijtihād of each differing from that of the other as to what is most ideal for the Ummah.

Also, this position, i.e. the position of avoiding the Fitnah, is the strongest of positions and the most preferred in light of the Shar‘ī texts and the statements of the pious Salaf. It was stronger than the position of those who felt that the truth was in fighting with ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, never mind it be stronger than the position of those who felt that the truth was in fighting those who opposed him.

- The term ‘Qurrā’ in the initial stages of Islam referred to those who read the Qur’ān, memorised it, understood its meanings, deliberated over its verses, and disciplined themselves with its demeanour. Thereafter, the definition of ‘Qurrā’ or ‘Qirā’ah’ (literally translated as reading) became distorted and was used mainly to refer to not having understanding, taking the literal implications of the texts, obstinateness in opinion, extremism, and being hard in the Dīn. To the extent that we are not baffled when we find in our early historical and Ḥadīth sources that those intended by the ‘Qurrā’ were the very individuals who participated in instigating the people against ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه in Kūfah and who, after participating in the Battle of Ṣiffīn, shunned the Arbitration and became the Khawārij who wreaked havoc in the earth by killing, looting the belongings of the Muslims. They did all of that considering it to be permissible based on their assumption that whoever opposed them was not a Muslim.

Many Prophetic Ḥadīth have made mention of them, and the end condition at which their matter was going to settle, i.e. to rebelling against the Ummah and spilling its blood without any right. The ḥadīth have warned against them and have praised those who will fight them.

- The role which is attributed to the Qurrā’ of them stopping the fighting, forcing the Arbitration, and imposing Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه as the arbiter is

nothing but a historical fallacy which was forged by the Shī'ī Historians who were disturbed by the fact that 'Alī عليه السلام seemed to be cooperating with Mu'āwiyah عليه السلام and the people of Shām, and that he was keen on reaching conciliation with his open enemies.

Therefore, they made their enemies, the Khawārij, bear the responsibility thereof in order to escape its consequences, and also made their claims seem self-contradictory. So, they were the ones who coerced 'Alī عليه السلام to accept the Arbitration and they were also the ones who remonstrated against him due to him accepting the Arbitration.

It should also be noted that the propellants for this type of narrations were the circumstances Kūfah, the stronghold of the Shī'ah, was undergoing at that particular time, the second half of the first century. For it had transitioned into a city which was under the jurisdiction of the people of Shām to which the Umayyads sent dictator type governors like Ziyād, his son 'Ubayd Allāh, and al-Hajjāj in order to diffuse their strength. As such Kūfah was a centre of opposition and a hatching place for insurrections against the Umayyads. All of this had prompted the Shī'ah to throw the liability of those events upon their enemies due to being driven by sectarian fanaticism.

- The historically established stance which appears in the books of the reliable scholars like al-Bukhārī, Aḥmad, and Ibn Abī Shaybah is that 'Alī عليه السلام accepted the Arbitration by himself without any pressure. This was due to him abiding by the laws of Islam which espouse reformation of mutual relations and retreating to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah at the time of conflict and dispute. It is also established that the stance of the Qurra' did not change from the very beginning and that they were adamant upon continuing the war against the people of Shām and denouncing the Arbitration.

This is an analysis which the heart is convinced about, because it is harmonious with the hard and constricted mentality of the Khawārij which allowed them to violate the blood and the belonging of the Muslims. For they were, in the various phases of their existence, always spearheading such movement that weakened the edifice of the Islamic empire and destroyed much of its stored strength.

- Because the Arbitration is something of crucial importance in the political history of the Islamic empire, it is important to clarify the reality of what unfolded therein. For it has been terribly depicted as equally as it has been terribly interpreted. This has resulted in much confusion and in the violation of the lofty status of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. For the popular narrative of the Arbitration accuses some of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم of being deceitful and heedless and others of resisting and clashing due to their desire for rulership.

By subjecting this narration to scrutiny three matters are taken note of. One of them concerns the point of dispute between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه which led to the war between them, the second concerns the positions of ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, and the third concerns the personalities of both Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنهما.

As for **the first matter**, the arbiters were appointed to reach a decisive conclusion regarding the dispute of ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه. The dispute was never regarding the Khilāfah and who was most deserving of it, but it was regarding the execution of the retribution against the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, something that has nothing to do with the Khilāfah. This is because the dispute around the Khilāfah had not risen as yet and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه had not claimed the Khilāfah for himself, nor did he deny that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was deserving of it. He only resisted pledging allegiance due to him enjoying dominion over the lands of Sham on the ground (although not officially) due to the people following him and being convinced that

his resistance from pledging allegiance to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was based on a valid reason, i.e. seeking his right of retribution from the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه due to him being the guardian. Hence, if the arbiters discarded this primary matter, which is what they were called to decide about, and took a decision regarding the Khilāfah as is alleged in the popular narration, then that would entail that they did not understand the focal point of the contention and did not comprehensively comprehend the claims of either side. This is something which is very unlikely.

As for **the second matter**, if the decision of the arbiters entailed the dismissal of both ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه, as alleged by the popular narration, then in the case of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه his dismissal was definitely out of place. For it is still possible to envision the dismissal of ‘Alī from the position of Khilāfah, but from which position did they dismiss Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه? Did they have the authority to dismiss him from his kinship or from seeking his right based on it? And has history ever witnessed in any of its annals that a revolutionist gets dismissed from his spearheading of an insurrection due to the decision of two arbiters? There is no doubt that this is another reason for the disapproval of the popular narration of the Arbitration and the decision that was taken therein.

As for **the third matter**, the idea that Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī رضي الله عنه was a victim of the deceit of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه in the Arbitration contradicts the historical realities which establish his merit, acumen, and his deep understanding of the Dīn. All of these traits are established for him due to him presiding over some positions of governance and law in the Islamic world in the time of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم and during the Khilāfah of ‘Umar ‘Uthmān, and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. Would it then be possible to imagine that a person who was trusted by Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم and his Khulafā’ thereafter was beguiled by a deception like the one stated in the incident of the arbitration. Furthermore, the Ṣaḥābah and many scholars of the successors have attested to the thorough knowledge of Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه,

his competence in governance, and his shrewdness in matters of law. Also, accepting this narrative would entail that ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه was a man who was driven by his ego when fulfilling his responsibilities. Owing to which his ego overrode not only his intellect and experience, but also his piety and abstinence. Thereafter the alleged reviling and swearing that transpired between him and Abū Mūsā رضي الله عنه is something that is in complete contrast with what is categorically known of their good conduct and their well-mannered speech.

- The incident of the Arbitration between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه led to the emergence of sects with unique political leanings. One of these sects was that of the Khawārij who refused to accept the Arbitration altogether. This is because they said, “There is no rule but for Allah,” establishing that it is not permissible to divert away from the order to Allah to the decision of men, and the order of Allah regarding the rebelling group was that it be fought till it returns to the command of Allah.

This slogan, ‘there is no rule but for Allah’, has remained the distinguishing symbol of the Khawārij in spite of all their various sects and their multiplicity. Their interpretations thereof, however, have differed from sect to sect. Hence, the Khawārij on the basis of their warped understanding and their forced interpretation of the texts perpetrated many crimes, and wreaked havoc on the earth by killing and looting the wealth of the Muslims. They did this considering it to be permissible due to their belief that whoever opposed them was not a Muslim. And they are the predecessors of the excommunicating sects of this Ummah till today.

From the specialities of the sects of the Khawārij was fanaticism, exceeding of bounds and being nit-picky. They also held a distinguished identity due to their reactionary methodology which was characterised by hastiness and carelessness, and their swift ability to divide and instigate problems. Callousness was their temperament and narrow-mindedness was their

speciality. Whenever they would be given a choice between two things, they would always choose the more difficult; whenever they coincidentally encountered two matters, they would choose the more unlikely; and whenever they saw two paths, they treaded the more challenging one.

And because the Khawārij were a breed of unique humans who were difficult, had very limited perception, narrow horizons, and an inability to understand differences, owing to which they would revolt for the most inessential of reasons without pondering over the catalysts and the ramifications thereof, and without deliberation; this induced them to excommunicate the entire Muslim congregation and display hatred and enmity for the denominations that opposed them.

Similarly, one of their principles was that revolting against a tyrannical ruler is an obligation which could not be discarded. Hence, it was binding upon every capable person to revolt even if he was alone, and whether he was confident that his rebellion will produce a positive result or not. Thus, they did not place numbers and ability to change a vice as a requisite to revolt, which is why their history is filled with series of insurrections and incessant wars. In doing so, they were exterminated or they were almost close to extermination.

- One of the outcomes of the Fitnah was the emergence of *Irjā'*. It originated at the boarders of Jihād and the outskirts of the cities where groups of the Muslims were fighting the disbelievers and were conquering cities. These groups did not know anything about how matters were progressing. Hence, when the disheartening news of the Fitnah reached them, agony prevented them from thinking, and the longevity of the distance saved them from the evil of delving into the Fitnah. Thereafter they were surprised by even more events that followed, and, thus, were unable to formulate an opinion and follow it; they could not give preference to one side and support it. Hence, they gave preference to being at peace with

both the combatant groups and inclined toward neutrality. They deferred the matter of all to Allah, for he is the one that will take their reckoning, and thus they were under his will.

They opposed the stance of most of the Khawārij of excommunicating the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم, and the stance of most of the Shī'ah of exceeding bounds regarding 'Alī رضي الله عنه and denigrating 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه, and they also diverged from the stance of the Ahl al-Sunnah.

The extremity of their view which entails deferring the matter of 'Alī and 'Uthmān رضي الله عنهما and doubting their entrance into Jannah is quite clear. For it entails digressing from that which is established in the Sharī'ah texts and is unanimously well-known to the scholars, i.e. the merit of 'Uthmān and 'Alī رضي الله عنهما and the testimony of Jannah for them. And this is from the errors and the deviances of the Murji'ah.

Nonetheless, whether *Irjā'* was an independent position which came about because of the Fitnah or it was a product of the Khārijī ideology and its offshoot, it, due to it being a psychological position, could have existed in this blind Fitnah and whatever followed. Because one of the trends of a society is that any debate between two sects or groups necessarily leads to the emergence of a third group which is impartial for whatever reason. But this neutrality is nothing but a negative stance which is followed by scepticism and doubt regarding the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who were embroiled in the dispute.

- The era after the Fitnah also saw the emergence of the Shī'ah who were distinct in their ideas and unique opinions in the political sphere. The Shī'ah sect is primarily linked to a sentimental matter which is love for the Ahl al-Bayt. This sentiment progressed and, as a result, the ideas which were born because of it started to become firmly grounded and take the form of a distinct school or a sect with unique ideas in the principles of Sharī'ah, rulership, jurisprudence.

It would also be good to point out that the early Shī'ah did not criticise the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم of Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم, revile them and denigrate them. In fact, they would give preference to Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما over 'Alī رضي الله عنه and would give preference to 'Alī رضي الله عنه over 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Subsequent to that the *Mufaḍḍilah* emerged who gave preference to 'Alī رضي الله عنه over even Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما. Thereafter, Shī'ism took on novel and grave extremes, for now it was gripped by extremism, the denouncing of the Khilāfah of Abū Bakr and 'Umar رضي الله عنهما, and reviling the Ṣaḥābah of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم.

It should be noted that several factors contributed to the development of the Shī'ī dogma. The most important of them was the Saba'iyyah. The greatest evidence to prove this is that the beliefs of the Shī'ah are harmonious with some of the ideas and beliefs proposed by 'Abd Allah ibn Saba', like believing in the *Waṣiyyah* (immediate appointment of 'Alī رضي الله عنه, his *Raj'ah* (his return), *Badā'* (otherwise occurring to Allah), the reviling of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم and disassociation from them, and extremism regarding 'Alī رضي الله عنه.

What is also worth noting is that the one belief which is found across all the Shī'ī sects is the belief that 'Alī رضي الله عنه was the best and that he was most deserving of the Khilāfah. According to them, this is not something which is based on common interest and thus is left to the discretion of the general people, but is rather a pillar from the pillars of Dīn. In order to justify this belief, they conjured the *Waṣiyyah*, i.e. the idea that Rasūl Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم emphatically appointed 'Alī رضي الله عنه as his immediate successor after him.

- The emergence of these sects to the political realm had negative outcomes, for it instated the symptoms of division and disunity between the Muslims. And of course, together with that it was a cause of weakness and helplessness. The clash between various sects was intense and directly

impacted upon the hindrance of the progress of the Islamic conquests. The era which followed after the Fitnah stands out as the era of excessive disputes and many wars which were fuelled by movements that did not benefit whatsoever from it themselves. Because they had exhausted their energies and efforts in fighting the Muslims instead of utilising them in striving in the path of Allah.

Furthermore, despite the fact that the year 40 A.H/660 A.D. was considered the year of the congregation; however, the congregation was not completely realised. For there always remained those who opposed verbally or through action the settling of events which transpired in the time after the martyrdom of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and the prevailing circumstances of the Umayyad dynasty. Together with that there were those who overtly displayed agreement but covertly concealed dissension.

- And from the results of the Fitnah was that the Khawārij excommunicated the perpetrators of major sins and averred that they will be doomed to Hell-fire forever. In this they went to very extreme limits. But that is not all, the greatest problem is that the perpetrator of a major sin according to them was not a fornicator, thief, a liar, or other sinners like them from the Ummah; rather ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, al-Zubayr, Ṭalḥah, ‘Ā’ishah, Abū Mūsā al-Ash‘arī, ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه and others like them from the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم were perpetrators thereof. Thus, they averred that ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and those who supported them were not believers, due to them ruling according to that which Allah had not revealed.

The Khawārij also believed that whoever opposed the Qur’ān in practice or in an opinion in which he erred was be a disbeliever. Therefore, they excommunicated the perpetrators of major sins and averred that they will be doomed to Hell-fire for eternity. In this they have opposed what is established in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of Rasūl Allah which state

that the perpetration of a sin does not necessitate eternity in Hell-fire as long as it is not Shirk.

- When the Khawārij adopted a radical position in sounding warnings to the people, the Murji'ah adopted an extreme position in sounding glad tidings and deferring judgement regarding the sinners till the Day of Judgement coupled with consigning their matter to Allah; i.e. if He wants, He will forgive them and if He wants, He will punish them. However, they progressed further than that and broadened the definition of īmān to its furthest extent. Which means that they deemed īmān to be merely associated to the heart and that there are no clauses of fulfilling commandments and refraining from prohibitions that will be binding upon a person. This led them to aver that no vice is detrimental with īmān just as no virtue is beneficial with disbelief. This view of the Murji'ah is indeed condemnable. Because a person who deliberates over this view of the Murji'ah will know that it is against what appears in the Qur'ān, the Sunnah of Nabī ﷺ, and the statements of the Salaf which indicate that action is linked to īmān and that īmān is linked to action, each one of them is inseparable from the other.

From the aforementioned it is clear that the true standard for passing a decision regarding any situation is the standard of the first century and the reality of the pious Salaf before the Ummah got embroiled in bickering in the time which followed after the Fitnah. That standard is that the reality of īmān is a compound reality which comprises of both confession and practice, just as the reality of a human comprises of the body and the soul. This is something agreed upon by the Salaf. It is something that is categorically supported by the Shar'ī texts and is sufficiently substantiated by rational and revelation based evidences. Only an innovator who deviated from the path, ignored the suggestions of the texts of revelation and the evidences of disposition and reason, and reverted to the assumptions of the philosophers, and a person in who the

misconceptions of the theologians were deeply embedded, has opposed and diverged in this matter.

- One of the innovations of the Shī'ah is reviling the Ṣaḥābah and denigrating them. In fact, excommunicating them has become one of the fundamental and essential components of their Dīn. In this belief of theirs they have opposed the absolute texts of the Qur'ān, and the Prophetic Sunnah which declare the purity of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, their integrity, their merit, and their nobility. They have also violated the consensus of those whose consensus counts in the Ummah regarding this matter, who aver that it is from the theological principles of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah.

Another of their innovations is their belief in *Badā'*, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى is completely above what they say. *Badā'* means for such a matter to occur to Allah عَزَّ وَجَلَّ after him having previously been unaware of it that necessitates him changing his decree.

Another of their innovations is their extremist conception of their Imāms whom they accord a rank higher than that of the Ambiyā' عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. They believe that they are infallible, that that they know the deeds of people and their lifespans, and that they have knowledge of the unseen.

And yet another of their innovations is that they adopted the stance of the Jahmiyyah regarding the attributes of Allah, and the stance of the Qadariyyah regarding the actions of men.

All of this is diametrically opposed to the pure belief of Salaf of this Ummah, the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and those who followed them with goodness.

- One of the negative outcomes of *Kalāmī* disputes was that debates between various sects within the realm of what is known as the science of *Kalām* opened a door from the many doors of the *Fitan*.

The theoretical angle was blown out of proportion to the detriment of the practical angle which the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ emphasised upon. They were the ones who understood the spirit of the message and deeply fathomed Islam, owing to which their hearts opened up to practice and were satisfied with constraining themselves from delving into the ambiguous texts, and the verses of the Qur'ān, and the ḥadīth which concern the attributes of Allah. And in doing so, they preserved the pristineness of the faith and its radiance. As opposed to the people of *Kalām* who because of their arguments and Byzantine dialogues, which concerned researching and investigating areas which were beyond the scope of the mind, destroyed the clarity of the faith and the transparency of the ideology. Their efforts did not produce any positive result other than inducing division, disputes, and shattering of the Islamic edifice because of inessential knowledge, which Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ the majority of the Ummah from the Ṣaḥābah, the successors, and the scholars of the Salaf all prohibited.

- One of the outcomes of the Fitnah was getting to know the laws pertaining to the rebels. Hence, on the basis of disparity between the rulings of the abode of disbelief and the abode of Islam, 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was able to institute laws and rulings based on his copious knowledge, and vast jurisprudential prowess, not forgetting that he was the most adept in judicial issues. These are Sharī principles which pertain to fighting the rebels. Subsequent to that the leading scholars of knowledge and jurists followed in his footsteps in dealing with the rebels; they deduced rulings and jurisprudential principles from his conduct in this regard.

Some of the rulings in this regard were the following: a fleeing person should not be killed, a wounded person should not be finished off, a prisoner should not be killed, no chastity and wealth should be violated, and whoever dropped his weapons was safe. This was all because fighting the rebels was merely to repel them and return them to the truth. Hence, only that much was violable which came about due to the necessity of

repelling, and the wealth, women and children, thus, remained upon the default ruling of amnesty.

- Apart from the innovative and deviant sects, which were from the remnants of the Fitnah, the general Muslims and most of the jurists, scholars, and bearers of the Sunnah represented the majority, or the congregation, or the Ahl al-Sunnah, as they came to be known in subsequent times.

The Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah always remain distant from extremism in everything and they give preference to moderation in opinion and in practice. They also strictly hold on to what their predecessors from the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ understood from the verses of the Qur'ān and the ḥadīth of Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

So, when the disputes and battles which transpired between the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ are mentioned their position is to supplicate that Allah be pleased with them and shower His mercy on them and to only make mention of them with goodness and nobleness.

And when the attributes of Allah are mentioned they affirm them and consign their modality to Allah مُبِحَالَةً وَعَالَى in a way that befits his majesty and grandeur. They describe him with that with which he has described himself in the Qur'ān and with which Nabī صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has described him. They do so without distorting these attributes, rendering them useless, assigning modality to them, or assigning similarity.

Similarly, when a ruler is oppressive or transgressive, they do not rebel against him but after a few requisites are met. One such requisite is: assurance regarding the non-occurrence of a Fitnah and the realisation of what is best for the Muslims. Also, most of them do not consider leading an insurrection to be permissible only unless there is explicit disbelief which they are able to substantiate by way of evidence from Allah.

Also, it would be plausible to aver that the specific tendency of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah is that knowledge and practice are more fruitful and beneficial than mere debating and argumentation. And that is why they emphasise that the reality of Shar'ī īmān is confession and practice, and that it increases and decreases; increases with acts of obedience and decreases with sins.

Hence, the ideological and jurisprudential legacy of the Ahl al-Sunnah has till the present day remained an ideal example of moderation in understanding events, weighing matters with the balance of Islam, and staying distant from the deviations of the extremist of the various sects in all contentious issues.

The Stance of the Ahl al-Sunnah

The subject of contention and dispute between the Muslims after the murder of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه can be analysed in two ways:

The first: The blame in that Fitnah in general of course was upon the killers of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه. Because the sin of all the Muslims who were killed at the hands of their brothers will be upon them; they were the people who opened the door of Fitnah, and whatever happened subsequent to that, the sin thereof will be upon them due to them being the direct cause of it. They were the transgressive group because of who every person who was killed in Jamal and Şiffīn got killed. Subsequent to that, the events, opinions, and standpoints that followed opened the door of division and disunity amongst them Muslims.

It is evident that the enemies of Islam who grew despondent from combatting Islam in the battlefield realised that cunningly plotting against this Dīn would prove more effective. Hence, they started orchestrating their plots in secrecy, for they had outwardly expressed Islam and inwardly remained upon their disbelief. It is by way of this disguise and hypocrisy that they gave rise to issues and calamities in the Islamic empire, placed obstacles and barriers in its path, and carried out countless destructive procedures toward it, as is obvious from the events which paved the way to the Fitnah, fuelled its fire, and brought about disunity between the Muslims. The dangers of this plotting lay in the fact that the extent and boundaries of this opposing force were not clear, and in that it was clandestinely included into the ranks of the Muslims, and that it was capable of becoming invisible after any destruction that it caused.

The Qur’ān has warned against the ploys of the hypocrites and their danger upon the Muslim society. It has also alluded to the means and distorted and clandestine ways which they deploy to destroy Islam and put an end to its progress. This is so that the Muslims always remain vigilant regarding them and do not become victims of their deception. Therefore, it is not surprising that the verses pertaining to hypocrisy and the hypocrites cover 340 verses of the Qur’ān.

There is no doubt that the Jews were the first people to tread this heinous path, i.e. the path of igniting hypocrisy and hiding behind it in order to convulse the pillars of Islam. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Saba’ and his cult were the most prominent hypocrites who plotted against Islam. He was the one who orchestrated the instigation of the Fitnah during the Khilāfah of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and he and his cohorts contributed to the Fitnah during the Khilāfah of ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ after the Muslims agreed to reconcile.

The second: Whatever transpired from the side of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ in this Fitnah should be interpreted as stemming from noble intentions, difference of analyses and Ijtihād. Similarly, it should be interpreted as error and rightness occurring therein. But they were nonetheless people of Ijtihād, and due to their sincerity, they will be rewarded in both instances of error or rightness, even though the reward of the right is double that of the one in error. Because every group had a viewpoint which it was defending with noble intentions, because the dispute between them was not due to vying over the worldly things, but it originated from their Ijtihād regarding the implementation of the rulings of Sharīah.

Some of the Salaf were asked regarding the blood that was shed between the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and he said:

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

*That was a nation which has passed on. It will have what it earned and you will have what you earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do.*¹

And when ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak was asked regarding what transpired between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا he said:

فتنة قد عصم الله منها سيوفنا فلنعتصم منها ألسنتنا

1 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 134.

That was a Fitnah from which Allah kept our swords safe, so we should keep are tongues safe.¹

In other words, we should keep them safe from falling into error and passing judgements regarding some of them which might not be incorrect.

And Ibn Fūrak² said:

ومن أصحابنا من قال: إن سبيل ما جرى بين الصحابة من المنازعات كسبيل ما جرى بين إخوة يوسف، ثم إنهم لم يخرجوا بذلك عن حد الولاية والنبوة، فكذاك فيما جرى بين الصحابة

Among our scholars some have suggested that the way of dealing with the disputes which occurred between the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم is like the way of dealing with what transpired between the brothers of Yūsuf عليه السلام. For that had not disqualified the latter from being the friends of Allah and His prophets, likewise can be said regarding what occurred between the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.³

And al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said the following regarding their fighting:

قتال شهده أصحاب محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم وغبنا، وعلّموا وجهلنا، واجتمعوا فاتبعنا، واختلفوا فوقفتنا

This is fighting which the Ṣaḥābah of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم witnessed and we did not. They knew and we did not. When they were united, we followed, and when they disputed, we suspended judgement.

1 Al-Qurṭubī: *al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'an*, 16/322.

2 Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Fūrak al-Anṣārī al-Aṣḥāhānī al-Shāfi'ī, Abū Bakr. From the scholars of Tafsīr, Ḥadīth, and the principles of Sharī'ah. He was from the jurists of the Shāfi'ī School. He has written many books, some being: *Gharīb al-Qur'an*, *Ḥall al-Āyāt al-Mutashābihāt*, *Mushkil al-Ḥadīth wa Gharībuh*, *al-Imlā' fi al-Īdāh wa al-Kashf 'an Wujūh al-Aḥādīth al-Wāridah*, *Risālah fi 'ilm al-Tawḥīd*. He passed away in 406 A.H/1015 A.D. See: al-Subkī: *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah*, 3/52; Ibn Taghrī Bardī: *al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 4/240; Ibn Khallikān: *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, 4/272.

3 Al-Qurṭubī: *al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'an*, 16/322.

And al-Muḥāsibī¹ said:

فنحن نقول كما قال الحسن البصري، ونعلم أن القوم كان أعلم بما دخلوا فيه منا، وتبع ما اجتمعوا عليه، ونقف عند ما اختلفوا فيه، ولا نبتدع رأياً منا، ونعلم أنهم اجتهدوا وأرادوا الله عز وجل، إذ كانوا غير متهمين في الدين.

So, we say what al-Hasan al-Baṣrī said. And we know that they knew better what they got involved in. Hence, we follow that which they united upon and stop at what they disputed in. We do not invent an opinion from our side, and we know that they practiced Ijtihād and intended the pleasure of Allah ﷻ, for they were not people who can be suspected in their Dīn.²

And it has occurred in a Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth:

لا تقوم الساعة حتى تقتتل فئتان عظيمتان تكون بينهما مقتلة عظيمة دعوتهما واحدة

The last hour will not come until two great groups fight. There will be a great battle between them, and their claims will be one.³

Commenting upon this Ibn Ḥajar say:

والمراد بالفتنتين فئة علي ومن معه، وفئة معاوية ومن معه، والمراد بالدعوة الإسلام على الرجح، وقيل المراد اعتقاد كل منهما أنه على الحق.

By the ‘two groups’ the group of ‘Alī and those who were with him and the group of Mu‘āwiyah and those who were with him are meant. And by

1 Al-Ḥārith ibn Asad al-Muḥāsibī al-Baghdādī, Abū ‘Abd Allah, the ascetic and the admonisher. He was from the senior Sufis. He would say, “The best of this Ummah are those whom their afterlife does not keep busy from their worldly life, and their worldly life does not keep busy from their afterlife.” He has written: *Ādāb al-Nufūs, al-Ri‘āyah li Ḥuqūq Allāh ‘Azz wa Jall, Mu‘ātabah al-Nafs, al-Masā’il fi A‘māl al-Qulūb wa al-Jawāriḥ*. He passed away in 243 A.H/857 A.D. See: al-Khaṭīb: *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 8/211; Abū Nu‘aym: *al-Ḥilyah*, 10/73; Ibn al-Jawzī: *Ṣifah al-Ṣafwah*, 2/207.

2 Al-Qurtubī: *al-Jāmi‘ li Ahkām al-Qur‘ān*, 16/322.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 8/101, chapter of Fitān.

‘claim’ Islam is meant according to the preferred opinion. And it is also suggested that the belief of each of them that it is upon the truth is meant.¹

And al-Bukhārī has narrated the following in his *Tārīkh* from Umm ‘Umārah, the caretaker of ‘Ammār رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ:

اشتكى عمار، قال: لا أموت في مرضي، حدثني حبيبي رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أني لا أموت إلا قتلا بين فئتين مؤمتين

‘Ammār رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ fell ill. He said, “I will not pass away in my sickness, for my beloved Rasūl Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ told me that I will not die but after being killed in a feud between two believing groups.”²

And Ibn al-‘Arabī has said what will follow in the exegesis of the verse:

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّى تَقِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ. إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ. وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

*And if two factions amongst the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them opposes the other, then fight against the one that opposes until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy.*³

فلم يخرجهم عن الإيمان بالبغي والتأويل ولا سلب عنهم اسم الأخوة بقوله بعده: . إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ فهذه كلها أمور جرت على رسم النزاع، ولم تخرج عن طريق من طرق الفقه، ولا

1 Ibn Hajar: *al-Fath*, 12/303.

2 Al-Bukhārī: *al-Tārīkh al-ṣaghīr*, 1/80.

3 Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 9, 10.

عدت سبيل الاجتهاد الذي يؤجر فيه المصيب عشرة والمخطئ أجرا واحدا، وما وقع من روايات في كتب التاريخ-عدا ما ذكرنا- فلا تلتفتوا إلى حرف منها فإنها كلها باطلة.

Allah did not remove them from *īmān* because of rebellion or exercising *Ijtihād*, nor did he take away from them the title of brotherhood, for he says thereafter, “*The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers.*” So, all these matters transpired as per the norms of argumentation. They did not exit a valid method from the many method of jurisprudence, nor did they exceed the path of *Ijtihād* wherein a correct individual gets ten rewards and erring individual gets one reward. Whatever else has featured in the books of history, other than what we have cited, do not pay attention to even a letter of it, for it is all false.¹

And al-Nawawī says:

اعلم أن الدماء التي جرت بين الصحابة رضي الله عنهم ليست بداخلة في هذا الوعيد -يعني قول النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: إذا التقى المسلمان بسيفيهما فالقاتل والمقتول في النار. ومذهب أهل السنة والحق إحسان الظن بهم، والإمساك عما شجر بينهم، وتأويل قتالهم، وأنهم مجتهدون متأولون لم يقصدوا معصية، ولا محض الدنيا، بل اعتقد كل فريق أنه المحق، ومخالفه يآثم، فوجب عليه قتاله ليرجع إلى الله، وكان بعضهم مصيباً وبعضهم مخطئاً معذوراً في الخطأ، لأنه اجتهاد، والمجتهد إذا أخطأ لا إثم عليه

Know that the blood which was shed between the *Ṣaḥābah* رضي الله عنهم is not included in this warning (i.e. in the *ḥadīth* of Nabī صلى الله عليه وسلم: “When two Muslims meet with their swords than the killer and the killed will be in Hell-fire.” The stance of the Ahl al-Sunnah and the people of truth is to entertain good assumptions regarding them, withdraw from discussing what transpired between them, and to interpret their fighting saying that they had exercised *Ijtihād* and did not intend vice nor the worldly things. Each party thought that it was correct and that its opposition was incorrect and sinful, and thus it was necessary for it to fight it till it returned to Allah. Some of them were correct and others among them had erred but are excused in that erring. Because it is *Ijtihād*, and when a person who exercises *Ijtihād* errs there is no sin upon him.²

1 Ibn al-‘Arabī: *al-‘Awāšim*, p. 169-171.

2 *Sharḥ al-Nawawī ‘alā Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 18/11.

Ibn Taymiyyah as well presents the stance of the Ahl al-Sunnah in this issue, deeming very unlikely the views of the innovators like the Khawārij, the Shī'ah, and the Mu'tazilah who all have considered fighting to necessitate either *Kufr* (disbelief) or *Fisq* (sinning). He, thus, states that the Ahl al-Ḥadīth concur upon the upstanding nature of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and thereafter say:

وأهل السنة والجماعة وأئمة الدين لا يعتقدون عصمة أحد من الصحابة، بل يمكن أن يقع الذنب منهم، والله يغفر لهم بالتوبة ويرفع بها درجاتهم و **وَالَّذِي جَاءَ بِالصُّدُقِ وَصَدَّقَ بِهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ أُمَّتُونَ لَهُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ذَلِكَ جِزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ لِيَكْفُرَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ أَسْوَأَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا وَيَجْزِيَهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ الَّذِي كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ**. إن الأنبياء معصومون فقط، أما فأما الصديقون والشهداء والصالحون فليسوا بمعصومين وهذا في الذنوب المحققة وأما ما اجتهدوا فيه فتارة يصيبون وتارة يخطئون فإذا اجتهدوا وأصابوا فلهم أجران وإذا اجتهدوا وأخطأوا فلهم أجر واحد على اجتهداهم، وجمهور أهل العلم يفرقون بين الخوارج المارقين وبين أصحاب الجمل والصفين ممن يعد من البغاة المتأولين، وهذا مأثور عن الصحابة وعامة أهل الحديث والفقهاء والأئمة.

The Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah and the scholars of Dīn do not believe in the infallibility of any of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, rather it is possible for a sin to occur from them. But Allah will forgive them by virtue of their repentance and will raise their stages. *'And the one that brought the truth (i.e. the prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and they who believed in it, they are the righteous. They will have whatever they desire with their lord. That is the reward of the doers of good. That Allah may remove from them the worst of what they did, and reward them they due for the best of what used to do.'*¹ Only the Ambiyā' عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَام are infallible. As for the Ṣiddīqīn (those who resemble the Ambiyā' most), the martyrs, and the pious, they are not infallible. This is pertaining to established sins. As for their Ijtihād, at times they will be correct and at times they will err. So, when they exercise Ijtihād and reach the correct conclusion, for them will be double reward, and if they err, for them will be a single reward for their Ijtihād. Then, most scholars differentiate between the Khawārij whose tendency was to quickly exit the Dīn and the people of Jamal and Ṣiffīn who were rebels who exercised Ijtihād. This is reported from the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ, and majority of the scholars of Ḥadīth, the jurists, and the Imāms.²

1 Sūrah al-Zumar: 33, 34.

2 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*, 35/50, 54, 56, 69.

So, Ibn Taymiyyah has deemed this to be mere rebelling whose people will not be excommunicated according to the consensus of the scholars of Dīn. Because the Qur’ān has emphatically announced their īmān and their brotherhood despite the presence of fighting and rebellion in them. Also, mere rebelling, oppression, and transgression do not render ordinary people out of the fold of īmān and do not necessitate cursing them, so how would they render the people of the best generations out of the fold.¹

In another place he says:

فمن جزم في واحد من الصحابة بأن له ذنبا يدخل به النار قطعاً فهو كاذب مفتر، فإنه لو قال ما لا علم له به لكان مبطلاً، فكيف إذا قال ما دلت الدلائل الكثيرة على نقيضه، فمن تكلم فيما شجر بينهم، وقد نهى الله عنه من ذمهم أو التعصب لبعضهم بباطل، فهو ظالم معتد

So, whoever assertively says regarding any Ṣaḥābī that he has done a sin because of which he will definitely enter Hell-fire, he is a liar and a slanderer. Because if he had to say something about which he had no knowledge it would be untenable, so what then would be the case if he says something the opposite of which is supported by substantive evidence?² Hence, whoever discusses what occurred between them, whereas Allah ﷻ has prohibited him from reviling them or unrightfully and fanatically supporting one of them, then he is a sinful transgressor.³

And al-Dhahabī says:

فبالله كيف يكون حال من نشأ في إقليم لا يكاد يشاهد فيه إلا غالباً في الحب مفرطاً في البغض؟! ومن أين يقع له الإنصاف والاعتدال؟! فنحمد الله على العافية، الذي أوجدنا في زمان قد انمحص فيه الحق،

1 Ibid. 35/74-75.

2 It is narrated in a Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth from Jābir رضي الله عنه that a slave of Ḥāṭib ibn Abī Balta’ah رضي الله عنه came to Rasūl Allah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم and said, “O Rasūl Allah! Ḥāṭib is surely going to enter the fire.” Rasūl Allah صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم said, “You have lied. He will not enter it, for he participated in Badr and Ḥudaybiyyah.” See: *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* with the commentary of al-Nawawī, 16/57, chapter regarding the merits of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم.

3 Ibn Taymiyyah: *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā*, 4/432.

واتضح من الطرفين، وعرفنا مآخذ كل واحدة من الطائفتين، وتبصرنا فعذرنا واستغفرنا، وأحببنا باقتصاد، وترحمنا على البغاة بتأويل سائغ في الجملة، أو بخطأ إن شاء الله مغفور، وقلنا كما علمنا الله: وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ. وترضينا أيضاً عمن اعتزل الفريقين: ك سعد بن أبي وقاص، وابن عمر، ومحمد بن مسلمة، وسعيد بن زيد وخلق، وتبرأنا من الخوارج المارقين، الذين حاربوا علينا، وكفروا الفريقين

For the sake of Allah, what would the situation of a person who grew up in a region where he probably only witnessed a fanatic lover and an extremist hater be? How will he ever have justice and balance? So, we praise Allah for his wellbeing, for he has created us in a time wherein the truth has become pure and clear from both sides, and we have come to learn the evidences of each one of the two groups. We analysed and thereafter excused and sought forgiveness, we loved with moderation, and sought mercy for those who rebelled based on a justifiable rationale, or on the basis of an error which if Allah wills is forgiven. And we said as Allah has taught us: ‘And those who came after them, saying, “Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and put not in our hearts resentment toward those who have believed. Our Lord, indeed you are the kind and merciful.”¹ We also sought the pleasure of Allah for those who stayed away from both groups, like Sa’d ibn Abī Waqqās, Ibn ‘Umar, Muḥammad ibn Maslamah, Sa’īd ibn Zayd, and many others, and we disassociated from the Khawārij who fought ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and excommunicated both the groups.²

And Ibn Ḥajar says:

واتفق أهل السنة على وجوب منع الطعن على أحد من الصحابة بسبب ما وقع لهم من ذلك ولو عرف المحق منهم لأنهم لم يقاتلوا في تلك الحروب إلا عن اجتهاد وقد عفا الله – تعالى – عن المخطئ في الاجتهاد بل ثبت أنه يؤجر أجراً واحداً وأن المصيب يؤجر أجرين

The Ahl al-Sunnah concur upon it being obligatory to refrain from criticising any of the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم because of what occurred from them of

1 Sūrah al-Ḥashr: 10.

2 Al-Dhahabī: *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, 3/128.

that sort, even if the one who was correct amongst them is known. Because they did not fight in those battles but on the basis of Ijtihād, and Allah ﷻ has forgiven the one who errs in his Ijtihād. In fact, it is established that he will be rewarded with one reward and that the one who is correct will be rewarded with a double reward.¹

Furthermore, the Ahl al-Sunnah have interpreted the warning mentioned in this ḥadīth: ‘When two Muslims face one another with their swords, then both of them will be from the people of Hell-fire’ to refer to the individual who fights without an acceptable reason and fights only to seek kingdom or the worldly treasures. For al-Bazzār has narrated an addition to the narration: ‘Then the killer and the killed will be in Hell-fire’ which clarifies this. That addition is: ‘When you will fight over the worldly things, then the killer and the killed will be in Hell-fire’. This is also supported by what Muslim has narrated with the wording, “The world will not perish until there comes upon the people a time wherein the killer will not know why he killed and the killed will not know why he was being killed.” It was asked, “How will that happen?” He replied, “Confusion will become predominant. The killer and the killed will be in Hell-fire.”²

Nonetheless, it only befits us in this matter to hold on to the verse:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

*Our Lord, forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith and put not in our hearts resentment toward those who have believed. Our Lord, indeed you are the kind and merciful.*³

In conclusion, I would like to say that writing the history of the Rightly Guided Khulafā’ ﷺ specifically, and the history of the Ṣaḥābah ﷺ in general,

1 Ibn Ḥajar: *al-Fath*, 13/34.

2 Ibid. 13/34.

3 Sūrah al-Ḥashr: 10.

according to the Islamic perspective, is a necessity which is binding upon the Muslim Ummah; it is not something optional which is dispensable. This is because the era of the Khulafā' surely is the golden era from the eras of the Islamic history which extends over 14 centuries.

Therefore, it is important to meticulously study it in the correct way so that it produces its desired results and actualises for the Ummah its much desired aspiration. For from it lessons can be drawn and from its exemplars and role models guidance can be sought.

Having said that, I hope that I was successful in eliminating confusion from many of the historical events which occurred in this time which is dear to the heart of every Muslim. Hopefully, through it much of what has been forcibly shoved in to history at the hands of personalities driven by sinister motives will become exposed. For history, and specifically Islamic history has remained one of the primary targets of the Orientalists who have paid much attention to it.

I consider it my obligation to announce my gratitude to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى who gave me the ability to bring many realities to the fore and to eliminate many misconceptions from personalities whose ranks those misconceptions could have sabotaged from the hearts of those who read and study history without thorough research and analyses.

Also, it does not behove me, after Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى having given me the ability to complete this study, but to turn to Him by thanking Him for the favours He has blessed me with. All praise and thanks are for Him all the time.

I do not claim infallibility for myself from erring, nor do I claim uncompromised perfection as well. Because Al-'Imād al-Aṣfahānī says, "I have observed that no person will write a book today, but that the next day he will say: if he changed this it will be nice, and if this is added it will seem better, and if this is brought forward it will be better, and if this is left it will be more pleasant. This is from the greatest of lessons, for it is a sign that deficiency prevails over most of humanity."

So Pure is the One who exclusively enjoys perfection, and is beyond all deficiency and forgetting.

Also, I hope that I have to the possible extent fulfilled the right of this study and that I have managed to shed light on new aspects. If I have done good, then it is from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and if I have done bad, then it is from me and from Shayṭān and I seek the forgiveness of Allah.

In the end I ask Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى with His beautiful names and His lofted attributes to make this action of mine good, sincerely for His pleasure, in accordance with the truth, a source of benefit for the Muslims, and a deed by way of which He increases my good deeds on the Day of Reckoning.

O Allah do not punish a tongue that informs about You, an eye that looks into sciences that lead to You, a foot that walks to serve You, and a hand that writes about Your path. I beseech you with your might and grandeur, please do not enter me in to Hell-fire, and enter me into Jannah with the pious. *Āmīn*.

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم.