

The Second Caliph of
ISLAM



The Golden Series of
**THE PROPHET'S
COMPANIONS**

'UMAR

Bin Al-Khattab رضي الله عنه

ABDUL BASIT AHMAD



DARUSSALAM
YOUR AUTHENTIC SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE



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THE PROPHET'S COMPANIONS



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The Golden Series of
THE PROPHET'S COMPANIONS

The Second Caliph of Islam

'UMAR

Bin Al-Khattab رضي الله عنه



Abdul Basit Ahmad

Edited by

Abu Taymiyyah Shafiq Siddiq



DARUSSALAM

YOUR AUTHENTIC SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

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*In the Name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*

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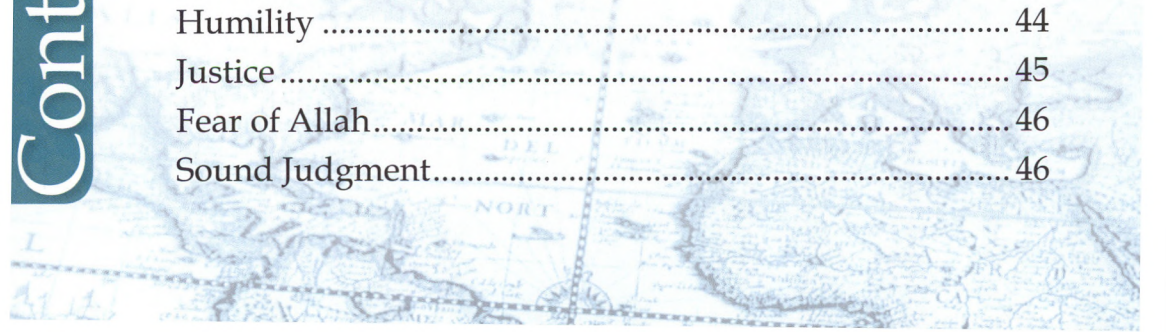
مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ
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يَنْظُرُ وَمَا بَدَّلُوا تَبْدِيلًا

“Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah [i.e. they have gone out for Jihâd (holy fighting), and showed not their backs to the disbelievers]; of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e. have been martyred); and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed [i.e. They never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allah] in the least.” (33:23)



Contents

Publisher's Note.....	7
Foreword	9
Introduction - The Prophet's Companions.....	11
Background	14
Intentions to Kill the Prophet ﷺ	16
Signs of Change.....	17
Meeting the Prophet ﷺ.....	18
'Umar ؓ Declares His Conversion to Islam Publicly	19
Oppression & Tyranny	19
Attempts to Seek Protection	20
'Umar Emigrates to Al-Madinah	21
Attempts to Recover the Stolen Property	22
The Battle of Badr.....	23
Other Challenges against Islam	25
The Treaty	26
Conquest of Makkah.....	27
The Prophet Passes Away	28
The Selection of the Caliph.....	29
Achievements of 'Umar ؓ during His Rule.....	30
Care for the Nation	34
Honorable Treatment of Conquered People.....	34
Conquests in Iraq and Iran	35
Conquests in Syria and Palestine.....	41
Conquest of Egypt.....	44
Humility	44
Justice	45
Fear of Allah.....	46
Sound Judgment.....	46





Publisher's Note

All praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists. May Allâh's peace and blessings be upon His final Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad, his family and his Companions.

Darussalam is pleased to present this valuable series, 'The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions', to the Muslim youth. The purpose of these books is to enlighten our youth about the lives of the greatest heroes of Islâm, the Prophet's Companions. Also, we wish to increase the enthusiasm of the Muslim youth for following and adhering to their religion. In this way, these books achieve two very important tasks: educating our youth and encouraging them to be good Muslims.

This book titled, 'Umar bin Al-Khattâb ﷺ - The Second Caliph of Islam' is the life story of one of the closest Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. 'Umar ﷺ was a bitter enemy of Islâm but when he submitted to it, the Muslims felt strong enough to stand in the face of oppression. His life was a true dedication to the support of Islâm and the

Prophet ﷺ. When he emigrated to Al-Madinah in daylight, he challenged the chiefs of the Quraysh to stop him but not a single one of them dared to stand in his way.

We hope that these books are beneficial to our Muslim youth, as they are the future of Islâm. We, at Darussalam realize the importance of good Islamic literature for Muslim youth, especially in the West where non-Islamic influences are very strong. For this reason, we feel that the availability of this series will be a valuable aid in instilling a genuine love for Islâm in our youth. We would like to thank the author, Mr. Abdul Bâsit Ahmad, as well as the editors, Mr. Aqeel Walker and Mr. Muhammad 'Ayûb Sapra for their diligent work in preparing this series. As Allâh says:

"Is there any reward for good other than good?"

(Ar-Rahmân, 60)

And our final invocation is that all praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists.

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager
October 2012
Dhul Hijjah 1433



Foreword

Human beings tend to be unjust in their dealings with each other, especially when there is no divine guidance that directs them to be just to each other. To act justly with others under all conditions, one must be endowed with the great blessings of self-denial and humility. Injustice becomes quite clear when it comes from a ruler, because abuse of power usually prevails in his dealings with his subjects unless he is guided by divine teachings.

Over history, few rulers have been rightfully called 'just'. The most distinguished among those rulers is our hero, 'Umar bin Al-Khattâb ﷺ, the second Caliph of Islâm.

'Umar ﷺ embodied many examples of justice known before and after him and he saw much of that from the Prophet (pbuh), for he was the one who taught him how to be just towards others. He acted justly with all his

subjects, whether they were Muslims or non-Muslims. Not only this, but he also kept close watch over the rulers whom he appointed in various parts of the Islamic State to ensure that they treated people with justice.

“In addition, ‘Umar ﷺ was so firm in his practice of Islâm that he usually could sense what was right or wrong before the Prophet ﷺ had informed others of it. The Prophet ﷺ said about him:

“Among the Children of Israel who lived before you, there were men who used to be inspired with guidance though they were not Prophets, and if there were any such person amongst my followers, it would be ‘Umar.”

To the story of this great man and ruler let us give an ear and from his honorable life let us learn a lesson.

Abdul Basit Ahmad



Introduction

The Prophet's Companions

“The Golden Series of the Prophet’s Companions” was meant to instill the values and morals that the early Muslims adopted in their lives in the hearts of our youngsters in order that they may find their way through our present materialistic world.

The Prophet’s Companion is defined as a person who believed in the Prophet ﷺ and came in contact with him. The Prophet ﷺ told us about the future generations of believers and called them his “brothers”.



The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ exclaimed:
"Are not we your brothers?"

The Prophet ﷺ told them:
"You are my Companions. My brothers are those who would believe in me although they did not see me."

Seniority of the Prophet's Companions depended on their initiative to accept Islâm, emigration to Al-Madinah and participation in the Battle of Badr. Allâh confirmed this classification by placing the early Muslims of emigrants and supporters at the head of the list of believers.

The Prophet ﷺ said:
"The best people are those who live at my time (meaning his Companions), followed by those who come after them and the ones who come after the latter."

Therefore, we hold all of the Prophet's Companions to be good and we do not prefer some hate others.

Some of the Prophet's Companions were foretold by the Prophet ﷺ that they would dwell in Paradise in the Hereafter. Also, the four rightly guided Caliphs of Islâm are placed first on the list of the Companions of the



Prophet ﷺ as they combined many characteristics that no other Companions had.

Some people of our time ignorantly criticize the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet said:

“Do not say anything bad about my Companions.”

Therefore, we should respect all the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ). We should also believe that they were the best men created by Allâh after the Prophets. They led a life of piety and devotion and followed the steps of the Prophet ﷺ. They were the living models of the teachings of the Qur’ân. They lived during the period that the Qur’ân was being revealed to the Prophet ﷺ and applied it in letter and spirit in their lives till they returned to Allâh. They sacrificed all their resources to support the Word of Allâh. Whenever you read about them, you discover something new about their dedication and truthfulness.

These were the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ to whom we are greatly indebted, for had it not been for their sacrifices and devotion, we would not be Muslims today.

Background

'Umar bin Al-Khattâb belonged to a clan of high rank amongst the Quraysh tribe. He was born forty years before the emigration of Muslims to Al-Madinah in a house of dignity and honour. His father, Al-Khattâb, was the chief of the Bani Makhzûm clan.

When 'Umar was a boy, his father treated him very harshly. He usually spent most of his time in the desert grazing camels for his father. However, when he became a young man, he began learning how to be a good merchant. He was also trained in wrestling and horsemanship until he became an example of strength and skill in both arts.

At that time, Arabs were mostly illiterate. A few people

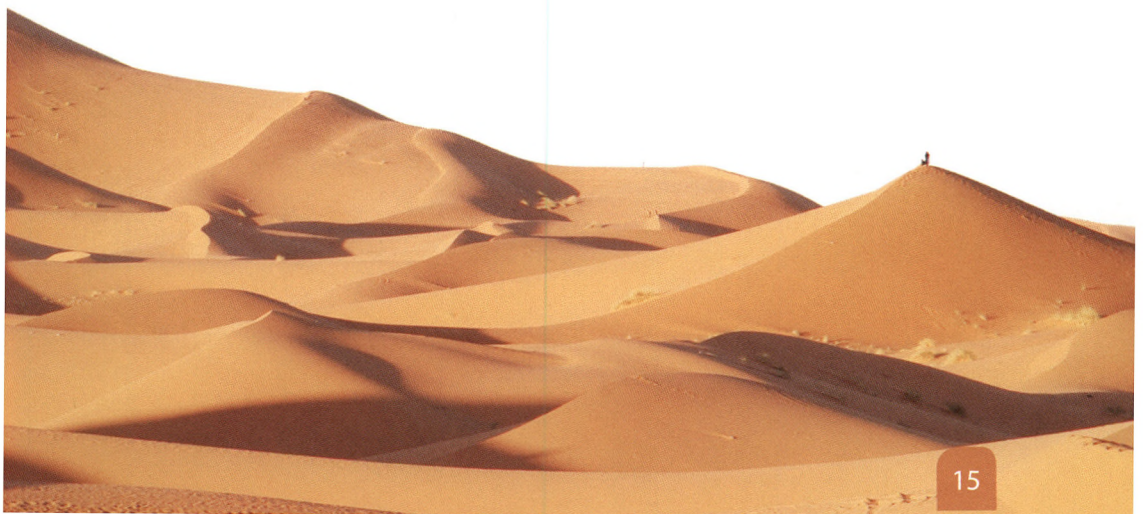


knew how to read and write Arabic. 'Umar began learning how to read and write in Arabic, which he mastered within a short period.

While still young, 'Umar traveled to many countries as a merchant and met many prominent people in both Syria and Irâq. He also acquired good knowledge of the affairs of the Roman and Persian Empires which were governing the world at that time.

'Umar was a well-known personality all over the Arabian Peninsula. He was also feared by other chiefs because of his strength and position amongst the Quraysh tribe.

When Muhammad ﷺ proclaimed the message of Islâm, 'Umar took the side of the opposition. He was very hard on the few early Muslims. He used to beat his housemaid harshly because she accepted Islâm. He did his best to make her and the other new Muslims abandon their faith. His relatives who accepted Islâm kept their conversion to Islâm secret for fear that he might torture them.



Intentions

to kill the Prophet ﷺ

'Umar knew how steadfast Muslims were to their faith. He used all means to make them go back to the worship of idols, but his efforts were all in vain. Therefore, he decided to kill the Prophet ﷺ himself in order to put an end to the message of Islâm.

In a moment of rage, 'Umar took his sword and headed to the place where the Prophet ﷺ was teaching his followers the principles of Islâm. On the way there, he met one of his tribesmen named Na'eem bin 'Abdullâh , who had already accepted Islâm but kept it secret. Na'eem saw the signs of anger on 'Umar's face. He asked him where he was going. 'Umar angrily replied that he was going to kill Muhammad because he abused the idols of Arabs. Na'eem wanted 'Umar to change his direction. Therefore, he told him that it was better for him to settle his case with his sister and her husband before killing Muhammad ﷺ.

'Umar was astonished to learn that his sister, Fâtimah, and her husband, Sa'eed, had accepted Islâm. He changed his way and hurried to his sister's house. Upon arriving there, he stood at the door listening. To his surprise, he heard his sister, her husband and a third person reading the Qur'ân. He knocked at the door and waited for

someone to open it. His sister immediately hid the papers they were reading and asked Khabbâb bin Al-Aratt رضي الله عنه, the teacher, to hide. She opened the door and came face to face with 'Umar. He immediately asked her what they were reading. She denied reading anything. He slapped her on the face. Her nose began bleeding. Her husband tried to interfere but 'Umar pushed him back harshly. Fâtimah decided that it was better to tell him the truth. She strongly said that she and her husband had accepted Islâm and that they would not change their faith even if he killed them.

Signs of Change

'Umar looked at his sister's face with her bleeding nose. His anger vanished and he felt sorry for what he had done. He calmly asked her to show him what they were reading. She gave him the papers and 'Umar began reading the Verses of the Qur'ân:

"Tâ-Hâ. We have not sent down the Qur'ân to you (O Muhammad) to cause distress. But only as a Reminder to those who fear (Allâh). A revelation from Him (Allâh) Who created the earth and the high heavens." (Tâ-Hâ: 1-4)

'Umar's face began changing and his heart softened. He felt a serenity that he had never felt before. Tears began rolling down his

cheeks as a result of the impact of the nice words he was reading. He immediately asked his sister's husband to take him to the Prophet ﷺ. Upon hearing these words, Khabbâb bin Al-Aratt ﷺ left his hiding place and told 'Umar that he had heard the Prophet ﷺ praying to Allâh to guide 'Umar to the way of Islâm. He told 'Umar that the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions were in the house of Al-Arqam.

Meeting

the Prophet ﷺ

'Umar apologized for his rudeness towards his sister and her husband and left to the place where the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions gathered. He knocked at the door and waited for someone to open. A Companion of the Prophet ﷺ peeped through the cracks of the door and saw 'Umar with a sword at his side standing at the door. He told the Prophet ﷺ that it was 'Umar. The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ felt afraid because they knew how hard 'Umar was on Muslims. The Prophet asked the man to open the door. As 'Umar went in, the Prophet threatened him that Allâh would punish him for his cruelty towards Muslims. He then asked him about the reason for coming to him. 'Umar immediately said that he came to embrace Islâm. Muslims inside the room were very happy to hear these words from 'Umar.

'Umar ؓ Declares His Conversion to **Islam** Publicly

Immediately after embracing Islâm, 'Umar ؓ went to the Ka'bah and announced before the chiefs of the Quraysh that he had believed in Islâm and the Prophet ﷺ and that he would challenge them till the end of his life. A fight ensued and the pagans attacked 'Umar ؓ, but he bravely fought them all until an elderly man came and convinced the people to leave 'Umar ؓ alone. From that day on, Muslims felt strong and began worshipping Allâh openly. Historians confirmed that 'Umar ؓ embraced Islâm six years after the Prophet ﷺ was commissioned to proclaim the message of Islâm. 'Abdullâh bin Mas'ûd ؓ said:

"After 'Umar accepted Islâm we gained power and respect."

Oppression & Tyranny

Muslims received all types of persecution at the hands of the chiefs of the Quraysh. Many of them migrated to Abyssinia to escape the torture that the Quraysh inflicted on them. 'Umar ؓ and his fellow Muslims were striving to keep steadfast to their faith. Weak people and slaves who believed in the message of Islâm were not able to withstand the oppression of the Quraysh.

Attempts to Seek Protection

The Prophet ﷺ felt that there was no way out of such oppression except to emigrate to another land. He began calling tribes outside of Makkah to accept Islâm and provide protection to him and his Companions. However, the chiefs of the Quraysh were following his steps and defaming him before the visitors of Makkah.

The Prophet ﷺ decided to visit Tâ'if, a city near Makkah, to seek protection, but the chiefs of the Thaqif tribe treated him very badly and rejected his call.

A group of people from a city called Yathrib (later known as Al-Madinah) visited Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ called them to accept Islâm and provide protection for Muslims. The group of people accepted the call and promised to come the next year with their chiefs to make an agreement with the Prophet ﷺ.

Islâm spread quickly in Al-Madinah. Seventy men and few women visited Makkah that year to hold a pledge of loyalty with the Prophet ﷺ. They promised to provide all means possible to protect the Prophet and his followers in their city. It should be noted that emigration was an act ordained by Allâh through the Prophet ﷺ and not only an act to have protection against persecution and oppression of the Quraysh.



'Umar Emigrates to Al-Madinah

'Umar and twenty people of his clan emigrated to Al-Madinah in daylight. He challenged the chiefs of the Quraysh to stop him but none of them dared to stand in his way.

Upon arriving in Al-Madinah, 'Umar settled at a place called Quba' near Al-Madinah. He and his fellow Muslims received warm welcome in Al-Madinah. The Prophet and his close Companion Abu Bakr followed them after a short time. The first

thing the Prophet did after settling in Al-Madinah was strengthening the ties of Islamic brotherhood between the emigrants (from Makkah) and supporters (inhabitants of Al-Madinah). 'Umar



A historical picture of Al-Madinah

was made the brother in Islam of 'Utban bin Malik, the chief of the Bani Saleem clan. 'Umar joined his brothers in Islâm in establishing firm foundations for the new state. He also joined hands with the other Muslims in building the first mosque of Islâm. The Prophet discussed with his Companions a way to call the Muslims to prayer. Some of them suggested ringing a bell at times of prayer, some suggested blowing a horn and others proposed to raise a flag. The Prophet did not support any of these suggestions.

He wanted to have something special for Muslims.

'Umar ﷺ was very concerned about finding a way to call to prayer. That very night he had a dream. A man holding a bell came to him. 'Umar ﷺ asked him to give him the bell to use it to call Muslims to prayer. However, the man told him that he had something better than the bell. He told him that it was better to call to prayer by using the Adhân. The next morning, 'Umar ﷺ hurried to the Prophet ﷺ to tell him about the dream he had. Surprisingly, another man had the same dream. He told the Prophet ﷺ about his dream before 'Umar ﷺ did. The Prophet ﷺ welcomed the idea and asked Bilal ﷺ to climb on top of the roof of the mosque to call Muslims to prayer.

Attempts to Recover the Stolen Property

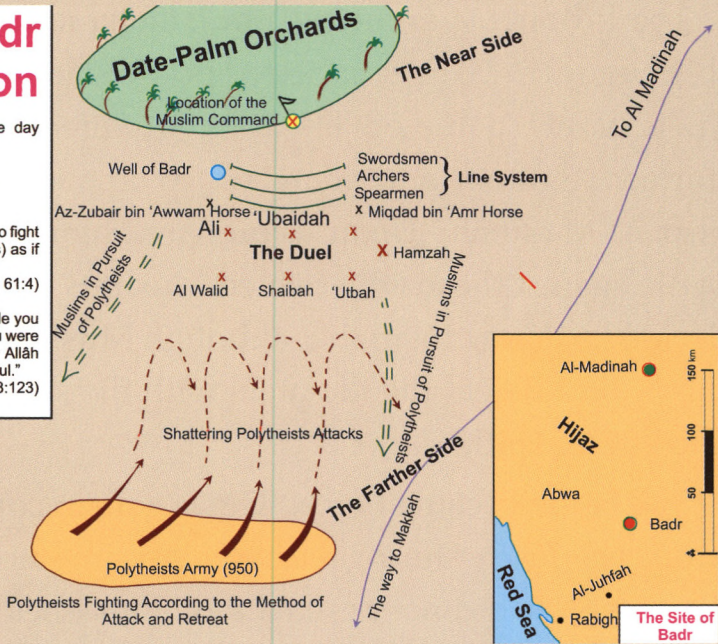
When 'Umar ﷺ and his fellow Muslims emigrated to Al-Madinah, they left behind all their property in Makkah, which the pagans took. Muslims wanted to recover their property. A caravan led by Abu Sufyân was heading to Makkah back from Damascus loaded with all types of goods. The Prophet ﷺ instructed his Companions to capture the caravan. However, Abu Sufyân became aware of the plan and changed his way. At the same time, he sent a man to the Quraysh to warn them.

Great Badr Expedition

(The Day of Criterion, the day when the two forces met.)
17 Ramadan 2 A.H.
13 March 624 A.D.

"Verily, Allāh loves those who fight in His Cause in rows (ranks) as if they were a solid structure."
(Qur'an 61:4)

"And Allāh has already made you victorious at Badr, when you were a weak little force. So fear Allāh much that you may be grateful."
(Qur'an 3:123)



The Battle of Badr

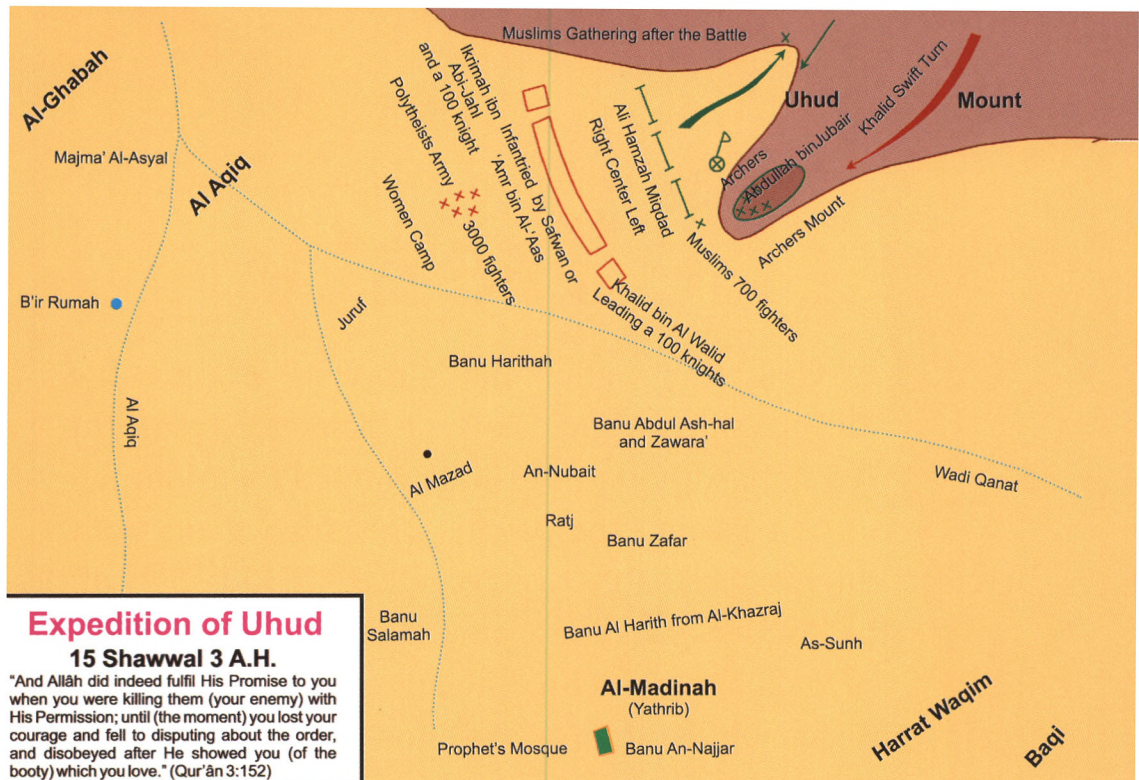
The pagans gathered an army of about one thousand fighters and headed to Al-Madinah to save their caravan and to put an end to the threats of Muslims. Although they were informed that the caravan had escaped the catch of Muslims, they insisted on fighting Muslims and destroying their new state.

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions received news of this huge army. They discussed how to face the challenge. They barely gathered an army of three hundred and thirteen fighters and marched to a place called Badr near Al-Madinah. 'Umar ﷺ prepared himself for the first battle against those who treated Muslims with cruelty. He decided to show them that although Muslims were weak, they could defeat the idolaters with the support of Allâh and strong Faith.

The battle became fierce. 'Umar's main concern was to protect his Faith. During the battle, he came face to face with his uncle. He did not hesitate to kill his uncle because the latter came with the intention to destroy Islâm. Although the number of the Muslim army was small compared to the number of their enemy, they defeated them. Seventy soldiers of the pagans were killed in the battle and Muslims took another seventy soldiers as prisoners of war.

Revelation Supports 'Umar's Point of View

Upon returning to Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ discussed with his Companions the issue of the prisoners of war. Abu Bakr ﷺ convinced the Prophet that it would be better to take ransom money from them while 'Umar ﷺ insisted on killing them because they were the aggressors. However, the Prophet ﷺ took the view of Abu Bakr ﷺ. A while later, revelation came down supporting 'Umar's point of view that the prisoners of war should have been killed so that they could not fight against Muslims again.



Other Challenges against Islam

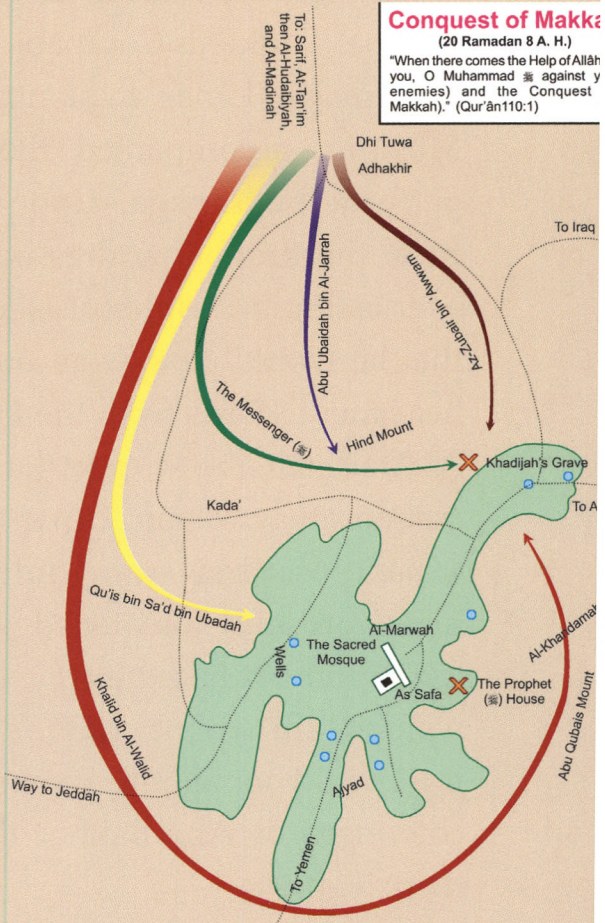
'Umar رضي الله عنه continued his struggle for the sake of Islām. He did not miss any chance that would add to the strength of the newborn state of Islām. In the Battle of Uhud, he and other Muslims fought a hard battle. Although Muslims lost the battle, 'Umar رضي الله عنه and his fellow Muslims kept steadfast to their faith. Two years later, the pagans gathered a huge army and wanted to destroy the Muslim State. However, 'Umar رضي الله عنه and other Muslims dug a trench around Al-Madinah that stopped the pagans and prevented them from entering the city. After a siege for one month, the pagans withdrew in humiliation back to Makkah.

The Treaty

One year later, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions wanted to visit Makkah to perform 'Umrah. Although Muslims wanted their journey to be peaceful, the pagans prevented them from entering Makkah. At a place called Al-Hudaibiyyah, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions negotiated with the Makkans to reach a peace agreement. The pagans insisted on putting a condition in the agreement stating that if anyone from Muslims wished to join the pagans he should be given the freedom to do so, but if anyone from the pagans wished to join Muslims, he should be sent back to the pagans by Muslims. 'Umar ؓ felt that this condition was humiliating to Muslims. He was very angry and wanted the Prophet ﷺ to refuse such an unjust condition. The Prophet ﷺ told him that he was the Messenger of Allâh and that Allâh would support him. Later on, 'Umar ؓ knew that the agreement was in the good interest of Muslims. It gave Muslims a chance to stop fighting with the main power in the Arabian Peninsula and call other tribes of Arabia to Islâm. Several tribes accepted Islâm and joined in building the Muslim State.

Conquest of Makkah

The Quraysh failed to respect their agreement with Muslims. They broke their promise and killed some of Muslims' allies. The Prophet ﷺ and Muslims were now determined to put an end to idolatry in Makkah. 'Umar joined the army of ten thousand Muslims who marched to Makkah and conquered the city. He wanted to avenge himself against the pagans who oppressed Muslims. However, the Prophet ﷺ taught him that a triumphant believer should always be forgiving. The Prophet ﷺ told the people of Makkah that they were free. In reaction to this merciful attitude by the Prophet ﷺ, all the people of Makkah accepted Islâm. 'Umar was beside the Prophet ﷺ when the women of Makkah came to embrace Islâm. The Prophet ﷺ asked 'Umar to be his deputy in witnessing the acceptance of Islâm by women.





The Prophet Passes Away

As Makkah had now become a Muslim land, the Prophet ﷺ told his Companions that he wished to perform pilgrimage. 'Umar ﷺ, along with one hundred thousand Muslims, accompanied the Prophet ﷺ to Makkah to perform pilgrimage. Upon completing the pilgrimage rites, the Prophet addressed his Companions about the everlasting principles of Islâm. In his speech, he implied that he would pass away soon. 'Umar ﷺ felt very sad to hear these words from the Prophet ﷺ. Upon returning to Al-Madinah, the Prophet ﷺ fell ill. After a short period, he passed away. When 'Umar ﷺ was told that the Prophet ﷺ had passed away, he didn't believe it. He unsheathed his sword and threatened to kill anyone who said that the Prophet ﷺ had died. He loved the Prophet dearly and wanted him to remain alive among Muslims to direct them if they did something wrong. He was calmed down and convinced by Abu Bakr ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ had really died.

The Selection of the Caliph

While 'Umar ﷺ and other close Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were busy with the Prophet's funeral, a group from the Ansâr (supporters) gathered at a place called As-Saqifah to select a caliph (ruler) from among them. Someone told 'Umar ﷺ of this meeting. He along with Abu Bakr ﷺ and Abu 'Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah ﷺ left the funeral and went to As-Saqifah. 'Umar ﷺ convinced the supporters that Abu Bakr ﷺ should be the Caliph. They all accepted his selection of Abu Bakr ﷺ and pledged obedience.

Before passing away, Abu Bakr ﷺ consulted the senior Companions of the Prophet ﷺ about the best man to succeed him. They all agreed that 'Umar ﷺ would be the best Caliph.

As 'Umar ﷺ took over, he started organizing the affairs of the state relying on the teachings of the Qur'ân and the Prophet's sayings.

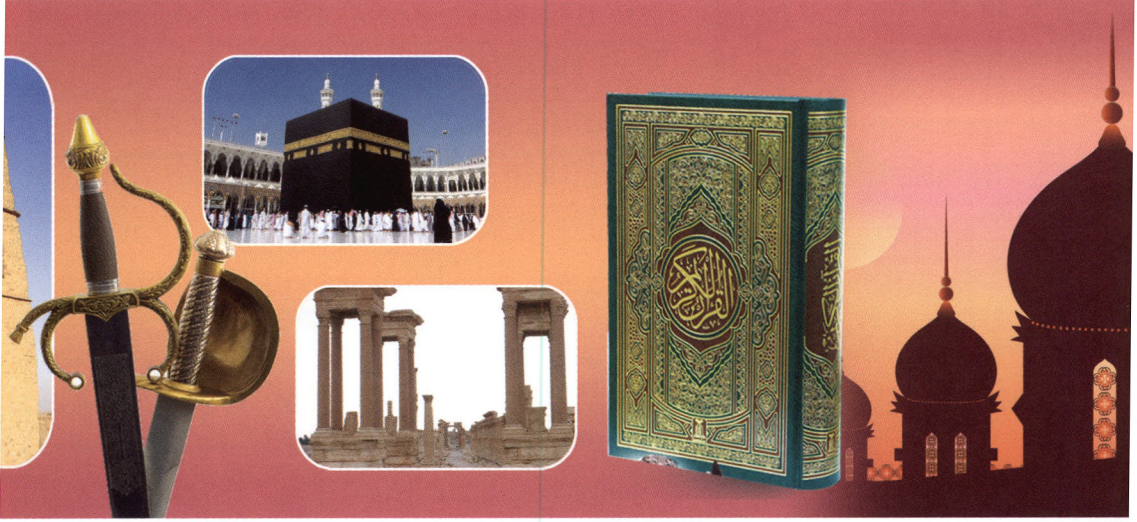


Achievements

of 'Umar ﷺ During His Rule

With the spread of the Muslim State over Iraq, Syria and Egypt, 'Umar ﷺ found it necessary to establish firm regulations under which the rulers of different regions should deal with their subjects. He sent letters containing rules of government to the governors. Not only this, but he also made visits to some parts of the Muslim Empire to ensure that the governors he had appointed were treating people justly.

'Umar ﷺ also established the public treasury. The money brought to the treasury was equally distributed among Muslims. Records of soldiers were made so as to pay them their wages wherever they were. The army was organized



in a way very similar to the modern armies. Each group of seven soldiers was headed by a supervisor who was responsible for their wages and benefits. 'Umar ؓ also appointed judges to solve problems among Muslims.

He ,himself, was summoned before the judge on at least two occasions. He recruited watchmen to guard the streets during the night and established a system of controls on markets to prevent any ways of deceit and fraud.

Public facilities and construction of cities were also part of his interests. He ordered the building of Kûfah, Basrah and Mawsil in Irâq and Fustat and Jiza in Egypt . He himself prepared the layouts of these cities. Spaces for streets and alleys were determined by 'Umar ؓ himself. Rivers and canals were also dug to provide water to populated areas all over the Muslim State. Engineers and craftsmen from all parts of the state were mobilized to pave roads in order for caravans to travel with ease throughout the vast state.

'Umar ﷺ found that it was essential for all Muslims to learn how to read the Qur'ân. Therefore, he sent teachers to all parts of the state to teach people how to recite the Noble Qur'ân. He also set prizes for those



who memorized the Qur'ân within a short period. Scholars among the Prophet's Companions were directed to teach people the interpretation of the Qur'ân and the principles of the Shari'ah (Islamic law). Bedouins were given much attention. Teaching of their children was established as a mandatory law. Muftis (legal advisors) were also appointed to give answers to legal questions.

'Umar ﷺ paid much attention to construction of mosques. He gave orders to expand the Sacred Mosque in Makkah as its space was not sufficient to accommodate visitors. He also supervised expansion of the Prophet's Mosque in Al-Madinah for the same reasons. He wrote to all governors ordering them to build mosques in cities and villages. It is reported that the number of mosques built during 'Umar's rule was more than three thousand.

The Arabs had no certain event to set the calendar. 'Umar ﷺ was receiving letters from governors that were not dated with a year. He discussed the matter with his

advisors. They all agreed to his point of view that the year of the Hijrah (emigration to Al-Madinah) should be the first year of the Islamic calendar.

As most people of the conquered lands, especially Irâq, Syria and Egypt were farmers, 'Umar ؓ ordered for their lands to be kept under their own control because they were familiar with the methods of cultivation. In addition, he provided farmers with all means necessary to increase and diversify their crops.

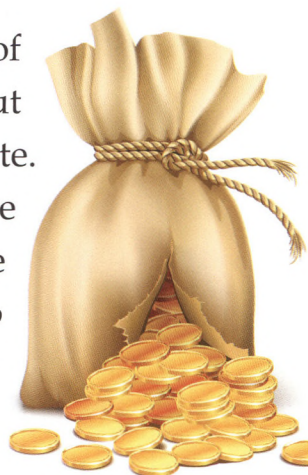
In addition to the records and bureaus 'Umar ؓ established for the military and civilians of the Islamic society, he ordered construction of barracks for the army at the borders of the Muslim State. This allowed the soldiers to use these as places of residence away from their homeland. He also set rules of service for soldiers. No soldier should keep away from his family more than four months in order to stay in touch with his family. Mail from soldiers was sometimes distributed by 'Umar ؓ himself.

As the road from Al-Madinah to Makkah was hard for pilgrims and visitors, 'Umar ؓ gave orders to pave the road, establish shaded rest places and dig wells to provide water to caravans.



Care for the Nation

The services rendered during the rule of 'Umar ﷺ did not cover Muslims only but were extended to all the subjects of the state. Old non-Muslim men and women were given maintenance pay. Subsidies were also given to farmers and craftsmen to help them continue their businesses. Every poor member of the nation was receiving a welfare stipend including newborns.



Honorable Treatment of Conquered People

Palestine was mainly inhabited by Christians. When Muslims conquered it, the inhabitants of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) agreed to surrender the city peacefully to Muslim army. They knew that 'Umar ﷺ was a just ruler. Therefore, they wanted him to sign the agreement himself. 'Umar ﷺ left Al-Madinah and visited Al-Quds to make the agreement. It was reported that he was not accompanied by any guards except his servant. He concluded an agreement with the inhabitants of the city, which guaranteed them all their financial and religious rights. As a result, most of the city inhabitants accepted Islâm.

Conquests

in Iraq and Iran

During Abu Bakr's rule, the Muslim armies spread east and north for the propagation of Islâm. Before conquering the Persians and the Romans, Abu Bakr ؓ died and left the trust to 'Umar ؓ. 'Umar ؓ continued the efforts started by Abu Bakr ؓ to conquer the two major nations of the time.



'Umar ؓ selected Sa'd bin Abi Waqqâs ؓ to march to Persia. An army of thirty thousand soldiers was gathered to fulfil the mission. Before leaving Al-Madinah, 'Umar ؓ advised Sa'd ؓ saying:

"Sa'd, I order you to fight the Persians. Listen to me and hold fast to my words. You are going to face a very hard obstacle that you cannot overcome unless you observe truth and goodness. You should know that every battle should be prepared for by having good equipment. Let your equipment be patience. Do not be deceived by saying to yourself 'I am the Prophet's uncle' for there is no kinship dearer to Allâh than obedience to His teachings."

Sa'd ﷺ led the army to a place called Al-Qâdisiyyah in Irâq. There he saw the Persians deploying their army under the leadership of Rustam.

'Umar ﷺ wrote a letter to Sa'd ﷺ saying:

"I order you and your soldiers to fear Allâh at all times, for fearing Allâh is the best weapon you have against your enemy. I order you and your soldiers to guard against evil deeds as much as you guard against your enemy. Evil deeds are more dangerous to your army than your enemy is. You will win because your enemy is a disbeliever. Ask Allâh to help you overcome your desires as much as you ask Him to help you overcome your enemy. Do not cause Muslims to march when they are tired and keep them ready with full strength to meet the enemy. Take rest one day every week to keep your army fully ready. Do not come near any village inhabited by our protected peaceful allies and do not allow anyone of your soldiers enter any village unless you are sure he will act properly. Lookout scouting is the best way to know the power of your enemy. Therefore, give such a mission to whom you most trust and provide them with the best horses."

Sa'd ﷺ sent messengers to Yazdajurd, the Persian King, calling him to embrace Islâm, to pay tribute or if he rejected both options, to fight.

The first delegation called the King to accept Islâm. Instead of accepting this kind call, the King began blaming the Muslims for coming to his land and threatened to destroy their religion. The King showed the delegation

much humiliation and anger. He asked his soldiers to fill sacks of soil and force the members of the delegation to carry them on their backs till they left the city. He told them that he would send Rustam to bury their leader and the Muslim army in the Al-Qâdisiyyah trench.

Rustam foresaw signs of defeat in the acts of the King. Therefore, he asked Sa'd ؓ to send him another messenger to negotiate. Al-Mughirah bin Shu'bah ؓ came to Rustam. As soon as he arrived, Rustam started negotiating with him in a very gentle manner and asked him to tell Sa'd ؓ that it was better for Muslims to leave to their homeland. Al-Mughirah ؓ told Rustam that it was their mission to spread the light of Islâm. He explained to him the principles of Islâm.

Rustam empathised to the just teachings of Islâm and asked the messenger to give him time to discuss them with the heads of the nation. Rustam told his people that it was better for them to accept Islâm, but they refused.

Sa'd ؓ sent the third messenger, Rabi' Ibn 'Âmir ؓ to Rustam.



Islamic and Persian armies before the I

Before his arrival to the place of the Persian army, the Persians wanted to show him how rich and powerful they were. The whole palace was furnished with gold and silver. Rabi' ﷺ came inside with his humble dress on his horse until he stepped on the carpets and spoilt them with his spear. He jumped down from the back of his horse and sat beside Rostam. He was not amazed by the vanity they wanted to show him. The negotiations did not yield any fruits.

More messengers were sent but all attempts to reach a solution came to nothing. At last, Rostam told Sa'd ﷺ that he would give Muslims a bitter defeat if they insisted on fighting.

The Persians prepared about one hundred thousand fully armed soldiers supported by elephants and other heavy combat equipment. Muslims on the opposite side gathered their humble arms to fight against this huge army.

The timing of operations was initiated by the words Allâhu Akbar (Allâh is the Greatest). The Muslim army faced a sudden shock. Their horses did not move forward for fear of the advancing elephants that the Persians put in the first line. However, some Muslim fighters began shooting the elephants. They forced the elephants to retreat in terror and throw off their riders. The whole day of fighting did not change the positions of either army. On the second day, a new round of fighting started. Muslims



Zoroastrians' Tower of Silence. Yazd, Iran

received support by an army led by Hâshim bin 'Utbah ؓ coming from Damascus. However, victory wasn't achieved by either side of the battle.

On the third day, the Persians prepared for another surprise. They put some huge elephants ahead of the army and attacked the Muslim army. The attack was almost successful. However, some Muslim commandos led by Al-Qa'qâ' bin 'Amr ؓ attacked the elephants and forced them to turn back through the advancing army. Muslims then opened huge gaps through the Persian army.

The battle continued and Muslims were sacrificing their souls to raise the Islamic banner high. The fighting went on the whole night. When the sun rose, it was clear that Muslims had the upper hand.

Rustam tried to escape but he was finally killed. The succeeding commander, Galinos, tried to save the defeated army by crossing to the other bank of the Tigris River. Instead, more than thirty thousand of his soldiers drowned in the river.

Sa'd ﷺ ordered his army to follow the fleeing army until he was sure that victory was fully achieved. The battle was over and Sa'd ﷺ immediately sent a messenger to 'Umar ﷺ informing him of the victory they achieved and asking for further orders. 'Umar ﷺ ordered Sa'd ﷺ to continue his march to Madâ'in, the Persian capital. Muslims marched forth but they did not face any resistance on the way to the capital.

The Muslim army led by Sa'd ﷺ did not have any boats to cross the Tigris River. Sa'd ﷺ ordered his soldiers to cross the river on horse backs. Not one of them was stopped by the torrent of the river. The Persian soldiers on the opposite bank of the river thought that they were fighting against Jinns. Salmân Al-Fârisi ﷺ, a great Companion of the Prophet (pbuh), originally from Persia, foresaw the heavenly help given to Muslims. He shouted:

"I swear by Allâh, those who had overcome the mainland would surely overcome the sea."

The Muslim army surprised the Persians who fled the city. Madâ'in was conquered and the Persian Empire was defeated once and forever.



Panorama detail with Umayyad mosque in Aleppo, Syria

Conquests in Syria & Palestine

Abu Bakr ؓ appointed Khâlid bin Al-Walid ؓ as Commander General of the Muslim army. He was fighting the Persians in Irâq but was directed by Abu Bakr ؓ to support the army led by Abû 'Ubaydah bin Al-Jarrâh ؓ who was directed to conquer the Romans.

The Romans gathered an army of two hundred thousand soldiers while the Muslim army numbered about thirty thousand fighters. Both armies met near a village called Al-Yarmûk. Khâlid ؓ carefully studied the conditions

and set up plans to fight the coming battle.

Before the start of the battle, the Roman commander sought to meet Khâlid ﷺ. He agreed to meet with him. The Roman commander addressed Khalid ﷺ saying:

"It has been brought to our knowledge that poverty was the only reason that brought you out of your land here. If you wish, I will give each one of you ten dinars, clothes and food on the condition that you go back to your land. I will even reward you with equal portions next year."

Khalid ﷺ angrily responded to such a belittling address saying:

"It is not poverty that brought us here; rather, it is that we only wish to drink your blood. We have been told it is very delicious!"

Khalid ﷺ returned to his troops. He studied the battlefield and decided to divide his army into battalions along the line of combat to face the huge number of the Roman army.

Soon the rattle of swords and cries of Allâhu Akbar (Allâh is the Greatest) filled the air and heads of soldiers fell under horses' hooves. Both armies fought all day long. They became very tired and retreated to their original positions. On the next day, Khalid ﷺ and his soldiers attacked the heart of the Roman army and divided their lines. The Romans, on the other side, began retreating and fleeing in all directions. They suffered a huge loss and left

the battlefield in humiliation.

While the battle was hot, a messenger from Al-Madinah arrived with news that Abu Bakr ؓ had died, that 'Umar ؓ was selected as the Caliph and that Khalid ؓ was to be replaced by Abû 'Ubaydah bin Al-Jarrâh ؓ. Abû 'Ubaydah ؓ kept the news secret until the Romans were finally defeated. He met Khâlid ؓ and informed him of the news. Khâlid ؓ willingly handed over the command to Abû 'Ubaydah ؓ and continued as an ordinary soldier under Abû 'Ubaydah's command. Abû 'Ubaydah ؓ continued his march. He conquered Damascus and its surrounding areas. The Roman Emperor left his place of rule in Hims and paid Syria an eternal farewell. Following this great victory, Abû 'Ubaydah ؓ led his army to Al-Quds (Jerusalem). The chiefs of the city surrendered the city peacefully. They asked the leader to make an agreement which, upon their request, was to be signed by 'Umar ؓ himself.





Conquest of Egypt

'Umar رضي الله عنه continued his efforts of spreading the light of Islâm. He prepared an army under the leadership of 'Amr bin Al-'Âs رضي الله عنه to conquer Egypt. Within a short period of time, 'Amr رضي الله عنه defeated the Romans and saved the Egyptians from their injustices. He built a strong Muslim state in Egypt under the guidance of 'Umar bin Al-Khattâb رضي الله عنه.

Humility

'Umar رضي الله عنه was known as a very humble man. He used to help orphans and widows to manage their lives. Once he was walking with his servant through the streets of Al-Madinah during the night. He heard some children crying. He found that a poor woman was trying to calm down her hungry children by putting an empty pot on the fire to show them that she was making them some food. 'Umar رضي الله عنه went back to the warehouse and took some flour and meat, carried them on his back and returned to the woman. He began cooking for the children and giving them food. He left them very happy. It was reported that he also visited an old woman every night to care for her and satisfy her needs.

Justice

A Jew complained against 'Ali bin Abi Talib ﷺ to the judge. 'Umar summoned 'Ali and the Jew before him to settle the case. 'Ali was very happy that 'Umar made him stand beside the Jew in the court and did not distinguish him over the Jew, but advised him not to use his kunyah - Abul Hassan - if he would not use the kunyah of the Jew to address the Jew also. This was the great level of justice we can see from both 'Ali and 'Umar who were the closest of friends.

The son of 'Amr bin Al-Âs ﷺ, the governor of Egypt, entered a horserace with an Egyptian. The Egyptian won the race. 'Amr's son got angry and whipped the Egyptian because of the defeat. The Egyptian came to 'Umar ﷺ complaining against 'Amr's son. 'Umar ﷺ sent for 'Amr ﷺ and his son to appear before him. When they stood in his company, 'Umar ﷺ asked the Egyptian to whip 'Amr's son as he had whipped him. 'Umar ﷺ addressed 'Amr ﷺ saying:

"Since when have you started to enslave people when they were born free?"



Fear of Allah

'Umar ؓ was always expressing his fear of meeting Allâh on the Day of Judgment with sins. Sometimes, he was heard saying:

"I would be satisfied if Allâh pardons me in the Hereafter."

He ordered all his governors all over the Islamic State to be kind even to animals for fear that he might be responsible for any injustice they might cause to people. He said:

"I fear that if a mule stumbles in Irâq, I will be questioned as to why I did not pave the way for it."

Tears drew two black lines on his cheeks for fear that he might be punished by Allâh. Although he was told by the Prophet ﷺ that he would dwell in Paradise, he used to pray most of the night in order to be acceptable to Allâh.

Sound Judgment

Some judgments given by 'Umar ؓ have become religious rulings. One case was when he asked the Prophet ﷺ to order women to wear Hijâb (Islamic dress). Allâh supported his opinion and Qur'ânic revelation came down ordaining the same. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"If there were divinely inspired men in my nation, one of them would be 'Umar."



As usual, 'Umar رضي الله عنه made pilgrimage to Makkah in the beginning of the eleventh year of his rule. The Muslim state had by now spread over Syria, Egypt, Persia and some parts of the Byzantine Empire. This quick spread of Islâm was hated and envied by all enemies of Islâm. They would try now and then to thwart Islâm but in vain.

'Umar رضي الله عنه used to go to Fajr (Dawn) prayer unattended by any guards. He left his house to the mosque in the dark, ordered for the prayer to be started and stood in front of the lines as leader of the prayer. A Persian named Fayrûz had planned to kill the Caliph. He decided to do his crime during the prayer. As 'Umar رضي الله عنه started the prayer, Fayrûz stepped forward and stabbed him several times in his side with a dagger. He also killed other Muslims who were

trying to get hold of him. 'Umar ﷺ retreated to the first row and ordered his son to complete the prayer as the leader. The persons behind him saw this criminal act by the Persian. They tried to catch him but he killed himself.

'Umar ﷺ was taken home. He asked concerning the man who stabbed him. They told him that it was Fayrûz. 'Umar ﷺ thanked Allâh that the killer was not a Muslim. He was well aware that the enemies of Islâm would not allow its message to be spread in peace.

Before dying, he selected six men and ordered that one among them to be selected as the Caliph. He also asked the permission of Â'ishah ﷺ (the Prophet's wife) to be buried beside the Prophet ﷺ. She agreed although she wanted to keep the place for herself. Three days later 'Umar ﷺ passed away.

'Umar ﷺ was buried beside the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ﷺ. He lied there in peace to meet with the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions on the Day of Judgment with the hope that he did his best to spread the Word of Allâh.

May Allâh bestow his mercy on 'Umar ﷺ, the best example of justice, for the great services he rendered to Islâm and Muslims.

We should all remember 'Umar ﷺ with great gratitude. Had it not been for the help of Allâh and the efforts exerted by 'Umar ﷺ, the Muslim State would not have spread across the world.