

Chapter – 04

Hazrat 'Uthman Ghani

(577 - 656 AD)

Hazrat 'Uthman is from Bani Umaiya, a famous branch of the Quraish tribe. Fifth generation back, his lineage is met with the Noble Prophet. Previously, his family name was Abu 'Umar, but after accepting Islam and when his wife Ruqaiyyah gave birth to 'Abdullah, his family name was changed to Abu 'Abdullah. His father's name is Affan bin Abul A'as and the mother's name is Urosi bint Kreez. His mother was the daughter of the cousin sister of the Noble Prophet. It is said that when 'Uthman became Muslim he was about 34 years old.

He was having a medium height, reddish white color, and smallpox scars on the face. He was a man of wide bones, strong arms and well-built legs. He had thick beard which used to be dyed. By nature he was very noble and gracious person. Due to his good nature he did not ever like drinking alcohol. In the same way, he was free from all the evils of that period.

Trade was his profession. In this, he gained so much from his sincerity and honesty that he was counted among the wealthiest people in Quraish, so he was called "غنى" (*wealthy*).

Siddique Akbar's preaching led him to Islam. Since his family was a fierce enemy of Islam and Muslims, he had to face severe opposition and oppression on his acceptance of Islam.

For this reason, he was among the emigrants of Habshah (*Abyssinia*). Thus, he had the privilege to become first emigrant.

Before the Prophethood, he was married to the daughter of the Noble Prophet. She died at the time when Badr war was progressing. After that, her second sister Um Kulsoom was married to 'Uthman. In this way, the two daughters of the Noble Prophet lived as spouse of 'Uthman. That is why he is remembered by the title "ذوالنورين" (*holder of two illuminations*).

'Uthman participated in almost all the combats. However, in the battle of Badr, he could not attend due to the illness of his first wife Ruqaiyyah. On the occasion of Hudaibiya war, he was entrusted to serve as Ambassador. Upon the rumor of his martyrdom, بيعت رضوان, the pledge of allegiance, took place which certainly remained an honor for him.

During both the tenures of Abu Bakr Siddique and 'Umar Farooq, he was a member of the then Advisory Committees and served Islam with his useful suggestions. With the help of his wealth, Islam and Muslims were also greatly benefited. He bought a well of freshwater in Madinah from a Jew and dedicated it for all the Muslims. Once during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr, a severe famine had occurred in the country, so when the caravan returned from the business trip, he dedicated the entire caravan to the poor and needy people.

In connection with the succession of Caliphate, as per advise of 'Umer, out of six names none was being selected in a given time. So Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf proposed that to reach a conclusion the total number of 6 persons may be reduced. Consequently, Abdur Rahman, Talha, Sa'ad and Zubair, one by one announced the withdrawal of their names in favor of 'Uthman and 'Ali. Then Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf appealed to the individuals that if they agree with him, then he will personally

decide the Caliph. They all agreed. For this, 'Abdur Rahman first arranged a get-together of Muslims in the Masjid Nabavi, then made an effective speech to the gathering, and then he himself pledged allegiance with 'Uthman. Upon which 'Ali also extended his hand too. Immediately after the allegiance of 'Ali, the entire mob had gone for the allegiance to 'Uthman. Thus 'Uthman became the Caliphate.

In the beginning "Uthman did not change the system of 'Umer Farooq. Under the will of 'Umar, he depose Mughira bin Sha'aba from the province of Kufa, and appointed Sa'ad bin Waqas. The first case that came to him, after sitting on the throne of the Caliphate was of 'Abdullah, the son of 'Umar. The details of this case is: Abu Lulu, the murderer of 'Umar, committed suicide immediately after the attack on 'Umer. But for some reasons, 'Abdullah suspected that two more people were involved in this plot. So, in an anticipation, he killed both of them. 'Uthman discussed this matter with 'Ali who proposed for *قصاص*, a reprisal *of* blood to blood. But 'Uthman disagreed with this idea and changed the sentence to *دية* (*blood to money*), and he paid this money with his own pocket.

Although 'Uthman remained as a Caliph for almost 12 years, but he could get the opportunity to govern peacefully for five to six years only. However, in this short period, he had done a great service to the Muslim Ummah. After the death of 'Umar, many of the revolts cropped up from Iran's provinces. He sent 'Abdullah bin 'Umar to crush them without delay and got success to control them. In 25AH/646AD 'Amr bin al-'As took the lead in crushing the revolt of Alexandria of Egypt and defeated the Romans. Armenians were also rebelled in the same period. Walid bin 'Uqba was appointed to take care of this revolt. Then there were many victories in Azerbaijan, Asia Koch, Turkestan, Kabul and Sindh. In the year 30AH/651AD,

Saeed bin al-Aas had invaded Tibristan. There were victories in Tagaristan, Kerman and Sajistan. During his time, the Syria, which was divided into several provinces, was made one province. Amir Mu'awiya was assigned as the Governor of the whole province who got great victories. In the west, Cyprus, the island in Mediterranean Sea, was occupied. Spain was also attacked. Thus, the boundaries of the Islamic government extended from Sindh and Kabul to the borders of Europe.

Since 'Uthman was naturally a cool, gentle and forgetful person, so there was no such strict accountability against corruption in his time. However, he also did not neglect things that would have any effect on Islam, on the code of conduct or on the system of government. Whenever such complaints arise, he took them seriously. For example, Sa'ad bin Abi Waqas was acquitted on charges of non-payment of debt of Bait-ul-Mall. Saeed bin al-A'as and Abu Musa Ash'ari were removed from their positions on public grievances. On the occasion of the pilgrimage, regular public complaints were heard and remedied.

Due to the new victories in the 'Uthman's period, the income through taxes increased significantly. The Egyptian's taxes money had doubled. As a result, salaries and pensions of people were reasonably increased. There were a lot of charitable works. Roads, bridges and lanes were built. Digging wells for drinking water were carried out. Heavy rains in Khyber caused a great flood, and to protect it Mehroze Dam was constructed.

Extension works of the Masjid-ul-Haram in Makkah were taken up in 26AH/647AD. For this many houses in the vicinity were purchased and its land was included in the mosque. Similarly, a lot of work was also done on the construction of the Masjid Nabavi in 29AH/650AD. 'Uthman's main task was to unite Muslims on the rules of one way of

recitation of Quran. Although the compilation of the Quran was already completed, he did much to propagate and promote it. Due to the different accents of the Arabs, the spelling and pronunciation of some of words could have been different, and this did not make any difference to their meaning, but for new non Arab, whose mother tongue was not Arabic, this matter was having great importance. In this situation, 'Uthman felt that if all Muslims were not unified on one way of recitation of Quran, people may go for its distortion or alterations, like Christians and Romans did with Bible. Therefore, he took those copies of the Quran composed earlier in the period of Abu Bakr, which was preserved with Hafsa, and send those copies to all Islamic countries. Moreover, all other books were destroyed.

Among new measures in his Caliphate include; giving lands to the people, issuing stipends, calling Takbir gently, burning perfume in the mosque and giving two Azan on Friday. Earlier, there was no tax for horses and slaves, but it was enforced in his time. Similarly prayers were previously shortened (قص) during Hajj, but in the last part of his tenure, offering of complete prayers were started.

During his term, much work was done on the development of the army. The provinces in which the administrative and military departments had been running under one sector were separated. New cantonments were set up. The most important development in his era was the establishment of the Navy. During the tenure of 'Umer Farooq the Muslims had suffered in Persian War, in view of which 'Uthman went against the naval war. But upon convincing Amir Mu'awiya, he allowed them to put in their troops in the Mediterranean Sea. As a result, Cyprus was conquered. After that, Amir Mu'awiya and 'Abdullah bin Sa'ad developed the

Islamic Naval fleet so much that it exceeded to the most powerful Roman fleet of that time.

The victories in the first five to six years of 'Uthman times, the proliferation of wealth, the exploitation of various taxes, the abundance of benefits and the development of agriculture and commerce had crammed the country with a wealth of leisure and luxury. But at the same time, its consequences, grudge, jealousy and rivalry also began to set in. And the internal changes and external causes combined with the revolution against 'Uthman left the entire Khilafat unleashed. Although the old enmity of Banu Umaiya and Banu Hashim was suppressed by the first elite of Islam, but it was not erased from their hearts. Because of these circumstances, Jews and Magians, whose government and religious dignity were earlier wiped out by Islam had a chance to take revenge.

One of these opponents was the most vicious and hypocritical Jew,' Abdullah bin Saba. He decided to exploit the old hatred of the Jews in these situations. This man felt that he could not fulfill his ambitions while remaining in his Jewish religion, so he started wearing a dress of Islam and started conspiring against 'Uthman. First he attracted people by talking of "امر بالمعروف ونهي عن المنكر" (*enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency*). Then gradually he began to discredit the workers of 'Uthman. And then he exploited alleged favoritism of 'Uthman. In order to divide the people, he strongly urged the Muslims to understand that as a matter of fact 'Ali was the nominated executor of the Prophet and those who did not fulfill the will of the Prophet they are unjust. He spread the network of this conspiracy throughout the Islamic centers in such a way that in a few days the whole atmosphere became awful. Iraq, in particular, became the focus of this temptation due to the mixed population of its various nations.

The first action against 'Uthman was carried out by Yazid bin Qais, a revolutionary of Kufa, in the year 34AH/655AD, but could not succeed. However, the affliction continued everywhere, and the baseless allegations against them continued to increase. 'Uthman continued to make every effort to remove these objections and afflictions and he was constantly involved in his corrective measures.

On the other hand, the rebels in Kufa, Basra and Egypt had already begun into the secret correspondence with each other, and had decided to attack on Madinah. So at the end of the year 35AH/655AD, when Madinah was vacated due to Hajj, three rebel groups showed their intentions for Hajj and moved to Madinah and they stayed a few miles outside Madinah. All three groups were agreed on the ouster of 'Uthman, but their views on his succession were different. Kofi wanted Zubair. The men from Basra wanted Talha, and the Egyptian wished for 'Ali. In one Friday Sermon, 'Uthman tried to explain to the rebels, but the rebellions had exceeded all their limits. Instead of listening to any of his words, they threw stones at him so much so that 'Uthman fell unconscious. Somehow few people brought him at home. Once again the rebels were tried even after this incident but all proved fruitless. The supporters of 'Uthman sought a regular fight with the rebels, but they were not permitted to do so.

In the light of the prophecy of the Noble Prophet, 'Uthman was fully convinced of his martyrdom, and he was patiently waiting for it. Eventually, the tragedy took place on Friday 18 Zul-Hajja in 34AH/655AD. By the event of his martyrdom, the unity of the Muslims were scattered so much that they were permanently divided among the Shi'a, Sunni, Kharijee and 'Uthmani sects.

Nevertheless, the author of "Companions of the Prophet" pays homage to "Uthman Ghani about his persona in the following words:.

"As a man, 'Uthman was the paragon of virtues. He was a man of stainless character, very pious, very religious and very virtuous. He was conspicuous of his modesty. He was very kind hearted. He had considerable wealth and own large slaves, but in spite of that he was most humble. 'Uthman had always a great fear of God. He exhorted the functionaries of the State to fear God and do justice to all concerned. 'Uthman was known for the firmness and steadfastness of his faith. 'Uthman was a man of principle."

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