

Chapter – 24

Qutaiba Bin Muslim

(669 - 715 AD)

Qutaiba is his name and Abu Hafs is his Kunniya. Qutaiba was born in a military family. His father, Abi Salih Muslim, was the chief of Bahla tribe, and he was officer in the army of the Umayyad Caliph Abdul Malik bin Marwan. Therefore, a soldier like tastes was developed in Qutaiba since his childhood. As a young man, he joined the army of Hajjaj bin Yusuf, the Emperor of Basra, and received distinguished honors in several battles. Hajjaj bin Yusuf was so impressed with him that in 86AH/705AD, he called upon the Caliph Abdul Malik and placed him in the Governorship of Khorasan. When he took this office then his life began in such a way that brought him to the rank of the world's greatest conquerors.

By that time, even though the Islamic government was established in Turkey, the insurgent activities were also frequently used to occur here and there. Qutaiba decided to tackle them first. A year later, he marched to Bekand, the city of Bukhara, to break the influence of idol worshipers. Bekand was an important city, so they siege this city for 50 days until the people of Bekand had to accept their obedience. After that, Qutaiba reached to Umthana. On the way, the nephew of China's Khaqan tried to stop him with a large army, but Qutaiba also upset the locust army with his full potential.

In 89AH/708AD, when Qutaiba came out with the intention of acquiring the whole Bukhara, it is said that the

Ruler of Bukhara accepted his obedience without fighting. On the other hand Ibn Kathir says that Qutaiba did not succeed on this juncture. Nevertheless, according to him, in 90AH/709AD, Qutaiba came back with more readiness and invaded Bukhara. This time, Qutaiba had to fight not only with the Bukhara army but also he had to look for the Turks and the people of Sughad (*Samarkand*) who came to his aid. The Turks fought with great courage and perseverance. In the army of Qutaiba, two warlords of Banu Tamim, Waki' bin al-Aswad and Hareem, fought against the enemy with their tribesmen, and finally succeeded in crossing the river. Shortly afterwards, the Turkish warrior, Verdun Khoda ran away and then the Muslims occupied Bukhara completely.

Nizak, the Ruler of Badghees, who always had successful ventures in association with Qutaiba, suddenly rebelled after Bukhara's campaign. He also made the rulers of Kabul, Balkh and Talaqan etc. with him. Qutaiba immediately dispatched an army under the supervision of his brother to confront with him, and later he himself reached there. Soon the Talaqan were in control. Nizak tried to fight off keeping himself confined in a strong fort but could not succeed. He was arrested and killed along with seven hundred of his comrades.

When the conquest of the Qutaiba took place in Turkestan and when Khwarizm came to know about this success, he sent a message of help to Qutaiba to get rid of the harms of his own cruel brother. So they arrived at his request and helped him. Khwarizm Shah accepted the obedience according to his promise in 93AH/712AD.

Now Qutaiba started thinking of subjugation of Samarkand. Samarkand, whose ancient name was Markanda, was a major trading center in Central Asia at that time. Its trade was extended to Tibet, India and China. The Samarkand people,

or the people of Sughad, had already accepted obedience to the Muslims, but later they joined with the Turks against the Muslims. Qutaiba wanted a complete result for them, so he prepared a large army in which Bukhara and the Khwarizm were also included. With such a large army, it was difficult for Samarkand people to fight in the open field, so they fought enclosed in the fort. A long siege occurred, which resulted in none other than reconciliation.

In 96AH/715AD, Qutaiba arranged an invasion on China as well. Since by that time the victories of Qutaiba were quite widespread so when Chinese Khaqan came to know about it, he became very nervous and thought for a compromise. Since Khaqan adopted a peaceable attitude, therefore Qutaiba too remained confined to accept tax only and then he returned.

On the very days, Caliph Walid died and his brother Suleiman took over the throne. Qutaiba bin Muslim disliked Suleiman from the beginning, so he rejected his allegiance. As a result, the nation was divided into two groups. Consequently, internal fighting started and Qutaiba was killed. Thus, the Great Conqueror of most parts of the world was executed by their own people.