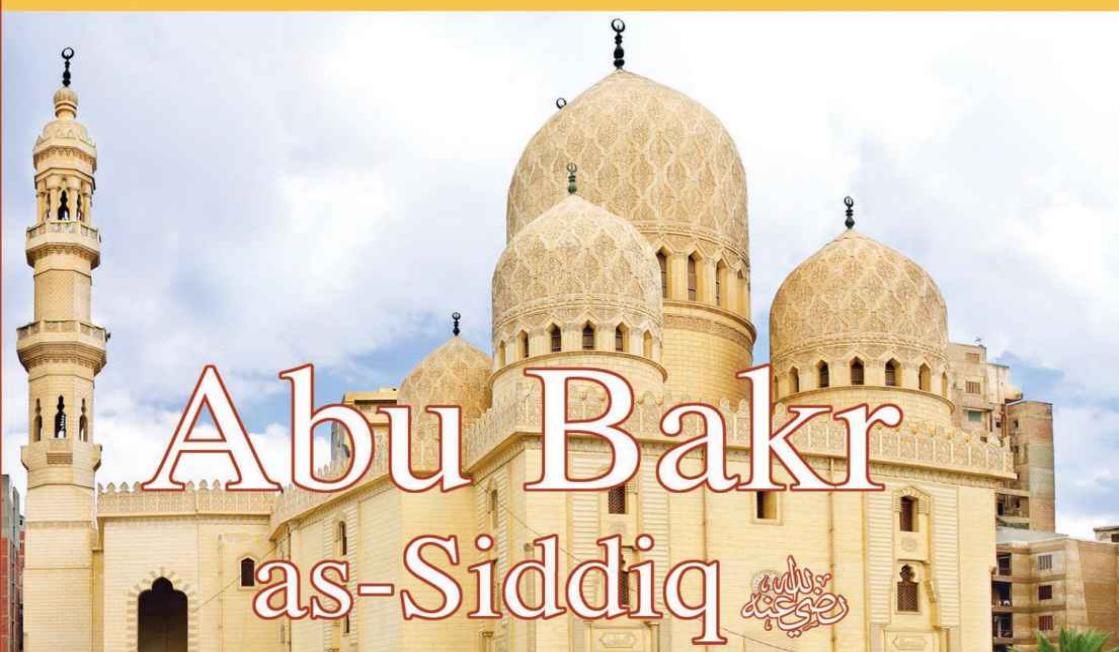


# HISTORY OF ISLAM

The Age of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs  
AL-KHULAFĀ AR-RASHIDŪN



## Abu Bakr as-Siddiq

The First of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs

Maulvi Abdul Aziz



**DARUSSALAM**  
GLOBAL LEADER IN ISLAMIC BOOKS

Riyadh . Jeddah . Al- Khobar . Sharjah  
Lahore . London . Houston . New York

History of Islam  
A Reader Series  
AL- Khulafa ar-Rashidùn

**Abu Bakr as-Siddiq**  
(May Allah be pleased with him)  
The First of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs

Downloaded from [sunniconnect.com](http://sunniconnect.com)

# Publisher's Note



In the Name of Allah, the Lord of Grace, the Ever Merciful.

For many years, I have been looking for textbooks on the History of Islam for English-speaking students, yet I have found very few. Most did not overcome a common problem: they did not go beyond the era of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs, (May Allah be please with them).

Bearing this in mind, we, at Darussalam, have resolved to present the entire History of Islam to our youth in language that appeals to them, in a simple yet lucid manner. The first four volumes in this series explore Islamic history during the period of the first Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Later volumes would be devoted to the History of Islam, down through the ages to modern times, in sha' Allah.

Our past, present, and future are interconnected and interdependent. Therefore, knowing and understanding our history is not optional; it is essential.

This is the first volume from this series, which deals with the life of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, the first of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs. No other person in the History of Islam can be compared to him when it comes to truthfulness, insight into Islamic teachings and devotion to Allah and His Messenger. He was outstanding and unique in his

commitment, sincerity, and whole-hearted support and assistance to the Prophet.

We would like to thank the author Maulvi Abdul Aziz, the editor and the designer Mr. Shahzad Ahmed for their diligent efforts in preparing this volume. We hope this work will inspire our youth to form a personal relationship with Abu Bakr as-Siddiq and encourage them to commit their lives sincerely to the mission of ‘the Champion of Truth’, which he has left behind as our common heritage.

*Abdul Malik Mujahid*

*Muharram 23, 1433*

*Darussalam, Riyadh*

December 18, 2011

# Table of Contents

Publisher's Note.....	3
Table of Contents .....	5
Chapter 1.....	9
The Death of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) .....	10
Completion of the Task.....	10
The Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) Final Illness .....	12
Abu Bakr's Return.....	19
Umar Realizes the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) Had Indeed Died .....	21
Men of Madinah Meet to Elect a Chief.....	23
Chapter 2.....	25
The Caliphate of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq May Allah be pleased with him .....	25
Abu Bakr's Inaugural Address.....	25
The Funeral Prayer & Burial of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) .....	26

Abu Bakr the First of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs .....	28
Usamah ibn Zayd's Army .....	29
Chapter 3 .....	37
Abu Bakr as-Siddiq .....	37
His Name, Ancestry, Titles, Family, and His Life .....	37
As-Siddiq .....	39
Al-Atiq .....	41
3. As-Sahib .....	42
His Birth and Physical Description .....	43
His Family .....	44
Asma bint Abu Bakr .....	45
Ai'shah the Mother of the Believers .....	46
Umm Kulthum .....	47
Abu Bakr as-Siddiq's Life in Makkah .....	48
The Quraysh Loved Him .....	49
Abu Bakr's Acceptance of Islam .....	50
Abu Bakr Preaches the Message of Islam .....	52
Trials and Tribulations .....	53

Abu Bakr Spent his Wealth to Purchase the Freedom of Muslim Slaves.....	56
Abu Bakr’s Emigration [ <i>al-Hijrah</i> ] with the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) to al-Madinah ....	57
Chapter 4.....	63
Abu Bakr’s Faith in Action.....	63
Abu Bakr: the First of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs .....	65
Progress of Islam does not stop with the death of anyone.....	66
Challenges and Problems Faced by Abu Bakr as-Siddiq as a Caliph: .	68
Abu Bakr’s War Against Apostates .....	68
False Prophets .....	71
Aswad al-Ansi.....	72
Saj’ah bint al-Harith ibn Suwaid.....	73
Musaylamah: the Liar.....	75
The End of Musaylamah, the Liar .....	78
Gathering the Glorious Qur’an in a Single Book.....	80
Chapter 5.....	83
The Spread of Islam.....	83
The Conquest of Iraq.....	84
The Roman Empire and the Iranian Empire .....	85

The Conquest of Iraq.....	86
The Conquests in ash-Sham.....	89
Abu Bakr Appoints Umar ibn al-Khattab as His Successor and Abu Bakr's Death .....	94
Abu Bakr's Time to Depart Draws Near .....	96
Abu Bakr's Character: Extremely Simple Life .....	99



# Chapter 1



# The Death of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him)

## Completion of the Task

When Islam reached the peak of perfection, these words were sent down upon the Prophet Muhammad (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), by Allah Most High (which mean):

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ فَضْلِيَ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ وَمَا﴾

*‘Today I have perfected your religion for you, completed My grace on you and approved Islam for your religion.’ [Al-Ma’idah 5:3]*

The Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had conveyed the Message truthfully. He had fulfilled the trust placed on him and striven in the cause of Allah as he should. Allah had favoured His Prophet, when people entered Islam in throngs. At this point, Allah gave His Prophet leave to depart from this world. As the hour of departure drew close, Allah announced (what means):

﴿وَإِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ ﴿١﴾ وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا ﴿٢﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُ ۗ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ﴿٣﴾﴾

*‘When comes the help of Allah and victory, and you see people entering Allah’s religion in throngs, then glorify the praise of your Lord and seek His Forgiveness. He is indeed Ever-turning.’ [An-Nasr 110: 1-3]*

Upon returning from *Hajj* in the month of Dhul Hijjah, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) remained in Madinah for the remaining months of al-Muharram and Safar in the year 11 AH/632 CE. Soon after, his attention turned towards the north. In the last days of Safar, the second month of the year, he began to prepare a huge army. He decided that the time had come to reverse the defeat of Mu'tah. He commanded that preparations be made for an expedition against those tribes of Syria, which had sided with the Roman troops on the day when Zayd ibn Harithah, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, and Abdullah ibn Rawahah were killed. He called Zayd's son Usamah to him and placed him, despite his youth, in command of the three-thousand-strong army. Usamah was only seventeen years old at that time.

# The Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) Final



## Illness

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was taken ill shortly before the end of Safar, 11 AH/632 CE.

One night, not long after the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had ordered preparations for the Syrian Campaign and before the army had left, he called his freedman Abu Muwayhibah and said, 'I have been ordered to seek forgiveness for the people of the cemetery, so come with me.' It was midnight. They went out together. When they reached al-Baqi, a graveyard in Madinah, he (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) supplicated for forgiveness for

the people at the graveyard. Then he turned to Abu Muwayhibah and said, 'I have been offered the keys of the treasures of this world and everlasting stay therein, followed by Paradise. I have been given the choice, between that and meeting with my Lord and Paradise.'

Abu Muwayhibah said, 'May my father and mother be ransomed for you! Take the keys of the treasures of this world and immortality [the state of being immortal; that lasts or lives forever] therein, followed by Paradise.' The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) answered him saying, 'I have already chosen the meeting with my Lord and Paradise.' Then he supplicated for forgiveness for the people of al-Baqi. Then he returned to Ai'shah's house.

It was at dawn, or perhaps the next day, that he (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) developed a headache. His head ached as never before, and he became severely ill. He developed a burning fever that was so high that the heat of the fever could be felt over his headband.

Even so, he still went to the Mosque and continued to lead the Prayers as usual. He tried to continue with his regular routine as best as he could, but his illness increased, until the hour came when he could pray only in a sitting position.

He gave his last *Khutbah* or sermon five days before his death. He mounted the pulpit and invoked blessings on the martyrs of Uhud, as if he were doing so for the last time. He then said, 'There is a slave amongst the slaves of Allah unto whom Allah has offered the choice

between this world and that which is with Him; and the slave has chosen that which is with Allah.’ When he said that, Abu Bakr wept, for he knew that Allah’s Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was speaking about himself and that the choice meant approaching death. Allah’s Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) saw that Abu Bakr had understood. He told him not to weep and then said, ‘O people, the person who has favoured me the most with his companionship and wealth is Abu Bakr, and if I were to take from all of mankind a bosom friend, he would be Abu Bakr, but for brotherhood [in Islam].’ Before leaving the pulpit, he said, ‘I go before you, and I am your witness. Your appointment with me will be at the Pool, which surely I see from here where I now stand. I fear not for you that you will set up deities besides Allah; but I fear for you this world, lest you seek to rival each other in worldly gains.’

From the Mosque he went to the apartment of Maymunah, whose turn it was to receive him. The effort of delivering the *Khutbah* to the congregation had increased his fever and his pain. Then, in the apartment of Maymunah, he called his wives and asked them to permit him to be looked after in Ai’shah’s apartment. All of them agreed. He came out walking between two men of his household, Fadhl ibn Abbas and Ali ibn Abi Talib. His head was wrapped tightly, and his feet were dragging as he entered Ai’shah’s house. [Remember ‘bin’ and ‘ibn’ both mean ‘son of’].

Ai'shah said that during his final illness, he told her, 'Ai'shah, I still feel pain from the food I ate at Khaybar. I feel my aorta [the main artery that carries blood from the heart to the rest of the body] being cut because of the poison.'

Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had commanded Usamah ibn Zayd to lead an expedition to the Syrian borders. Many of the prominent Emigrants and Helpers were in his army, the most eminent being Umar ibn al-Khattab. Preparations were hastened, and Usamah went out with his army as far as al-Jurf, where they encamped, about three miles to the north of Madinah. However, the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) illness took a serious turn when the army was at al-Jurf and Usamah broke camp. After his (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) death, Abu Bakr sent forward the army under Usamah, to fulfil the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) last wishes and his command.

At the next call to Prayer, Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) could no longer lead it, even though he remained seated. He, therefore, said to his wives, 'Tell Abu Bakr to lead the people in Prayer.' Ai'shah feared that it would immensely grieve her father to take the place of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), so she said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Abu Bakr is a very sensitive man. He is not strong of voice and is given to weeping when he recites the Qur'an.' However the Prophet (May the

peace and blessing of Allah be on him) insisted, 'Tell him to lead the Prayer.' Thus, for the rest of his illness, Abu Bakr led the Prayer.

Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) used to come to visit the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). At one of these visits, Ai'shah saw him whisper something to his daughter. Thereupon, Fatimah began to weep. Then he confided to her another secret, and she began to smile through her tears. Later, Ai'shah asked her what he had said, and she answered, 'The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) told me that he would die in that illness, whereof he died, and so I wept. Then he told me that I would be the first from his household to follow him, and so I laughed.'

Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) suffered great pain in his illness. Umm Ayman was in constant attendance. She kept her son Usamah informed of his condition. On one of those days, during which the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) condition worsened, he (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said concerning the *Ansar*, 'I advise you to take care of and be kind to the *Ansar* [Helpers]. They are very close to me. So accept from those among them who do well, and pardon those among them who do wrong.'

Jabir says, 'Three days before the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) died, I heard him say, "Let no one among you die



except while he is having good thoughts about Allah, the Possessor of Might and Majesty.”

It was early morning on Monday, 12 Rabi al-Awwal, 11 AH, when the Prophet’s (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) fever lessened. The call to Prayer made him decide to go to the Mosque. The Prayer had already begun when he entered. When Abu Bakr realized that the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was approaching, he stepped back without turning his head. But Allah’s Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) placed his hand on his shoulder and pressed him forward again in front of the congregation, while he himself sat on the left of Abu Bakr and prayed seated. Thus, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was leading the Prayer and Abu Bakr became his *Mukabbir* [a person who lends his voice to the followers].

Not long afterwards, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) lost consciousness. Ai’shah thought that it was the onset of death, but after some time he opened his eyes. Then she heard him murmur: “With the Supreme Companion in Paradise, with those upon whom Allah has showered His Favours, the Prophets and *Siddeeqs* [those who testify to the truth] and the martyrs and the righteous -- most excellent companions are they!” These words were the last words she heard him (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) speak. After this, Ai’shah laid his head on a pillow.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) died after midday on Monday, 12 Rabi al-Awwal, 11 AH/632 CE. He died at the age of sixty-three. The day of his death was the darkest and the saddest day that the Muslims had ever seen.

## Abu Bakr's Return

It was a little after midday when the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) died. The Muslims were shocked, bewildered and confused. Some of them sat down and were not even able to stand. Others lost their ability to speak. Yet others were in complete denial, refusing to believe that the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had really died.

Among this last group was Umar ibn al-Khattab. In fact, no one was in greater denial than him. He began to threaten anyone who claimed that the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had died. He said, 'He has not died. Rather, he has gone to his Lord, just as Musa ibn Imran went, remaining absent from his people for forty nights, after which he returned to them.' When Abu Bakr heard about the news of the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) death, he mounted his horse and rode from his house in al-Sunh until he reached the Mosque. His house was in the upper residential district of Madinah.

He crossed the courtyard, not paying any attention to Umar ibn al-Khattab. He entered Ai'shah's chamber and headed straight for the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), who was covered in a garment. Abu Bakr removed the part of the garment that covered the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) face. Bending down, he kissed the Prophet's (May the

peace and blessing of Allah be on him) forehead and began to cry. He then said, 'May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! Allah will not combine two deaths upon you. As for the death that was decreed for you, you have just tasted it.'

When Abu Bakr said, 'Allah will not combine two deaths upon you,' he was proving false what Umar was claiming that the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) would come back to life. Abu Bakr knew that even if that were the case, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) would still have to die again; which meant that he would have to die two deaths. Abu Bakr knew that the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) enjoyed too high a status with Allah for that to happen to him.

# Umar Realizes the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) Had Indeed Died

Abu Bakr came out of the Mosque, Umar was speaking to the people. He was still in a fit of rage. Abu Bakr said, ‘O Umar, sit down.’ Abu Bakr then stood up to deliver a sermon to the people. He praised Allah, glorified Him and then said, ‘Whoever worships Muhammad, then indeed Muhammad has died. And whosoever worships Allah, then Allah is Ever-Living and He does not die.’ He then recited an *Ayah* (Verse) of the Noble Qur’an (which means):

﴿ وَمَا مَسَّنَا إِلَّا رِسُولٌ مِمَّنْ مَكَتَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ رُسُلًا أَفَلَمْ نَكُنْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ نَبِيًّا وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا ﴾

*‘Muhammad (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) is no more than a Messenger and indeed Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels? And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah, and Allah will give reward to those who are grateful.’*

[*Āl-Imrān 3: 144*]

Umar later said, ‘No sooner did I hear Abu Bakr recite that Verse, than I fell to the ground. My legs could no longer carry me. And I came to know that the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had indeed died.’ This incident is the strongest proof of Abu

Bakr's bravery. He had a firm and steadfast heart during times of hardships and misfortunes. There was no calamity greater than the death of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), at which Umar claimed that the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had not died, Uthman lost the ability to speak and Ali secluded himself. The community was on the verge of plunging into utter chaos, but Abu Bakr brought calm to the situation with this Verse of the Glorious Qur'an. It was as if people did not know that Allah had revealed this Verse, until Abu Bakr recited it. In doing so, Abu Bakr as-Siddiq saved the Muslim nation from many hardships and solved many of the problems that afflicted Muslims. He understood the truth on occasions when no one else did – not even Umar.

## Men of Madinah Meet to Elect a Chief

The assembly in the courtyard of the Mosque had quieted down, when a messenger ran up, breathless with a report that the *Ansar*, the citizens of Madinah, had assembled to choose a caliph from amongst themselves. The *Ansar* had gathered in the courtyard of Banu Sa'idah on the very same day, which was Monday, 12 Rabi al-Awwal, the year 11 AH/632 CE.

The Companions knew that the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had indeed died. The purpose of their meeting was to choose someone among them to be the first caliph of the Muslim nation. The word caliph is the English form of the Arabic word *Khalifah*, which means a successor, or the political and religious leader of the Muslims.

This was a critical moment when the unity of the community was at stake. A divided nation would fall to pieces. All power and strength would be lost. The mantle of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) must fall upon one successor and one alone. The sovereignty or authority of the Muslim state demanded an undivided Caliphate. The people of the *Ansar* had gathered around the leader of the *Khazraj* tribe, Sa'd ibn Ubadah. Meanwhile, the people of the *Muhajirûn* or Emigrants gathered elsewhere with Abu Bakr. The purpose of their meeting was the same. They too wanted to appoint a caliph from among themselves. However, before they arrived at a

decision, they remembered their brothers from the *Ansar*. They said to each other, 'Let us go to our brothers from the *Ansar*, for they have the right to help us arrive at a decision regarding this matter.'

So Abu Bakr and Umar, accompanied by some other Companions hurried to the spot. The Helpers or *Ansar* from Madinah wanted their chief, Sa'd ibn Ubadah, to succeed, but this was strongly opposed by the Emigrants. They insisted that the Bedouin tribes would not accept someone from Madinah. Eventually, it was agreed that Abu Bakr should succeed the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) political position with the title of Caliph [*Khalifah* meaning successor, the full title being *Khalifat Rasûl Allah*: the successor to the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him)].

The next day at dawn, before leading the Prayer, Abu Bakr sat at the pulpit. Umar rose and addressed the assembly. He bade them pledge their allegiance to Abu Bakr. He described him as: 'The best of you, the Companion of Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), the second of the two when they were both in the cave.' And with one voice, the whole congregation swore fealty to him -- except Ali, who a little later affirmed the right of Abu Bakr and pledged his allegiance to him.



## Chapter 2

# The Caliphate of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq

## May Allah be pleased with him

### Abu Bakr's Inaugural Address

Then Abu Bakr gave praise and thanks to Allah and addressed them, saying, 'I have been given the authority over you, and I am not the best of you. If I do well, help me; and if I do wrong, set me right. Sincere regard for truth is loyalty and disregard for truth is treachery. The weak amongst you shall be strong with me until I have secured his rights, if Allah Wills; and the strong amongst you shall be weak with me until I have wrested from him the rights of others, if Allah Wills. Obey me so long as I obey Allah and His Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). But if I disobey Allah and His Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), you owe me no obedience. Arise for your Prayer, may Allah have mercy upon you.' This address was to become one of the most memorable and moving speeches in the history of the Muslim nation.

# The Funeral Prayer & Burial of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him)



## Allah be on him)

After the Prayer, the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) household and his family decided that they must prepare him for burial, but they disagreed over how it should be done. Eventually, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was washed with his garment upon him. The Companions now had different opinions regarding where he should be buried. However, Abu Bakr remembered having heard the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) say,

'No Prophet dies but is buried where he died.' So a grave was dug in the floor of Ai'shah's room near the couch where he was lying. Then the people of Madinah came and prayed over him. They came in turns and

each small group prayed the Funeral Prayer. The women came after the men and after them the children, all of them prayed over the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). Nobody acted as an *Imam* or led the funeral prayers for the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

# Abu Bakr the First of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs

The supreme authority thus passed, without hindrance, into the hands of Abu Bakr. The decision to choose a single successor to the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) to lead the Muslims had a great effect on the progress of Islam. A decision of world-shaking importance had been reached.

## Usamah ibn Zayd's Army

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq now had an opportunity to show his determination in carrying out the will of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) in matters both great and small. Just before he fell sick, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had given orders for an expedition to the Syrian border.

In fact, during the lifetime of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), two major empires bordered the Arabian Peninsula: the Roman Empire and the Persian Empire. The Roman Empire controlled large areas of land in the northern part of Arabia. The rulers of those areas acted as viceroys for the Roman Emperor. They were appointed by the Empire and were completely under its control.

The Romans had a very low opinion of the Arabs who lived in the Peninsula. They were annoyed when they heard about the events taking place in Arabia and the fact that Arabs were organizing themselves under the banner of a single religion: Islam. Wanting to teach them a lesson, the Romans made certain invasions towards the south. Meanwhile, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) sent messengers towards the northern area of the Peninsula that was collectively known as the region of ash-Sham -- Syria and the surrounding regions. He sent a letter to Heraclius, the emperor of Rome. In it, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on

him) invited him to embrace Islam. However, the emperor turned away from the truth and refused to accept Islam.

The Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was facing a difficult situation. Arabs were entering into the fold of Islam in throngs. Yet, almost all the Arabs felt the same way about the Romans – they were terrified of the Romans. The Roman Empire was, after all, one of the only two super powers of that time. The Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) approach for dealing with the widespread fear of the Roman Empire was clear. To fill the hearts of the Muslims with a sense of confidence, he took the offensive against the Romans. It produced a two-fold effect. On one hand, it made the Romans doubt themselves and their control over the region. On the other hand, it made the Muslims believe that they had it in them, with the help of Allah, to stand up to their Roman neighbours. In the year 8 AH/629 CE, the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) sent out an army that clashed with a force that consisted of Romans and Christian Arabs. The battle that followed is known as the Battle of Mu'tah. During the course of events, all the commanders of the Muslim army -- Zayd ibn Harithah, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, and Abdullah ibn Rawahah -- were martyred. When the last of them died, Khalid ibn al-Walid – the Sword of Allah – took control of the army. Against tremendous odds, he was able to return with almost all of his soldiers back to safety in Madinah.

Then in the year 9 AH/630 CE, the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) set out with a huge army towards ash-Sham [Syria and surrounding regions]. The army reached Tabûk, but no fighting took place between the Muslims and the Romans. Likewise, no fighting took place between the Muslims and the Arab tribes that inhabited the region.

Finally, in the year 11 AH/632 CE, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) informed his Companions that he would be sending out an army to fight the Romans in al-Balqa and Palestine. Among those who were prepared to go were the most prominent members of the Emigrants and the Helpers. In a decision that surprised many of them, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) appointed the very young Usamah ibn Zayd to lead the army. He was only 17 years old. It is reported that Usamah's army was completely ready on Saturday, two days before the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) died. The actual preparations, however, for the expedition had begun much earlier, even before the final illness of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). In fact, it was at the end of the month of Safar that the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) first ordered his people to get ready to attack the Romans. The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) called Usamah ibn Zayd and told him, 'Go to where your father was killed and trample the enemy down with your horses; for indeed, I have placed you in- charge of this army.'

Some people voiced their doubts over Usamah's appointment to lead the army. He was young. He was inexperienced in comparison to others. Moreover, the army consisted of men who had participated alongside the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) in many previous battles. They had more than proven their worth on the battlefield. Even Umar and Abu Bakr were part of the army. Thus, some people asked, why was Usamah chosen to lead them? What they did not realize was that it was not their place to question the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) once he had made the final decision. The Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) made that point quite clear when he said, 'If you are critical of his leadership, then you were also critical of his father's leadership in the past. By Allah, he was indeed worthy of being a leader. He was among the most beloved of people to me. And now that he has departed [Zayd had been martyred in a previous battle], this one [Usamah] is among the most beloved of people to me.'

With the death of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), the situation for Muslims changed completely. The Muslims had to ask themselves whether they could afford to send out Usamah's army to attack the Romans. However, Abu Bakr was firm. He announced, only three days after the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) death: 'Let Usamah's army go out and complete the mission. Let no member of Usamah's army spend this



night in Madinah. Instead, let each one of them leave immediately for his encampment in al-Jurf.’



Obeying the command, the fighters of Madinah and its neighbourhood flocked to the camp. Even Umar ibn al-Khattab was among them. As the army was preparing to depart, the situation suddenly worsened. Reports of the Prophet’s (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) illness, followed by news of his death had spread like wildfire in the land. From every side came rumours of disloyalty and of the intention to abandon Islam. The army, and Usamah himself, was strongly against leaving the city defenceless and the Caliph exposed to the risk of sudden danger.

Umar ibn al-Khattab was sent to inform Abu Bakr of this, and to urge that if the army must proceed, a more experienced general should assume command. To the first request Abu Bakr replied, calm and unmoved, ‘Were the city swarming round with packs of ravenous wolves, and I was left solitary and alone, the force should still go, not a word from the Prophet’s (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on

him) lips shall fall to the ground.’ At the second demand, the Caliph’s anger was aroused and he said,

‘Your mother be bereaved of you, O son of al-Khattab!’ He said, seizing Umar by the beard, ‘Shall the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) appoint a man to the command, and I deposing him, appoint another in his place?’

Thus, Umar returned without gaining either objective.

When all was ready for the march, Abu Bakr repaired to the camp, and accompanied the forces a little way on foot, Usamah said to him, ‘Mount, or else I will dismount and walk by you.’ ‘No,’ replied Abu Bakr, ‘I will not mount. I will walk and soil my feet a little while in the way of Allah. Truly, every step trodden in the way of Allah is equal to the merit of manifold good works, and wipes out a large number of sins.’ Abu Bakr knew he had made the right decision, but as he walked alongside Usamah, there was one thing which troubled him. One of the soldiers in Usamah’s army was Umar ibn al-Khattab. He was Abu Bakr’s most trusted adviser. He was sincere and always willing to speak his mind. Abu Bakr needed Umar by his side now more so than any other time. Abu Bakr said to Usamah, ‘If it be your will, give Umar permission that he may return with me to the city, for strength and advice.’ So Usamah gave him leave.

The army then halted to receive Abu Bakr’s parting words. Abu Bakr faced the soldiers and said,

‘O people! Stop, so that I can advise you regarding ten things. Memorize them from me. Avoid treachery. Do not depart in any way from the right. You shall not mutilate anyone. Nor shall you kill children, aged men or any women. Do not harm the date-palm, nor burn it with fire. Do not cut down any tree wherein is food for man or animal. Do not slay the flocks, herds or camels, except for needful provision. You may eat of the food, which the men of the land shall bring you in their vessels, after making mention therein of the Name of Allah. Fight not with those among the Jews and the Christians who have taken refuge in their places of worship. Leave them alone. Neither add to what the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) has commanded you nor subtract from it. Now march forward in the Name of the Lord and may He protect you.’

After this, Abu Bakr returned with Umar to Madinah and Usamah departed with his army. When Usamah reached his destination, he sent out horses to attack the tribes of Quda’ah and Abil. The expedition was a resounding success. Usamah and his men completed the mission and they were unharmed in the process. Both the journey to the highlands south of Syria and the return journey lasted for forty days. The army returned laden with spoils.

Heraclius, the Emperor of Rome learnt in a single message about the death of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and the arrival of Usamah’s army. The Romans were shocked. They exclaimed, ‘What is the matter with them? Their

Companion dies and then they attack our land?’ Meanwhile, the Arabs in the regions said, ‘If they were not powerful, they would not have sent out the army.’

Thus, the Arab Christians and the Romans were led to believe that the Muslims were quite powerful and they were not weak. As a result, the Romans refrained from attacking the Muslims. This proved that Abu Bakr had made the right decision in sending out Usamah and his army to Syria or ash-Sham.

## Chapter 3

### Abu Bakr as-Siddiq

## His Name, Ancestry, Titles, Family, and His Life

His name was Abdullah. Abu Bakr was not his actual name. It was his *Kunyah*. Do you know what *Kunyah* means? *Kunyah* is an Arabic word which is a title, by which one is ascribed to one's son or daughter, or by which one is associated with some place, idea or a group of people. A *Kunyah* is expressed in the form 'Abu so-and-so or *Umm* [mother] of so-and-so'. When used literally, a *Kunyah* ascribes or connects a person to his son. So if one's name is Abu Abdullah, people would probably be right in guessing that he has a son whose name is Abdullah. But this is not always the case.

A *Kunyah* is often used figuratively [means not literally] as well.

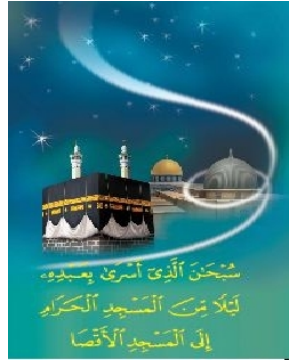
Let us take an example. Hurayrah means 'a small cat' in Arabic. One particular Companion of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) always kept a small cat with him. He was, therefore, given the *Kunyah*, Abu Hurayrah.

As for Abu Bakr's *Kunyah*, Bakr literally means a young camel, but it also refers to a very large Arab tribe. The following is Abu Bakr's name

and lineage (and keep in mind, as we have pointed out earlier, that *ibn* means ‘son of’): Abdullah ibn Uthman ibn Amir al-Qurashi at-Taymi. Al-Qurashi and at-Taymi are mentioned at the end of his lineage as a way of connecting him to his tribes of Quraysh and at-Taym. Abu Bakr’s lineage met up with that of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) at a distance of six generations. Abu Bakr was given many names or titles throughout his life. Each one of them points to one or more of his superior qualities.

In Arabic, if someone or something is known by many names, it is often the case that a person or thing is important in some way. In the same spirit, Abu Bakr was given many names and titles. Among those names, three of his titles are very popular: 1. As-Siddiq; 2. Al-Atiq; and 3. As-Sahib.

# As-Siddiq



As-Siddiq, the best known of Abu Bakr's titles comes from the word *Sidq*, which means truthfulness. The word as-Siddiq denotes a person who is constantly truthful or who constantly believes in the truthfulness of someone or something -- in Abu Bakr's case, in the truthfulness of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). He was named as-Siddiq, because of his constant and unwavering belief in the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). The night after the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) went on his Night Journey to Masjid al-Aqsa, the people began to talk about it, being in doubt about the possibility of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) being able to travel to and from Jerusalem in a single night. A number of them went to Abu Bakr and said, 'Will you not go to your Companion? He claims that he went on a night-journey last night to Jerusalem!' He answered, 'Did he really say that?' They replied, 'Yes.' He said, 'If he said that, he spoke the

truth.' They asked, 'And do you truly believe him when he says that he travelled to Jerusalem last night, and returned just before dawn, this morning?' He replied, 'Yes, I do indeed believe him about the things which are even more amazing than that: I believe him about revelation that comes to him from the heavens in the early morning or in the afternoon.' It is because of this incident that he was named as-Siddiq: the truthful or the champion of truth.



## Al-Atiq

The word 'al-Atiq' has various shades of meaning in Arabic. It can mean old, ancient, or noble. It can also mean someone who has been freed either from bonds of slavery or from some unpleasant circumstances. Once the Prophet of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) told him: 'Rejoice, for you are the Atiq [the freed one] of Allah, from the Hellfire.' Some historians are of the view that Abu Bakr was named Atiq, because of the handsomeness or the nobility of his features.

### 3. As-Sahib

As-Sahib literally means the Companion. Allah gave Abu Bakr this title in the Noble Qur'an [9: 40]. Scholars unanimously agree that 'his Companion' in this Verse refers to Abu Bakr as-Siddiq. Once Abu Bakr said, 'While we were in the cave, I said to the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), 'If anyone of them had looked down below his feet, he would have surely seen us. But he said, "What do you think, O Abu Bakr, could befall the two who have Allah as the third with them?"' When the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and Abu Bakr were hiding in the cave, some of the pursuers passed above its opening without noticing them.

## His Birth and Physical Description

Abu Bakr was born after the Year of the Elephant, the year during which Abraha marched towards Makkah with his army. This means he was a few years younger than the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). Born and raised in Makkah, in a house of noble lineage, Abu Bakr was blessed with a very distinguished upbringing.

He was white-skinned and lean. His beard did not grow very long on his cheeks. His back leaned forward to a certain degree. Because of his physical constitution – his leanness – his lower garment would not remain in place at the level of his hips. His face was thin, smooth, and fair, nose sharp, forehead high, and eyes deep-seated. When his hair turned grey, he would dye it with henna and *al-Katm* [a kind of shrub used for dyeing, that was very similar to henna]. Even in his old age, his appearance was handsome; his expression mild, but wise and resolute. To him, faith in the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had become a second nature. Once the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had passed away, the Companion lived to fulfil his will. It was these qualities that made Abu Bakr, out of all the Companions of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), the truest, firmest, and most resolute.

## His Family

Abu Bakr's father's name was Uthman. His *Kunyah* was Abu Qûhafah, by which he was most famously known. Abu Qûhafah embraced Islam on the day of the Conquest of Makkah. Abu Bakr's mother's name was Salmah. She was the daughter of Sakhr ibn Amr. Her *Kunyah* was Umm al-Khair. She embraced Islam during the earlier stages of the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) calling people to Islam.

During his lifetime, Abu Bakr had four wives in all, who bore him six



children: three sons and three daughters.

The eldest of Abu Bakr's sons was Abdur Rahman. He embraced Islam on the Day of the Treaty of al-Hudaybiyyah. He then became a good and practising Muslim. He tried to remain in the company of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) constantly.

## Asma bint Abu Bakr

Asma, Ai'shah and Umm Kulthum were Abu Bakr's three daughters. The eldest of them was Asma. She was named 'She of the Two Girdles [*Dhat an-Nitaqayn*]. A *Nitaq* was a girdle of cloth worn by women. She was named thus, because when the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and Abu Bakr were preparing to go to Makkah, Asma made a *Sufrah* [a mat that is used for eating] in a bag for her father. She fastened the bag containing the provisions, which the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and her father were to take on their journey, by tearing her girdle into two pieces. The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) himself gave her this name. Asma was married to the eminent Companion Az-Zubayr ibn al-Awwam.

When she migrated to Madinah, she was expecting Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr. She gave birth to him when she arrived in Madinah. This is significant, because Abdullah was the first Muslim child to be born after the emigration of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

Asma bint Abu Bakr lived a long life. Even when she reached the ripe old age of one hundred, she still had her teeth and was as intelligent as ever. She greatly benefited the Muslim nation. She used to relate *Hadith* (narrations) to students who visited her. She died in Makkah in the year 73 AH/ 692 CE.

## Ai'shah the Mother of the Believers

One of the titles of Ai'shah was 'the Truthful, Daughter of the Truthful'. She was married to the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). Of all women throughout the history of Islam, Ai'shah was without a doubt, the most knowledgeable. With regard to certain aspects of the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) life, she was even more learned than the most learned of the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) Companions.

After the death of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), she dedicated the rest of her life to spreading the knowledge she had learnt from the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). Some 2210 of Ai'shah's narrations are recorded in *Hadith* compilations. She died in the year 57 AH/ 676 CE. Ai'shah did not have any children.

# Umm Kulthum

She was born shortly, after Abu Bakr died. At the time of Abu Bakr's death, two of Ai'shah's brothers were alive, and her sister Asma was also alive.

These were the members of Abu Bakr's blessed household, a household of Islam and *Eeman*.

## Abu Bakr as-Siddiq's Life in Makkah

During the pre-Islamic days of ignorance, Abu Bakr was a businessman. He would go on business trips to Busrah in ash-Sham [Syria and surrounding areas] and to other cities as well. A rich man, he would spend generously on the poor and needy. He was fair and generous in his business dealings. When people feared being cheated in a business transaction, they would take their business to Abu Bakr, knowing fully well that he would not cheat them. He would instead be fair and true to his word.



## The Quraysh Loved Him

All the members of the Quraysh loved Abu Bakr. Like the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), Abu Bakr never drank alcohol during the pre-Islamic days of ignorance.

He knew the ill-effects of alcohol and strove to keep his dignity and honour at all times. Abu Bakr was similar to the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) in another important respect as well. Throughout his entire life, he never performed a prostration to an idol. He knew that worshipping idols was a degrading and senseless thing to do.

# Abu Bakr's Acceptance of Islam



Bakr as-Siddiq was the first free man to embrace Islam. He did not hesitate before he embraced Islam. Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) once informed his Companions that whenever he invited a person to Islam, that person would hesitate before making up his mind to accept Islam -- except for Abu Bakr. He did not hesitate. He did not waver. Instead, he immediately embraced Islam and believed in the Messenger of Islam (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

Abu Bakr was intimately familiar with the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) during the pre-Islamic days of ignorance. He knew that Muhammad (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was trustworthy and honest. He knew that Muhammad (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was so honest that he would not lie even about small matters. He knew that it was impossible for Muhammad (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) to lie about Allah. His entry into the fold of Islam was nothing short of a

great victory for the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and Islam.

# Abu Bakr Preaches the Message of Islam

Abu Bakr was a successful caller to the message of Islam. From within his family, his wife Umm Rumman, his daughters Ai'shah and Asma, his son Abdullah and his servant Amir ibn Fuhayrah embraced Islam during those early days of the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) mission. Men who accepted Islam at Abu Bakr's hands were: Az-Zubayr ibn al-Awwam, Uthman ibn Affan, Talhah ibn Ubaydullah, Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas, Uthman ibn Madh'un, Abu Bakr Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah, Abdur Rahman ibn Awf, Abu Bakr Salamah ibn Abdul Asad, and Arqam ibn Abi Arqam. All of them became eminent Companions in their own right. Each one of them went on to preach the message of Islam to others.

# Trials and Tribulations

The Quraysh persecuted and tortured weak Muslims and slaves when they embraced Islam in Makkah. Even Muslims from the upper classes of Makkah were not saved from one form of persecution or another. Abu Bakr was no exception. In fact, on one occasion, Abu Bakr was beaten so badly that he almost died as a result.

When there were only thirty-eight male Muslims, Abu Bakr asked the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) to preach the message of Islam openly. However, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) answered by saying, ‘O Abu Bakr, we are few in number.’ Abu Bakr continued to urge the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) to preach openly, until one day, the Muslims spread out in different parts of the Mosque with each man remaining in the midst of his clan.

Abu Bakr then stood up to deliver a sermon. Allah’s Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) remained seated. At this, the polytheists became enraged and charged towards Abu Bakr. He was trampled upon and beaten severely. Using his shoes, the evildoer Utbah ibn Rab’iah began to strike Abu Bakr viciously on his face. So severely was Abu Bakr beaten, and so much blood flowed down his face, that it became difficult to make out his face and the back of his head. Had the beating continued, Abu Bakr might have died. However, his fellow clansmen from Banu Taym arrived to defend him. They pushed the

attacking mob away and carried Abu Bakr home, feeling certain that he had died.

Abu Bakr gained consciousness at the end of the day. Rather than worry about his own condition, Abu Bakr asked about the wellbeing of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). He was told, 'He is safe and sound.' Abu Bakr anxiously asked: 'Where is he?' He was informed, 'In the House of al-Arqam.'

Despite his own weakness and need for rest and adequate nourishment, he took an oath that he would neither eat nor drink before going to the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him)



and making sure that he was well.

When the situation calmed down in the streets, they led Abu Bakr to the House of al-Arqam. Since he was not able to walk on his own, he leaned on them for support. As soon as they entered, the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) hurried towards Abu Bakr and kissed him. The other Muslims that were there also

hurried to meet Abu Bakr. The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was greatly moved by Abu Bakr's condition.

After the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), Abu Bakr was the first person to be harmed in the way of Allah. He was the first to defend the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and he was the first to invite others to the way of Allah. Throughout his entire life, Abu Bakr was like the right hand of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

Abu Bakr dedicated all his time to the cause of Islam. He accompanied the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and helped him.

# Abu Bakr Spent his Wealth to Purchase the Freedom of Muslim Slaves

Abu Bakr spent a great deal of his wealth on setting slaves free. He purchased the freedom of Bilal and declared that he was now a free man. One of the slaves Abu Bakr freed was Amir ibn Fuhayrah who later took part in the battles of Badr and Uhud. He also set free Umm Ubyas and Zinnirah. Abu Bakr also freed an-Nahdiyyah and her daughter.

Abu Bakr's heart flowed with sympathy and compassion for the weak. In Abu Bakr's mind, Muslim slaves were his equals and his brothers in faith.



# Abu Bakr's Emigration [*al-Hijrah*] with the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) to al-



## Madinah

As time went by, the Quraysh became more and more brutal in their treatment of the Muslims. As a result, some Muslims migrated once or twice to Ethiopia, while the others continued to bear oppression at the hands of the Quraysh patiently.

When life became completely unbearable for Muslims in Makkah, relief came to them from Allah. The citizens of Madinah who accepted Islam, pledged to follow and defend the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). The Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) Companions then made their way to Madinah individually and in small groups.

The death of Abu Talib left the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) without a protecting ally. The death of Khadijah left him without personal moral support in a city [Makkah] that refused his call to Islam. His attempt to find a new base in Ta'if had been defeated. The polytheists of Makkah were not slow to realize the significance of Abu Talib's death. They increased their persecution. But when all avenues were closed, hope came from the direction of Madinah. It was to this ancient Arabian oasis in the North that, after his journey from Ta'if, the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) thoughts turned. However, when Abu Bakr asked for permission to leave Makkah, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) asked him to wait awhile, saying to him, 'Don't be in a hurry, it may be that Allah will give you a Companion.' The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) did not explain in detail what he meant, but Abu Bakr understood and wished, deep in his heart, that this promised Companion would be the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) himself.

At the time no Muslims were left in Makkah, except for the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), Abu Bakr and Ali ibn Abi Talib, and those who were confined by the Quraysh or forced to leave Islam. So frightened were the Quraysh by the gathering of the Muslims in Madinah that they called an urgent meeting at Dar an-Nadwah, their assembly place. In this meeting, they decided that the best way to get rid of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah

be on him) was to assassinate him, but Allah revealed the whole affair to the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) through the Angel Jibril. The long-awaited hour for undertaking the *Hijrah* or emigration had come.



Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) went to the house of Abu Bakr and told him that Allah had given him permission to migrate to Madinah. Abu Bakr anxiously asked, 'Together, O Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him)?' The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) replied, 'Together.' Abu Bakr's eyes filled with tears. Then Abu Bakr said that he had hoped for this all along, ever since the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had told him that Allah might give him a Companion. He also told the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) that he had long since purchased and readied two camels in anticipation of the journey.

Abu Bakr had already arranged to hire an excellent guide on to the road to Madinah. His name was Abdullah ibn Urayqat. The man was a

polytheist, not a Muslim, but he was an expert and completely trustworthy. The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) insisted on paying the cost of his camel, thus indicating the importance and desirability of each Muslim paying, as far as possible, for the expenses of his own emigration or *Hijrah*.

When preparations were complete, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and Abu Bakr began their journey. They avoided the main streets of the city, walking rather than riding, so as not to be noticed. To mislead their pursuers even further, they went southwards, that is, in a direction opposite the one normally taken to Madinah. The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) knew quite well that his pursuers would be waiting for him on the way to Madinah to the north of Makkah. His immediate destination was a cave in Mount Thawr, just below the city of Makkah to the south. Things were planned well in advance, so that they could hide safely for three days in that cave. It was a sufficient period for the situation to calm down, and to draw the pursuers off the road.

While the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and Abu Bakr were hiding in the cave, some of their pursuers passed by its entrance without even noticing them. Abu Bakr worried so much about the safety of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) that he shook with fear. However, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) reassured him, 'O Abu Bakr, what do you think of two men, the third among whom is Allah Himself?' The

Qur'an refers to this conversation between the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and Abu Bakr. When the polytheists were standing above the cave, Abu Bakr said, 'If one of them were to look beneath his feet, he would see us.' The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) said, 'Do not grieve, Allah is surely with us.'



After three days in the cave, when the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and Abu Bakr were ready to be on the road again, Asma came along with a big bag full of provisions for the journey. She wanted to tie it, but could not find a string. She tore her own girdle in half and made a string from it. For this reason, this noble and courageous woman was called 'She of the Two Girdles'.

Having set out from the cave on 4 Rabi al-Awwal, the first year AH, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and Abu Bakr reached Madinah on 12, Rabi al-Awwal.

This marked the end of the emigration of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and his Companion to Madinah. But the emigration of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be

on him) did not mark the end of the goals and objectives that the migration itself signified.

The establishment of a Muslim state, which was realized with the migration of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), enabled the development of a wonderfully civilized and advanced society. It was established upon faith, piety, goodness, and justice. It was, therefore, soon able to overcome the two greatest empires of the time: the Roman and the Persian Empire.

# Chapter 4

## Abu Bakr's Faith in Action



Abu Bakr did not miss a single expedition or battle in which the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) took part. He participated in the Battle of Badr. When most people fled from the battlefield on the Day of Uhud, Abu Bakr stood firmly and bravely alongside the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). On the day of Tabûk, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) handed him the black flag, which was the flag not just of a single battalion, but of the entire Muslim army.

When he was young, Abu Bakr was a close friend of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and when he grew older, he spent his wealth on him, providing him with – among other things – the riding animal and provisions to complete his migration to Madinah. As the years went by, he continued to spend on the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), and even married his daughter to him. Finally, when the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) died, he was buried in the apartment of Abu Bakr's

daughter. She was the most beloved of women to the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), just as Abu Bakr was the most beloved of men to the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).



# Abu Bakr: the First of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs

The period from the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) death until 40AH/661 CE is known as the era of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs or *al-Khulafah ar-Rashidûn*. After Abu Bakr, the others were Umar [634-44 CE], Uthman [644-56 CE] and Ali [656-61 CE]. The caliphate then passed into the hands of Muawiyah, the son of Abu Sufyan, and the clan of Umayyah managed to retain it among themselves until 132 AH/750 CE. They made Damascus their capital, and are known as the Umayyad dynasty. Another Makkan family known as the Abbasids, who were the descendants of the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) uncle al-Abbas, replaced them. They moved the capital to Baghdad. These political developments will be dealt with in greater detail in the other parts of this series of books, Allah Willing.



## Progress of Islam does not stop with the death of anyone.

On sending out Usamah's army, Abu Bakr sent a clear message to all the Muslims. The forward march of Islam should not, must not, and will not stop because of the death of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). In other words, the forward progress of Islam does not depend on any single person. It would always be the case that if one leader dies, another would rise to take his place. True, the Prophet had just died; His death represented the greatest calamity that had ever befallen the people of this nation.

Since the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was no longer among them, it became their duty to continue to do the job of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him): to spread the message of Islam to all mankind. After the death of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), Abu Bakr did not remain inactive. Only three days after the death of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), he took the brave decision to send out Usamah's army. Abu Bakr's bold step struck the Bedouin mind as an indication of the stability of his rule. If the leaders in Madinah had not been sure of strength at home, they would not have sent away their army. The Arab tribes and clans, reasoning

thus, were prevented from much they might otherwise have done. Still, the situation was critical, and at times quite alarming.

# Challenges and Problems Faced by Abu Bakr as-Siddiq as a Caliph:

## Abu Bakr's War Against Apostates

Who is an apostate? What is apostasy? The Arabic word for apostasy is *ar-Riddah*. Apostasy or *ar-Riddah* means to exit from the fold of Islam after having been a Muslim. Apostasy is to cut oneself off from Islam, either by intention, by action, or by word of disbelief. An apostate is called *Murtadd* in Arabic. The word is also applied to the period of revolt and the rise of false prophets among the desert tribes, which followed the death of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

After the death of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), the Arabs rose on all sides in rebellion. Apostasy and disloyalty raised their heads.

However, it is simply not true to think that the death of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) sent Arabia -- except for Madinah, Makkah, and Ta'if -- into the fold of apostasy. They did not leave *Tawhid* or Oneness of Allah. They did not adopt *Shirk* or polytheism. They did not turn to idol-worship.

They were, however, particularly against the payment of *Zakat* or the purifying obligatory dues. This was because it was against their sense of freedom and dignity. They, therefore, withheld the payment of *Zakat*,

the obligatory charity which is one of the Five Pillars of Islam, binding upon the believers. Thus, the problem before the Muslim was not that of polytheism and idol-worship. It was the question of unity and solidarity of the system which Islam had established at the cost of many sacrifices.

The rejection of the payment of *Zakat* was even more dangerous to the cause of Islam than the battles fought by the Muslims against the external forces harmful to Islam.

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq held an emergency meeting of the Companions to discuss this explosive situation. They put forward their opinion against fighting the rejecters of *Zakat*. Earlier, they had not been in favour of Usamah leading an army against the Romans. However, Abu Bakr announced his verdict against the rebellious tribes who refused to pay the *Zakat*. He declared firmly that even if only the cord used to hobble a young camel was withheld in payment of *Zakat*, he would fight those dissenters.

In the meantime, deputations of the apostates came to Madinah. They argued: 'We perform *Salah*, but we want to be freed from giving *Zakat*, but Abu Bakr's firm answer made them silent. They quietly went back to their places, but later rose as one man against the Islamic State. They began to make preparations to attack Madinah. They knew that the Muslim army headed by Usamah was busy fighting the Romans far away from Madinah. Against these threats, Abu Bakr acted quickly and firmly in what is usually called the Wars of Apostasy [or *Riddah*],

during which he sent armed expeditions of believers to the main centres of opposition in Arabia: Yemen, Nejd, and Yamamah.

Abu Bakr was in complete control of the situation, both at home and abroad. The Muslim government headed by Abu Bakr had the full support of tribes, individuals, and groups. They remained firm on Islam. He stayed in close contact with the Muslim forces fighting in far off lands. At the same time, he gave necessary orders to the *Zakat* collectors. He encouraged the people of Madinah to remain firm and united.

He asked the fighters among the people of Madinah to stay alert and be on guard in front of the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) Mosque. He sent Ali, Zubayr, Talhah, and Abdullah ibn Mas'ud on patrol duty around the city of Madinah.

Information came that the people of Abu Dhubyan, Banu Kinanah, and Banu Asad tribes had gathered together to attack Madinah. Abu Bakr himself went to repulse the enemy attack up to Dhu Khusab. He organized his troops, launched a fierce attack and routed the enemies completely after a fight of five or six hours, and later returned to Madinah. In the meantime, Usamah also came back with a very large quantity of spoils and entered Madinah. The success of Usamah's expedition opened the eyes of those who thought Islam was dying out after the death of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). Some of the tribes returned to Islam, which they had apparently abandoned.

# False Prophets

Abu Bakr then turned his army toward the false prophets. A number of individuals, including women had declared themselves as prophets. Among them were (1) Aswad al-Ansi, (2) Tulayhah of the Bani Asad tribe, (3) Musaylamah, the Liar, and (4) an ambitious young woman called Saj'ah.

## Aswad al-Ansi

He rose in Yemen. He was known as al-Ansi or the Veiled prophet. This was because he kept his face veiled all the time. He collected a huge army and stood up in an open revolt against Islam. He was killed by Muslim warriors. Tulayhah belonged to the tribe of Bani Asad in Northern Arabia. Just after the death of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), he rose in open revolt. Abu Bakr sent Khalid bin al-Walid to crush the revolt. After a fierce battle, Tulayhah's army was defeated and he fled to Syria. Later he entered Islam and was sincere in his repentance.



## Saj'ah bint al-Harith ibn Suwaid

She belonged to the tribe of Banu Tamim. Banu Tamim was a very big tribe. Not everyone from this tribe had apostatized. In fact, only some members of the overall Banu Tamim tribe apostatized. After the death of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), a number of chiefs of this tribe denied Islam and Saj'ah declared her prophethood. Four thousand people, including some of the chiefs, gathered around her, ready to march towards Madinah. She also forced those who did not cooperate with her to follow.

On her way to Madinah, she learnt about the Muslim army of Khalid ibn al-Walid, the Sword of Allah, who had crushed the rebellion of Tulayhah. Hearing the news of the army, she was frightened, and wrote a letter to Musaylamah, the Liar, seeking his support. Musaylamah had also declared his prophethood. In the beginning, a mutual understanding was reached between the two, but later Saj'ah married Musaylamah and accepted his prophethood.

In the meantime, Khalid ibn al-Walid reached the nerve centre of the tribe of Tamim. After the marriage of Saj'ah with Musaylamah, most of the people of the Banu Tamim who had rejected Islam re-entered into the fold of Islam.

Khalid ibn al-Walid did not do anything to them, but fought against those who were still apostates and defeated them. Saj'ah had been a Christian Arab, but then she claimed to be a prophetess. At one time,

Saj'ah and her soldiers came across the army led by Khalid ibn al-Walid. The soldiers of Saj'ah became so terrified that they fled, leaving Saj'ah alone. She gave up her pursuit of power and returned to her tribe, where she lived for a number of years. Then, years later, Mu'awiyah confronted her and her people and drove her from her land.

# Musaylamah: the Liar



Musaylamah belonged to a tribe of Central Arabia, called Banu Hanifah. He was born and brought up in Yamamah, in a town, which is today called al-Jubai'lah. In his younger days, he travelled far and wide throughout both Arab and foreign lands. His aim was to learn the different ways of influencing people. He was greatly interested in magic, fortune-telling, and other similar evil arts. He was known to have practised a magic trick in which he would reattach a bird's wing, which appeared to be, but was not really broken.

When Musaylamah first claimed to be a prophet, Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was in Makkah. He sent men to Makkah to listen to the Qur'an and convey it to him. When they returned and conveyed to him the Verses of the Qur'an they had heard, Musaylamah would recite them to people, claiming them as his own sayings. In the ninth year of the Islamic Calendar, a year during which Islam spread throughout Arabia, a delegation of Banu Hanifah tribesmen to which Musaylamah belonged visited the Prophet

of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), in Madinah, in order to declare their acceptance of Islam.

Shortly after the delegation returned to Yamamah, Musaylamah declared that he was a prophet. He said that he was a partner of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

Musaylamah posed perhaps the gravest danger to the Muslims during the apostasy wars. He had many well-armed followers. One claim that the Liar made was that the Qur'an was being sent down to him. In order to prove his claim, he would compose and recite Verses that he described as being a part of the Qur'an. Thus Musaylamah managed to lead a great many people astray, which goes to show just how easily fooled and ignorant many people are in the world.

Musaylamah gained almost unanimous and instant support from his tribesmen. This shows that people from Banu Hanifah tribe were naturally prone towards evil. They were merely waiting for someone to lead them. While it is true that the majority of Banu Hanifah tribesmen apostatized, several of them did not. In spite of the dangers they faced, they refused to yield to Musaylamah's false promises.

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq sent orders to Khalid ibn al-Walid to march towards Yamamah. Khalid headed towards Yamamah. He fought against all the apostates he came across on his way. Meanwhile, Abu Bakr sent out another large army, whose job was to protect the rear of Khalid's army.

Musaylamah was commanding an army of forty thousand men. The Muslim army under the Command of Khalid consisted of thirteen thousand soldiers. A fierce battle was fought. Several prominent Companions of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) were slain in the battle. In the end, Musaylamah's army was defeated.

## The End of Musaylamah, the Liar

Musaylamah had taken shelter in a garden. He was hiding in a gap along one of the garden walls. The first Muslim to see him was Wahshi ibn Harb. He was the same person who had earlier killed Hamzah, the uncle of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), during the Battle of Uhud. This was an opportunity to make amends for it. He had been waiting for such an opportunity for a long time. He had killed one of the best people on earth, and now, as an act of redemption as a good practising Muslim, he had before him the chance to kill one of the most evil men on earth.

Wahshi was an extremely skilled spear-thrower. He took aim and threw his spear. It pierced right through Musaylamah's body and exited from his other side. Musaylamah was almost killed, but he was still on his feet. Abu Dujanah then raced towards him. He struck him with a sword, causing him to fall down dead on the ground. Abu Dujanah was a valiant swordsman, who gloried in battles. His red turban was well known, and it was called 'the turban of death'. When he put it on, winding it around his helmet, they knew he meant to inflict great slaughter on the enemy.

Nearly ten thousand apostate fighters were killed in the garden. However, some historians have said that the number of their fallen soldiers was close to twenty-one thousand – hence the new name of the garden: 'The Garden of Death'. The number of Muslim casualties in

the garden ranged between five and six hundred, and Allah Knows best! Among the Muslim dead were some of the most eminent Companions of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

The outcome of the Battle of Yamamah resulted in mixed feelings for the Muslims. They felt joy at having defeated Musaylamah and sadness for the Muslim losses. During the course of the entire conflict in Yamamah, 1200 Muslims lost their lives. About forty of them had memorized the whole Qur'an. The conflict of Yamamah began in the year 11 AH/632 CE, and ended in the year 12 AH/633 CE. Thus, within a year of the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) death, the rebellious tribes were dealt a crushing defeat under the leadership of Khalid ibn al-Walid, the indomitable military commander during and after the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) time. Soon thereafter, practically all of Arabia was brought under the control of Madinah. Abu Bakr has been gratefully remembered for this remarkable feat of achieving unity in such a short time.

# Gathering the Glorious Qur'an in a Single Book

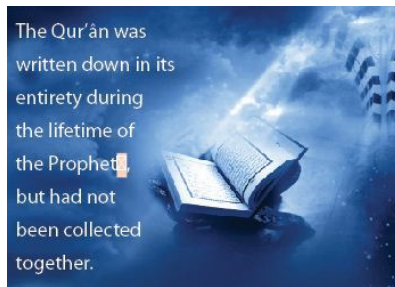


When the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) died, the Qur'an was not collected into a single book. Instead, parts of it lay with different people: on leather parchments, on bones, and in the hearts of men. Hence, when many Companions who had the Qur'an memorized died on the Day of Yamamah, their loss signified the possible loss of the Glorious Qur'an; or at least some of the Verses and Chapters.

The first person to sense not only the danger of the situation, but also the necessity of taking immediate and decisive action was Umar ibn al-Khattab. If more Companions who had memorized the entire Qur'an were to become martyrs in future battles and conflicts, most of the Qur'an would be lost. Therefore, Abu Bakr as-Siddiq appointed Zayd ibn Thabit al-Ansari to gather together the Glorious Qur'an from what was written of it on leather parchments and bones, and from what was preserved in the hearts of men.



Abu Bakr certainly gave a lot of thought to the matter before he put Zayd ibn Thabit in charge of gathering the Qur'an. In fact, Zayd possessed the qualities that were needed for the momentous task of collecting the Qur'an. Zayd was young -- only twenty-one years old -- but he was wise and intelligent. He used to write down Revelations for the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). As many as sixty-five different Companions acted in the capacity of scribes for the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and Zayd ibn Thabit was one of them. Zayd himself says that because of his nearness to the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) Mosque, he was often called as scribe whenever the Revelation commenced. Once the task of recording the Verses of the Qur'an was complete, Zayd would read them back to the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) to make sure that no writing



errors had left in.

Indeed, the Qur'an was written down in its entirety during the lifetime of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), but

had not been collected together. Zayd ibn Thabit then searched for the various parts of the Qur'an, finding them preserved on palm branches, on the surfaces of flat stones, in the hearts of men, on pieces of leather, and shoulder bones of camels and sheep. He continued to search for the Qur'an until he completed the task. He did everything that was necessary in order to ensure the correct and precise collection of the Qur'an. The collected scrolls of the Qur'an stayed with Abu Bakr until he died, and then with Umar ibn al-Khattab until he died, after which they were passed on to his daughter Hafsa, the wife of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

# Chapter 5

## The Spread of Islam



## The Conquest of Iraq

The major conquests of Islam began during the time of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). Some very important conquests were achieved during the time of Abu Bakr's caliphate. The rest took place during the times of the other Rightly-Guided Caliphs. In the following sections, we will talk briefly about the conquests and battles that took place during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq.

# The Roman Empire and the Iranian Empire

There were two superbly grand and large empires existing at the time of the Prophet of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him): the Roman and the Iranian or Persian empire. At the time, the world was ruled by these two civilizations. When Islam came with the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), a new power and new civilization emerged. It overshadowed the glittering civilizations of both Rome and Iran and left its mark as the only important power. The Roman Empire ruled Greater Syria and Egypt, and the Persian Empire ruled Iraq and Iran.

The rivalry between these two empires was centuries old. Frequent warfare took place between them during the second half of the sixth century. In the early seventh century, the Iranians or Sassanians were proving superior. In 614 CE, they captured Jerusalem and in 619 CE occupied Egypt. After about 622 CE, however, under the emperor Heraclius, the Romans began to regain strength. By 627 CE, Heraclius had become stronger. He recovered Egypt and Syria and advanced into Iraq. In 628 CE, the Iranian Emperor Chosroes was assassinated. This was followed by dynastic disputes, which led to the breakup of the empire.

# The Conquest of Iraq



These two mighty empires did not like the rise of a new power on the political horizon of Arabia, which was steadily challenging their oppressive authority in the region they ruled. Abu Bakr, therefore, had to devote his time and energy for the defence of the Muslim *Ummah* [nation] and Islam against these two empires. His chief aim was to spread the message of Islam to the rest of humanity, and his secondary goal was to save people from the tyrants that ruled over them.

No sooner did peace return to the Arabian Peninsula with the end of the Wars of Apostasy than Abu Bakr put into effect his plans of foreign conquests. Originally, the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had put together these plans.

In order to conquer Iraq, Abu Bakr sent forth two armies: (1) The first army was headed by Khalid ibn al-Walid, (2) The second army was headed by Iyadh ibn Ghanam. This took place in the year 12 AH/ 633 CE. There was a third army too that had not been sent earlier. Al-

Muthannah ibn Harithah, who was a native of Iraq, headed this army. He had fought battles in Iraq even before Abu Bakr decided to launch an all-out invasion of the Persian or Iranian Empire. Khalid ibn al-Walid proceeded with his army. Abu Bakr was a brilliant military planner. From Madinah, he sent word to Khalid and Iyadh and told them which road they should take to invade Iraq. He ordered one of them to enter from the south-western part of Iraq, and the other, from the north-eastern part of Iraq. It was an ideal manner of entry. It kept the enemy engaged on two fronts. Moreover, it allowed both Muslim armies to come together in Central Iraq. This enabled them to combine their forces and work as a single unit to bring down the enemy completely.

Abu Bakr as-Siddiq ordered al-Muthannah to join ranks with the advancing Muslim army and obey Khalid ibn al-Walid. The overall army of Khalid consisted of eighteen thousand soldiers. The Persian or the Sassanids greatly outnumbered the Muslims. There were several fierce encounters between the two armies. Battle after battle was lost to the Muslim armies. After centuries of comparative stability, the Persian Empire was thrown into a state of disorder. What made matters worse was the recent death of the Emperor of Persia, Azdashir. At the highest level of government, officials and members of the royal family were fighting for the throne. Finally, Muslims achieved victory over the Persians or Iranians. What was amazing about the war in Iraq was the speed with which the Muslims achieved victories. Khalid began his

military campaign in the month of Muharram in the year 12 AH/ 633 CE and he conquered most of Iraq by Rabi al-Awwal of the same year. Khalid ibn al-Walid was a brave soldier. His bravery was the result of his deep faith and complete trust in Allah's promises of rewards. He not only conquered most of the southern part of Iraq in a short time, he also helped Iyadh conquer a vitally important part of northern Iraq. Abu Bakr as-Siddiq now made al-Muthannah the over-all leader of the Muslim army and ordered Khalid ibn al-Walid to march forth toward ash-Sham [Syria and surrounding Regions].



# The Conquests in ash-Sham



Certain regions of ash-Sham or Greater Syria were a part of the Roman Empire. Arabs inhabited other parts of it. They were not actually a part of the Roman Empire, but were loyal and answerable to it and its Emperor.

During his lifetime, Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) gave serious attention to the land of ash-Sham. His primary aim was to win over to Islam the Arabs that inhabited the Arabian Peninsula. He sent a letter to Heraclius, the Emperor of the Roman Empire, inviting him to accept Islam. Heraclius responded positively to the letter. He expressed his will to embrace Islam, but members of his court stopped him from doing so. The Emperor thus failed to accept Islam.

Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) wrote a similar letter to Al-Harith ibn Abi Shammar al-Ghassani, the king of the people of Ghassan in Balqa, which was situated in the land of ash-Sham. Al-Harith was the Emperor's viceroy over the Arabs. He

reacted violently when he read the letter. He even wanted to attack the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) in Madinah but the Emperor forbade him from taking that step. Then, the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) sent an army to ash-Sham. He appointed not one but three leaders: Zayd ibn Harithah, and if he died, Ja'far ibn Abi Talib; and if he died, Abdullah ibn Rawahah. As events turned out, all three of these leaders were martyred. The man who next took charge of the Muslim army was none other than Khalid ibn al-Walid. Through sheer genius, he led the Muslim army, away from the scene of the battle without losing any soldiers in the process.

Although the Muslims did not win the battle, it was the first bold step towards destroying, if not the entire Roman Empire, then at least the part of it that ruled over ash-Sham. It sent a clear message that the Roman Empire might have been powerful, but it was not such that it could not be destroyed.

Later, Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) himself accompanied an expedition to ash-Sham that was known as the Expedition of Tabûk. During the various conflicts and battles that took place between Muslims and Romans, Muslims learnt a great deal about the strength of the Roman Empire and about their war tactics. On the other hand, the same battles allowed the people of ash-Sham to become familiar with the religion of Islam and its teachings. As a result, many of them embraced Islam.

During his caliphate, Abu Bakr continued where the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had left off. He first sent Usamah's army to ash-Sham, followed by other troops. Finally, Abu Bakr instructed Khalid ibn al-Walid, who was fighting the Persians in Iraq, to join the Muslim forces in ash-Sham. Roman armies guarded the borderlands between Iraq and ash-Sham. A great task lay before Khalid ibn al-Walid. He had to enter ash-Sham without being stopped by the Romans. To make matters worse, a vast desert lay before Khalid and his men.

Khalid gathered his guides. They knew the pathways of the entire region. Some of them were expert night-travellers. Thus, instead of taking the regular route, Khalid adopted a new route. It was a road that was rarely used. The route was certainly shorter, but was full of danger. The danger lay in the fact that there was no water on the way. However, Khalid devised a new method to face the situation: He collected a number of good camels, which could run as fast as the horses. He made them drink plenty of water, and then set out for ash-Sham. The army consisted not just of soldiers, but also of horses and camels. The path was barren and rough and there were no signs along the way. There was desert wasteland everywhere, but Khalid told his soldiers that in spite of the many disadvantages of the route, it was necessary to take it. It would enable them to travel unnoticed and to take their enemy by surprise. Every time the Muslims stopped to make

camp, a few of the water-filled camels would be slaughtered and every member of the army would drink some of it.

In this manner, they were able to travel from Qaraqir to Saul, which was situated near a number of villages inside ash-Sham. The Muslims would rest by day and travel by night. Khalid forbade all his soldiers from walking. He ordered them to ride because he wanted to keep them as strong as possible for the unknown dangers that awaited them once they entered the borders of ash-Sham. Thus, Khalid and his soldiers slipped into Roman territory unnoticed. This was made possible by Khalid's brilliant strategy of taking a dangerous yet unguarded path. Having entered ash-Sham, Khalid began his mission immediately.

In the history of warfare, Khalid's decision to travel to ash-Sham by way of a dangerous and unused road was a unique and brilliant military tactic. It had numerous positive results. Khalid and his army entered ash-Sham virtually unnoticed. For a single man to enter into a country unnoticed is one thing, but for an entire army to do the same is a truly amazing achievement. On the one hand, the Romans were taken by complete surprise, and on the other hand, Khalid achieved his goal of providing badly needed support to the embattled Muslim armies that were already in the region.

The Romans were taken completely by surprise, and so, every village or army that Khalid passed by surrendered after little or no fighting. Roman soldiers stationed in the region never imagined that a huge Muslim army would catch them unawares. Moreover, they had no time

to call for support troops. In the centuries that followed, military men all over the world, both read about and admired stories of Khalid's military genius. One German general during the First World War wrote: 'In the art of war, he is my teacher.' However, the armies that were sent to conquer ash-Sham had a difficult time completing their mission. They were facing the army of an Empire. It was an army that was famous for its superior strength and large size. The Romans were a warrior race. They had spent a great deal of money building fortresses and towers in order to fortify their most populated cities. The Roman soldiers were about two hundred forty thousand in number, while the Muslims were a little more than forty thousand. Fierce battles were fought at several places.

Finally, Khalid surrounded the city of Damascus to compel the Romans to surrender. The siege continued for several months until the Muslims achieved a complete victory over the Roman Empire in ash-Sham. This happened after the death of the first Caliph Abu Bakr in the year 13 AH or 634 CE.

# Abu Bakr Appoints Umar ibn al-Khattab as His Successor and Abu Bakr's Death

It was in the month of Jumada al-Akhirah [the sixth month in the Islamic Calendar] of the year 13 AH/ 634 CE, that the Caliph of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) became sick with the illness that led to his death.

Abu Bakr's illness began when he took a bath unwarily on a cold day. He then suffered from a fever for fifteen days. Fever laid him low and on each of those days, he could not come out for Prayer. Instead, he ordered Umar ibn al-Khattab to lead the people in Prayer. People would visit him. The person who stayed closest to his company was Uthman ibn Affan. Aware that the end was near, he prepared for a successor and chose Umar ibn al-Khattab. In order to strengthen his own opinion by that of others, he first consulted Abdur Rahman ibn Awf followed by the most eminent of the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) Companions from the Emigrants [*al-Muhajirun*] and the Helpers. [*al-Ansar*]

Abu Bakr took all the worldly steps that were necessary to carry out the decision. Since there was no opposition to Abu Bakr's choice, Umar ibn al-Khattab was declared the next Caliph and the Companions agreed to it. The people pledged allegiance to Umar ibn al-Khattab while Abu

Bakr was still alive. Consequently, soon after Abu Bakr's death Umar assumed all the responsibilities of the Caliphate. The Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) Companions agreed unanimously in this decision to appoint him the successor of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq.

Abu Bakr's solution for this nation was the appointment of Umar. Abu Bakr was aware that the world with its riches and temptations was coming to the Muslims. He feared that if they embraced those temptations with open arms, then they would be heading down the path of destruction. Fearing such a situation, Abu Bakr prescribed a very effective cure -- a cure that lay in the leadership of Umar ibn al-Khattab. After all, Umar was the man to whom the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had once said, 'O Ibn al-Khattab! By Him in whose Hand is my soul, if Satan would encounter you in a mountain pass, he would certainly take a way different from yours!'

## Abu Bakr's Time to Depart Draws Near

Abu Bakr's illness continued for fifteen days. The last day of his illness was Monday, 22 Jumada al-Akhirah, in the year 13 AH/ 634 CE. It was last part of the night when Tuesday was about to begin, that Abu Bakr as-Siddiq breathed his last.

While Abu Bakr was on his deathbed, he said, 'Umar insisted upon me to take 6000 *Dirhams* from the Muslim treasury in order to cover my everyday expenses. In return for all that amount, take my garden, which is situated in such and such place.' After Abu Bakr died, his last wish -- that his garden should be donated to the Muslim treasury -- was mentioned to Umar. He said, "May Allah have mercy upon Abu Bakr. In fact, he did not want to give people any opportunity to make any accusation against him." This shows how careful Abu Bakr was with regard to the wealth of the Muslim nation.

For more than two years, he had abandoned his business and stayed away from all forms of paid work. He was busy taking care of his responsibilities as the Caliph and had no means of earning his livelihood. Thus, he was compelled to take a wage or allowance from the Muslim treasury. It was a meagre wage, considering the services he rendered, for which he deserved so much more. When he died, all that he had left over from what he took from the overall wealth of the Muslim nation amounted to an Ethiopian slave and a camel. He returned even those things to the Muslim treasury. He did so, so that



he could meet his Lord secure in the knowledge that he had nothing to be accountable for with regard to the wealth of the Muslims.

Two of Abu Bakr's last commands were that his wife Asma bint Umais should wash his body, and that he should be buried alongside the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

The city of Madinah virtually shook on the day Abu Bakr died. He passed away at the age of 63, which was the exact age at which the Prophet of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) died. As per his instructions, Asma bint Umais washed Abu Bakr and he was buried alongside the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). In his grave, Abu Bakr's head was placed parallel to the shoulders of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). Such was the beautiful death of Abu Bakr as-Siddiq, after a lifelong struggle for the cause of Islam.

Through the early years of Islam, Abu Bakr was a source of comfort and constant help for the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). He was always ready and willing to sacrifice his wealth and his very life for the cause of Islam. When the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) died, Abu Bakr continued where the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had left off. He further strengthened the foundations of the Muslim nation, first by fighting against and defeating the apostates and then by spreading Islam in some of the major conquests that took place during his caliphate. Abu Bakr ruled for a period of two years and three months

only. He was shrouded with the clothes in which he died. Umar ibn al-Khattab performed the Funeral Prayer over him.



# Abu Bakr's Character: Extremely Simple Life

Bakr as-Siddiq lived a very simple life. By nature, Abu Bakr was singularly mild and gentle. He was very tenderhearted. Of course, he was stern in his treatment of the apostate tribes, but no act of cruelty stood against him.

After becoming the Caliph, Abu Bakr maintained the same simple and frugal lifestyle as the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). There were no guards and servants and Abu Bakr personally tended to the smallest things. Thus, he would go forth by night to seek the poor and the oppressed. One night, Umar found him inquiring into the affairs of a poor blind widow, whom Umar himself had gone forth to help. The department of justice was made over to Umar ibn al-Khattab, but for a whole year, barely two disputes came before him. In the choice of officers and administrators for high positions or command, he was free from partiality. He was wise and mindful in his estimation of character. Abu Bakr was firm when the occasion demanded, for example, in the instance of the dispatch of Usamah's army. When Madinah lay defenceless and enveloped by darkness, he showed a boldness and steadfastness of purpose that helped to roll back the tide of rebellion and apostasy.

Abu Bakr was universally loved for his noble qualities and respected for his scholarly achievements. He was a skilled genealogist [a person who studies ancestry] of his time, and of the Quraysh in particular. He was easygoing and exceptionally generous with his money. As a businessman, he became famous for his fair and honest dealings. Abu Bakr was a brave and skilled soldier. He participated in every single battle in which the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) participated. He was especially helpful on the Day of Uhud. He stood firmly alongside the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) when most others were fleeing from the scene of the battle.

Following the example of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) before him, Abu Bakr appointed a governor over each province or district. It was the duty of each governor to be in-charge of the administration of each province. It was his duty to lead people in Prayer, to judge between their disputes, to collect *Zakat* and enforce Islamic Law in its entirety. Given the importance of these duties, Abu Bakr chose his governors very carefully.

Abu Bakr used his authority and time for the greater interest of Islam and the benefit of the people. The supreme secret of his strength was faith in the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). He would say: 'Call me not the Caliph of the Lord; but the Caliph of the Messenger of the Lord.' The question with him was: what did the Prophet of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be

on him) command? Or what would he have done? He never moved a hair's breadth from this position. His deep faith in the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) is itself a strong proof of the truthfulness and sincerity of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him).

Another significant contribution of Abu Bakr was the compilation of the Qur'an in the form of a book. Umar, who was alarmed by the death of a large number of Qur'an reciters or memorizers during the Wars of Apostasy, prompted it. This first effort to put together the written collection of Qur'anic Verses was turned over to Zayd ibn Thabit, the Prophet's (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) scribe. This early collection was then given to Umar after the death of Abu Bakr. Before his conversion to Islam, Abu Bakr had been a very wealthy merchant. On accepting Islam, he gave away most of his wealth in the way of Allah. Abu Bakr also set a good example in the method of nominating his successor.