

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of **Allah**, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

Hadhrat Abu Bakr As-Siddiq (ra)

The Great Lover of Allah (s.w.t)

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1. Introduction

In a hadith the Holy Prophet (saw) is reported to have said¹:

'Love of Abu Bakr (ra) and gratitude to him are a duty on everyone of my Ummah'

This article is thus written in a spirit of love and gratitude for the marvelous character, example, and achievements of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra).

The name Abu Bakr (ra) was one of many Arabic titles (*kunya*) given to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) but his actual name was Abdullah ibn Abi Quhafa Uthman ibn Amir ibn Amr ibn Ka'b ibn Sa'd ibn Taym ibn Murrah ibn Ka'b ibn Lu'ayy ibn Ghalib al-Qureshi at-Taymi. His other titles are numerous and offer us a deep insight into his character as perceived by those around him and indeed Almighty Allah as will be shown. The first of his titles is *Ateeq* which literally means noble or to be freed from some unfortunate outcome or circumstance. There are countless reasons put forward for him being named as such with the most compelling relating to a hadith in which the Holy Prophet (saw) said,

'Abu Bakr you are the one whom Allah has freed (عتيق) from the bell fire'².

He was also known as *As-Siddiq* which comes from the root truthfulness (صدق) and literally means that a person is in a constant state of truthfulness. It has been related in Al-Bukhari that the Holy Prophet (saw) once climbed with Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra), Hadhrat Umar(ra) and Hadhrat Uthman(ra) to the top of Mount Uhud upon which he said³,

'Be firm, O Uhud, for upon you are a Prophet, a Siddiq (Hadhrat Abu Bakr) and two martyrs (Hadhrat Umar and Hadhrat Uthman)'.

In relation to this the Promised Messiah(as) writes in Arabic⁴,

"وَإِظْهَرَ عَلَيَّ رَبِّي أَنَّ الصِّدِّيقَ وَالْفَارُوقَ وَعُثْمَانَ كَانُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الصَّلَاحِ وَالْإِيمَانِ وَكَانُوا مِنَ
الَّذِينَ آتَرَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَخَصُّوا بِمَوَاهِبِ الرَّحْمَانِ....
وَإِنِّي أَخْبَرْتُ أَنَّهُمْ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ. وَمَنْ آذَاهُمْ فَقَدْ آذَى اللَّهَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْمُعْتَدِينَ"

¹ Al-Sayuti, The History of the Khalifas, Pg.47

² IBID. Pg.14; Also At-Tirmithe in Al-Manaaqib 3679.

³ Sahih Al-Bukhari Vol.5. Ch.57, No.24.

⁴ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Sirrul Khilafah. Pg.8-9; also see Tadhkirah. Pg.317.

'My Lord has made it clear to me that the Siddique (Abu Bakr (ra)) and Farooq (Umar) and Uthman were of the righteous and the faithful and were of those who were chosen by Allah and were bestowed in particular with the bounties of the Gracious One.

I have been informed that they were of the righteous and he who hurts them, hurts Allah and is a transgressor.'

In further expounding the deep meaning of As-Siddiq the Promised Messiah (as) delves into his vast ocean of knowledge and, as was his habit, presents us with a glowing pearl of wisdom. He writes that hood after Hadhrat Muhammad (saw) is only attainable through the complete and absolute losing of oneself in the love of the Holy Prophet (saw). The Promised Messiah (as) writes⁵,

'...all the doors leading to Prophet hood have been closed except the door of Sirat-e-Siddiqi, i.e., losing oneself in the Holy Prophet.'

There were several other titles attributed to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) but none more esteemed than the title *As-Sahib* (the companion) which was most magnificently assigned to him by Almighty Allah (s.w.t). It is said that when taking shelter in the cave of Thaur (Ghar Thaur) Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) began to weep upon which the Holy Prophet (saw) asked him why he was weeping. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) replied⁶,

'I do not weep for my life, O Prophet of God, because if I die it is only the question of a single life. But if you die it will be the death of Islam and of the entire Muslim Community.'

It was here that Almighty Allah (s.w.t) revealed a comforting verse, to remove the fears of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra), in which He gave him the title *As-Sahib*⁷,

((إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا))

...and he said to his companion, be not sad, surely Allah is with us

To merit such a unique title, and be so closely associated with Hadhrat Khatam-An-Nabiyyeen (saw), indicates that Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was par excellence in the way he conducted himself. This was exemplified in his acceptance of Islam when he did not hasten for the fraction of a second to believe the Holy Prophet (saw) and offer his bay'ah at the hand of Hadhrat Khatam-An-Nabiyyeen (saw). Regarding his acceptance the Holy Prophet (saw) addressed the companions and said⁸,

⁵ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. A Misunderstanding Removed. Pg.4.

⁶ Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II, Tafsir Al-Kabir, Pg.387, Ft.1186.

⁷ The Holy Qur'an, Ch.9 Vs.40

⁸ Sahih Al-Bukhari. No.3661.

Verily, when Allah (s.w.t) sent me to you, you said, "You are lying", meanwhile Abu Bakr said, "He has spoken the truth". He then consoled me by sacrificing his life and his wealth.'

2. Family

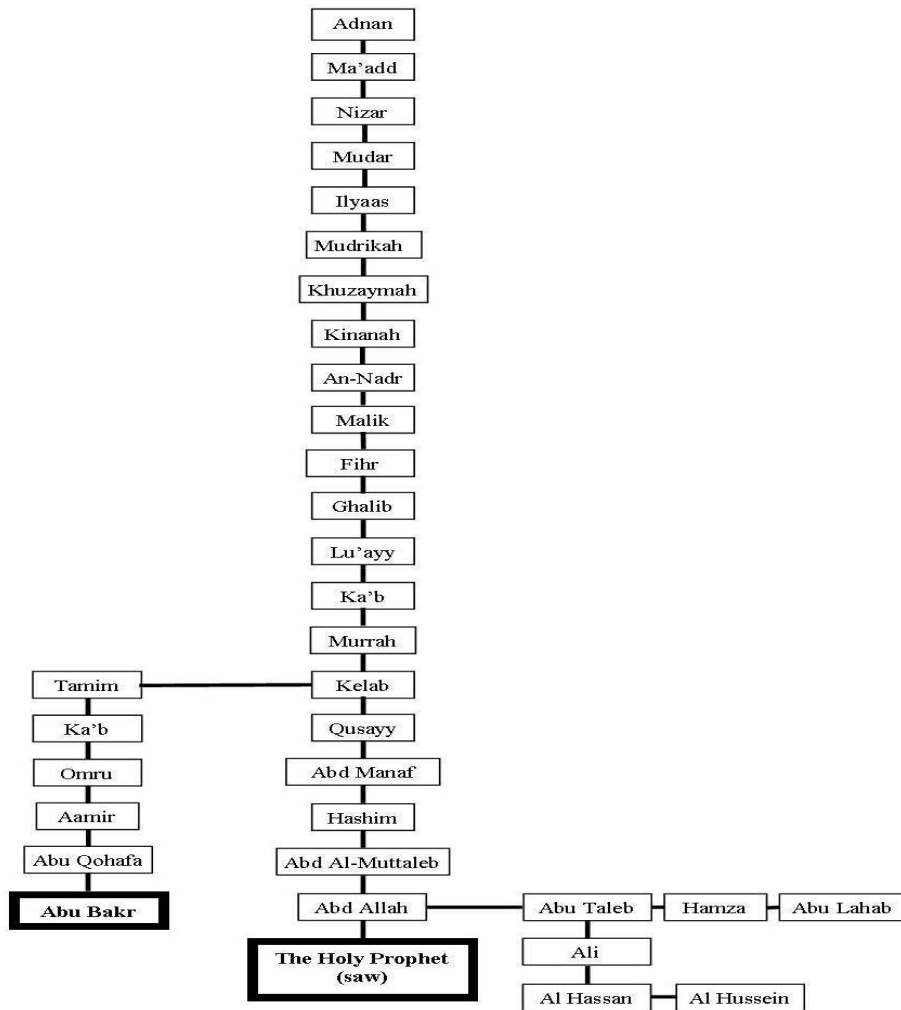
Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) came from a prominent family of good standing and his father was called Uthman ibn Aamar ibn Amr(ra) (also known by the title Abu Quhafa) and his mother was called Salma bint Sakhr ibn Amr ibn Ka'ab ibn Sa'ad ibn Teem(ra) (also known by the title Umm-ul-Khair). Whilst his mother accepted Islam in the early days before Hijra, his father did not accept until the day that Islam liberated Makkah Al-Mukarrama from the hands of the tyrannical pagans.

Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was blessed with four wives who bore six children between them. His wives were Hadhrat Qateela (ra), Hadhrat Umm Rooman (ra), Hadhrat Asma (ra) and Hadhrat Habeebah (ra). His blessed children were Hadhrat Abdur-Rahman (ra), Hadhrat Abdullah (ra), Hadhrat Muhammad (ra), Hadhrat Asma (ra), Hadhrat Aisha (ra) and Hadhrat Umm Kalthoom (ra) who was born shortly after he passed away.

It is beyond the remit of this article to detail the lives of each of his children as their contributions to Islam were immense. In short they were blessed believers who contributed heavily towards the success and development of traditional Islamic thought and rule. As a note of interest, the family of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was one of the very few families that were blessed with four generations which are classed as companions of the Holy Prophet (saw).

Delving deeply into the lineage of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) leads one to realise the rich Prophetic tree from which he grew. He was in fact related to Hadhrat Muhammad(saw) through Hadhrat Tamim (his fourth generation grandfather), who was the brother of Hadhrat Kilab (the fifth generation grandfather of the Holy Prophet (saw)) who were the sons of Hadhrat Morah from the family tree of Hadhrat Adnan as shown the diagram⁹,

⁹ Taken from Ahmad Rateb Armoush. The Political and Military Leadership of the Prophet (saw) Muhammad. Pg.40; Original source Hamidullah. Majmu'at al-Watha'eq. Pg.257.



The great historian Ibn Hishaam goes even further listing the blessed lineage of Hadhrat Adnan all the way to Hadhrat Adam (as). The list is as follows¹⁰, ‘Adnan ibn Udd [also known as Udad] ibn Muqawwim ibn Nahur ibn Tayrah ibn Ya’rub ibn Yashjub ibn Nabit ibn (Prophet) Isma’il ibn (Prophet) Ibrahim [the intimate friend of Allah] ibn Tarih [also known as Azar] ibn Nahur ibn Sarugh ibn Ra’u ibn Falakh ibn Aybar ibn Shalakh ibn Arfakhshadh ibn Sam ibn (Prophet) Nuh ibn Lamk ibn Muttushalakh ibn Akhnukh [who was said to be Prophet Idris] ibn Yard Mahlayl ibn Qaynan ibn Yanish ibn Shith ibn Adam(as).’

This was indeed a lineage of great blessings and miracles including no less than six Prophets (Hadhrat Muhammad, Hadhrat Isma’il, Hadhrat Ibrahim, Hadhrat Nuh, Hadhrat Idris and Hadhrat Adam, may Allah be pleased with them all).

¹⁰ Ibn Hishaam. Pg.3.

3. Early Life & Acceptance of Islam

Not much is known about the life of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) prior to his accepting Islam. Scholars have estimated that he was born in Makkah roughly two and a half years after the birth of the Holy Prophet (saw) in 572AD. He spent most of his youth in Makkah learning how to become a successful merchant and as the years passed he would often leave Makkah with various caravans on trade expeditions in other countries. His business activities proved to be very successful and he soon established himself as a wealthy merchant. It is also known that from a young age Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) lived the life of a Bedouin and came to be known as someone with a keen interest in camels of which he owned many. He was a just and equitable man quickly gaining a reputation for being trustworthy and honourable, so much so that he was entrusted by many tribes with blood money and other items of value. His character was so pure that Hadhrat Ma'aruf ibn Kharrabudh (ra) has remarked in one report that Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was one of only ten men who united¹¹, 'pre-eminence in Jahiliyyah and Islam'.

It is a natural sign of the truth of Islam that following its advent people were delivered from darkness into spiritual illumination, however, Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was an extraordinary individual because unlike most pre-Islamic Arabs he lived a pure and honest life in the period of ignorance (jahiliyya). It is easy to understand why he was such an honest person because during his youth he kept the very best of company being a friend of the Holy Prophet (saw). Regarding Hadhrat Abu Bakr's friendship with the Holy Prophet (saw) before the advent of Islam Al-Zamakhshari writes¹²,

'Abu Bakr's (ra) name will be juxtaposed alongside that of the Messenger of Allah (saw) until the end of time. When he was young Abu Bakr (ra) was a close friend of the Prophet (saw); and when he grew older he spent his wealth on him...'

In addition to his extraordinary qualities he was also exceptional in his actions as was exemplified by the fact that he was one of the few blessed companions who protected themselves from alcohol before the advent of Islam. In a gathering of the companions Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was questioned about whether or not he drank wine before entering the fold of Islam to which he admonished the questioner by saying¹³,

'I seek refuge in Allah (s.w.t) ...I tried to protect my honour and my manliness for whoever drinks wine will lose his honour and his manliness.'

On this incident being related to the Holy Prophet (saw) he replied,

'Abu Bakr (ra) has told the truth, Abu Bakr (ra) has told the truth.'

Regarding his acceptance of Islam, some scholars document Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) as the first grown man to accept Islam with Hadhrat Ali(ra) being the first child and

¹¹ Al-Sayuti. Pg.16.

¹² Mohammad As-Sallaabee. Pg.108.

¹³ IBID Pg.17.

Hadhrat Khadija (ra) the first lady. Imam Al-Sayuti supports the view that Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was the first man to accept Islam citing in evidence the following couplets of the great poet of the Holy Prophet (saw), Hadhrat Hasaan ibn Thaabit (ra), as related by Hadhrat Ash-Sha'bi (ra)¹⁴,

إِذَا تَذَكَّرْتَ شَجَوًّا مِنْ أَخِي ثِقَةٍ فَادْكُرْ أَحَاكَ أَبَا بَكْرٍ بِمَا فَعَلَا
 خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ، أَتَقَاهَا وَأَعَدَلَهَا إِلَّا النَّبِيَّ، وَأَوْفَاهَا بِمَا حَمَلَا
 وَالثَّانِي التَّالِي الْمَحْمُودَ مَشْهُدُهُ وَأَوَّلَ النَّاسِ مِنْهُمْ صَدَقَ الرُّسُلَا

'When you recall the distress of a trusted brother, then remember your brother Abu Bakr (ra) for what he did.

The best of creation, most fearfully obedient to them, and the most just, except for the Prophet, (saw) and most certain to fulfil what he has undertaken,

The second, the follower whose assembly is praised, and the first of those men who affirmed the messenger.'

It is the view of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II (ra)¹⁵ that upon Hadhrat Abu Bakr's (ra) return to Makkah he began to hear stories about how the Holy Prophet (saw) had turned mad, announcing to people that angels were delivering him messages from God. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was a close friend of the Holy Prophet (saw) and knew that if he had actually made such claims they would most certainly be true, such was the absolute trust he placed in the Holy Prophet (saw). Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) proceeded to the home of the Holy Prophet (saw) and upon entering asked the Holy Prophet (saw) about what had taken place. So as to avoid any misunderstanding of what he was saying the Holy Prophet (saw) began to offer him a long explanation of what had happened but Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) stopped him and said that he wanted no explanation but only to know if an Angel had conveyed messages from God to him? Once again the Holy Prophet (saw) tried to offer a lengthy explanation but Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) again said that he had no need for such an explanation but only to know if God had communicated with him? The Holy Prophet (saw) answered him in the affirmative and Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) accepted the claims of the Holy Prophet (saw) without hesitation and affirmed his status as a Muslim (الله أكبر). Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) went on to say that had the Holy Prophet (saw) offered a lengthy explanation to be followed by debate then this would have detracted from the sincerity and value of his faith and acceptance. On reading this, who, from all of Allah's creation, would dare to question the sincerity or pure righteousness of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) 'the trusted one'. This alone should be enough to make clear that the status of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was amongst those who had the highest levels of Taqwa (righteousness). His acceptance was indeed the most spectacular of all the companions because it was based on complete belief and required no qualification. Surely this unique

¹⁴ Al-Sayuti. Pg.18.

¹⁵ Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II. Introduction to the study of the Holy Qur'an. Pg.144-45.

action of trust safeguards Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) as being counted amongst those referred to in the following verse¹⁶,

((وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ
إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا))

And who is better in faith than he who submits himself entirely to Allah, and he is a doer of good and follows the religion of Abraham, the upright? And Allah took Abraham for a special friend.

This verse mentions the term ‘Special Friend’ (خليل) which is taken from the Arabic *Khula* (meaning intimate friendship) which more precisely refers to a type of¹⁷, ‘friendship or affection which penetrates the heart and takes root in it’ making a *Khalil* someone who is¹⁸, ‘a special and particular friend who penetrates the inner parts’.

Hadhrat Ibn Arabi (ra) has illuminated the meaning of the word Khalil in his chapter describing Hadhrat Ibrahim (as) in his deeply insightful book *Fusus al-Hikam*¹⁹,

‘Abraham was called the intimate [khalil] [of God] because he had embraced [takballala] and penetrated all the attributes of the Divine Essence. The poet says,

*I have penetrated the course of the spirit within me,
And thus was the Intimate [of God] so called.*

In the same way, colour permeates that which is collared, providing [it be understood] that the accident in relation to its substance is not as the thing and the space it occupies; or Abraham was so called because the reality permeates his form.’

In a famous hadith the Holy Prophet (saw) expresses his deep love for Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) by both connecting the concept of a Khalil with the unshakeable trust and submission shown by Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) when he accepted Islam²⁰. Here I refer to an instance in which Hadhrat Abu Darda was sitting with the Holy Prophet (saw) when Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) approached the Holy Prophet (saw) and said, ‘*There was something between me and Umar (ra) ibn al-Khattab and I was hasty with him, then later I regretted and asked him to forgive me, but he refused. So I have come to you*’. The Holy Prophet (saw) then repeated three times to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra), ‘*You are forgiven.*’

Meanwhile Hadhrat Umar (ra) was searching for Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) to resolve the situation but could not find him, he then visited the Holy Prophet (saw). When he

¹⁶ The Holy Qur’an. 4:126.

¹⁷ Khalifatul Masih II. Tafsir Al-Kabir. Ft.261; Original source Aqrab & Lane.

¹⁸ IBID Ft.591.

¹⁹ Ibn Arabi. The Bezels of Wisdom. pp.91-92

²⁰ Al-Sayuti. Pg.41-42; Also see Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol.5, Bk.57, No.13.

reached there the Holy Prophet's face became flushed, so much so that Hadhrrat Abu Bakr (ra) dropped to his knees in fear repeating twice to the Holy Prophet (saw), *'Messenger of Allah, by Allah, I was more wrong than him (Umar (ra))'*. On hearing this the Holy Prophet (saw) rebuked Hadhrrat Umar (ra) by saying, *'Truly Allah sent me to you and you said, "You Lie," and Abu Bakr (ra) said "You have told the truth," and he shared himself and his wealth with me. Will you leave me my companion, will you leave me my companion'*.

In another narration of the same events the son of Hadhrrat Umar (ra) says that the Holy Prophet (saw) concluded by saying²¹, *'Do not cause me hurt in my companion, for Allah sent me with guidance and the life-transaction of truth. You said, "You lie!" and Abu Bakr (ra) said, "You have told the truth." If it was not that Allah named him a companion I would have taken him as an intimate friend (خليل). But there is the brotherhood of Islam'*.

These precious words are a true and manifest example of the closeness and love of the Holy Prophet (saw) for Hadhrrat Abu Bakr (ra). Further reiterating this Hadhrrat Khalifatul Masih II (ra) relates another hadith in which the Holy Prophet (saw) said²²,

'If I had taken anyone as my Khalil I would have taken Abu Bakr as such, but my Khalil is God'.

4. Companion of the Holy Prophet (saw)

From the day that Hadhrrat Abu Bakr (ra) is said to have uttered the blessed Shahada (affirmation of the unity of Allah and of Muhammad being a Messenger of Allah) he did not leave the side of the Holy Prophet (saw) but with his express permission for special circumstances such as Hajj and to take part in battles. It has been reported²³ that in gatherings the companions would always surround the Holy Prophet (saw) and listen to him with such enthusiasm and intensity that their circle would resemble a solid wall; however, a place by the side of the Holy Prophet (saw) would always be left for his trusty companion Hadhrrat Abu Bakr (ra) and when he would join the group the Holy Prophet (saw) would address the entire group but face Hadhrrat Abu Bakr (ra).

As has already been touched upon that Hadhrrat Abu Bakr (ra) was blessed with the opportunity to accompany the Holy Prophet (saw) during Hijra (migration from Makkah to Madinah) and seek refuge from the Quraish in the Cave of Thaur (Ghaar Thaur). It is important to be fully aware of the magnitude of this blessing and know that Allah chose the greatest from among the companions to accompany His beloved Prophet (saw). Reminiscing upon the glorious miracles and the fond memories of those three nights spent in Ghaar Thaur, the Holy Prophet (saw) asked the greatest of the poets among the companions, Hasaan ibn Thabit, if his dazzling pen had recorded anything about Hadhrrat Abu Bakr (ra) during those nights. Hadhrrat Hasaan ibn Thabit responded in the affirmative and recited²⁴,

²¹ IBID. Pg.42; Also See Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol.5, Ch.57, No.6.

²² Hadhrrat Khalifatul Masih II. Tafsir Al-Kabir. Ft.261

²³ Al-Sayuti. Pg.47.

²⁴ IBID. Pg.34.

وَتَانِيَّ اِثْنَيْنِ فِي الْعَارِ الْمُنِيفِ وَقَدْ
 طَافَ الْعَدُوُّ بِهِ اِذْ صَعِدَ الْجَبَلَا
 وَكَانَ حِبًّا رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ قَدْ عَلِمُوْا
 مِنْ الْبَرِيَّةِ لَمْ يَعْدِلْ بِهِ رَجُلًا

*'And "the second of the two" in the glorious cave,
 The enemy went round about it when he ascended the mountain.
 The love of the Messenger (for him) they already knew,
 Amongst people he held not equal any man.'*

Indeed, the love of the Holy Prophet (saw) for his beloved Abu Bakr (ra) was special and derived itself from the immense love and sacrifice which Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) continuously displayed for the Creator of the Heavens and Earth, Almighty Allah (s.w.t).

The life of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was characterised by his pure will to excel in all good and noble qualities and none more than kindness and generosity. Over a very short period of time it became apparent to the inhabitants of Arabia that Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was the most generous of all the companions. It was his habit to regularly free a slave for the sake of Allah (s.w.t). It is famously known that Allah (s.w.t) blessed Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) with the opportunity to free Hadhrat Bilal Al-Habashi (ra) from his torturous life of slavery but another incident involved Hadhrat Zinneera (ra) who was also a freed slave. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) paid for her freedom and shortly after this Hadhrat Zinneera (ra) lost her vision. The Quraish became boastful and mocked Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) and Hadhrat Zinneera (ra) saying that her loss of vision was in fact a curse upon her from the 'real gods' saying that it was none other than al-laah and al-uzzah (two pagan gods) who took her eyesight. Hadhrat Zinneera (ra) rebuked them and remained steadfast in her faith after which, out of His Mercy and Grace, Almighty Allah (s.w.t) cured her by returning her vision²⁵.

The resilience and power of faith which entered the hearts of those slaves whom Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) freed was quite astonishing. One young lady who was freed by Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was subsequently captured and continuously beaten. The person who was beating her would periodically stop and say²⁶, *'I apologise to you, it is only boredom that has made me stop'*, to which she would bravely reply, *'it is indeed Allah (s.w.t) Who has made you become bored'*.

Hadhrt Abu Bakr (ra) was not only generous with his wealth by freeing slaves but would never hesitate for even a second to offer his wealth, effort and very life for the sake of Almighty Allah (s.w.t). In this regard he was an example for all mankind as related to us by the Holy Prophet (saw) who said²⁷,

²⁵ Ibn Hishaam. 1/393.

²⁶ IBID

²⁷ Al-Sayuti. Pg.26.

'I have never been under obligation to anyone but that I have repaid him, except for Abu Bakr, for he has put obligations on me which Allah (s.w.t) will repay him for on the Day of Rising, no one's wealth has ever benefited me as much as Abu Bakr's wealth.'

Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was also blessed with the honour of his daughter, Hadhrat Aisha (ra), marrying the Holy Prophet (saw). The events leading up to the Nikah and consummation of this blessed marriage have been beautifully expounded by Hadhrat Muhammad Zafrullah Khan (ra) in his book *'Muhammad; Seal of the Prophets'*²⁸. In summary the facts, as we know them, were that two years before Hijra the Holy Prophet (saw) was asked by Hadhrat Khaulah (ra), 'Messenger of Allah, why do you not marry?' to which he replied, 'Whom shall I marry?'. She enquired as to whether he would prefer to marry a virgin or a widow. The virgin she talked of was Hadhrat Aisha (ra) and the widow Hadhrat Saudah (ra). The Holy Prophet (saw) requested that Khaulah approached both of them. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was pleased with the proposal but wanted to first enquire from the Holy Prophet (saw) if such a marriage would be permissible considering the close relationship of brotherhood they had. The Holy Prophet (saw) informed Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) that it was permissible as only physical, and not spiritual brotherhood, prohibits marriage²⁹. The Nikah ceremonies were thus held for both Hadhrat Aisha (ra) and Hadhrat Saudah (ra) in the month of Shawal during the tenth year of Prophet hood. The Mahr for both marriages was a modest amount of 400 dirhams each.

Describing his love to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) the Holy Prophet (saw) is reported by Hadhrat Ibn Abbass (ra) to have remarked³⁰,

'No one has shown greater favour to me than Abu Bakr. He shared himself and his wealth with me and married me his daughter'.

It is worth pausing for a moment and discussing the age of Hadhrat Aisha (ra) when she married the Holy Prophet (saw) as this has been an issue the opponents of Islam have manipulated in order to attack the pure character of the Holy Prophet (saw). Using the ill-informed research of some Muslims, the opponents of Islam propose that the marriage ceremony between the Holy Prophet (saw) took place when Hadhrat Aisha (ra) was five or six years old with the marriage being consummated when she was nine or ten years of age. Such allegations are based on a cocktail of half truths, manipulation and deception of the highest order. Historical research establishes that Hadhrat Aisha (ra) was in fact ten years old at the time of her Nikah which took place two years before Hijrah. Her marriage was not consummated until the third year after Hijrah making her about fifteen years old when the marriage was consummated. To be married at the age of fifteen during the time of the Holy Prophet (saw), and under the hot climate of Arabia, was not at all out of the ordinary. At the age of fifteen it was common for girls of the Arabian peninsular to mature to the age of puberty and begin married life. Explaining the great wisdom behind this marriage Hadhrat Muhammad Zafrullah Khan writes³¹,

²⁸ Muhammad Zafrullah Khan. *Muhammad; Seal of the Prophets*. P.129.

²⁹ Sahih Al-Bukhari. Bk.7, Bk.62, No.18.

³⁰ Al-Sayuti. Pg.26.

³¹ IBID. Pg.61.

In no single marriage of his [the Holy Prophet (saw)] was he inspired by any purely personal desire or motive. At the time when his nikah was performed with Aisha (ra), she was only ten years of age. She was the daughter of his closest and most devoted friend; had been brought up from her birth in an atmosphere of piety and righteousness; her mind under the Holy Prophet's (saw) care could be moulded along lines of utmost beneficence; she could be instructed in an intimate relationship with regard to all that Islam required of a woman and could thus prove most helpful in guiding Muslim women, both by precept and by example, along the ways of righteousness; and she could be expected to survive the Holy Prophet (saw) for a long period and to serve as a source of instruction for the whole Muslim community, as indeed proved to be the case in fact. A great part of the knowledge of the ways and practice of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, was handed down to future generations of Muslims through Aisha (ra)'.

Thus do we find that the friendship of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) with the Holy Prophet (saw) expanded in meaning and purpose upon the marriage of his daughter to the Holy Prophet (saw). The love of the Holy Prophet (saw) for Hadhrat Aisha (ra) was very special and unique in nature. Commenting on Hadhrat Aisha (ra) the Holy Prophet (saw) showered her with praise saying³²,

'Many amongst men attained perfection but amongst women none attained the perfection except Mary, the daughter of Imran and Asiya, the wife of Pharaoh. And the superiority of 'Aisha to other women is like the superiority of Tharid (i.e. an Arabic dish) to other meals'

Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was an ever forgiving person who always sought to find goodness in people and act justly in his every action even if he himself had been wronged. In one incident a man slandered his daughter, Hadhrat Aisha (ra) (*The Mother of the Faithful*), and by coincidence the slanderer was reliant upon charitable donations given to him by Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) in order to live and feed his family. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) immediately stopped supporting the man financially but his generous and forgiving nature overwhelmed him and he soon began to again support the man financially. It should be noted that in this instance the Holy Prophet (saw) advised him that mercy was the best reaction³³. Throughout his life Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was privileged to learn and expand as a human being under the watchful eye of the greatest of teachers from Almighty Allah's (s.w.t) creation, Hadhrat Muhammad Mustapha (saw)³⁴.

Prior to outlining some of his achievements during the latter part of his life as Khalifat-ur-Rasul we should spend a few sentences reflecting upon the status of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) as a Dailillah (one who calls others to the path of Allah). He was an exceptional preacher and, with the permission of the Holy Prophet (saw), became the first of the companions to openly preach the message of Islam in public. After accepting Islam it became common occurrence for Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) to request the Holy Prophet's permission for him to openly preach the message of Allah but the Holy Prophet (saw)

³² Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vo.5, Bk.57, No.113.

³³ IBID. Vol.8, Bk.78, No.670.

³⁴ See Hadhrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad. Introduction to the Study of the Holy Qur'an. Pg.345-45.

continuously refused his requests knowing that it was not yet the appropriate time. One day Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was granted this permission upon which he stood up in the middle of a large gathering outside Ka'ba and, with no thought for his own safety, delivered a sermon inviting the people of the various tribes present to the Sirat-ul-Mustaqeem. The people present became enraged and began to beat Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) and indeed all the other Muslims present which included Hadhrat Khatam-An-Nabiyyeen (saw). Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) is said to have been beaten to within an inch of his life and was saved by the members of his tribe as they could not bear to see him trampled upon by members of opposing tribes. His injuries were so severe that people found it difficult to distinguish his nose from his face. Despite being close to death, and in no state to carry out even simple tasks, he could not allow himself to rest until he stood face to face with the Holy Prophet (saw) to ensure that he was healthy and unharmed. It was during this emotion-filled meeting that Ummul Khair (ra), the blessed mother of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra), accepted Islam in the presence of the Holy Prophet (saw).

This painful test in no way deterred this great Da'ee (caller) from continuing to invite people to Islam but only acted to make him far more resolute in his pure intention to serve Almighty Allah (s.w.t) by spreading the great news of Islam. In addition to the members of his own blessed family, Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was permitted by Allah to convert countless people including Hadhrat Uthman ibn Affan (ra), Hadhrat Al-Zubayr ibn-ul-Awwam, Hadhrat Abdur-Rahman ibn Awf (ra), Hadhrat Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas (ra) and Hadhrat Talha ibn Ubaidillah (ra)³⁵.

On more than one occasion Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was blessed with the opportunity to protect the Holy Prophet (saw). One such incident is here related to us by Urwa bin Az-Zubair³⁶,

"I asked Ibn Amr bin Al-As, "Tell me of the worst thing which the pagans did to the Prophet." He said, "While the Prophet was praying in the Hijr of the Ka'ba; 'Uqba bin Abi Mu'ait came and put his garment around the Prophet's neck and throttled him violently. Abu Bakr came and caught him by his shoulder and pushed him away from the Prophet and said, "Do you want to kill a man just because he says, 'My Lord is Allah?' " "

In a similar incident Hadhrat Ali (ra) relates that two men from the Quraish attacked the Holy Prophet (saw)³⁷. One of the men grabbed the Holy Prophet whilst the second threw him to the ground saying, 'Are you the one who has made the gods in one God?' It was none other than Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) who rushed to assist the Holy Prophet (saw) striking one of the men and restraining the other whilst admonishing them by saying, 'Woe to you! Will you kill a man because he says, "My Lord is Allah?" '. The narration then ends at which point the narrator, Hadhrat Ali (ra), raised his cloak and began to weep so much that his beard filled with tears and then said to those with him, *I adjure you by Allah! Is the*

³⁵ Al-Sayuti. Pg.41.

³⁶ Sahih Al-Bukhari.Vol.5, Bk.58, No.195.

³⁷ Al-Sayuti. Pg.23.

believer of the people of Fir'awn better than Abu Bakr? [...] By Allah, an hour of Abu Bakr is better than a thousand hours of the like of the believer of the people of Fir'awn. He was a man who concealed his iman, and this was a man who was open about his iman'.

It is ironic that the threat which faced our beloved Holy Prophet (saw) is the same threat, in spirit, which the followers of the greatest lover of the Holy Prophet (saw), Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as), are facing today. For it is no exaggeration to say that those who accepted the Promised Messiah and Imam Mahdi (as) are persecuted, ridiculed and murdered for testifying that Allah (s.w.t) is their Lord. Oppressors of the Ahmadi Muslim Jama'ah would be best advised to read the above narration and ask themselves, 'Do you want to kill a man just because he says, 'My Lord is Allah?'. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV (Rh) addresses this issue writing³⁸,

"History presents several non-Muslim attempts to obliterate the belief in the Unity of God. The most dreadful attempt of all was made during the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). However, even those Muslims could not conceive that a time would come when those associated with Islam would attempt to obliterate the Kalimah with their own hands. No Muslim could have even remotely imagined this. Today, this dubious honour goes to the tyrannical government of Pakistan. A new concept for the defence and service of Islam is being presented: to attack the very basis of Islam, assault the affirmation of God's Unity, and to assault the affirmation of the belief in the Prophet hood of Muhammad (saw)"

The Promised Messiah (as) writes that the life of the Holy Prophet (saw) was threatened on five separate occasions. On one of those occasions Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) had the honour of again standing side by side with the Holy Prophet (saw) during that occasion of great adversity. The Promised Messiah (as) describes it as follows³⁹,

"On five occasions, the life of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] was in serious danger and had he not been a true Prophet of God, he would certainly have been destroyed. One was the occasion when the disbelieving Quraish had surrounded his house and had sworn that they would kill him that night. The second occasion was when pursuers had arrived with a large body of men at the entrance to the cave in which he had taken shelter along with Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra). The third occasion was when he had been left alone in the battle of Uhad and the Quraish had surrounded him and attacked him in a body but were foiled of their purpose. The fourth occasion was when a Jewish woman gave him meat to eat which had been saturated with a fatal poison. The fifth occasion was when Khusro Pervaiḡ, Emperor of Persia, had made up his mind to destroy him and had sent his emissaries to arrest him. His delivery on all these dangerous occasions and his ultimate triumph over all his enemies is conclusive proof that he was righteous and God was with him."

What is clear is that from the moment he accepted Islam Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was always the first of the believers to assist Allah's (s.w.t) apostle (saw). One could not

³⁸ Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (Rh). Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'ah and the Palestinian Muslims. pp.15-16.

³⁹ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as). Essence of Islam. Vol.1, pp.308-309; also see Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 23, pp. 263-264, footnote

envisage an instance in which Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) would permit his Nafs to overcome one iota of his absolute love for the Holy Prophet (saw). As a result we find that Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was at the blessed side of the Holy Prophet (saw) during every momentous event in the early years of Islam. Do not be fooled into thinking that all this was a matter of chance or luck; rather it was the blessing of Almighty Allah (s.w.t) Who most certainly made Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) the recipient of His favours.

5. A Man of Knowledge & Wisdom

Hadhrat Ibn Abdullah (ra) relates that the Holy Prophet (saw)⁴⁰,

“Amongst the trees, there is a tree, the leaves of which do not fall and is like a Muslim. Tell me the name of that tree.” Everybody started thinking about the trees of the desert areas. And I thought of the date-palm tree. The others then asked, “Please inform us what is that tree, O Allah’s Apostle?” He replied, “It is the date-palm tree.”

Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani (Rh) has further elaborated on this subject with an explanation which is a choice description of the great status of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra). Discussing the inspiration and rank of those blessed with a special insight in knowledge he writes⁴¹,

‘Such interpretation is for those special servants of Allah who are firmly established, constant in their spiritual state and well-grounded in the knowledge that enables them to form true judgments. Like the date-tree whose roots are firm in the ground, their feet are firm in this material world; and again like the date-tree, whose fronds reach high into the sky, their hearts and minds are raised to heavenly knowledge. By the grace of Allah this constancy that contains no doubt is placed in the centre of their hearts. The heart firm in this state is likened to the second half of the confession of Unity: La ilaha illa Llah, ‘there is no god but Allah’ – illah Llah, ‘only Allah’, is the final confirmation of unity’

It was certainly the case that Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was a man of great knowledge and wisdom having placed the Holy Qur’an in his heart and closely studied the words and deeds of his mentor (saw). What was compelling about the unique character of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was that every ounce of that which he had learned became an integral part of his physical character and actions; he did not shed a single leaf and his feet were firmly rooted. We therefore find the greatest examples of his knowledge not only in his words but in his deeds.

One clear illustration of the great knowledge and wisdom of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) is that on several occasions he was of the same opinion as the Holy Prophet (saw) whilst other companions differed. After the battle of Badr the Holy Prophet (saw) enquired from a few companions as to their opinions on what should be done to the prisoners of war. The majority view was that they should be punishable by death, however the Holy

⁴⁰ Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.1, Bk.3, No.59.

⁴¹ Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani. Kitab Sirr al-Asrar wa Mazhar al-Anwar. Pg.27.

Prophet (saw) agreed with Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) who said⁴², “*They are our kith and kin. I think you should release them after getting from them a ransom. This will be a source of strength to us against the infidels. It is quite possible that Allah may guide them to Islam*”.

On the day of Hudaibiya it was again the case that Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was in complete harmony with his great mentor (saw). The incident is narrated in the following hadith narrated by Hadhrat Abu Wail (ra)⁴³,

‘We were in Siffin and Sahl bin Hunaif got up and said, ‘O people! Blame yourselves! We were with the Prophet on the day of Hudaibiya, and if we had been called to fight, we would have fought. But ‘Umar bin Al Khattab came and said, ‘O Allah’s Apostle! Aren’t we in the right and our opponents in the wrong?’ Allah’s Apostle said, ‘Yes.’ ‘Umar said, ‘Aren’t our killed persons in Paradise and theirs in Hell?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ ‘Umar said, ‘Then why should we accept hard terms in matters concerning our religion? Shall we return before Allah judges between us and them?’ Allah’s Apostle said, ‘O Ibn Al-Khattab! I am the Apostle of Allah and Allah will never degrade me. Then ‘Umar went to Abu Bakr and told him the same as he had told the Prophet. On that Abu Bakr said (to ‘Umar). ‘He is the Apostle of Allah and Allah will never degrade him.’ Then Surat-al-Fath (i.e. Victory) was revealed and Allah’s Apostle recited it to the end in front of ‘Umar. On that ‘Umar asked, ‘O Allah’s Apostle! Was it (i.e. the Hudaibiya Treaty) a victory?’ Allah’s Apostle said, ‘Yes’”

As will later be discussed in more detail Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was the only one amongst the companions who understood the meaning of Surah Al-Nasr when it was revealed. Whilst everyone else was especially delighted by this particular revelation Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) could be found weeping. He had in fact been the only person who understood that with the victory would naturally come the death of his beloved mentor (saw).

In a similar incident the Holy Prophet (saw) again gave news of his imminent demise and it was only Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) who understood what was being conveyed to them and he began to again weep. The incident is related to us by Hadhrat Abu Saeed Al-Khudri⁴⁴,

“The Prophet delivered a sermon and said, “Allah gave a choice to one of (His) slaves either to choose this world or what is with Him in the Hereafter. He chose the latter.” Abu Bakr wept. I said to myself, “Why is this Sheikh weeping, if Allah gave choice to one (of His) slaves either to choose this world or what is with Him in the Hereafter and he chose the latter?” And that slave was Allah’s Apostle himself. Abu Bakr knew more than us. The Prophet said, “O Abu Bakr! Don’t weep. The Prophet added: Abu-Bakr has favoured me much with his property and company. If I were to take a Khalil from mankind I would certainly have taken Abu Bakr but the Islamic brotherhood and friendship is sufficient. Close all the gates in the mosque except that of Abu Bakr. ”

⁴² Sahih Muslim. Bk.019, No.4360.

⁴³ Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.4, Bk.53, No.406.

⁴⁴ IBID. Vol.1, Bk.8, No.455.

In his final days on this earth the Holy Prophet (saw) appointed Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) as the Imam and he lead the companions in the salat. This in itself is a glaring indication of the knowledge and wisdom which Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) had as only a man of the highest calibre could be granted this painful but immensely blessed role. Al-Hafiz Ibn Kathir (Rh) cites this as the primary reason for why Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) should be regarded as the greatest of the companions in his knowledge and understanding of the Holy Qur'an⁴⁵. The magnitude of the respect which Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was shown here by the Holy Prophet (saw) can be better understood by reflecting upon the following hadith⁴⁶,

“The Imam is like a shelter for whose safety the Muslims should fight and where they should seek protection...”

After the demise of the Holy Prophet (saw) a great dispute arose amongst the companions who disagreed with Hadhrat Abu Bakr's decision to engage the rebellious tribes on the issue of their refusal to pay Zakah (known as the al-Ridda wars). The companions later came to realize that the unpopular position adopted by Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was in reality the correct one. Imam As-Sayuti (Rh) and Imam An-Nawawi (Rh) cite this as being one of the main factors which defined Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) as one of the most knowledgeable of the Ummah⁴⁷.

As displayed in the above example it was always the case with Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) that he had completely annihilated himself in the love and obedience of Allah (s.w.t) and would never give temporal concerns, or the opinions of others, a second thought if he felt they were detracting him from fulfilling the Will of Allah (s.w.t). It is as a result of this that we know that the knowledge which Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was blessed with went beyond the confines of theory and transcended into a living and breathing example of goodness. There is perhaps no other greater example of this to be found than in the words uttered by Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) to his own flesh and blood regarding the day of Badr⁴⁸. Hadhrat Abdur-Rahman ibn Abu Bakr (ra) entered Islam and was discussing the day of Badr with his father Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra). During the battle of Badr, Hadhrat Abdur-Rahman (ra) was a non-Muslim and made it know to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) that on the day of Badr an opportunity had arisen whereby he could have killed Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) but that instead he turned away from him and spared his life. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) replied with the words, *‘However, if you had been exposed to me as a target I would not have turned away from you’* (الله اكبر).

Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was also known as the foremost amongst the companions in both the knowledge of genealogies of the Arabs and interpretation of dreams. A member of the Ansar called Jubayr ibn Mut'im, who was said to be the most proficient in the field of

⁴⁵ As-Sayuti. Pg.27.

⁴⁶ Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.4, Bk.52, No.204.

⁴⁷ As-Sayuti. Pg.26.

⁴⁸ IBID. Pg.21.

the genealogies of the Arabs, admitted that, *'I only took genealogies from Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, and Abu Bakr As-Siddiq was the most learned in the genealogies of the Arabs'*⁴⁹.

One of the most highly regarded interpreters of dreams from amongst the Muslims, Hadhrat Ibn Sirin (Rh), said that⁵⁰, *'Abu Bakr was the most able of this Ummah after the Prophet (saw) to draw a meaning (from a dream)'*. The following narration illustrates the special passion held by Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) for interpreting dreams⁵¹,

'A man came to Allah's Apostle and said, "I saw in a dream, a cloud having shade. Butter and honey were dropping from it and I saw the people gathering it in their hands, some gathering much and some a little. And behold, there was a rope extending from the earth to the sky, and I saw that you (the Prophet) held it and went up, and then another man held it and went up and (after that) another (third) held it and went up, and then after another (fourth) man held it, but it broke and then got connected again." Abu Bakr said, "O Allah's Apostle! Let my father be sacrificed for you! Allow me to interpret this dream." The Prophet said to him, "Interpret it." Abu Bakr said, "The cloud with shade symbolizes Islam, and the butter and honey dropping from it, symbolizes the Qur'an, its sweetness dropping and some people learning much of the Qur'an and some a little. The rope which is extended from the sky to the earth is the Truth which you (the Prophet) are following. You follow it and Allah will raise you high with it, and then another man will follow it and will rise up with it and another person will follow it and then another man will follow it but it will break and then it will be connected for him and he will rise up with it. O Allah's Apostle! Let my father be sacrificed for you! Am I right or wrong?" The Prophet replied, "You are right in some of it and wrong in some." Abu Bakr said, "O Allah's Prophet! By Allah, you must tell me in what I was wrong." The Prophet said, "Do not swear."

Hadhrat Abu Bakr was a man of great obedience to the shariah and always delivered his valuable knowledge and advice with great wisdom and eloquence. Advising his son Hadhrat Abdur-Rahman (ra) he instructed him⁵², *'Do not judge between two persons when you are angry, for I heard the Prophet saying, "A judge should not judge between two persons while he is in an angry mood."*

After the passing of the Holy Prophet (saw) the science of Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqha) has greatly developed into a rich and widely written about field of knowledge. As the centuries moved further and further away from the date of the passing of the Holy Prophet there developed an important tool in the field of fiqha, namely 'Consensus' (Ijma). This is a methodology by which the Ummah can safely approach and digest ambiguous and unclear areas of the law. It is often forgotten that this great tool was first utilised by Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) on the passing of the Holy Prophet (saw). This interesting fact is pointed out by the Promised Messiah (as) when he writes⁵³,

⁴⁹ IBID. Pg 29.

⁵⁰ IBID. Pg.29.

⁵¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.9, Bk.87, No.170.

⁵² IBID. Vol.9, Bk.89, No.272.

⁵³ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Lecture Sialkot. Pg.66.

The first ever consensus (Ijma') in Islam was to the effect that not a single Prophet from the past was alive. This is also evident from the verse:

مَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ

May God reward Abu Bakr (ra) manifold, who initiated this consensus and recited this verse from the pulpit.'

In another interesting incident Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) rebuked a lady called Zainab bint Al-Muhajir from the Ahmas tribe for refusing to speak. He asked⁵⁴, *"Why does she not speak?"* The people said, *"She has intended to perform Hajj without speaking."* He said to her, *"Speak, for it is illegal not to speak, as it is an action of the pre-Islamic period of ignorance. So she spoke and said, "Who are you?"* He said, *"A man from the Emigrants."* She asked, *"Which Emigrants?"* He replied, *"From Quraish."* She asked, *"From what branch of Quraish are you?"* He said, *"You ask too many questions; I am Abu Bakr."* She said, *"How long shall we enjoy this good order (i.e. Islamic religion) which Allah has brought after the period of ignorance?"* He said, *"You will enjoy it as long as your Imams keep on abiding by its rules and regulations."* She asked, *"What are the Imams?"* He said, *"Were there not heads and chiefs of your nation who used to order the people and they used to obey them?"* She said, *"Yes."* He said, *"So they (i.e. the Imams) are those whom I meant."*

On another occasion a slave came to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) and gave him some money from which Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) purchased some food. As he chewed the food the slave informed Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) that the money which he had given Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was appropriated through a dishonest act. Upon hearing this Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) immediately vomited all of the food he had eaten fearing that might be accountable to Almighty Allah (s.w.t) for taking that which was not rightfully his⁵⁵. The love, respect and obedience to the Shariah here shown by Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) is quite breathtaking and indicative of his deep understanding of the spirit of the Shariah.

Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was known as being the most eloquent of the companions in speech along with Hadhrat Ali (ra). People would greatly enjoy listening to his Khutbas as his words were filled with immense insight, humility and wisdom. In one Khutbah which he delivered he began as follows⁵⁶(see appendix 1 for the full Khutbah),

"Verily, Allah does not accept deeds except those which were performed for the sake of His Face only. Therefore, seek Allah's Face by your actions. Know that whatever action you do with sincerity to Allah is an act of obedience that you performed, a good share that you earned, a duty that you fulfilled, and a reserve that you keep from perishable days to everlasting days. At that time you will be most in need and in anticipation (for these good deeds)."

⁵⁴ IBID. Vol.5, Bk. 58, No.175.

⁵⁵ IBID. Vol.5, Bk.58, No.182.

⁵⁶ Selected Friday Sermons. Pg.33.

6. Demise of the Holy Prophet (saw)

Prior to becoming a Khalifah, Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) suffered through the pain of the Holy Prophet's final days on earth. This was especially testing for him because of the unique love he had developed for the Holy Prophet (saw) and also in light of the great burden which the Holy Prophet (saw) would place upon him during this period. The Holy Prophet (saw) instructed Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) to lead the prayers whilst the Holy Prophet (saw) was too weak to do so. Many people, including the wives of the Holy Prophet (saw), felt that such a burden was too great for the tender heart of such a kind and gentle person but the Holy Prophet (saw) was firm in his command. The firmness of his (saw) resolve is illustrated in the following hadith narrated by Hadhrat Aisha (ra)⁵⁷,

'Allah's Apostle during his fatal ailment said, "Order Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer." I said, "If Abu Bakr stood at your place (in prayers, the people will not be able to hear him because of his weeping, so order 'Umar to lead the people in prayer." He again said, "Order Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer " Then I said to Hafsa, "Will you say (to the Prophet), 'If Abu Bakr stood at your place, the people will not be able to hear him because of his weeping, so order 'Umar to lead the people in prayer?" Hafsa did so, whereupon Allah's Apostle said, "You are like the companions of Joseph. Order Abu Bakr to lead the people in prayer." Hafsa then said to me, "I have never received any good from you!"'

The great historian Al-Tabari has reported that for some three days or seventeen prayers Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) endured the deep pain of acting as the Holy Prophet's deputy and leading the prayers⁵⁸.

In one heartbreaking hadith it is narrated that two companions carried the Holy Prophet (saw) into the Mosque. Once, Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was leading the prayers as he had been bid by the Holy Prophet (saw). The Holy Prophet's (saw) illness is said to have become so overpowering that his blessed feet were dragging along the floor of the Mosque as he was being carried by the two companions. On realising his presence Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) began to weep but continued to lead the prayer in complete obedience to his duty. His love and complete subservience to Allah's Messenger was so great that he even tried to step back so that the Holy Prophet (saw) could lead but Rasulullah (saw) did not permit this. The unrelenting pain he felt at the mere thought that he should lead Hadhrat Khatam-un-Nabiyyeen (saw) in prayers was so piercing that he could no longer bear it and cleverly placed himself in such a position that the congregation believed that the Holy Prophet (saw) was leading. The effect of this was that the congregation was following the Holy Prophet (saw) and the Holy Prophet (saw) was following Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra).

It was during the last days of the life of the Holy Prophet (saw) that we are reminded of the great connection and understanding which Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) had with the Holy

⁵⁷ Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.9, Bk.92, No.406.

⁵⁸ Al-Tabari, Pg.513.

Prophet (saw), and also of Hadhrat Abu Bakr's phenomenal understanding of the Holy Qur'an. One day the Holy Prophet (saw) addressed the companions saying⁵⁹,

'Today I have received the revelation:

((إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ))
 ((وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا))
 ((فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا))

When the help of Allah comes and the Victory, and thou seest men entering the religion of Allah in troops, Glorify thy Lord with His praise and seek His forgiveness. Surely He is Oft-returning with mercy. (Ch.110: Vs.2-4)

Ordinarily Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) would take great joy in eagerly listening to new verses of the Holy Qur'an as they were being revealed but on this occasion rather than displaying happiness he began to weep and cry uncontrollably. This perplexed the companions as the context of this chapter seemed to hold glad tidings of good news and victory. Hadhrat Umar (ra) became agitated and he and other companions questioned why Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) should be crying so. They had not realised that with the coming of the victory of Islam also meant that the Holy Prophet (saw) would soon pass away. Of all the companions it was only Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) who had instantly understood the meaning and in a display of the highest affection and love which a man can offer to his brother the Holy Prophet (saw) spoke the words⁶⁰,

'Abu Bakr (ra) is very dear to me. If it were permissible to love anyone more than others, I would so have loved Abu Bakr (ra). But that degree of love is only for God. O my people, all the doors which open to the Mosque should be closed from today except the door of Abu Bakr (ra).'

Could any sincere lover of the Holy Prophet (saw) wish for more precious words than these to be uttered about him or her by the Holy Prophet (saw)? There most certainly could have been no person left in the Mosque that day who did not come to appreciate the love held by the Holy Prophet (saw) for his dear companion Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra).

Upon the death of the Holy Prophet (saw) Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) entered the room in which the blessed body of the Holy Prophet (saw) was and kissed the forehead of his beloved mentor (saw) as he came to terms with the greatest loss mankind has ever suffered⁶¹. There later erupted a debate over where the Holy Prophet (saw) should be buried but Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) took hold of the situation and said, *'I have heard it from the lips of the Prophet himself, that in whatsoever spot a Prophet dieth, there also should he be buried'*.

⁵⁹ Hadhrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad. Introduction to the Study of the Holy Qur'an. Pg.298-99.

⁶⁰ IBID. Pg.299.

⁶¹ Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.7, Bk.71, No.610.

The Holy Prophet (saw) was therefore buried in the chamber of Hadhrat Aisha (ra). On his acceptance of Islam Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) unconditionally affirmed his oath to Allah (s.w.t) and allegiance to the Holy Prophet (saw), it was therefore fitting that before the Holy Prophet's (saw) burial, accompanied by Hadhrat Omar (ra), Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) visited his mentor (saw) one last time upon which he and Hadhrat Omar (ra) testified, *'Peace be upon thee, O Prophet of God; and mercy from the Lord and His blessing. We bear testimony that the Prophet of God has delivered the message revealed to him; has fought in the ways of the Lord until God brought forth His religion unto victory; has fulfilled his words, commanding that He alone in His unity is to be worshiped; has drawn us to himself, and has been kind and tender hearted towards the believers; has sought no recompense for delivering to us the faith, neither has he sold it for a price at any time'*.

Take heed of this example and inculcate the love contained within these words in your every thought, step and very breath. The Holy Prophet (saw) had affected the hearts of these two shining stars of Islam with such an indescribably intense love and obedience that they addressed Almighty Allah (s.w.t) in support of their beloved Mohammad Mustapha (saw). This action is certainly to be counted as one of the highest expressions of love and obedience.

7. Appointment as Khalifah

After the passing of Hadhrat Muhammad (saw) there emerged a void within the Ummah. Losing the Holy Prophet (saw) created an intense atmosphere of sorrow, fear and disunity. Ibn Rajab reports that when the Holy Prophet (saw) passed away the Muslims became⁶²,

'...shocked, bewildered and confused. Some of them were stunned and became perplexed; others sat down and were not able to stand; others lost their ability to speak; and yet others were in complete denial and refused to believe that the Holy Prophet (saw) had really died'

There was no established system by which a Khalifah could be elected and it was in this distressing atmosphere that the blessed companions found themselves. A heated and unfruitful debate erupted between members of the Muhajirun and Ansar as to who should become the Khalifah and lead the faithful. At this critical juncture it could only have been Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra), perhaps the most tender-hearted and fragile of all the companions, who could bring calm to the situation.

Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was away from Madinah on the day that the Holy Prophet (saw) passed away. Upon his return, he entered the chamber in which the blessed body of the Holy Prophet (saw) lay and with tears in his eyes, kissed the forehead of his beloved companion and then walked out into the assembly of the faithful where Hadhrat Umar (ra) stood with his sword drawn ready to smite anyone who dare say that the Prophet was dead, he asked Hadhrat Umar (ra) to sit down and then addressed the companions with the most fitting of words⁶³,

⁶² Ibn Rajab. Lataaif al-Ma'arif. Pg.114.

⁶³ See Sahih Al Bukhari Vol.5, Bk.57, No.19.

Whosoever used to worship Muhammad, then (let him know that) indeed Muhammad has died. And whosoever worships Allah, then Allah is alive and does not die’.

He then qualified this statement and proved that the Holy Prophet (saw) was not immortal by reciting a verse from the perfect book, the Qur’an⁶⁴,

((وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ))

And Muhammad is but a messenger. Verily all Messengers have passed away before him. If then he dies or is slain, will you turn back on your heels? And he who turns back on his heels shall not harm Allah at all. And Allah will certainly reward the grateful.

Al-Qurtubi very poignantly points out that this very action of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was the highest display of courage⁶⁵, ‘Bravery is defined as having a firm and steadfast heart during times of hardship and calamities. And there was no calamity that was greater than the death of the Holy Prophet’

Following this, there was a consensus. This is known as the first consensus amongst the Muslims. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was universally agreed upon by the Muhajirun and Ansar as the Khalifatul Rasul (the Successor to the Prophet). Commenting on this great day of blessing the Promised Messiah (as) writes⁶⁶,

‘As it happened at the time of Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (ra), the death of the Holy Prophet (saw) was considered untimely and many ignorant Bedouins turned apostate. The companions of the Holy Prophet (saw), too stricken with grief, became like those who lost their senses. Then Allah raised Abu Bakr Siddiq (ra) and showed for the second time the manifestation of His Power and thus Islam, which was about to fall, was supported by Him and He fulfilled this promise of His which was given [in the verse]:

((24:55) وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا))

That is, after the fear we shall firmly re-establish them. That is what also happened at the time of Moses (as), when he died on his way from Egypt to Kin’an before taking the Israelites to the intended destination in accordance with the promise. At his [Moses’] death the Israelites were plunged into deep mourning. It is written in the Torah that with the grief at this untimely death [of Moses] and his sudden departure the Israelites wept for forty days.

⁶⁴ The Holy Qur’an. Ch.3. Vs.144.

⁶⁵ Tafseer al-Qurtubi. 2/222.

⁶⁶ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The Will. Pg.6.

The same happened with Christ (as). At the time of the incident of the Crucifixion all his disciples scattered and even one of them apostatized.'

In another place the Promised Messiah (as) reaffirms that the position of Khalifah could have gone to none other than Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra)⁶⁷,

"وَعُلِّمْتُ أَنَّ الصِّدِّيقَ أَعْظَمُ شَأْنًا وَأَرْفَعُ مَكَانًا مِنْ جَمِيعِ الصَّحَابَةِ"

'And I have been told that the Siddique (Abu Bakr (ra)) was the greatest in rank and the highest in station of all of the Companions'

Over the coming years and centuries there erupted much criticism of his appointment by Shia scholars as they were, and are, of the opinion that Hadhrat Ali (ra) was the rightful successor to the Holy Prophet (saw). The evidence against this opinion is so numerous that it would be impossible to discuss it all in this article. A seeker of truth is best advised to read the book of the Promised Messiah (as) 'Sirr-ul-Khalifah' in which he outlines that upon the death of the Holy Prophet (saw) the verse of Successorship (Istikhlaf)⁶⁸ came into immediate action and could have only applied to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra). The Promised Messiah (as) writes⁶⁹,

'In the verse of Istikhlaf, Allah (s.w.t) has promised Muslim men and Muslim women that, in any case, under His mercy and blessings, some of the believers would be made Khalifabs; and Allah would replace the sense of danger in their hearts with a sense of security and peace. So this is a circumstance, a condition, which does not properly and fully apply to any except the Khilafat of the Siddiq.'

Before mentioning a few conclusive narrations of the Holy Prophet (saw) and his Companions, regarding the legitimacy of Hadhrat Abu Bakr's (ra) Khilafah, I would like to include the magnificent explanation of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV (Rh) being one of pure logic. In a Question & Answer⁷⁰ session he very sensibly points out that as a matter of common knowledge it was accepted that Hadhrat Ali (ra) was one of the most courageous companions and that in the battlefield the fiercest position to be, after that of the Holy Prophet (saw), was where Hadhrat Ali (ra) was standing. Huzur (ra) says that in light of the tremendous bravery and righteousness of Hadhrat Ali it is incomprehensible that he would offer his bai'at at the hand of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) had he known that the Holy Prophet (saw) instructed that somebody else should be the Khalifah. It is in actuality an insult of the highest order to accuse Hadhrat Ali (ra) of disobeying a direct command of the Holy Prophet, Hadhrat Khatam An-Nabiyeen, and offering his pledge of allegiance to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra). The only logical conclusion is that he in fact knew and accepted that Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) should be the rightful Khalifah.

⁶⁷ Sirrul Khilafah. Pg.18; Also see Tadhkirah. Pg.317.

⁶⁸ The Holy Qur'an. Ch.64. Vs.56.

⁶⁹ Sirrul Khilafah. p.15.

⁷⁰ Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad. 17th July 1994. Liqa'a Ma'al Arab.

http://66.250.64.38/dmlmediafiles/video/wmv/QALQ071794_04.wmv [Accessed: 30.10.2007]

Likewise, it is inconceivable that a man of the towering status of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra), a pillar of righteousness, should have accepted a position which he knew the 'Beloved of Allah' (saw) had issued to someone else. It is reckless of anyone to infer that the one whom the Holy Prophet (saw) named 'the truthful one' would act so deceitfully upon the Holy Prophet's (saw) death.

Hadhrt Ali (ra) has himself been recorded on many occasions as having expressed his love and respect for Hadhrt Abu Bakr (ra). He is reported to have said in one narration⁷¹, *'By the One in Whose Hand is my self, we never strove to be first in a good action but that Abu Bakr was before us in it'*. In another report he praised, and displayed his deep love for, both Hadhrt Abu Bakr (ra) and Hadhrt Umar (ra) saying⁷², *'The best of mankind after the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, is Abu Bakr and Umar. Love for me will never be united with hatred of Abu Bakr and Umar in the heart of a believer'*.

Regarding the status of Hadhrt Abu Bakr in the eyes of the Holy Prophet (saw) we find an interesting hadith⁷³ in which a lady visited the Holy Prophet (saw) and was told to come back after a while to which she asked the Holy Prophet (saw) who she should visit if she returned and he was not there (i.e. he had passed away) to which he responded, 'If you should not find me, go to Abu Bakr'. This coupled with the fact that the Holy Prophet (saw) chose Hadhrt Abu Bakr (ra) to lead the prayers when he was ill should leave no doubt in the heart of a sincere believer that Hadhrt Abu Bakr (ra) was the legitimate Khilafah after the death of the Holy Prophet (saw).

After being elected Hadhrt Abu Bakr (ra) reluctantly, and under the persuasion of Hadhrt Umar (ra), climbed the pulpit. After a heart-rending introduction by Hadhrt Umar (ra), the Muslim world was treated to one of the most famous and meaningful speeches in the history of Islam. Although only a paragraph or so long, his humble statements would not only outline his Khilafah but that of those shining stars that followed him. He said the following⁷⁴,

'O People, I have indeed been appointed over you, though I am not the best among you. If I do well then help me; and if I act wrongly then correct me. Truthfulness is synonymous with fulfilling the truth, and lying is tantamount to treachery. The weak among you is deemed strong by me, until I return to them what is rightfully theirs, Allah Willing. And the strong among you is deemed weak by me, until I rightfully take from them what is rightfully someone else's, Allah Willing. No group of people abandons Jihad in the way of Allah, except that Allah makes them suffer humiliation. And wickedness does not become widespread among a people, except that Allah inflicts them with widespread calamity. Obey me so long as I obey Allah and His Messenger. And if I disobey Allah and His Messenger, then I have no right to your obedience. Stand up now and pray, may Allah have mercy on you'

⁷¹ Al-Sayuti. Pg.48.

⁷² IBID

⁷³ Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.5, Bk.57, No.11.

⁷⁴ Al-Bidaya Wa Nihayya. 6/306. 306.

8. The Great Leader

These words of humility and wisdom marked the beginning of Hadhrat Abu Bakr's (ra) Khilafah and encapsulated the way with which he conducted himself throughout his entire term as Khalifah. He was a champion of absolute justice. This was then exemplified in one of his first decisions to dispatch an army led by Hadhrat Usama ibn Zaid to Syria to defend the Muslim empire against an aggressive Roman Empire. What was peculiar about this order is that despite it actually being the final order of the Holy Prophet (saw), before his passing away, many of the companions disagreed with Hadhrat Abu Bakr's decision to dispatch the army. They did not agree that such a large number of people should leave Madinah when the Muslims were so vulnerable as a result of loss of the Holy Prophet (saw). They also objected to the army being led by a Hadhrat Usama ibn Zaid who was just a teenager. Their argument did hold some weight considering the many apostate tribes threatening to cause internal disorder; however Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) did not flinch for a second and remained obedient to the order of the Holy Prophet (saw). He rebuked the companions who were against dispatching the army and in the strongest of terms said⁷⁵,

By the One Who has the soul of Abu Bakr (ra) in His hand, had I thought that wild predatory animals would make off with me, I would still send out Usamah's army in accordance with what the Messenger of Allah commanded Usamah to do. And even if I were the last person to remain in these cities, I would still do the same'

With this Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) dispatched the army to Shaam (present day Syria, Jordan, Palestine) ordering Hadhrat Usama (ra) to adhere to the regulations of war as set out by the Holy Prophet (saw) and stressed that no Muslims should be unjust, nor cut down trees nor injure the holy people of other lands⁷⁶. His obedience to the Holy Prophet (saw) was such that he ordered Hadhrat Usama (ra) not to rush back but to take his time and fulfil every order of the Holy Prophet (saw) to the finest detail. The result was that Hadhrat Usama (ra) returned some forty days later with a healthy army that had successfully suppressed the Roman empire in al-Shaam.

However, whilst he was away with most of the Muslim army and military resources, there erupted a surge of internal battles which are known as the Al-Ridda or Apostate Wars. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV (Rh) has referred to the challenge here faced by Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) as⁷⁷, *'The main task of the Prophet (saw)'s successor, Abu Bakr (ra)...'* It is worth noting that whilst Al-Ridda literally means 'to wilfully recant the religion of Islam', Huzur(Rh) established that the groups involved in the Al-Ridda wars were named as such by the companions in the metaphorical sense and that they had in fact, for the most, not recanted the religion of Islam. Huzur (Rh) clarifies the actual facts of the revolt through the following quote of Bernard Lewis⁷⁸,

⁷⁵ Al-Tabari. 4/45.

⁷⁶ IBID 4/46.

⁷⁷ Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad. Murder in the Name of Allah. Pg.67.

⁷⁸ IBID Pg.69.

'The refusal of the tribes to recognize the succession of Abu Bakr (ra) was, in effect, not a relapse by converted Muslims to their previous paganism, but the simple and automatic termination of a political contract by the death of one of the parties. The tribes nearest to Medina had in fact been converted and their interests were so closely identified with those of the Ummah that their separate history has not been recorded. For the rest, the death of Muhammad (saw) automatically severed their bonds with Medina, and the parties resumed their liberty of action. They felt in no way bound by the election of Abu Bakr (ra) in which they had taken no part, and at once suspended both tribute and treaty relations. In order to re-establish the hegemony of Medina, Abu Bakr (ra) had to make new treaties.'

In reality the Al-Ridda defectors represented several corrupt factions which either intentionally or unintentionally attempted to spark disorder within the Ummah following the passing of the Holy Prophet (saw). They can be divided into four broad categories, namely,

- (1) those who falsely claimed prophet hood creating deviant splinter groups;
- (2) those who wanted to continue to follow Islam only to be prevented from doing so by tyrannical leaders;
- (3) those who wanted to remain within the Ummah but refused to pay Zakah or wanted to renegotiate the amount, and;
- (4) those who did not feel obligated to pledge allegiance to, and accept, Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra).

It would be credible to say that following the death of the Holy Prophet (saw), and with the exception of the great moral degradation which the Promised Messiah (as) was sent to remove, there has been no greater threat to Islam than the Al-Ridda wars.

The effect they were having was to create serious disorder within the Muslim provinces which had the potential to split and fragment the Ummah. As has been detailed, following the death of the Holy Prophet (saw) the Ummah was spiritually unified by Hadhrat Abu Bakr's wise and decisive decisions when faced with the crisis of succession. In a very similar fashion the magnificent and righteous qualities of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) were called upon during the Ridda Wars to neutralise the threat of anarchy and maintain the physical and political unity of the Ummah. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) successfully thwarted one attack upon the Muslims which was headed by Kharjah ibn Hism. Then in a later incident five prominent tribes visited the city of Madinah to negotiate a lowering of the Zakah; however, to the dismay of many companions, Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) refused to negotiate with them. A group led by Hadhrat Umar (ra) approached Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) and voiced their dismay at his decision to fight those who refused to pay Zakah with the following words⁷⁹,

⁷⁹ IBID Pg.68; Also see Muhammad Idris al Shafii. Kitab al-Umm. ed. Muhammad Zahri al Nadjjar (Cairo, n.d.), vol. VIII. 256.

‘What right do you have to fight these people? The Prophet (saw) has said, ‘I was ordered to fight people until they say there is no God but Allah. If they say this, they safeguard themselves and their property from me’

Here Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) stood firm and refused to act upon the opinion of his companions. He knew the cunning mischief behind the renegade tribes’ actions and conveyed this to the people of Madinah by delivering the following sermon⁸⁰, *‘The delegation has observed just how few of you there are in Madinah. You do not know whether they will attack you by day or night. Their vanguard is only a stone’s throw from Madinah. They wanted us to accept their proposals and make an agreement with them, but we have rejected their request. So make ready for their attack’*

In fulfilment of his words the tribes attacked no less than three days later and were suppressed by the Muslim’s thinly spread army of Madinah. A testament here to the great statesman-like and military qualities of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was that not only could he read situations with unique vision but that he repelled each of these ruthless attacks with the barest of military resources. The campaign in Syria under Hadhrat Usama ibn Zaid had used up much of the Muslim’s financial and physical resources and left them short of manpower. In the face of such tribulation Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was successful and one would have to put this down to his unshakeable belief in trusting Allah (تَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ).

Another great test for Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) during this period were the false claimants of prophet hood with perhaps the most famous and well-documented being ‘Musalimah the Liar’. In an unprecedented action, Musalimah moved to attack Madinah with a hundred-thousand strong army. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) reacted by dispatching Hadhrat Khalid bin Waleed (ra) at the head of a far weaker force of only 13,000 men in what would later be called the battle of Yamamah (Yamamah being the place where they fought). Despite their valiant efforts, the Muslim army was suppressed at several key junctures and needed a fresh strategy. Hadhrat Khalid ibn Waleed (ra) adopted a proposal put forward by several companions ordering that the Muslims from among the army that knew the Holy Qur’an by heart should form a separate elite regiment to attack Musalimah. It was thought that the rest of the army, made up of relatively new Muslims, did not fully appreciate the spirit of jihad and that a regiment comprised specifically of Hufaaz would make for a formidable force. The Hufaaz, numbering 3,000 in total, attacked the army of Musalimah with such stealth and power that they were ultimately granted victory by Almighty Allah (s.w.t). Musalimah was killed in battle by Hadhrat Wahshy ibn Harb (the same person who, before accepting Islam, killed Hadhrat Hamza the uncle of the Holy Prophet (saw)) in what later became known as the garden of death.

The shortfall of this action was that of the 3,000 Hufaaz some 500 were martyred. Deeply concerned by the inevitability that the Hufaaz would continue to reduce in number with each new battle, Hadhrat Umar (ra) suggested that it was now necessary for the verses of the Holy Qur’an to be collected into one book. The fact that the Holy

⁸⁰ IBID

Prophet (saw) had not done this made Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) hesitant at first; however, he eventually agreed and initiated the process. He assigned this task to Hadhrat Zaid ibn Thabit (ra) who began to collate the verses of the Holy Qur'an by writing down what others had recited and copying down verses that had been written on differing objects which even included the stalks of date-palm trees. Relating the magnitude of the mammoth task, Hadhrat Zaid ibn Thabit (ra) said⁸¹,

By Allah, if he had imposed on me the responsibility of removing one of the mountains it would not have been heavier for me than what they ordered me to do of collecting the Qur'an'

Collating the Qur'anic verses into one book was an achievement of the highest order. The measure of this great act of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) certainly amounted to an immeasurable fountain of blessings as Allah afforded him the honour of beginning an initiative, the publishing of the Holy Qur'an, by which many billions of people have since benefited, and will continue to benefit

After resolving the internal problems of the Muslim empire Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) pursued a defensive military strategy to fortify and defend the Muslim territories against bordering enemies. This started with him dispatching an army headed by Hadhrat Khalid bin Waleed (ra) to the South West of Iraq and a second army led by Hadhrat Iyaad ibn Ghanam (ra) to North Eastern Iraq. It is during this period that we discover how much of a master military strategist Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was.. Al-Tabaree records that Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was very explicit in his instructions to the two generals who were tasked with defending Muslims against the Persians in Iraq. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) instructed that Muslims were forbidden from initiating any acts of aggression against the enemy but rather proceed with love in an attempt to win the hearts of the non-Muslims. One must pause and ask when in the annals of history has any army been dispatched with its primary instruction to put aside the sword and win over the hearts of it's' opponents?

He also instructed Hadhrat Khalid bin Waleed (ra) not to admit people into his army that had left Islam and subsequently re-entered the fold of Islam. Such people might have posed too great a threat to the greater stability of the military lines having already displayed a great weakness in faith. The two armies did as Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) instructed, and under Hadhrat Khalid bin Waleed's (ra) leadership the combined army managed to repel the Persian aggressors and take control of the whole of Iraq. Following this great victory Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) replaced Khalid bin Waleed (ra) with a great warrior and commander Hadhrat Al-Muthanna ibn Haaritha Al-Shaybani who was assigned the task of defending Iraq from once again falling under the control of tyrannical rule.

Hadhrot Khalid bin Waleed (ra) was subsequently appointed the General of a new army with his assignment to lead the Muslim army to the border of Shaam where they would remain. During the time of the Holy Prophet (saw) the leader of the Roman Empire

⁸¹ Al-Sayuti. Pg.70: (For the full narration see: Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.9, Bk.89, No301.)

ruled Shaam threatened that he would one day attack Madinah and it was therefore important that a defensive force be stationed on the border. Khalid bin Waleed (ra) was thus under strict orders to remain on the border but not fight anyone unless the opponents were the aggressors. It was not long before the leader who had once threatened to attack Madinah ordered his army to attack the Muslim army.

The aggressors knew that Hadhrat Khalid bin Waleed (ra) was the commander of the Muslim army and should have thus realised that the Sword of Allah (ra), by Allah's Grace, was unaccustomed to losing on the battle field. The Muslim army thus successfully defeated the fearful Arab tribes of Al-Shaam with each of them scattering on seeing the resilience of the Muslim army. After a period of set backs and great hardship which included the martyrdom of the son of Hadhrat Khalid bin Waleed (ra), and an impressive build up of Roman military might in Shaam, it became apparent to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) that a more robust defensive strategy was required. He thus gathered his closest companions for a Majlis-e-Shura (a consultative council) to discuss the options available to them. After much thought he assigned Hadhrat Khalid bin Waleed (ra) to another province and came to the decision that four armies should be sent to Al-Shaam which would be commanded by Hadhrat Yazeed ibn Abi Sufyan (ra), Hadhrat Shurahbil ibn Hassanah(ra), Hadhrat Abu Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah (ra), and Hadhrat Amr ibn Al-Aas (ra). The task ahead of them was great as they knew they would have to hold off the might of the Roman Empire which had built up an impressive set of defences across the whole Al-Shaam region. The Romans wanted to take no chances against the Muslim army and so further reinforced their defences; in fact, so seriously was their reaction that no one other than their leader, Haraqal, travelled to Al-Shaam to oversee the conflict.

Over time, the four leaders of the Muslim armies became weary of the powerful threat facing them and each wrote letters to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) requesting reinforcements. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) remained steadfast and reminded each of them of their duty and that whilst they were fewer than the Romans in number Almighty Allah (s.w.t) had blessed them with Muslim soldiers who each valued death in the cause of Allah more than life. As was the great characteristic of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra), he remained constant in his trust in Almighty Allah (s.w.t) and again rebuked the four generals saying⁸²,

Verily, people such as yourselves do not lose because they are few in number. When tens of thousands of soldiers gather together, they are defeated only because of their sins. So protect yourselves from sins, gather in Yarmook, so that you can support one another. And let each man among you lead his companions in prayer'

We must again take a moment to pause and reflect upon the truly unique character of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra). Even when faced by the threat of complete annihilation at the hands of one of the greatest empires in the history of mankind, he so wisely simplified the issue down to one of righteousness, that power is in the hands of Almighty Allah and all the numbers in the world are no match for Allah's Might, (لا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ)

⁸² Al-Tabari. 4/211.

there is no power other than Allah. Still fresh in his mind must have been the sweet victory afforded to the Muslims by Almighty Allah on the day of Badr, or the tribulations from which they were saved on the day of Uhud when piercing arrows were passing by the shoulders of the Holy Prophet (saw) and all but a few had mistakenly thought he had been killed. Such an astounding person, who had the perfect book engraved upon his heart and was the student of the greatest of Allah's creation, could never fear an enemy.

Sensing the need for a more powerful strategy of defence Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) ordered all four armies to gather in Yarmook and issued an order which sent trembles throughout the land of Al-Shaam. He instructed that the Sword of Allah, Hadhrat Khalid Bin Waleed (ra), should leave his post in Iraq and lead a combined large Muslim army in Al-Shaam. Khalid bin Waleed (ra) did so with great skill and ability defeating the Romans in both Ajnadain and Yarmook despite being far less well-equipped and greatly outnumbered. A great battle then ensued which required of Hadhrat Khalid bin Waleed (ra) some of his greatest tactical mastery, but the inevitable outcome was that the Muslim army was victorious inflicting unprecedented damage upon the Roman army.

However, the Muslims could not rejoice in their victory as Khalid bin Waleed (ra) informed them of the demise of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra). It was in fact during the battle that news reached Khalid bin Waleed of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra)'s demise but he kept the news from the Muslim army so as to not dishearten them. The military accomplishments of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) cannot be understated and provided a clear and unifying platform for his successors to build upon. The magnitude of his advancement of Muslim territories can be appreciated in the following diagram,



9. Demise of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra)

As Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) became more and more ill he came to the decision that the station of Khalifah should be given to Hadhrat Umar ibn Al-Khattab (ra). The companions for the most part were in complete agreement with this decision and all were obedient to it. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) died in his house with Hadhrat Aisha (ra) by his side as he was instructing that Hadhrat Umar (ra) should repay the simple wage he received from the Baitul Maal by giving his garden to the treasury. On this day Madinah was filled with sadness only second in intensity to that felt after the passing of the Holy Prophet (saw). The companions were distraught and Hadhrat Umar (ra) cried with such pain and anguish that his tears formed a small pool on the floor. On hearing the news Hadhrat Ali (ra), filled with emotion, marched to the house of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) and, surrounded by a large crowd, delivered a long speech in which he outlined some of the dazzling achievements and sacrifices of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra). In this heart wrenching tribute Hadhrat Ali (ra) is reported to have said⁸⁴,

'O Abu Bakr, may Allah have Mercy upon you. You were the closest companion and friend of the Messenger of Allah (saw); you were a comfort to him; you were the one he trusted most. If he had a secret, he would tell it to you; and if he needed to consult someone regarding a matter, he would consult you. You were the first of your people to embrace Islam, and you were the most sincere of them in your faith. Your faith was stronger than any other person's, as was the degree to which you feared Allah. And you were wealthier than anyone else in terms of what you acquired from the religion of Allah 'Azza Wa Jall (The Possessor of Majesty and Might) . You cared most for the Messenger of Allah, and Islam. Of all people you were the best companion to the Messenger of Allah; you possessed the best qualities; you had the best past; you ranked the highest; and you were the closest to him. And of all people you resembled the Messenger of Allah the most in terms of his guise and demeanour. Your ranking was higher than anyone else's, and the Prophet held you in higher esteem than anyone else. On behalf of the Messenger of Allah and Islam, may Allah reward you with the best of rewards. When the people disbelieved in the Messenger of Allah you believed in him. Throughout your life you were both his eyes with which he saw, and his ears with which he heard. Allah has named you truthful in his book when He said:

((وَالَّذِي جَاءَ بِالصِّدْقِ وَصَدَّقَ بِهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ))

And He who has brought the truth and he who testifies to it as the truth-these it is who are the righteous

When people were stingy in their support for the Messenger of Allah (saw) you comforted him. And when people sat still, you stood side by side with the Messenger of Allah (saw), facing the same hardships that he faced. In times of hardship, you were truly a good and noble companion of his. You were the 'second of two', his Companion in the Cave; and the one upon whom As-Sakeenah (peace, tranquillity, calmness) descended. You were his companion during the migration (to Al-Madinah), and you were his successor regarding the religion of Allah (s.w.t) and his Nation. And a truly good successor you proved to be when the people apostatised. You

⁸⁴ As-Sallabee. Pg.737-8; Also see At-Tabsirah. Ibn Al-Jawzee. 1/477-479.

did what no other Khalifah of God did before you. You stood up firmly and bravely when his other Companions lost their resolve and became soft. You truly were as the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: weak in your body but strong regarding the commands of Allah; humble in yourself, but lofty in your ranking with Allah (s.w.t); well esteemed in the eyes of the people, honoured and great in their hearts. Not a single one of them had any reason to dislike you, to be suspicious of you, or to hold you in contempt... The weak and humble you have always treated as strong and honourable, making sure you gave them what was rightfully theirs. And in this regard, you have treated relatives and strangers equally. Of all people, you respect those who are most obedient to Allah (s.w.t) and who fear Him the most. In your overall character, you embodied truth and compassion. Your speech has always been characterised by the qualities of wisdom and decisiveness. And you have always struck a noble balance between gentleness and firmness. You have always based your knowledge on knowledge, and once you have made your decisions, you have always kept firm resolve to execute them... Verily to Allah (s.w.t) do we belong, and to Him is our return. We are pleased with, and submit to, Allah's (s.w.t) Decree. And by Allah (s.w.t), other than the death of the Messenger of Allah(saw), Muslims have never been afflicted with greater calamity than the calamity of your death. You have always been a protector, a sanctuary, and a source of honour for this religion. May Allah 'Azza wa Jall make you join the company of His Prophet, Muhammad (saw), and may he not deprive us of your reward. And may He not lead us astray after you.'

This statement of love gives us not only a valuable insight into the great achievements of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) but also of the immense love and high esteem which the companions had for him. It is at this juncture that we relate the most astonishing part of his Khilafah. His achievements as Khalifah, as outlined in the previous pages, were not made in ten years or twenty or even thirty but rather over just two years and some months. It is unheard of in the annals of history, with the exception of Hadhrat Muhammad (saw), that any statesman or spiritual head has achieved so much in such a concentrated period of time. Most importantly he took his responsibilities seriously and fulfilled his mission which Allah had set him. He presented Hadhrat Umar (ra) with a spiritual community which was stable, unified, greatly expanded and most importantly filled with the Madinan love (المحبة) for Almighty Allah. If one had to highlight any single defining characteristic of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) which those after him benefited from the most it would have to be his complete trust in Allah. Not a calamity challenged the Ummah when Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) did not hold firm to the fact that Allah has the power to overcome anything. It should be fitting that on perhaps the only occasion that Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) feared from a situation, the threat to the Holy Prophet (saw) in Ghaar Thaur; it was Allah Who comforted His most truthful of servants.

At the age of 63 Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) moved into the next world and was buried in the same chamber of the Prophet and at the shoulder of his great leader, mentor and dearest of loves Hadhrat Muhammad (saw). It is fitting here, and should provide us with immense comfort, to recall a glorious hadith of the Holy Prophet (saw) in which he said⁸⁵,

⁸⁵ Al-Sayuti. Pg.41; Also see Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.5, Bk.57, No.34.

'As for you, Abu Bakr, you will be the first of my Ummah to enter the garden'.

Here we are reminded of heart warming incident involving Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (ra) which occurred as he stood over the dead body of the second Khalifah of Islam Hadhrat Umar (ra). He relates that as he stood there a man rested his elbow on his shoulder saying⁸⁶,

'O Umar (ra)! May Allah bestow His Mercy on you. I always hoped that Allah will keep you with your two companions, for I often heard Allah's Apostle saying, "I, Abu Bakr and Umar were (somewhere). I, Abu Bakr and Umar did (something). I, Abu Bakr and Umar set out." So I hoped that Allah will keep you with both of them.'

Hadhrat Ibn Abbas (ra) relates that he turned to find that the man was none other than the 'Gates of Knowledge' Hadhrat Ali ibn Abi Talib (ra). Still to this very day do we find the graves of these two faithful companions set at the shoulders of our beloved Habibullah (saw) in the Prophet's Mosque.

10. Conclusion

Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) was the greatest of the companions and, after the Holy Prophet (saw), displayed within his actions and words the closest characteristics to those of the Holy Qur'an. The Promised Messiah (as) was gifted by Almighty Allah with unique insights into the characteristics and lives of the companions of the Holy Prophet (saw) by way of visions. On many occasions the Promised Messiah (as) was blessed with the opportunity to meet some of these great ambassadors of Islam and even feel some of their hardship. His words, therefore, hold exceptional standing and have been vouchsafed as being representative of the truth. Writing about our beloved Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra), the Promised Messiah (as) comments⁸⁷,

'Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) was a man of deep insight, meek, and compassionate. Humility and meekness were his qualities. Forgiveness, kindness and compassion were his characteristics. He was recognised by the light of his forehead. He was deeply attached to the Holy Prophet and his soul had been united to the soul of the Best of creation. He was covered by the same light which had been bestowed upon his master, the beloved of the Lord. He was enveloped by the light of the Holy Prophet and his great bounties. He was distinguished from all other men in his understanding of the Qur'an and in his love of the Chief of the Messengers and the Pride of mankind. When the life of the hereafter and the mysteries of the Divine were made manifest to him, he forsook worldly connections and physical attachments and was tinged with the tinge of his beloved, and he gave up all objectives for the sake of the One sought after. He discarded all physical impurities and took on the colour of the One the True and he disappeared in the pleasure of the Lord of the worlds.'

⁸⁶ Sahih Al-Bukhari. Vol.5, Bk.57, No.26.

⁸⁷ Sirrul Khilafah. Pg.31-32.

When the love of the True Divine saturated the whole of his being and its light began to manifest itself in all his actions and words and his attitudes, he was named the Siddique and he was invested with fresh and deep knowledge from the Presence of the Best of Bestowers. Faithfulness became his nature and its effects made themselves manifest in all his doings and sayings and movings and stoppings and in his senses and in his pure breath. He was included among those upon whom the Lord of the heavens and the earth had bestowed His favours. The truth is that he was a comprehensive illustration of the book of prophet hood. He was a leader of those who are recipients of grace and perfection and had partaken of the nature of the Prophet. In stating this I have not been guilty of exaggeration, nor is my statement merely the result of my wishful thinking but is a reality which has been disclosed to me from the Presence of the Lord of Honour.'

Over the centuries men of knowledge have compiled thousands of books and research papers in an attempt to extract, from traditional Islamic sources of knowledge, the essence of what a Khalifah is. The above explanation of the Promised Messiah (as) differs greatly in approach from the other assessments of other great Islamic personages yet there is no doubt in the author's mind that such a simple yet miraculous explanation of Khilafah as has been expounded here is without a doubt an inspired one. The Promised Messiah (as) has most beautifully set out that the most solid of foundations upon which Khilafah is built is the absolute and unqualified love, affection and obedience of the individual (Khalifah) for the Messenger of Allah (saw). It is this very love, obedience and affection which emanates from the Khalifah as if it were a blazing light which Allah (s.w.t) has ignited within his heart and intensified through the reflection of the mirror of the Holy Prophet (saw). In this regard it is no other than Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra) who was par excellence in his love, obedience and affection for the Holy Prophet (saw). He thus created the template of love and obedience upon which Khilafah was founded and has continued to shine throughout the centuries and still to this very day shines through the personage of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih al-Khaamis (aba) (ابن معك يا مسرور). It is therefore a necessary requirement for each and every Muslim man, woman and child to rush towards the door of As-Siddiq and inculcate within themselves the deep love and obedience which Hadhrat Aba Bakr (ra) displayed in his every action and utterance for the beloved of the Lord of all the Worlds (s.w.t), Hadhrat Khatam-ul-Anbiyaa (saw).

Indeed, the content of this article amounts to nothing more than a droplet in the ocean of the life and achievements of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra). We should each aspire to delve deeper and deeper into the vast ocean that was the life of this great lover and servant of Almighty Allah (s.w.t). The best way for us to display our sincere love and gratitude for his great sacrifices is to supplicate to Allah (s.w.t) that He may instil within each of us and our children the truthful spirit of Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra). Let us each aspire to become an Abu Bakr (ra) in our faith, love, spirituality, preaching, courage etc. The Promised Messiah (as) has instructed no less⁸⁸,

⁸⁸ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Lecture Ludhiana. Pg.64.

For my part, no one can be a true Muslim unless he imbibes the colour and complexion of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali, (may Allah be pleased with them all). They did not love this world but placed themselves entirely at the service of God'.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّكَ وَالْعَمَلَ الَّذِي
يُبَلِّغُنِي حُبَّكَ، اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ حُبَّكَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ نَفْسِي
وَمَالِي وَأَهْلِي وَمِنَ الْمَاءِ الْبَارِدِ

Oh Allah! I ask You for Your love of those who love you, and love of the actions which brings me close to Your love. My Lord! Make me such that Your love is more pleasing to me than myself, and my wealth, and my family and the cool, sweet water. (Dua of Hadhrat Da'ud (as))

وآخر دعوانا أن الحمد لله رب العالمين

Appendix 1 - Sermon by Hadhrat Abu Bakr (ra)

“Verily, Allah does not accept deeds except those which were performed for the sake of His Face only. Therefore, seek Allah’s Face by your actions. Know that whatever action you do with sincerity to Allah is an act of obedience that you performed, a good share that you earned, a duty that you fulfilled, and a reserve that you keep from perishable days to everlasting days. At that time you will be most in need and in anticipation (for these good deeds).”

O slaves of Allah! Draw a lesson from those who died before you. Think about those who lived before you. Where were they yesterday? Where are they today? Where are the tyrants who were noted for the wars they waged and earned victories in battle? Time has eliminated them and they disintegrated into dust. The only things that remain from them are their evil statements, and verily, evil statements are for evil people and evil people are for evil statements. Where are the kings who ruled on the earth and inhabited it? They have become a thing of the past and their memory has been forgotten. They have become nothing. Yet, Allah the Exalted and Most Honoured has kept for them the evil burden of their deeds, but ended their streak of lusts. They perished, but the deeds they committed remained theirs even though the world has become for others. We were created after them, so if we draw lessons from their fate we will attain deliverance. Otherwise, if we were deceived by all this, we will earn a fate similar to theirs.

Where are the bright faces of those who were deceived on account of their youth? They have turned into dust, but what they committed of shortcomings remained with them as cause for sorrow. Where are those who built cities, fortified them with walls and collected wonders? They left all this for those who came after them; there you see the remains of their cities, they have not been inhabited after them. Meanwhile they are in the darkness of graves:

(هَلْ تُحِسُّ مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْ تَسْمَعُ لَهُمْ رِكْزًا)

Canst thou perceive a single one of them, or hear even a whisper of them? [19:98]

Where are those whom you knew among your forefathers and brethren? Their lifetimes came to an end and they joined their deeds and actions. They are residing after they died either in the dwelling of happiness or misery.

“Verily, Allah is One and has no partners in worship. There is no tie of kinship between Him and any of His creation that warrants granting goodness or fending off evil on account of that kinship. There is only the obedience of Allah (s.w.t) and abiding by His Commandments. Know that you are subservient slaves (of Allah) and that what He has can only be earned through obeying Him. Is it not time for one of you that the Fire be taken away from him, while Paradise is not made far from his reach?”

(Source: Selected Friday Sermons. Abdul Malik Mujahid. pp.33-34)

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