

## **Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - The Caliphate Issue**

### ***Will of the Holy Prophet***

We have next to consider whether the Holy Prophet made any will about his succession. Everything about the activities of the Holy Prophet including the minutest details is fully documented. No will of the Holy Prophet is on record, and as such it is a fact that the Holy Prophet made no will. It is alleged in some quarters that before his death the Holy Prophet had expressed the desire to record his will, but Umar frustrated the attempt by declaring that the Holy Quran was enough for them. Ayesha refuted this allegation and observed that the Holy Prophet did not express any desire to record his will.

It may be recalled that even during his illness the Holy Prophet attended the mosque on two occasions, and addressed the people. On one occasion he reprimanded the people for their objection to the command of an expedition against Syria by Usama b Zaid. If the Holy Prophet in spite of his illness could advocate the causes of Usama's command, he could have advocated the cause of the successor of Ali as well, if he had so desired.

Another point that arises for consideration in this respect is whether the failure to record the will was an omission or was it deliberate? The Holy Prophet did not pass away suddenly; he had ample time to settle his affairs before his death. Even at the Farewell Pilgrimage three months before his death, he knew that his end was near. He had been sent by God to complete his mission. If the nomination of a successor was to be a part of the divine mission with which he had been entrusted, he would have nominated a successor to complete his mission. As he did not nominate a successor, and as his mission had been completed, it means that the nomination of a successor was no part of his mission. After him, whosoever was to succeed him was to be temporal ruler only, and the right to choose such ruler vested in the people this means that the Holy Prophet did not nominate his successor deliberately. Obviously the intention was that the people should elect their leader themselves. Allah Himself declared that He had chosen Islam as the religion for the people, and the Muslims were the best of community. It cannot, therefore, be said that what happened in the matter of succession was an omission on the part of the Holy Prophet or disinterestedness on the part of Allah (God forbid).

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