

Khalifa Umar bin al-Khattab - Inter-Personal Relations and Interactions

Umair Bin Saad

Umair bin Saad held the office of the Governor of Emessa for some time during the caliphate of Umar. Umair was more of a saint than a statesman. Instead of amassing wealth he distributed all that he had in the way of Allah.

For a year Umair remitted no revenue to Madina. Umar felt suspicious that Umair had misappropriated the revenues. He issued instructions calling upon Umair to come over to Madina.

As soon as the instructions of the Caliph were received Umair started for Madina. He took a tiffin carrier for carrying the meals, and a small waterskin for carrying water. He took a staff in his hand and started for Madina on foot. When he reached Madina he waited on Umar.

Umar enquired how did he do.

Umair said, "You can see for yourself."

Looking at his strange appearance, Umar enquired whether he had come all the way from Emessa to Madina on foot.

Umair answered the question in the affirmative.

Umar then asked why did he not hire an animal for the purposes of the journey.

Umair said that he had no money to pay for the hire. Some persons offered him a free ride in consideration of the office held by him, and such offers were rejected by him.

Umar then enquired about the revenues. Umair said that all the revenues were spent for the use of the people.

Umar wanted him to go back to Emessa, and ensure that in future the State share of the revenues was sent to Madina.

Umair said that he was not fit to be a Governor and that some one else should be appointed in his place.

Umar prevailed upon him to take back his resignation but Umair said that his decision was irrevocable.

Umair took leave of the Caliph, and retired to his village which was a few miles from Madina.

Umar was surprised at the behaviour of Umair. He thought that Umair had affected such austerity to cover up the misappropriation of revenues. Umar deputed a man to go to the house of Umair and submit a report. Umar instructed, "Go to the house of Umair and there be his guest for three days. Watch him carefully. If you see any signs of opulence about him, furnish me a report. Take this bag of money. If you find that he is in straitened circumstances make him a gift of this money."

The man deputed by Umar went to the house of Umair and there lodged with him as his guest. There he found that Umair subsisted on bare barley bread and there was no sign of opulence about him. When the agent of Umar was about to depart he presented him the bag, of money Umair refused to accept the money.

When the report was submitted to Umar, he said that Umair was a great man.

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Source : Alim.org-Umar bin al-Khattab History