

Khalifa Uthman bin Affan - Uthman's Letter to the Pilgrims

Uthman's letter to the pilgrims

Uthman addressed a letter to the pilgrims assembled at Makkah. This letter was entrusted to Abdullah b Abbas and he was required to read the letter at the gathering of the pilgrims at Makkah. This letter is contained in Zia Misri's book Uthman b Affan; and Taha Hussain's book Uthman. The letter reads:

"In the name of God, the most merciful, the most beneficent. From Amirul Mominin Uthman to all Muslims. Salutations.

After offering praise and glory to God, I wish you to turn to God Who had favored you, and chose Islam for you as your religion. Instead of waywardness, He gave you guidance. He released you from the bondage of Kufr. He armed you with guidance. He enlarged your sustenance. He made you victorious against your enemies. He showered His favors on you.

Allah says, "If you take the favors of God into account, you will find them too numerous to be counted. But man is rebellious and ungrateful by nature."

O believers have the fear of God in your hearts. Pray that when you die you die in Islam. Be united and hold fast to the cord of God";

Allah also says, "O believers, recall the favors of God. Keep in mind the covenant that you have made with Him of your obedience and faithfulness.,'

Allah says, "O ye believers, if any miscreant brings to you a news, fully verify it before accepting it as the truth."

Allah says that those who purchase this world are the losers and they will have nothing to their credit in the hereafter.

Fear Allah, and do not violate the pledges that you have taken.

Allah has enjoined you to obey Him, obey His Prophet and obey those in authority among you.

Those who believe and do good deeds, God has promised them the inheritance of the earth. Those who rebel against authority incur the wrath of God.

Allah said, "They who pledge allegiance to you pledge allegiance to Me. On them is My Hand."

In the light of these verses from the Holy Quran bear in mind that Allah is pleased with those who obey authority and who stand for unity and solidarity. Allah has condemned dissension and discord. He has brought home this point to us by narrating the stories of previous communities. Therefore act according to the injunctions of God, and be afraid of His punishment. If you ponder over history, it will be revealed to you that the previous communities were destroyed because they became victims of dissension. For the good of a people, there is no way other than this that they should have a head, in whose obedience they should be united. If you follow the way of discord and dissension, your community would disintegrate, and the enemy would come to dominate over you.

If all this comes to pass, then the religion of God would receive a set back, and the community would disintegrate into a number of sects. Allah told the Holy Prophet, "Have no concern with the people who

have broken their unity and disintegrated into sects. Leave them to God. God will take them to task for their misdeeds "

I offer you the same advice as God has offered. I ask you to fear his punishment. Shuaib had told his people, "O people beware lest my opposition leads you to the same end as befell the communities of Noah, Hud, or Salih." Since some time past, some people from amongst us have tried to present themselves as the apostles of truth, who are not interested in the affairs of the world, and who have no axe to grind. But when they were presented with reality, some of them accepted the truth, but some of them disputed the truth. Some of them stood for falsehood, but they posed as if the truth lay with them. Such persons feel upset at my longevity. They covet power. They long for an immediate revolution. Such persons have written to you that they are waging the struggle against me to get their rights. I do not know of which rights I have divested them, which they now demand from me. They demanded that no one should be above the law. I told them that I fully agreed with them. I asked them to bring all cases to my notice and I assured them that the law would be enforced against all, high or low without any distinction. But they could bring no case to my notice where any person had defied the law and proper action had not been taken against him. They said that the injunctions of the Quran should be followed. I said that I wholeheartedly agreed with the demand but would not permit any innovation or deviation. The people demanded that the poor should get bread, the laborer should get his wages. I said that I was at one with them, and it is open to them to make their suggestions in the matter. They demanded that, in the matter of Sadaqa and Khums the right of early one should be protected. I said that I agreed with the demand and they were welcome to make their suggestions in that behalf. I saw the wives of the Holy Prophet, and agreed to act according to their advice. I have accepted all legitimate demands, but in spite of that I am being oppressed and harassed. I have been prevented from leading the prayers in the Prophet's mosque. The rioters have established their full control over Madina.

The rioters have put three alternatives before me. They demand Qasaas from me for all grievances that any person may have suffered because of any verdict passed by me as Caliph. Their other alternative is that I should abdicate so that they might choose another Caliph. The third alternative is that they should assemble the people who support them, and then repudiate the allegiance to my caliphate.

All these demands are preposterous. There have been rulers and Caliphs in history who had been vested with the authority to pass judgments. The judgments might be right or wrong, but no body has the right to sit over such judgment and demand compensation. Such a demand is against all principles of jurisprudence. As regards the demand for abdication I hold myself responsible to God, and I cannot abandon my post at the behest of any one. The third alternative is ridiculous. No ruler in his senses would provide facilities to the rioters to rebel against him.

These people are apparently after my life, and their sole object appears to be to murder me. I have advised my supporters not to use any force. I do not want that the Muslim community should fall a victim to civil war. I will watch developments with due patience, and would await the decision of God. If I have to give my life in the way of Allah I would have no hesitation in making the sacrifice. I know that as Caliph I have done nothing wrong. Nevertheless I seek the forgiveness of Allah. May Allah forgive us all. May Allah have mercy on the Muslims.

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