

Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith (Hadith 8.817)

Ibn Abbas

I used to teach (the Qur'an to) some people of the Muhajirin (emigrants), among whom there was 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf. While I was in his house at Mina, and he was with 'Umar bin Al-Khattab during 'Umar's last Hajj, Abdur-Rahman came to me and said, "Would that you had seen the man who came today to the Chief of the Believers ('Umar), saying, 'O Chief of the Believers! What do you think about so-and-so who says, 'If 'Umar should die, I will give the pledge of allegiance to such-and-such person, as by Allah, the pledge of allegiance to Abu Bakr was nothing but a prompt sudden action which got established afterwards.' 'Umar became angry and then said, 'Allah willing, I will stand before the people tonight and warn them against those people who want to deprive the others of their rights (the question of rulership).' "

'Abdur-Rahman said, "I said, 'O Chief of the believers! Do not do that, for the season of Hajj gathers the riff-raff and the rubble, and it will be they who will gather around you when you stand to address the people. And I am afraid that you will get up and say something, and some people will spread your statement and may not say what you have actually said and may not understand its meaning, and may interpret it incorrectly, so you should wait till you reach Medina, as it is the place of emigration and the place of Prophet's Traditions, and there you can come in touch with the learned and noble people, and tell them your ideas with confidence; and the learned people will understand your statement and put it in its proper place.' On that, 'Umar said, 'By Allah! Allah willing, I will do this in the first speech I will deliver before the people in Medina.' "

Ibn Abbas added: We reached Medina by the end of the month of Dhul-Hijja, and when it was Friday, we went quickly (to the mosque) as soon as the sun had declined, and I saw Sa'id bin Zaid bin 'Amr bin Nufail sitting at the corner of the pulpit, and I too sat close to him so that my knee was touching his knee, and after a short while 'Umar bin Al-Khattab came out, and when I saw him coming towards us, I said to Said bin Zaid bin 'Amr bin Nufail, "Today 'Umar will say such a thing as he has never said since he was chosen as Caliph." Said denied my statement with astonishment and said, "What thing do you expect 'Umar to say the like of which he has never said before?"

In the meantime, 'Umar sat on the pulpit and when the callmakers for the prayer had finished their call, 'Umar stood up, and having glorified and praised Allah as He deserved, he said, "Now then, I am going to tell you something which (Allah) has written for me to say. I do not know; perhaps it portends my death, so whoever understands and remembers it, must narrate it to the others wherever his mount takes him, but if somebody is afraid that he does not understand it, then it is unlawful for him to tell lies about me. Allah sent Muhammad with the Truth and revealed the Holy Book to him, and among what Allah revealed, was the Verse of the Rajam the stoning of married person (male &

I am afraid that after a long time has passed, somebody will say, 'By Allah, we do not find the Verse of the Rajam in Allah's Book,' and thus they will go astray by leaving an obligation which Allah has revealed. And the punishment of the Rajam is to be inflicted to any married person (male &

And no doubt after the death of the Prophet we were informed that the Ansar disagreed with us and gathered in the shed of Bani Sa'da. 'Ali and Zubair and whoever was with them, opposed us, while the emigrants gathered with Abu Bakr. I said to Abu Bakr, 'Let's go to these Ansari brothers of ours.' So we set out seeking them, and when we approached them, two pious men of theirs met us and informed us of the final decision of the Ansar, and said, 'O group of Muhajirin (emigrants)! Where are you going?' We replied, 'We are going to these Ansari brothers of ours.' They said to us, 'You shouldn't go near them. Carry out whatever we have already decided.' I said, 'By Allah, we will go to them.' And so we proceeded until we reached them at the shed of Bani Sa'da. Behold! There was a man sitting amongst them and wrapped in something. I asked, 'Who is that man?' They said, 'He is Sa'd bin 'Ubada.' I asked, 'What is wrong with him?' They said, 'He is sick.' After we sat for a while, the Ansar's speaker said, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah,' and praising Allah as He deserved, he added, 'To proceed,

we are Allah's Ansar (helpers) and the majority of the Muslim army, while you, the emigrants, are a small group and some people among you came with the intention of preventing us from practicing this matter (of caliphate) and depriving us of it.'

When the speaker had finished, I intended to speak as I had prepared a speech which I liked and which I wanted to deliver in the presence of Abu Bakr, and I used to avoid provoking him. So, when I wanted to speak, Abu Bakr said, 'Wait a while.' I disliked to make him angry. So Abu Bakr himself gave a speech, and he was wiser and more patient than I. By Allah, he never missed a sentence that I liked in my own prepared speech, but he said the like of it or better than it spontaneously. After a pause he said, 'O Ansar! You deserve all (the qualities) that you have attributed to yourselves, but this question (of Caliphate) is only for the Quraish as they are the best of the Arabs as regards descent and home, and I am pleased to suggest that you choose either of these two men, so take the oath of allegiance to either of them as you wish. And then Abu Bakr held my hand and Abu Ubada bin Abdullah's hand who was sitting amongst us. I hated nothing of what he had said except that proposal, for by Allah, I would rather have my neck chopped off as expiator for a sin than become the ruler of a nation, one of whose members is Abu Bakr, unless at the time of my death my own self suggests something I don't feel at present.'

And then one of the Ansar said, 'I am the pillar on which the camel with a skin disease (eczema) rubs itself to satisfy the itching (i.e., I am a noble), and I am as a high class palm tree! O Quraish. There should be one ruler from us and one from you.'

Then there was a hue and cry among the gathering and their voices rose so that I was afraid there might be great disagreement, so I said, 'O Abu Bakr! Hold your hand out.' He held his hand out and I pledged allegiance to him, and then all the emigrants gave the Pledge of allegiance and so did the Ansar afterwards. And so we became victorious over Sa'd bin Ubada (whom Al-Ansar wanted to make a ruler). One of the Ansar said, 'You have killed Sa'd bin Ubada.' I replied, 'Allah has killed Sa'd bin Ubada.' Umar added, "By Allah, apart from the great tragedy that had happened to us (i.e. the death of the Prophet), there was no greater problem than the allegiance pledged to Abu Bakr because we were afraid that if we left the people, they might give the Pledge of allegiance after us to one of their men, in which case we would have given them our consent for something against our real wish, or would have opposed them and caused great trouble. So if any person gives the Pledge of allegiance to somebody (to become a Caliph) without consulting the other Muslims, then the one he has selected should not be granted allegiance, lest both of them should be killed."

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