



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**FACULTY OF ARTS**

**COURSE CODE: ISL 271**

**COURSE TITLE: THE RIGHTLY GUIDED CALIPHS AND  
THE UMAYYADS.**



**ISL271**

**THE RIGHTLY GUIDED CALIPHS AND THE Umayyads**

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## Introduction

Welcome! *ISL127: The Rightly Guided Caliphs and the Umayyads* is a two-unit course available in the second semester for the B.A. Islamic Studies programme at the National Open University of Nigeria. This course aims at exposing you to the history of the four Orthodox Caliphs. The course places particular emphasis on their biographies and contributions to the development of Islam. The Course also traces the overthrow of the Caliphate by Mu'āwiyah bn Abī Sufyān and foundation of Umayyad dynasty in its place. The Umayyad dynasty ran through a period of one century; year 23AH —123 AH to be specific.

## What You Will Learn in This Course

The death of Prophet Muhammad called for appointment of a successor who will fill the vacuum. Good enough the Prophet during his lifetime had around him men of high integrities and sterling qualities called the *ṢaḥṢābah* (Companions). Those Companions were such that could maintain the glory of the faith and follow hook line and sinker the path set by the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* of the Prophet. They could exercise both the temporal and secular aspects of the Islamic tenets; and thus the Four that emerged among them as successors to the divinely chosen Master Muhammad were generally accepted and described as Rightly Guided Caliphs.

Unfortunately, the period of the Rightly Guided Caliphs was short-lived due to the characters and 'ambitions usually inherent in human beings. The *Ummah* only enjoyed their orthodox leadership between year 632 A.H. and 662 A.H. 30 years after the transition of the Prophet Muhammad to the great beyond. Mu'āwiyah bn Abī Sufyān snatched power and jettisoned the principle of *Shūrā* which could be regarded as bedrock of appointment to position of authority in Islam. In place of *Shūrā*, he institutionalized a caliphate which was hereditary among his descendants. He hailed from a Meccan clan called the Banū Umayyad and the era of their reign is 'known in history as the Umayyad dynasty.

## Course Aims

There are 16 units in this course and each has its objectives. You should read the objectives of each unit and bear them in mind as you go through it. Besides the objectives of each unit, the overall aims of this course are among other things:

- (i) To introduce you to the problem of succession arising from the demise of the Prophet Muhammad (Ṣ).
- (ii) To familiarise you with the concept of *Shūrā* as an Islamic

- system of appointment to the position of authority.
- (iii) To expose you to institution of Caliphate as the early system of government in Islam.
  - (iv) To intimate you with the biographies of and services rendered by the four key actors in the caliphate during the glorious age in the history of Islam that lasted between 632 — 661CE.

## Course Objectives

Based on the general aims of this course, some objectives as a whole are set out for it. These are things you should be able to do by the time you complete the course. If you are able to meet the objectives, you would have achieved the aim of the course. Therefore, on your successful completion of this course you should be able to:

- (a) Define the Caliphate and the Caliph.
- (b) Explain the concept of “Shūrā” and its application in selecting rulers in early Islam.
- (c) List name of all the Caliphs and respective periods of their reign.
- (d) Highlight achievements of each of the Caliphs
- (e) Assess their contribution to Islamic history.

## Working through This Course

You have to work through all the study units in the course. They are 10 study units in all.

Meanwhile, the major components of the course are:

1. Course materials
2. Course guide
3. Study unit
4. Text books
5. Assignment file
6. Presentation schedule

## Study Units

There are 10 units in this course broken into four modules. They are:

### **Module 1     The Death of Prophet Muhammad and Assumption of Caliphate by Abubakr**

- Unit 1     The Death of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), the *Khilāfah* and the *Shūrā*
- Unit 2     Caliph Abu Bakr (632-634 CE)
- Unit 3     The ‘*Riddah*’ Wars, Abubakr’s Achievements and Death

**Module 2 The Caliphate of ‘Umar *bn* al-Khaṭṭāb (632 – 644 CE)**

- Unit 1 Early life of ‘Umar and His Acceptance of Islam
- Unit 2 ‘Umar’s Election as the Caliph in 634<sup>CE</sup> and His Reign
- Unit 3 Services and Achievements of ‘Umar (R. A.), Death and Burial

**Module 3 Caliph ‘Uthmān bn ‘Affān (644 – 656 CE; 24 – 36 AH) and Caliph ‘Alī bn Abī Ṭālib (657-662CE.; 36 – 41AH)**

- Unit 1 Caliph ‘Uthmān bn ‘Affān (644 – 656 CE.; 24 – 36 AH)
- Unit 2 aliph ‘Alī bn Abu Ṭālib (657-662 c.e.; 36 – 41A. H.)
- Unit 3 Civil Wars Fought by ‘Alī and His Death
- Unit 4 The Fall of the Caliphate and Mu‘āwiyah’s Foundation of the Umayyad Dynasty

**Textbooks and References**

Each unit contains a list of references for further reading. Try to get as many as possible of those textbooks and materials listed; they are meant to widen your knowledge of the course. Some of such books are:

Abdul, M.O. (1980). *The Classical Caliphate*. Lagos: Islamic Publication Bureau.

Hitti, P.K. (1980). *History of the Arabs*. London: Macmillan and Basingtoke.

Ibrahim, A. S. (2000). *Prophet Muhammad and the Rightly Guided Caliphs*. Alamsek Press Limited: Ijebu – Ode, Ogun State Nigeria.

Khwaja, M. A. (1952). *Hadrat Aboo Bakr*. Athlone, Cape South Africa: Islamic Publication Bureau.

Rahim, A. (1992). *Islamic History*. Lagos: Islamic Publication Bureau.

**Assignment File**

In this file, you will find all the details of the work you must submit to your tutor for marking. The marks you obtain from these assignments will count towards the final mark you obtain for this course. Further information on assignments will be seen in the assignment file itself later in this Course Guide.

## Course Overview and Presentation Schedule

The presentation schedule included in your course materials gives you the important dates for the completion of tutor-marked assignments and attending tutorials. Remember you are required to submit all your assignments by the due date. You should guard against lagging behind in your work.

The dates for submission of all assignment will be communicated to you. You will also be told the date of completing the study units and dates for examinations. Below is an overview of the Course and schedule for the presentation of the assignments.

	Title of Work	Weeks Activity	Assignments
<b>Module 1 The Death of Prophet Muhammad And Assumption of Caliphate by Abubakr</b>			
	The Death of Prophet Muhammad (S.), the <i>Khilāfah</i> and the <i>Shūrā</i> .	Week 1	Assignment 1
	Caliph Abu Bakr (632-634 CE)	Week 2	Assignment 2
	The 'Riddah' Wars, Abubakr's Achievement and Death.	Week 3	Assignment 3
<b>Module 2 The Caliphate of 'Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb (632 – 644 CE)</b>			
	Early life of 'Umar and His Acceptance of Islam.	Week 4	Assignment 4
	Umar's Election as the Caliph in 634 C. E. and His Reign	Week 5	Assignment 5
	Services and Achievements of 'Umar (R. A), Death and Burial.	Week 6	Assignment 6
<b>Module 3 Caliph 'Uthmān bn 'Affān (644 – 656 CE; 24 – 36 A. H.) and Caliph 'Alī bn Abī Ṭālib (657-662 CE; 36 – 41 A. H.)</b>			
	Caliph 'Uthmān bn 'Affān (644 – 656 CE; 24 – 36 A. H.)	Week 7	Assignment 7
	Caliph 'Alī bn Abu Ṭālib (657-662 CE; 36 – 41 A. H.)	Week 8	Assignment 8
	Civil Wars Fought by 'Alī and His Death	Week 9	Assignment 9
	The Fall of the Caliphate and Mu'āwiyah's Foundation of the Umayyad Dynasty	Week 10	Assignment 10



	Revision	1	
	Examination	1	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	

## Assignment

Your assignment will be based on tutor-marked assignments (TMA) and a final examination, which you will write at the end of the course.

## Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)

Each unit contains at least one or two assignments. You are advised to work through all the assignments and submit them for assessment. Four of them will be submitted out of which the best three will constitute the 30% of your final grade. The tutor-marked assignments may be presented to you in a separate file. Just know that for each unit, there are some tutor-marked assignments for you.

## Final Examination and Grading

At the end of the course, you will write a final examination which will constitute 70% of your final grade. The examination, which will be electronic, shall consist of three sections i.e. Multiple Choice Questions (M.C.Q.), Fill in the Blanks Questions (F.B.Q.) and two Comprehension passages. It will last for two hours.

## Course Making Scheme

This table shows how the actual course marking is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Assignment	Four assignments, best three marks of the four count at 30% of course marks
Final Examination	70% of overall course marks
Total	100% of course marks.

## How to Get the Most from This Course

The study units as presented above replace the university lecture. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning; you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and pace that suits you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecture. In the same way a lecturer might give

you some reading to do, the study units tell you where to read, and which are your text materials or set books. You are provided exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise.

Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the unit and how particular unit is integrated with the other units and the course as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is completed, you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If you form this habit, then you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your set books or from a reading section. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course.

If you run into any trouble, contact your tutor. Remember that it is the duty of your tutor's to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this course guide thoroughly, it is your first assignment.
2. Organise a study schedule. Design a 'course overview' to guide you through the course. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units. Important information, for example, details of your tutorials, and the date of the first day of the semester is available from the study centre. You need to gather all the information into one place, such as your diary or a wall calendar. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it. The major reason why students fail is that they got behind with their course work if you get into difficulties with your schedule, please; let your tutor know before it is too late for help.
4. Turn to unit 1, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. You will need your set books and the unit you are studying at any point in time.
6. Work through the unit. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
7. Keep in touch with your study centre for up-to-date course information.
8. Submit your assignment well before the due dates (about 4 weeks before due dates). The assignments have been designed to help

- you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination.
9. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
  10. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
  11. When you have submitted an assignment to your tutor for marking do not wait for its return before starting on the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the assignment is returned, pay particular attention to your tutor's comments on the assignments.
  12. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the finals examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the Course Guide).

### **Facilitators/Tutor and Tutorials**

The dates, times and locations of these tutorials will be made available to you together with the name, telephone number and the address of your tutor. Each assignment will be marked by your tutor. Pay close attention to the comments your tutors might make on your assignments as these will help in your progress. Make sure that assignments reach your tutor on or before the due date. Your tutorials are important; therefore try not to skip any. It is an opportunity to meet your tutor and your fellow students. It is also an opportunity to get the help of your tutor and discuss any difficulties encountered on your reading.

### **Summary**

This course aims at exposing you to the life history of the four orthodox caliphs, their biographies and Islamisation. The course also exposes you to their roles as maintainers of the glory of Islamic faith, the Prophet's traditions and policies. The course will also pay particular emphasis on their contributions to the development of Islam.

We wish you outstanding success in the course and in all your future endeavours.



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## **MODULE 1      THE DEATH OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND ASSUMPTION OF CALIPHATE BY ABU BAKR**

Unit 1	The death of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), the <i>Khilāfah</i> and the <i>Shūrā</i>
Unit 2	Caliph Abu Bakr (632-634 CE)
Unit 3	The ‘Riddah’ Wars, Abu Bakr’s Achievement and Death

### **UNIT 1      THE DEATH OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (S), THE CALIPHATE INSTITUTION AND THE SHŪRĀ**

#### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Prophet Muhammad’s Death
  - 3.2 The Caliphate Institution (*al-Khilāfah*)
  - 3.3 The *Qur’ān* and *Hadīth* on “*al-Khilāfah*”
  - 3.4 Institution of “*Shūrā*”
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit will begin by recalling the death of Prophet Muhammad (S), which you must have come across in your study on *Sīrah*. This will be followed by an examination of the Caliphate (*al-Khilāfah*) as an institution. This unit will intimate you with the stand of the *Qur’ān* and the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad on *Shūrā*, the bedrock of political principles in Islam and the extent of its application in the appointment of the pious Caliphs.

#### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- expatiate on the demise of the Prophet Muhammad, its implication and reaction of the people around him
- define *khilāfah* and the roles of the *Khalīfah*

- state the stand of *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth* on *al-Khilāfah* and the title
- cite quotations from the *Qur'ān* and Hadith on *Shūrā*.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Prophet Muhammad's Death

Muhammad bn Abdullah (S) the seal of the Messengers Allah was raised to guide humanity, departed the ephemeral world to the great beyond on June 8, 632CE after brief illness at the height of his glory. His death created a great vacuum that must be filled not just by anybody but by a person who possesses the qualities, which can positively maintain his legacy and move on the Muslim Ummah. His demise was envisaged and of course indirectly mentioned in his last sermon during the “*Hajjatu `l-wadā'* (farewell pilgrimage).

Prophet Muhammad as long as he lived remained the legitimate supreme leader of the Muslim Ummah. He performed the function of Prophet, lawgiver, religious leader, chief judge, commander of the army and civilian head of state; in short, he was all in all. Therefore, his death necessitated the desire for someone to act as his successor (*khalīfah*). The person must be one who would follow the path set by the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*; who would maintain the glory of the faith and exercise Islamic polity in the temporal and secular matters. The Prophet did not designate a successor even though in some occasions he did ask Abu Bakr to lead the Ummah in canonical prayers most especially when indisposed.

The commotion caused by the death of the Prophet among the people was allayed by the Venerable Abu Bakr who having ascertained the demise promptly addressed the crowd saying “O people if you adore Muhammad know that Muhammad is dead; if it is God that you adore know that He liveth, He never dies”. This *Qur'ānic* reminder calmed down the wailing and despondent Muslims. ‘Umar who was in a strong emotional state was even cooled down through the very brief but effective historic address of the great *Ṣaḥābah* Abu Bakr Ṣiddīq bn Abī Quhāfah.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give the scenario of the Prophet Muhammad's death and describe how Abu Bakr was able to allay the commotion it caused.

### 3.2 The Caliphate Institution (*al-Khilāfah*)

Immediately after the death of the noble master Prophet Muhammad, the question of who will be the Caliph that is, successor of the Prophet in a Muslim State arose. Among the Arabs, the Chiefdom or Shaikhdom was not hereditary but elective. It is the only principle of universal suffrage recognised by which all the members of the tribe had a voice in the election of their chief. Besides, the Prophet did not clearly designate a successor; neither did he leave any male child; only one daughter Fatimah survived him. Thus, the Caliphate was the first problem Islam had to face. This gave room for individuals and groups having inordinate ambitions to assume the position. To this effect, about four parties laid claim to successorship. The contenders were:

- **The *Muhājirūn*** (emigrants) who based their claim on having belonged the tribe of the Prophet and of course the first group of people to accept the mission proclaimed by him.
- **The *Anṣār*** (helpers) at Madinah who said that if they did not give Muhammad and the nascent Islam the needed asylum both would have perished and gone into oblivion. That their being positive instrument to the survival of Islam gave them an edge over all other contenders. Later the *Muhājirūn* and *Anṣār* came together and formed a coalition of “*īṣahābah*” (Companions).
- The third party are the legitimists “*Ashābu `n-Naṣṣ wa ta’yīn*” who reasoned that Allah and His apostle could not have left the Ummah of believers to the chance and whims of an electorate; someone must have been designated to succeed Prophet Muhammad (S). They held that the only person so designated was ‘Alī bn Abi Tālib, the paternal cousin of the Prophet, the husband of his only surviving daughter and one of the first two or three believers. That he was the only legitimate successor.
- The last party was the **Umayyad** (the aristocrats of Quraysh) who held the reign of authority, power and wealth in pre-Islamic days but now professors of Islam. They also laid claim to successorship. In order to know who will emerge from among the contenders, “*Shūrā*” consultative forum was arranged to preside over the destiny of the infant Islam.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

List the parties who contended position of successor of the Prophet (S.A.W).

### 3.3 The *Qur'ān* and *Hadith* on *Khilāfah*

The Holy *Qur'ān* and the tradition (*Hadīth*) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad are replete with injunctions on the institution of the (*Khilāfah*) Caliphate in general and the (*Khilāfah Rashīdah*) rightly guided Caliphate in particular.

The *Qur'ān* in chapter 24 verse 55 enjoins that:

Allah has promised those among you, who believe and work righteousness, that He will surely grant them “*Khilāfah*” (inheritance of power in the land), as He granted those before them, and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He hath approved for them, and will give them in exchange safety after their fear”

In chapter 21 verse 105, the *Qur'ān* goes further to say: “My righteous servants will inherit the land.” Closely to this is *Qur'ān* 22:41 where we read “They are those who if we give them power in the land, establish *Ṣalāt* (Worship) and pay *Zakāt* (religious tax) and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And Allah’s is the sequel of events.” There are number of other verses in the Holy *Qur'ān* (vs. 2:30, 7:10, 69, 74, 129, 38:26 etc.) in which *Khilāfah* has been defined in one way or the other.

The *Hadiths* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad also subscribe to the issue of *Khilāfah*. The Prophet (S) is reported to have said that:

“I have put you on a way which is clear and even its light is like an enlightened day. Nobody will deviate from that way after me but a doomed person. You would come across with differences after me. But you should stick to my *Sunnah* (ways) and the *Sunnah* of my rightly-guided Caliphs (successors). Hold to those ways with your teeth and follow them even though your ruler (i.e. Muslim Ruler) is black slave because a believer is like a camel whose nose has been tied, therefore he is obedient to who holds him (Ahmad)”.

About the duration of the genuine Caliphate, the Prophet predicted “*Khilāfah*” (Caliphate) would continue for 30 years after *Nubuwwah* (Propethood) then it will change into kingship” (al-Hākim a` t-Tirmidhī).

It is pertinent to note here that the time limit concerning golden age of noble Caliphs ended at the Caliphate of ‘Alī. This is because Abu Bakr’s

Caliphate was just two years, then Umar who reigned for 10 years followed by ‘Uthmān’s 12 years of reign and of course ‘Alī’s leadership which covered just six years. If all durations are counted together then 30 years as prognosticated by the Prophet would be fully completed.

In the matter of obedience to the Caliphs, the Prophet (S) said “Obey every ruler (Amir), pray behind every Imam and insult none of my Companions.” The Prophet further said, “If a slave who has been mutilated is made your ruler (Imam or Amir) and lead you in accordance with Allah’s Book, listen to him and obey.” (Muslim).

None of the successors of the Holy Prophet Muhammad bore the nomenclature “*Khalīfatullah*” that is vicegerent of God. When Abu Bakr was so called by the Muslims, he objected saying that his title was “*Khalīfatu Rasūl Allah*” i.e. successor of the Apostle of Allah.

When Umar succeeded, Abu Bakr he was called “*Khalīfatu Rasūl Allah*” though later on he was called “*Amīru ‘l- Mū’minīn*” the Commander of the Faithfuls; ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī (ridwānullah alayhimah) retained the same title.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Explain the significance attached to the title of *Khalīfah* in Islam by the *Qur’ān* and *Hadīth*.

#### 3.4 Institution of “*Shūrā*”

“*Shūrā*” is an essential element in the administration of the Caliphate. It means Consultation or Council of Elders. Islam opposes tyranny and autocratic ruling. This is so because the affairs of Islamic state and its ruling are subject to the regulation of the *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah*. The Prophet Muhammad (S), despite being the divinely appointed ruler of the “Ummah” still consulted his Companions on important affairs. The implementation of the *Shūrā* was enshrined in the Holy *Qur’ān*, Chapter 3:159 where Allah enjoins thus; “And consults them in affairs. Then when thou has taken decision put thy trust in Allah for Allah loveth those who put their trust in Him.”

The *Shūrā* is composed of the principal Companions of the Prophet. This consultative body used to hold its sitting in the Mosque. All the people in the forum, even people who gathered there enjoyed perfect freedom of speech. The *Shūrā* came to decide important affairs of the state such as salary of the soldiers, establishment of various offices, appointment of civil servants, levy of taxes and a host of other decisions. All worthy successors of the Prophet followed the tradition of the great

teacher. They put in place the *Shūrā* and sought its advice and aid in the affairs of the state. During the Caliphate of Abu Bakr, members of *Shūrā* were placed in charge of important department of the state. For instance, ‘Umar who happened to be a member was put in charge of judiciary and Zakat. ‘Alī, another member of *Shūrā* was in charge of prisoners of war (captives) and correspondence.

As the supreme Head of the state, the Caliph performed executive, judicial and military functions. He delegated authorities and functions to provincial governors, *Qādīs* and generals. The Caliphs had no legislative power because the rule of law as entrenched in the *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah* was imbibed as their law. There was no room for hereditary principles of succession before Abu Bakr died. He, through consultation, suggested the name of ‘Umar as his successor to the principal companions of the Prophet, which they whole – heartedly acknowledged.

At every point in time the membership of the ‘*Shūrā*’ was not based upon colour, race, wealth or worldly power, it was rather based upon service rendered to Islam, closeness to Allah and His Prophet. *Shūrā* becomes very necessary in the Islamic political system because of the following reasons.

- Allah commanded the Prophet to consult his ‘*Ṣahābah*’ in matters on which *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah* are not categorical (Q 3.159).
- It gives members of state a sense of belonging.
- It generates ideas from different people since two good heads are better than one. Leaders at times may not think of some important ideas whereas their subordinates do.
- Whenever people are part and parcel of a decision they try to see to the implementation of that decision
- The *Ṣahābah* had always contributed to debates on matters brought to them by the Prophet for deliberation.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

1. What does *Shūrā* stand for and of what relevance is *Shūrā* in Islamic political system?
2. Discuss the place of *Shūrā* in the early Islamic polity.
3. Enumerate the advantages of *Shūrā* as a political system.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

The Caliphate institution was consequential to the death of the Prophet Muhammad (S), which also exposed different personalities and groups inordinate ambition to rulership. Notable seceders among many Arab tribes from Islam and the rise of false prophets in Arabia threatened the

very existence of the infant faith. Besides was the severeness of the strict rules of moralities, which Islam enforced on the immoral and undisciplined people, the jealousy against Madinah's ascendancy as well as demand for exemption from payment of Zakat. Consequently, four principal actors as temporal rulers were brought to the limelight to keep going the infant faith for effective governance. The principal actors employed some fundamental God-given principle among which was (shūrā) consultation.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed Caliphate institution as supported by the injunctions of Allah from the *Qur'ān* and from the traditions of the noble Prophet Muhammad (S) was put in place for appointment into leadership position in Islam after the exit of the Holy prophet Muhammed from the ephemeral world. The unit intimates you with the names of the parties who laid claim to successorship.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. What is the meaning of “*al-khilāfatu `r-Rāshidah*”?
2. Define *Shūrā* and explain its significance in the Islamic political system.
3. With *Qur'ān* injunction and tradition of the Prophet Muhammed, justify the need for the Caliphate institution.

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## UNIT 2 THE CALIPHATE OF ABU BAKR `Ş-ŞIDDĪQ (632-634 CE)

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Early Life of Abu Bakr and His Islamisation
  - 3.2 Abu Bakr's Election as the First Caliph
  - 3.3 Post Election Address and Accomplishment of Usamah's Expedition
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in the previous unit, you will agree with me that the vacuum created by the exit of the Holy Prophet Muhammad should not allow for any delay in the choice of a successor. In this unit, you will learn about the biography of the person on whom the mantle of leadership fell. You will equally be acquainted with his election, his acceptance of the post and his first assignment after election.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the early history of Abu Bakr and his Islamisation
- recount his contribution to the new faith
- identify the factors considered for his choice as *Khalīfatu `r-Rasūl*
- highlight his achievements and leadership qu'Alī ties.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Early Life of Abu Bakr and His Islamisation

Abu Bakr (R.A) was born in 573CE shortly after the Year of Elephant into a respectable family of Banu Tamīm a branch of Quraysh tribe. He was two years younger than the Prophet Muhammad (S). His name in Pre-Islamic days was Abu `l-Ka'b. On conversion to Islam, he was named Abdullah. His patronymic "*Kunyah*" nickname Abu Bakr



became so famous that it overshadowed other names including his real name. His father's name was 'Uthmān Abu Quhāfah. His mother Salmah was popularly known by her (*Kunyah*) nickname as Ummu 'l-Khayr.

Like the Holy Prophet Muhammad, Abu Bakr was born in an age of superstition and disbelief. At the time of his birth, corruption and vices of the highest order were prevalent in Arabia. He out of the mercy of the Creator grew up as a simple, sincere, pure, incorruptible and truthful person. Little wonder then why the Prophet nicknamed him "Aṣ-Ṣiddīq" the truthful for having no iota of doubt in his mind when the Prophet declared he has been commissioned by God. God gave Abu Bakr wisdom to embark on things that were right and praiseworthy.

At the youthful age, he had imbibed the art of generosity. This endeared almost everybody to him. He through his sterling qualities won the hearts of the people and thus attained honourable and enviable position within the rank and file of his people. Even before his Islamisation he disposed the barbaric customs of the days of ignorance and was never involved in pool betting, wine drinking and promiscuity.

Abu Bakr's main profession was trading like that of the Prophet Muhammad. His trading trips occasionally took him down to Syria and Yemen. He also accompanied the Prophet Muhammad in some of his trade missions.

Abu Bakr used to visit the Prophet Muhammad (S) even before the latter was called to the office of prophethood. Since they grew up together, they had become bosom friends since their youthful age. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad disclosed to him secretly about the revelation of Allah, Abu Bakr accepted it immediately without any hesitation. The Prophet once said, "Whenever I offered Islam to any person he showed some reservation before embracing it. But Abu Bakr was an exemption as he embraced Islam without the slightest hesitation on his part."

Abu Bakr was the first person among the adults to accept Islam. As soon as he accepted Islam, Abu Bakr started the work of *Da'wah* that is, invitation towards Allah first secretly and then openly when it was so allowed by the prophet.

People like 'Uthmān, Talhah, Zubayr and Sa'īd (*ridwanullahi alayhim*) accepted Islam on Abu Bakr's preaching. Some other prominent Quraysh such as Abu Ubaydah, Uthmān bn Maz'ūn, Abdul- Rahmān bn 'Awf also accepted Islam through him.

Despite the popularity and nobility of Abu Bakr among the Makkans he was not spared of harassment. He was one time after his preaching at Ka'bah beaten up by the idolators so much that his face was besmeared with blood. Abu Bakr's love for the Prophet was unbounded.

Abu Bakr had a singular honour to accompany Prophet Muhammad (S) during the most critical days in his journey to Yathrib now Madinah and shared from the joy of the rousing welcome.

Abubakr rendered valuable services to the Prophet and Islam. As the first elderly man to accept Islam, Abubakr assisted the Prophet in laying the foundation stone of the new faith in Arabia. He dedicated all his properties to the cause of Islam and suffered untold persecution from the Quraysh. He ransomed many Muslim slaves with his money. He gave all the needed support to the Holy Prophet Muhammad and stood by him always.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Write short biography of the life of Abu Bakr up to the time of Hijrah to Yathrib.

### 3.2 Abu Bakr's Election as the First Caliph

The old tribal custom was followed in the choice of a successor to the Prophet because the urgency of the time did not allow for any delay. The election was made based on seniority among the surviving male members of the deceased chieftain family. The first party among the contenders triumphed. Other contenders were confronted with a "*fait accompli*" which they reluctantly accepted. Abu Bakr the wise and the most elderly was eventually chosen as the worthy successor of the Prophet. 'Umar took the hand of Abu Bakr and declared allegiance to him. Other companions gave the "bay 'ah" oath of allegiance. All the *Muhājirūn* and the *Anṣār* acknowledged Abu Bakr as the Caliph of the Messenger of Allah.

Various yardsticks were considered for Abu Bakr to become the first successor of the Prophet. First, the Muslims strictly adhered to the Arabian custom of electing their tribal chiefs. Two, the Arabs generally choose an elderly man as their chief. Considering age and wisdom Abu Bakr was senior to all. Three, the Caliph was to come from Quraysh family, which Abu Bakr belonged to. Four, Abu Bakr was the bosom friend and Companion of the Prophet. That was even mentioned in the Holy *Qur'ān* 9:40: "The one among two in the cave." "Fifth, Abu Bakr had been commissioned to lead Muslims both in prayer and on

Pilgrimage when the Prophet was in sick bed. The last was interpreted as an indication that the Prophet wished Abu Bakr as the first Caliph.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

List out five yardsticks considered for the election of Abu Bakr.

### 3.3 Post Election Address and Accomplishment of Usāmah's Expedition

After the election of Abu Bakr and declaration of allegiance to him by the teaming crowd, he delivered his inaugural speech, to the following words:

You have elected me your Khalīfah though I am not better than you.

I need all your advice and help. If I do right, help me. If I do wrong, correct me. In my sight the powerful and the weak are alike and to both I wish to render justice. You should obey me as long as I obey the Lord and His Prophet. If I disobey them, you should forsake me.

This inaugural address of the first Caliph of Islam shows that he was ready to run a responsive government, which is purely democratic and constitutional. It shows that oppression and autocracy would not be brought into play. Having said that Abu Bakr took the title "*Khalīfatu Rasūl Allah*" (the successor of the Messenger of Allah); he was ready to keep intact the legacy of the Prophet (the religion, the state and the Ummah). Abu Bakr however could not succeed to the post of Prophethood because it was a divine gift.

Having been sworn in and accepted the responsibility of Islamic leadership, Abu Bakr swung into action. The first assignment before him as the first Caliph was to conclude the expedition already planned by the Prophet. The expedition was to be led by Usāmah the son of Zayd bn Thābit the adopted son of the Holy Prophet Muhammad who was slaughtered by the polytheists in the battle of Mu'tah. Zayd had a son called Usāmah. This son was appointed by the Prophet to lead the army that would avenge Zayd's death. Before the expedition began the Prophet who had brief illness died. Since it was the wish of the Prophet, Abu Bakr resolved to fulfill the desire of his great leader. Abu Bakr remained undaunted though 'Umar objected. To the objection of 'Umar and others, Abu Bakr said:

should the first act of mine as the successor of the prophet be to undo what my master has done? Am I to disobey the orders that my master gave from his death bed? Even if I know that hungry wolves were to come upon me and tear me to pieces, I would not stop this expedition.

The firmness of Abu Bakr was displayed and the young Usāmah won a landslide victory over the Roman forces in Syria.

Apart from the fact that Abu Bakr did not fold up the flag already unfurled by the Messenger of Allah (S), he equally did not dismiss the young and inexperienced Usamah already appointed by the Prophet despite pressures from some quarters.

The success of Usāmah's expedition opened the eyes of those who thought Islam was dying out after the demise of the Holy Prophet (S). The success brought back to Islam again some of the tribes who had already left through skepticism.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

1. Examine the post-election address of Abu Bakr and its constitutionality.
2. Justify the loyalty of Abu Bakr to the Prophet Muhammad and his firmness in taking action.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

With the filling of the vacuum created by the death of the Prophet Muhammad (S) through the election of best capable hand, the young faith, which people felt, would die prematurely waxed on stronger and stronger. The commitment and loyalty of the first successor of the Prophet and his firmness in issues brought back the “doubting Thomas” to the fold of Islam.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we have discussed the early history of Abu Bakr and his relationship with Prophet Muhammad from the youthful age up to the time of his conversion to Islam. We have equally discussed his election and the sterling qualities he possessed which qualified him as the first among equals and the display of such qualities in maintaining the constitutional and democratic setting put in place by his Master.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Write short note on the man Abu Bakr and highlight some of the factors that assisted him in attaining initial success.

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## **UNIT 3 THE *Riddah* Wars, Abu Bakr's Achievements and Death**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 *Riddah* War: Causes, Suppression and Effects
  - 3.2 Illness of Abu Bakr and Umar's Nomination
  - 3.3 Abu Bakr's Death, Achievements and Distinctions
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, you will learn about fake prophets who set themselves up in vain attempt to achieve fame and power. The unit will also intimate you with brief account of four principal actors who perpetrated rebellion, disorder and apostasy.

The unit will also discuss the illness of Abu Bakr, which resulted in his eventual death. It will also intimate you with the solid preparation he made regarding the election of his successor and his burial. His administration acumen, his achievement as well as his noble example and selfless services in the religion of Islam will also be imparted to you.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define *Riddah* and state its causes
- list the name of the false prophets who perpetrated rebellious threat in the state during Abu Bakr's reign
- describe the effort made by Abu Bakr to subjugate all false prophets who reared their ugly heads
- explain the effects of *Riddah* war on the young faith and nascent democracy
- describe the circumstances that led to Abu Bakr's death and preparation he made for Umar's nomination as his successor
- give account of his instruction to his daughter on his burial
- state some of his achievements and describe his selflessness and administrative sagacity.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The *Riddah* Wars: Causes, Suppression and Effects

Shortly after Abu Bakr became the Caliph, some disbelievers who had inordinate ambitions declared their prophethood and started revolt. The first principal actors in the rebellion were four. They include the following.

- Musaylimah, (*al-Kadh-dhāb*) who belonged to Banu Hanif tribe in Yamamah, in central Arabia. His tribe declined to follow the “Prophet of Quraysh” and so accepted him as a prophet. His secret ambition to become a prophet was openly declared after the death of the Holy Prophet (S). He had commanded an army of 40,000 Bedouins.
- Aswad Ansi was a chief of the Ansi tribe of Yemen. He was known as “the veiled Prophet” because veil is always put on his face. He also had a big army.
- Tulayha belonged to the tribe of Asad in Northern Arabia. He also rose in open revolt after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S).
- Saj‘ah bnt Al-Hārith belonged to the tribe of Banū Tamīm. After the demise of the Prophet (S) a number of people from her tribe repudiated Islam and thus Saj‘ah declared her prophethood.

They all became dangerously hostile to the infant faith (Islam). All of them laid claim to the Prophet office and tried to establish themselves.

#### ***Riddah* Wars and Causes**

‘*Riddah*’ means apostasy or secession from Islam. *Riddah* wars were the battles that were occasioned by the withdrawal of many Arab tribes from Islam and the rise of false prophets in Arabia. The champions of *Riddah* wars were the four mentioned above. They became dangerously wicked and hostile to the infant faith and its adherents. They tried to find their footing and falsely laid claim to the prophet’s office.

Many factors and inordinate ambition led to secession of the Arabs from Islam. Among the causes are:

- death of the Prophet, which created a great opportunity for the hypocritical Arabs to revert to mischief and insincerity

- moral elevation of a people like the Arab Beduins who had wallowed in notoriety and fickleness was not possible in short time. Therefore, after the demise of the Prophet it was easy for them to return to their moral laxity
- the removal of the mighty hand of the Prophet, which held the Arab tribes in check, led to rejection of supremacy and ascendancy of Madinah. The Arab tribes were jealous of the authority of Madinah and wanted to have back their independence
- the Arab chiefs saw the prophetic offices as profitable. They saw it as the easiest way to get power, influence and wealth hence the rise of some fake prophets and prophetess
- reluctance to pay tax and demand for exemption by many tribes. Since their demand involved a fundamental of Islam, the Caliph was not ready to compromise and did not allow the perfected faith to be mutilated.

### **Suppression of the *Riddah***

Abu Bakr did not leave any stone unturned in order to subjugate all false prophets who reared their ugly heads. The task to save and rehabilitate the faith was so gargantuan and enormous. With firmness and calmness, the aged Caliph faced the hurdle and with punitive expedition forced back the rebellious apostates and recalcitrant tribesmen to Islam. He first repulsed an invasion of the apostate insurgents on Madinah. About the time, Usamah who had won the Syrian expedition returned. The Caliph strategised and divided the army into 11 divisions. He sent them in different parts of Arabia to deal with the rebels. Each battalion was put under the command of an experience commander.

The principal task of suppression was entrusted to the chief commander Khālīd bn Walīd the brilliant general of Islam. He forced many tribes to submission without any encounter. He defeated Tulayha and his army in a bloody clash and reduced his tribe to nothingness. He also defeated Saj-‘ah (the false prophetess) and her followers in several engagements. Musaylimah (the liar) and his supporters offered the most stubborn resistance to the Muslims. This was so because Saj-‘ah married him and greatly strengthened his army. Musaylimah with 40,000 troops crushed two Muslim armies before Khālīd the general came round to ruthlessly deal with him in a sharp contested battle at Yamāmah. After this, Tulayha, Sajah and many tribes surrendered back to the new faith. Aswad Ansi was also eliminated by other Muslim generals in a protracted warfare. By this, the apostasy movement, which affected the



whole peninsula besides Makkah and Madinah, was totally suppressed. Islam once again became the only religion of the peninsula.

Abu Bakr after subduing the rebellion and re-establishing Islam divert his attention towards outside Arabia. He considered Khālīd bn Walīd the fittest and most suitable commander for the external expeditions.

### Effects of *Riddah* Wars

After the suppression of apostasy, all rebel tribes came back to Islam. The Arabs were again united into one people and nation. The law of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* of the Prophet were re-established in the whole Arabian Peninsula. Jealousy on the ascendancy of Madinah was removed. Abu Bakr was regarded as the saviour of Islam. Khālīd bn Walīd was given the rank of the greatest general of Islam. Many of the Qur'ānic memorisers died in the war. Their death, which caused jitteries in the spines of the Muslims, led to compilation of the *Qur'ān* into a codified single book. Relief from the internal problem led to devotion of Abu Bakr to external affairs, which threatened the existence of Islam. Abu Bakr had time to organise campaigns against the (Romans and Persians) two powerful empires of the time.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. Mention the names of the false prophets who laid claim to the Prophet's office and their respective tribes.
2. What is Riddah? Why did Arabs relapse into it?
3. Highlight the strategies, which Abu Bakr used in repulsing the insurgence of the Apostates.
4. Mention some of the effects of war of apostasy on the the nascent Islam and the Muslim *Ummah*.

### 3.2 Illness of Abu Bakr and Umar's Nomination

It was on the 7th of Jamada-al-Ākhira 13AH that Abu Bakr Aṣ-Ṣiddīq became seriously indisposed with severe fever; the sickness lasted two weeks. When the illness took a serious turn, he summoned the "*Shūrā*" for consultation on who would be his successor.

The leading figures present in the "*Shūrā*" were 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Alī', Abdu l'r-Rahman bn 'Awf; Mu'ādh bn Jabal, Ubayy bn Ka'b, Zayd bn Thābit and other leading *Muhājirūn* and *Anṣār*. He did this in order to display preference for the Muslims to decide the matter in his presence and to forestall the like of confusion experienced after the demise of the Prophet (S) on the selection of a Caliph. Having summoned the "*Shūrā*," Abu Bakr put his proposal for 'Umar to be the second Caliph before the

members. Majority upheld the proposal except few such as ‘Alī and Ṭalhah who entertained fear about Umar’s strictness. Abu Bakr convinced the members who objected, that the burden of Caliphate would make Umar milder. With the assurance, they all accepted Abu Bakr’s view and declared ‘Umar the next Caliph.

It must be borne in mind that though the appointment of ‘Umar did not take place in the same way as it happened in respect of Abu Bakr, it was not undemocratic in the sense that the nomination of ‘Umar took place after fair and due consultation with the “*Shūrā*”. The employment of “*Ijtihād*” (personal judgment of a jurist) after due consultation by Abu Bakr was informed of the fact that he did not want any ugly situation which would make Islam weak after him and at the same time wanted an agreed person to be nominated as his successor in his presence.

After the popular agreement on the nomination of ‘Umar as the next Caliph, Abu Bakr asked Uthmān to write down the will. Thereafter, ‘Umar was seriously admonished by his predecessor Abu Bakr.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Describe the method adopted by Abu Bakr in nominating ‘Umar as the second Caliph.

### 3.3 Abu Bakr’s Death, Achievements and Distinctions

The sickness that ran through a fortnight claimed the life of Abu Bakr on Tuesday, the 22nd Jamādā –l-Ākhirah 13AH (634CE). He was 61 years old. Before his death, he instructed his daughter ‘Āishah (Ummu ‘l-Mū’minīn) that his burial must be made simple and devoid of extravagance. He said “Do not use new cloth for my shroud. Wash the sheet in my use and wrap my corpse in it.” Another wish of his was paying back all the money he got as salary since he assumed office from “*baytu ‘l- māl*” (Public Treasury) through the sale of his garden. In strict compliance to his wishes, Abu Bakr was simply buried and his allowances were paid back to the treasury.

Abu Bakr left behind a noble example of selfless service. He lived and worked for the sake of Islam to his last breath without seeking any reward. He was happily married and had some children among who was Āishah (R.A)."

### Abu Bakr’s Achievement and Distinctions

Abu Bakr, the most trusted Companion of the Prophet and the savior of Islam, assumed office of Caliph at the most crucial moment in Islamic

history. After the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) Abu Bakr, through undaunted spirit gave a new life to Islam. He thus became one of the great forces in the world. He crushed all the futile powers that threatened Islam in its infancy. He together with other great champions of Islamic revolution within shortest time brought about the greatest social, political and economic changes in the history of humanity. He was one of the founders of the true democracy, which existed in the world 1430 years ago, the like of democracy wherein the highest dignitary of the state (the Caliph) who was the most powerful monarch of his time roamed about in the street unguarded. He out of modesty and simplicity ate coarse food and wore tattered clothes such that even ordinary citizen could approach him at any time of the day and question his action publicly.

Abu Bakr was an embodiment of humility, kindness, generosity, piety and chivalry. One of his sayings is, “Cultivate humility, greatness will follow you. Aspire for death (in a noble cause); life will be conferred upon you.” Abu Bakr maintained high moral standard which was laid down by the Prophet so much that when he appointed ‘Umar as the grand *Qādī*, no single complaint was lodged with him for full one year. This was so because people had been purged of all the immoralities of the pre-Islamic days and had imbibed honesty in their spiritual and social life. Later historians never mince words when paying eloquent tributes to the services, character and achievements of Abu Bakr. Other achievements of his include:

- spread of Islam outside Arabian borders
- compilation of the Holy *Qur’ān*
- democratisation of governance through “*Shūrā*” consultation
- consideration of people of high merit when appointing to offices
- personal supervision of office and strict administration
- establishment of Public Treasury (*Baytu’l Māl*) and administration of revenue
- administration of the Army and its division into battalions
- preaching of Islam with wisdom and best admonition
- appointment of Judges and administration of Justice
- division of Arabian Peninsula into various provinces for administrative convenience and host of others

Abu Bakr followed closely the footsteps of his master Prophet Muhammed in all the affairs. Thus, he laid down the foundation of a true Islamic Republic upon full democratic principles. He was a man of simple, mild and gentle habit though stern when necessary. He did all his works with his own hands and never tolerated anyone to share his domestic duties. Whenever people praised him, he used to say:

“O God! Thou knowest me more than myself and I know myself more than these people do. Forgive those sins of mine which are not in their knowledge and do not hold me responsible for their praise”.

His strong faith and trust in Allah were reflective of his administration. A western historian, Sir W. Muir writes: his reign was short but after Muhammed (S) himself there is none to whom the faith was dearer.” His Caliphate lasted two years. All he was given for his private use such as camel and pieces of cloth were transferred to the new Caliph shortly before his death. On receiving the articles ‘Umar his successor burst into tears saying “Abu Bakr: You have made the task of your successor extremely difficult”.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1. Describe the simplicity of Abu Bakr up to the point of death despite the vantage position he occupied.
2. Abu Bakr was not a leader who seeks gratification in office. Discuss.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The display of selfish and inordinate ambition by some recalcitrant peoples of the Arabian Peninsulas after the death of the Prophet constituted a great challenge to the authority of Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr mustered great courage and found means and ways to subdue the hostility occasioned through apostasy. He consulted with his associates and resorted to punitive expeditions. He through the appointment of experienced commanders subjugated all false prophets and forced back the rebellious apostate tribesmen to Islam.

The premonition the Caliph had during his protracted illness about the inevitable, propelled him to make a democratic arrangement through the “*Shūrā*” for the appointment of another capable hand who will fill the vacant stool. His simplicity and probity including other sterling qualities prepared a good ground for governance during the tenure of his successor. His outstanding achievements threw a great challenge to his successors and the leaders of every given *Ummah* at all times.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have looked at the roles played by some principal actors who falsely proclaimed prophethood after the death of the noble master Prophet Muhammad. We equally discussed some of the factors that propelled the troubleshooters (false Prophets) and their people in

secession from Islam. The unit also saw the frantic effort made by the incumbent Caliph (Abu Bakr) in suppressing apostasy and re-establishing Islam. We equally in this unit highlighted some of the effects of the *Riddah* wars on the Muslim Ummah and the young faith.

We have discussed the sickness and demise of the first Caliph of the Prophet Muhammad (S). We have also looked at the Caliph been a stakeholder in the appointment of his successor. We also saw in this unit how his daughter and the Ummah displayed simplicity by carrying out his instruction on his burial. The unit also gave us insight on the outstanding achievements of the noble Caliph and his remaining firm on the footsteps of his master Prophet Muhammad concerning all affairs.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. State some of the factors that led to apostasy and explain how it was suppressed.
2. Discuss the role played by Khālid bn Walīd in triumphing over the forces of false prophets.
3. Enumerate some of the achievements of Caliph Abu Bakr.
4. Discuss Abu Bakr's virtuous conducts and sterling qualities.

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## **MODULE 2      THE CALIPHATE OF ‘UMAR BN AL-KHATTĀB (632 – 644CE)**

Unit 1	Early Life of Umar and His Acceptance of Islam
Unit 2	Umar’s Election as the Caliph in 634CE and His Reign
Unit 3	Services and Achievements of ‘Umar (R. A.), Death, and Burial

### **UNIT 1      EARLY LIFE OF ‘UMAR AND HIS ACCEPTANCE OF ISLAM**

#### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Life of ‘Umar before Islam
  - 3.2 ‘Umar’s Acceptance of Islam and the Title “al-Fārūq”
  - 3.3 ‘Umar’s Migration to Madinah
  - 3.4 ‘Umar’s Services to Islam before *Khilāfah*
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit will teach you something about the life of Caliph ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb before Islam. You will also learn about his killer mission, which miraculously brought about his conversion to Islam. The unit will equally intimate you with the title conferred upon him before his migration to Madinah as well as his service to Islam before he assumed office as the Caliph.

#### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give account of the early life of Caliph ‘Umar
- discuss the manner of his acceptance of Islam
- discuss his services to Islam before he assumed office as the Caliph.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Life of ‘Umar before Islam

Abu Hafṣ ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb was born in 583CE in the ‘Addy branch of the renowned Quraysh family. His birth took place about 40 years before the migration from Makkah to Madinah (Hijrah). Before Islam, ‘Umar was temperamentally bad and distinguished himself in wrestling and oration. He was among the few people in Makkah who knew the art of reading and writing. When the Prophet Muhammad (S) got revelation and invited people to Islam, ‘Umar became a sworn enemy of Islam and its Prophet. He proved to be an obstacle in the progress of the new faith and religion. He became a changed person when he gave himself to God through acceptance of Islam in the sixth year of Islam. He was a businessman.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. Apart from being literate, in what aspects did Umar distinguish himself before Islam?
2. What were the attributes of Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb before Islam?

#### 3.2 ‘Umar’s Acceptance of Islam and His Confirmation with the Title “Al –Fārūq”

When the mission of the Holy Prophet Muhammad was just six years old, the Quraysh leaders (of Makkah) having fed up with the progress being made by Islam despite all odds, summoned a meeting of their tribe and asked for a volunteer killer who would assassinate the Prophet (S). ‘Umar offered himself to carry out the dastardly act. The blood thirsty ‘Umar headed for a spot where he would execute the Prophet. On his way, ‘Umar met Sa’d bn Abī Waqqāṣ who enquired of him about his destination and mission. ‘Umar told him that he was going to eliminate the Prophet. At this point, some discussion ensued between them. Sa’d said: “You had better take care of your own family first. Your sister and brother-in-law have both accepted Islam.” The enraged ‘Umar changed direction and headed straight to his sister’s house. When he knocked on the door, his sister and husband were busy studying the Holy *Qur’ān* from Khabbab (R.A). On hearing ‘Umar’s voice, the sister became frightened and hurriedly hid the portion of the *Qur’ān* they were reciting. Having gained entrance, ‘Umar enquired about what they were doing and on finding out that they had embraced the new faith, he first dealt a dead blow on his brother-in-law before violently smiting the sister who tried to intervene on the face. The sister who bled profusely defiantly burst out saying, “Do whatever you like, we are determined to die as Muslims.” Though ‘Umar loved his sister very dearly he could

not tolerate her conversion to Islam. He however was overawed and ashamed of his action when he saw blood oozing out of her. ‘Umar thereafter asked the sister to show him the page on which the Holy *Qur’ān* was written. The sister bluntly said that ‘Umar could only touch it after he must have ritually purified himself.

As God would want it, ‘Umar, the heathen, took the ritual bath and then read the beginning of *Sūratu – Tāhā* (Q20). When he got to verse 14 of the chapter, which says: “Verily I am Allah: there is no god but I, so serve Me (only) and observe regular prayer for My remembrance”. ‘Umar exclaimed, surely this is the word of Allah. Take me to Muhammad (S). Khabbab, the instructor who had taken cover because of ‘Umar came out of hiding and said: “Oh ‘Umar! Glad tidings for you, it seems that the prayer of the Holy Prophet (S) which he said last night had been granted in your favour. He had prayed to Allah. “Oh Allah, strengthen Islam with either ‘Umar bn Al – Khattāb or ‘Umar bn Hisham whomsoever thou pleaseth”. ‘Umar then went to the Prophet and willingly declared his desire to accept Islam. On hearing this, the Muslims shouted “Allah Akbar” (God is greatest). Before the conversion of ‘Umar, Muslims had lived in constant fear of unbelievers and most of them concealing their faith. Now that he had become a faithful man, the Muslims were able to offer their prayers openly without fear of harassment and molestation.

‘Umar led the Prophet and his followers to the Ka‘bah (the holiest Mosque at Makkah) and they all offered “*Ṣalāt*” there in congregation. Prophet Muhammad (S) led the first historic *Ṣalāt* in the Ka‘bah openly. For this courageous and bold action of ‘Umar, the Holy Prophet gave him an appellation “*al-Farūq*” (the Separator of truth from falsehood).

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. Narrate the event that led to the statement “Do whatever you like; we are determined to die as Muslims.”
2. On what occasion was the title “*al – Farūq*” conferred on ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭab and what is the significance of the appellation?

### 3.3 ‘Umar’s Migration to Madinah

The city of Madinah before the *hijrah* was called Yathrib. The promise and readiness of the Yathribites to accept the Holy Prophet and the faithful believers encouraged the Prophet to dispatch some Muslims to Yathrib for religious and political asylum. When the Muslims were ordered to migrate to Madinah, most of them secretly and quietly sneaked out; only the undaunted ‘Umar declared his departure openly. When he was about to go, he put on his arms and made straight to



Ka‘bah. He performed ablution and offered the “*Ṣalāt*.” Thereafter, he challenged anybody who would be bold to stand on his way saying “I am migrating to Yathrib. If anyone wants to check me, let him come out. I am sure that his mother would cry for his life.” The Makkans kept their mute and nobody acted against the challenge. He thereafter migrated boldly to Madinah.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

“Once a soldier, ever a soldier.” Explain this saying in the light of ‘Umar’s migration to Yathrib.

#### 3.4 ‘Umar’s Services to Islam before Khilāfah

Other Muslims in Makkah at the early stage of Islam were encouraged by the boldness and fearlessness of ‘Umar. His conversion made it easy for the Muslims to observe their “*Ṣalāt*” prayer openly. He became endeared and trusted to the Prophet and thus became one of his closest Companions. After Islamisation ‘Umar had great love for Allah and His Prophet (S). He gave his widowed daughter Hafṣah to the Prophet in marriage. He participated in almost all the big battles such as Badr, Uhud, Hunayn, Ahzab, Khaybar, and so on. He gave half of his wealth in the path of Allah in the expedition to “Tabuk.” He was next to AbuBakr when sacrificing belongings for the cause of Allah. The Holy Prophet (S) had a deep love for him and once he remarked, “Were a Prophet to come after me, he would have been ‘Umar’”. Another Hadīth narrated by Abu Hurayrah says that the Holy Prophet Muhammad said. “In Bani Israil (Israelites) there were people who were not prophets but talked to Allah. Were anyone in my Ummah (people) like those people, he would be ‘Umar’”.

‘Umar could hardly believe the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad until Abu Bakr reminded him of a clear verse in the Holy *Qur’ān* on the subject. He received the death of the Prophet with a rude shock. He was the first person who pledged (Bay ‘ah) loyalty to Abu Bakr when made the first *Khalīfatu-Rasūlullah*. He stood by Abu Bakr throughout the duration of his rule and served him with great devotion.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

1. What is *bay‘at*?
2. List out some of the services rendered by ‘Umar to Islam before he became the Caliph.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

It is true that supplication could bring about a positive change in the bad destiny of a man. This position is understood through the prayer offered for the two notorious ‘Umar’s in the Arabian Peninsula. The efficacy of the prayer turned avowed enemy of Islam and bitterest foe of believers in the new faith (Islam) to a dearest protagonist of the faith. ‘Umar conversion made the early meek and feeble Muslims bold and courageous. Apart from being a great asset to Islam, he was among the in-laws of the Prophet.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

We have discussed in this unit the early history of ‘Umar bn al – Khaṭṭāb, his bad temperament and his area of distinction. The unit has equally pointed out his miraculous acceptance of Islam and the removal of fear in the hearts of the early Muslims when it comes to the practice of their faith. We also highlighted some of the meritorious services he rendered to Islam before he became a Caliph.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. “With God everything is possible” Explain this assertion in the light of ‘Umar’s conversion to Islam.
2. In which areas did ‘Umar distinguish himself before he embraced Islam?
3. Examine the effect of conversion of ‘Umar on the development of Islam.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 2     ‘UMAR’S ELECTION AND REIGN AS CALIPH (634CE - 644 CE)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 ‘Umar’s Election as the Caliph
  - 3.2 ‘Umar’s Wars and Victories
  - 3.3 Causes of Arab Success under ‘Umar
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, you will learn about the election of ‘Umar as the second Caliph of Islam. We shall discuss only the main events, which took place during his Caliphate particularly some of the wars. We shall also discuss the removal of the war general Khālīd bn Walīd from the command and fall of Jerusalem.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- explain the event that characterised the election of ‘Umar as second Caliph
- discuss some of the wars fought during his reign
- state reasons for his victory and the circumstances surrounding the removal of Khālīd bn Walīd from the command.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 ‘Umar’s Election as the Caliph**

During the terminal illness of Caliph Abu Bakr, ‘Umar’s name was suggested as the next successor through consultation with the principal Companions of the Prophet. Before Abu Bakr breathed his last, he had secured the acceptance of ‘Umar to succeed him. Going by the narrow margin by which chaos was averted after the Prophet’s death, Abu Bakr determined to appoint a successor through ‘*shūrā*’ and after finding that majority favoured ‘Umar, he asked ‘Uthmān bn ‘Affān to write out an

ordinance appointing ‘Umar to succeed him. He equally commanded ‘Uthmān in the mosque to read same out to the assembled people. This way, and without any feasible opposition, ‘Umar became the Caliph-elect in August 23rd 634CE. Although the election of ‘Umar did not take place in the same way as it happened with Abu Bakr it was not undemocratic. This is so because his nomination took place only after full and fair consultation with the ‘*shūrā*’. On assumption of office, ‘Umar followed fully the ways of the Prophet (S) and the policy of his predecessor with his characteristic zeal and vigour. It was his strict adherence to the “*Sunnah*” of the Prophet, which helped him to subdue the mighty empires of Persia and Byzantine. His Caliphate marked the “Golden Age” of Islam.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Aduce few reasons why the election of ‘Umar is seen as being democratic.

### 3.2 ‘Umar’s Wars and Victories

Khālīd bn Walīd had conquered part of Persian Empire during the time of Caliph Abu Bakr (R.A). The conquered part was known as **kingdom of Hīrah**. After the conquest, Khālīd was ordered to join the expedition to Syria. At the time of departure, Muthana bn Harith was appointed as the commander of the Islamic army. The large army that was mustered by the Persian Emperor against the Muslims scared Muthana; and thus, he requested for reinforcement, which was led by another commander Abu’Ubaydah th-Thaqafi. At “Namariq,” a battle ensued and a number of famous generals of Persian army were killed.

Other battles fought by ‘Umar include battle of Bridge, battle of Buwa`yb, battle of Qadisiyyah, and battle of Jalula. In all these fierce battles, Muslims recorded victories because of their strong determination and faith in God.

By the year 23AH, the whole of Persia had come under the sway of Islam. It is pertinent to note that in all the wars fought by the Muslims under Caliph ‘Umar, thousand of non-Muslims voluntarily embraced Islam.

The conquest of the Persian empire provided the Muslims with unlimited resources which brought them in touch with luxuries that subsequently led them to giving up simple living and falling prey to some vices. In 638CE, Muslims established two military cantonments, one at Basra and the other at Kufa. These cantonments later on developed to important big cities of Islamic culture and civilisation.

Subjugation of the Eastern Roman Empire was not left out in the conquest. The Byzantines (commonly called Romans) were equally defeated and rooted out by the Muslims on the Syrian front. The Muslims captured a number of cities like Basra and Ajnadīn. Damascus was captured shortly after Abu Bakr's death along with other cities such as Himṣ and others. Khālīd bn Walīd displayed military prowess in all the wars. 'Umar the Caliph even applauded his merit and tactics saying: "May Allah bless the soul of Abu Bakr, he put Khālīd in a right place". The fall of the important cities infuriated Emperor Heraclius. He sent a huge army to fight with the Muslims. Having heard of the big plan of the Emperor, the Muslims left some of the places they occupied and returned to safer border. On leaving, the Islamic armies paid back "Jizyah" to the inhabitants of those places for not being able to protect them.

The Romans who had fled to Antioch a seat of Emperor Heraclius appealed for help against the Muslim armies. The Romans who were several times larger in number marched against the Muslims after conceding to their plea. Khālīd initially was in charge of Muslim armies, it was just during the battle he received the letter from the Caliph deposing him from the post of commander-in-chief. Abu Ubayda was asked to take over the supreme command of the Muslim forces. Like a true soldier, Khālīd without hesitation submitted to the order of the Caliph. He handed over the army and served under Abu Ubayda who hitherto was his subordinate. Khālīd displayed the spirit of discipline inculcated by Islam. Khālīd's extravagance led to his deposition. The award of 10,000 dinars he gave to a poet, which could not be backed with satisfactory explanation culminated to his sack. The deposition did not affect him. He fought on under the leadership of Abu Ubaydah until they attained victory.

The Muslim conquerors under the able leadership of 'Amr bn al-Āṣ, Abu Ubaydah and Khālīd bn. Walīd (R.A) captured Antioch, Aleppo and other key cities. They went further to lay siege on the great city of Jerusalem. The Patriarch having seen the defeat of Byzantines forces offered a peaceful truce with the proviso that the "Caliph: came in person to sign the treaty in their presence. 'Umar after consultation with the "*Shūrā*" accepted the offer. He went to Jerusalem and signed the treaty in the company of 'Alī his deputy. He accorded the Christians and other inhabitants of the place security of life, property and religion. After the fall of Jerusalem, the whole of Syria and Palestine came under the possession of the Muslims.

'Umar together with the Muslims entered Jerusalem offered *Ṣalāt*; he later lay the foundation of a Mosque at a place where Allah revealed to

Prophet Ya‘qub known as **Qubbatu ʿş-Şakhrāh** (the Dome of Rock). It was at the same place where King Solomon built his “Great Temple.” ‘Umar also partook in the building of the mosque. The mosque is known as “‘Umar’s mosque”. After the conquest of Jerusalem, the Romans tried to recover their lost province. The people of Jazīrah (now North West of Iraq) plotted to oust the Muslims from Syria, despite the military support they received from Heraclius the Muslims frustrated their attempts and beat them off.

In the 17-18 AH, Northern Arabia (Hijāz) was faced by drought and severe famine, food supplies were got from part of Egypt which had been conquered by ‘Amr bn-al-Āṣ when the consignment arrived at Madinah, ‘Umar took pain to personally distribute the grains among the needy. ‘Umar prayed to Allah in a big gathering of Muslims when the famine became intolerable; and according to report he had not concluded the prayer when rain began to pour.

About the same time, plague spread in most parts of Iraq, Syria and Egypt. Both the civilians and the Muslim armies tasted from its havoc. The plague indeed consumed Abu Ubaydah, Mu‘ādh bn-Jabal and Yazīd bn Abu Sufyān. ‘Umar appointed Mu‘āwiyah as the governor of Damascus in place of Yazīd his brother. Egypt, which posed great danger to the security of Hijāz was attacked by ‘Amr bn ‘l-Āṣ and his military collaborators in the conquest of Palestine.

A campaign was led against the valley of Nile. ‘Amr and others entered Egypt through al-Fuṣṭāṭ, the strongest fort of Romans and conquered it after some time. He went further to attack Alexandria, the strong hold of the Romans in Egypt; for six months siege was laid on the city. The task remained difficult until Caliph ‘Umar wrote to the army before victory was obtained. After the victory, the inhuman custom, which prevailed in Egypt where in a beautiful maiden is thrown to river Nile to appease it to bring more water, was abolished.

Incidentally, the Nile had very little water that year. ‘Umar in order to stop the un-Islamic practice wrote a letter which he asked ‘Amr to drop in the Nile. The content says: “From ‘Umar the servant of Allah and “Amir” of the Muslims to the River Nile of Egypt O! Nile if you flow of your own desire, we do not need you. If you flow by the order of Allah, we pray to Him to keep you flowing.” The letter was thrown into the Nile and it overflowed its bank that year. The Egyptians realised the spiritual power of Islam, stopped their unislamic practice and entered its fold.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Why was Khālīd deposed of his military position and how did he display the spirit of discipline, which Islam inculcates?

### 3.3 Causes of Arabs Success under ‘Umar

The most remarkable event in history is the conquest of the most formidable Persian Empire and the provinces of the Byzantine Empire. Like a furious hurricane, the hitherto barbarous and infamous Arabia demolished and humiliated the two Empires. The victories, which supposed to take years, were obtained within a decade. The reasons for the Arabs victory are due to:

- Discipline and spirit of nationalism, which Islam infuses in the Muslims:  
The Arabs who had inculcated the spirit of brotherhood fought in a body and they rose and fell in a body. This made them very stiff fighters in the field.
- Muslims desire for martyrdom is another cause for their success: Victory or death was their resolution. They prefer death in the battle, as it would open for them the gates of heaven.
- The poverty-stricken Arabs were enticed by the prosperity of the enemies; they regarded their battles with them to be struggle for existence. They thus fought gallantly in order to win and obtain the fertile territories of the Persians and Romans.
- Arabs victory was greatly depended on the better generalship of Khālīd bn - Walīd, Sa‘d bn al-Waqqās, ‘Amr bn al-Āṣ, Abu Ubaydah and a host of others. The Muslim generals had no match in the ranks of the Persians and Romans in term of tactics, strategy, organising capacity and dashing spirit.
- The extensive use of cavalry and camelry, which the Romans had never mustered, accounted for Arabs victory. The Arabs applied a military technique in conquering the Romans and at the same time resorted to camelry in conquering Syria.
- The disobedience of the Persian and Byzantine empires led to Arab success: The internal disputes on succession, assassination, luxury, wine and women and other intrigues, which shook their foundation even before the coming of the Arabs, made them to be vanquished.

- The alienation of the peasants by the rulers through heavy taxation, and oppression propelled the subjects to welcome the Arabs deliverers from the shackle and state of miseries under the Persian and Roman rule.
- Racial and religious differences in Persian and Roman empires also led to Arabs victory. Absence of homogeneity and national feeling in the Byzantine and Persian empires couple with racial differences and bitter Persecution led the subject people to look for the enlightened Arab Muslims as great liberators.
- The withdrawal of the ban on the advancement on Egypt and the fall of Alexandria after protracted siege into the hands of the Muslim is another cause for the Arabs victory.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1. How did ‘Umar stop the inhuman and unIslamic custom?
2. Arabs victory was greatly dependent on the better generalship of Khālīd and others. Discuss.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The election of ‘Umar as the successor of Abu Bakr proved to be round peg in a round hole. The zeal and vigour displayed by Umar in following the ways of the Prophet Muhammad and policies of Abu Bakr made ‘Umar an institution to reckon with. Victories recorded during ‘Umar’s Caliphate was as a result of strong determination and faith in God. ‘Umar led by example in displaying good leadership in the area of spirituality and diplomacy. He personally supplicated when there was a drought and received succor from God. He equally went to sign peaceful truce with the patriarch before Jerusalem was handed over to the Muslims. As a disciplinarian, ‘Umar sacked Khālīd bn W’Alī d for extravagance.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed the democratic nature of the election of ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb through the ‘*shūrā*.’ You have been acquainted with wars fought during the regime of ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb, the committed generals that led the wars and the victories they recorded. The unit has also discussed the discipline meted on Khālīd bn Walīd for being immodest in spending. The unit has also furnished you with strong reasons why the Arab Muslims won their wars against the formidable Roman and Persian empires.



## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Adduce various reasons why the Muslim army got landslide victory over the powerful empires during the Caliphate of 'Umar bn al-Khattāb.
2. Why was the period of Caliph 'Umar declared the 'Golden Age of Islam'?

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## **UNIT 3      SERVICES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND ASSASSINATION OF ‘UMAR BN AL-KHATTĀB (R.A)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Services and Achievements of ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb
  - 3.2 ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb as Religious Head of State
  - 3.3 Other Achievements of ‘Umar
  - 3.4 ‘Umar’s Assassination, Last Assignments, Death and Burial
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, you will learn about ‘Umar being one of the pioneering factors of Islamic democracy and the pioneer of civilisation through the formation of a state based upon the Islamic tenets and principles. The unit will also make you see the reason why his democratic administration remains unparalleled both in the history of Islam and in the history of modern civilisation. Indeed the unit will expose you to his method of separating powers and giving independence to judiciary.

You will equally learn how ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb the valiant who shook the world through outstanding performance was slain. The unit will also acquaint you with his last assignment on who to succeed him and the consideration given to him by Āishah on his special demand for his final place of burial.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss Caliph ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb’s method of administering the state through Islamic principles
- explain why Caliph ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb was declared a “marvelous combination of softness and sternness”
- discuss Caliph ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb’s conduct as the spiritual head of state

- highlight some of Caliph ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb achievements, and his assassination
- explain Caliph ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb last assignment, death and burial.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Services and Achievements of ‘Umar

Caliph ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb, apart from being one of the pioneers of Islamic principles, was also a pioneer of Islamic civilisation. He formed a state based on the Islamic political system. This system was incorporated in the West as late as 19th and 20th centuries. He was the greatest democratic administrator whose example is unparalleled not only in the history of Islam but also in the history of modern civilisation. ‘Umar remained exemplary leader for all great Muslim rulers during the whole of Islamic history. He decided all matters after due consultation with the “*shūrā*.”

During his tenure, he upheld three types of *shūrā*. The first, which consisted of prominent and popular companions, discussed and decided important matters. This is the higher advisory council which consisted of Uthmān bn ‘Affān, ‘Alī bn Abi Tālib, Zayd bn Thābit, and Ṭalha bn Zubayr. The second *shūrā* was the general advisory council made up of many Companions from amongst the *Anṣār* and *Muhājirūn*. The body discussed all matters of general interest. Chief of all various clans and tribes were also included in this *shūrā*. The third type ranked in between the higher and the general Advisory councils. It comprised of some elected Companions between the *Muhājirūn* and the *Anṣār*. Matters of special interest were put before the *shūrā*, freedom of opinion and expression was given to all members of *shūrā* whenever they held meetings. On many occasions Caliph ‘Umar said “I am but an ordinary person like you. I can only request you to co-operate in the work with which I have been entrusted by you.” Decisions were usually taken based on unanimity or sometimes by majority. The Caliph in the interest of Islam and Muslims may veto any decision, which he considered very proper.

Both men and women enjoyed the freedom of opinion during his Caliphate. Once, ‘Umar was suggesting the quantity of dowry to be fixed at the time of “*Nikāh*” which was not in accordance with Islamic principle, a veiled lady immediately stood up and said “O ‘Umar, fear Allah.” Hearing this, ‘Umar realised his mistake and accepted her objection. As far as implementation of law is concerned, he was stern and just. He acted upon the principle of equity and brotherhood of mankind on one side and justice and truthful on the other. He made no

discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims in matters of justice, human right and fair play.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Briefly explain the three types of *shūrā*, which functioned during the tenure of ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb as Caliph.

### 3.2 Caliph ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb as the Religious Head of State

Like other Caliphs, ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb was the over-all religious head of the state. He used to lead the obligatory prayers five times daily as well as the Jum‘ah prayer in the Holy Prophet’s mosque at Madinah. He also led the ‘Īd Ṣalāts at the “Muṣallā for Īds in Madinah. At the time of Hajj, he was the leader of all the pilgrims and in his absence, he appointed a person as his deputy. In all religious matters he used to give his verdict based upon the *Sharī‘ah* (Divine Law). In case of a question of law he usually consulted a special committee for that purpose working under a department known as “Shu‘ba-l-Iftā” (The department of Jurists), or sometimes he sent the matter directly to the committee. He never hesitated to inquire about any *Ḥadīth*, which he did not know from the *Muḥaddiths* (Jurists) in Madinah.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Highlight some of the spiritual traces in the leadership of the Caliph ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb.

### 3.3 Other Achievements of ‘Umar

There are a number of achievements credited to Caliph ‘Umar (R.A). Among his achievements are:

- **Division of the Islamic state into provinces for easy administration:** Each province had capital manned by a governor who was responsible to the Caliph at Madinah. The provinces are Hijāz, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Palestine, Mesopotamia and central province of Arabia. Besides the governor who stayed at the state capital, there were other officers such as “*Ṣāhib bayti l māl*” (the Treasury Officer) “*Ṣāhib Kharāj*” (Revenue Collector), “*Ṣāhib Ahdāth*” (Chief Police Officer), and “*Al- Qādi* (Judge) who manned the provinces. All the officers were paid high stipend so that they may not indulge in bribery and corruption.

- **Administration of justice:** The judicial functions were solely entrusted to the judges. For easy administration of justice, the Caliph separated the judiciary from the executive. During his time, law was not a respecter of anybody. On a number of occasions, the Caliph himself appeared before a *Qāḍī* to defend himself in some cases. No immunity was given to anybody even the Caliph and there was no perversion of justice.
- **Establishment of the Department of Education:** Caliph ‘Umar who had keen interest in imparting knowledge to the Muslims established schools for teaching the Holy *Qur’ān*, *Hadīth*, *Sharī’ah* and art of reading and writing. Mosques were used as schools; “*Hufāẓ*” (the memorisers of the whole *Qur’ān*) were specially referred scholarship and other facilities that would make learning conducive were given to students.
- **Establishment of Police Department and Institution of Prison:** ‘Umar was the first Muslim head of state to establish police department to curb crimes and maintain order. The police force at that time was known as “*Ahdāth*.” Before Caliph ‘Umar, there was no jail in Arabia. To curb excesses of the criminally minded people and to rehabilitate them, Caliph ‘Umar personally bought five houses and converted them to prison in Makkah. He also had district jails at various provinces.
- **Administration of Revenue:** ‘Umar established “*Baytu ‘l māl*” and laid down the basic principle of the public treasury. He treated “*bayt al-māl*” as a great public trust. He ensured that it was solely used for common interest. He never spent a single “dinar” from it for his personal benefit. He ensured that proceeds from *Zakāt* were spent for the benefit of the poor Muslims. The officer in charge of the public treasury (*Bayt-ul-māl*) is known as “*Ṣāhib Baytu ‘l- māl*.” There were treasury officers in each province too. The main sources of revenue at that time were:
  - (i) *Jizyah* (Defense or poll Tax)
  - (ii) *Zakāt* (Poor Tax)
  - (iii) *Kharāj* (Land Tax)
  - (iv) Booty (income from conquered places)
  - (v) Tax on non-Muslim merchants or traders who did not pay *Zakāt*
  - (vi) Tributes and others

Apart from *Zakāt* that was spent in accordance with Islamic laws as given in the Holy *Qur’ān*, proceeds from other sources of revenue were used for expenditure on general administration and warfare. Excess money that was left was distributed as stipends among the Muslims.

Both males and females young and old benefited from the stipends. Caliph ‘Umar was very cautious in spending the public fund. Once, his daughter Hafsa (the chaste widow of the Prophet (S)) came to him and demanded some share in the booty that came from a battlefield, saying; “Give me some because your relatives have certain rights over you” He replied, “of course my relatives have certain rights in my personal property but not in the property of Muslims”.

When ‘Umar fell sick he was advised to take honey by the physician; however, he had none but there was plenty of it in the *Bayti l-māl*. He went to the Prophet’s Mosque and called general house of the “*shūrā*” When people assembled he said, “I need some honey, I would be thankful if you allow me to take some from the *Bayt al-Māl*”. Such example of his is unparalleled in the history of world civilisation.

- **Establishment of Public Complaints Commission:** Caliph ‘Umar personally oversaw the commission on daily basis. At the end of every congregational prayer, he used to sit back in the Mosque to listen to the complaints of the people in the area of need; he attended promptly to the yearnings of these people. In addition to sitting back in the Mosque, ‘Umar used to go out in the dead night to find out the needs of the people. During this normal routine, one night he stumbled on an indigent woman with her children on the outskirts of the city. The children were crying because they were hunger-stricken. He personally came to their rescue by providing meals for them. Once, he saw a Bedouin woman whose life was in the throes of childbirth. ‘Umar instantly called on his wife who worked as a midwife on the woman.
- **Construction of Mosques:** Caliph ‘Umar built many Mosques. He also mandated governors of various provinces to build at least one Mosque in each city where religious instructions were given to people. He ensured the extension of *Masjid-al-Haram* (the Holy Mosque) in Makkah to accommodate the ever-increasing Muslim population. He did same to the Prophet’s Mosque in Madinah. He also bought all houses and properties around the Mosque to pave way for extension.
- **Introduction of coins:** Caliph ‘Umar was the one who introduced coins bearing the inscription of “*Kalimatu `shahādah*” (There is no God except Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger).

Other achievements of ‘Umar are the abolition of slavery in Arabia and setting prisoners of war free; introduction of Islamic calendar,

maintenance of regular Islamic army and building of cantonment for soldiers where they lived with pure Islamic practices. ‘Umar considered the great office he occupied as a trust, thus he was vigilant to the need of his subjects. He constructed irrigation and commercial canals thereby conferring a boon to trade and agriculture. He also gave security to tenure, to the peasant farmers and reduced their burden of taxation. He gave shape to Islamic republic.

‘Umar assumed the title the “Commander of the Faithfuls” (*Amīr-al-Mū’minīn*). He led the Muslims in the prayers, in public affairs and in the battlefield. Though he could delegate authorities in religious, judicial, military and civil to his lieutenants, he remained the head of the Islamic state.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1. Describe how revenue was sourced and administered during ‘Umar’s reign as Caliph.
2. Narrate how he with dispatch appointed *Shūrā* who would consider his successor.
3. Explain the essence of having consideration for others even at the point of death.

### 3.4 ‘Umar’s Assassination, Last Assignments, Death and Burial

#### ‘Umar’s Assassination

After the reign of 10 years, the glorious rule of ‘Umar came to an end with his death on Wednesday November 3, 644CE. He fell at the hand of an assassin called Abu ‘Lu’Lu Fayrooze. This Christian-Persian slave came to the Caliph (‘Umar) with bitter complaint about his master who used to place on him a burden he could hardly bear. The complaint was not all that genuine to ‘Umar thus he ignored it.

The slave was unhappy about the treatment meted out on him and became disgruntled. In order to avenge the ill-treatment, the Persian slave planned a dastardly act over the night. The slave, early morning of the next day, took cover in a corner of the Mosque. While ‘Umar (R.A) was saying his prayer in the midst of the congregation, the assassin emerged and stabbed him severally with a poisoned dagger. People quickly apprehended the assassin and overpowered him. The assassin did not wait for anybody’s judgment before he instantly took his own life with the poisoned weapon.

### His Last Assignment, Death and Burial

Caliph ‘Umar bn al-Khaṭṭāb had the premonition that he would die very soon since the injuries sustained by him from his assailant were so much. On his deathbed he appointed a “*shūrā*” consisting of six most senior serving Companions and instructed them to select one from among themselves as his Successor. He gave three days ultimatum for the assignment. The six were ‘Alī bn Abi Tālib, ‘Uthmān bn ‘Affān, Talhah bn ‘Ubaydullah, Abdur –Rahmān bn ‘Awf, Sa’d bn Abi Waqqās and Zubayr bn ‘Awwām. He died the next morning.

It was the desire of Caliph ‘Umar bn Khaṭṭāb to sleep next to the Holy Prophet’s grave. He therefore sought express permission from *Ummu ‘l-Mū’minīn*, Āishah (R.A). Though the place had already been reserved by Āishah for herself; however, out of consideration and compassion, she gave it to him. Consequently, when ‘Umar eventually died, he was buried by the side of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. A genius greater than ‘Umar in Islam has not been born in the world judging by his character and achievement. Muslims are proud of this great personality of history.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

1. Give the historical record of Abū Lu’lu’s devilish act.
2. Give a brief account of ‘Umar’s reign as Caliph.
3. How did ‘Umar realise his desire to sleep next to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S)?

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

‘Umar proved himself to be the most successful leader and ruler of men. He was a genius with rare talent for capacity building and organising constructive statesmanship. He consolidated Islam and built a great Empire for the Muslims. He was regarded as the practical founder of Islamic state. ‘Umar was an embodiment of softness and sternness. He was soft and mild to the meek. He was humble and a father to the poor and needy. He was at the same time harsh and stern to the unruly. The leadership trait of ‘Umar did lay solid foundation for leaders and administrators of all time.

We can see that the best assignment is its accomplishment. Umar through the appointment of the last “*shūrā*” became an accomplished ruler. It is equally necessary not to encroach on anybody’s properly without permission of the owner. Consideration for others is equally a good quality of a good Muslim.



## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed the unparalleled nature of Umar's exemplary administration. The unit has equally exposed you to his maintenance of equality and brotherhood of humanity. The unit also discussed extensively on various achievements recorded during 'Umar's reign which made him the practical founder of Islamic state.

In addition, we discussed the martyrdom of 'Umar the second Caliph. You have equally been exposed to the irrational behaviour of his assailant. The unit has also taught you the essence of seeking permission from owners of properties before using them.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Write short notes on five of the outstanding achievements of Umar.
2. Compare the public treasury during the time of 'Umar with the public treasuries in some states in today Nigeria.
3. What reason can you adduce for the assassination of Caliph 'Umar?
4. How did 'Umar become accomplished during the period of his rulership.

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### **MODULE 3      CALIPH ‘UTHMĀN BN ‘AFFĀN (644 – 656 CE; 24 – 36 AH) AND CALIPH ‘ALĪ BN ABĪ TĀLIB (657-662 CE; 36 – 41)**

Unit 1	Caliph ‘Uthmān bn Affān (644 – 656 C E; 24 – 36 A H)
Unit 2	Caliph ‘Alī bn Abu Tālib (657-662 CE; 36 – 41 AH)
Unit 3	Civil Wars Fought by ‘Alī and His Death

#### **UNIT 1      CALIPH ‘UTHMĀN BN ‘AFFĀN (644 – 656 CE; 24 – 36 AH)**

##### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Birth, Parentage and Early Life of ‘Uthmān bn ‘Affān
  - 3.2 Conversion to Islam and His Characters
  - 3.3 Uthmān’s Migration to Abyssinia and His Conferment with the Title of Dhū Nūrayn
  - 3.4 ‘Uthmān’s Services to Islam before His Reign as Caliph
  - 3.5 ‘Uthmān’s Election as the Third Caliph
  - 3.6 ‘Uthmān’s Reign and Benevolence Institutions
  - 3.7 Redaction of the Holy *Qur’ān* during the Reign of ‘Uthmān
  - 3.8 Causes of Strife that Ended the Reign of Caliph ‘Uthmān
  - 3.9 Assassination of ‘Uthmān and Its Effects of the Ummah
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, you will learn about birth, parentage and early life of the third Caliph, Uthmān bn ‘Affān. The unit will expose you to the Caliph’s acceptance of Islam, marital life and conferment with the title “Dhu-n-Nurayn.” The discussion in this unit will also touch on the services he rendered to Islam before he emerged as a Caliph. It will also touch on his conquests and benevolent institutions of Islam during his era.

“Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely” is a popular English expression. This was the case with the third Caliph who started his rule on a good note but bastardised it at the later part through undue

favour he gave to his family members. Since there is no smoke without fire, allegation and counter allegation rocked the Muslim empire at the tail end of his reign. The strifes eventually led to the termination of the life of the Caliph. Thus, the political unity enjoyed during the tenure of the first two Caliphs was lost.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give account of Caliph Uthmān bn ‘Affān’s birth, parentage and early age of ‘Uthmān bn ‘Affān and his character
- discuss the services he rendered to Islam after conversion
- state reasons why he was called Dhū `n-Nūrayn
- narrate the method followed in ‘Uthmān’s election
- discuss his reign over the Muslim empire and state some of his achievements
- list some areas of ‘Uthmān’s failure
- discuss those things that led to strifes and dissention among his subjects
- discuss his murder and the effects on the Muslim Ummah.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Birth, Parentage and Early Life of ‘Uthmān bn Affān

‘Uthmān bn Affān (R.A) belonged to a noble family of Quraysh in Makkah. He was from the Umayyad clan. His full name is ‘Uthmān bn Affan. He was born in the year 573CE. Before embracing Islam, he was known by his patronimc name (*Kunyah*) Abu Amr and there after Abu Abdullah. He was one of the few persons of Makkah who knew art of reading and writing. When he grew up a young man, he started business in textile, which made him to be very rich. He used his money in good ways and always assisted the poor and the needy. He was simple and kind-hearted. The Makkans had great respect for him because of his noble qualities.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Describe the philanthropic qualities of ‘Uthmān bn Affān before Islam.

### 3.2 ‘Uthmān’s Conversion to Islam

‘Uthmān was one of the Makkans who accepted Islam at its early days. He was just 34 years of age when Prophet Muhammad proclaimed his

mission. Abu Bakr was the first person who carried message of Islam to ‘Uthmān on his return journey from Syria. As he got the gist about Islam, he went straight to the Prophet and embraced it. At the point of Islamisation, ‘Uthmān related a personal experience saying, “I was just coming back from Syria” on the way at one place, we were feeling somewhat drowsy when there came a voice: “Wake up ye sleeping ones, Ahmed has appeared in Makkah.” On our arrival, back here we came to know about your mission. ‘Uthmān incurred the wrath of his people because of his acknowledgement of the prophethood of Muhammad. The Quraysh who once loved him before his conversion became his enemies. His relatives even rebuked and chastised him severely. The reason for that was the rivalry between Banū Hāshim (the Holy Prophet’s family) and “Banū ‘Umayyah” (‘‘Uthmān’s family). The holy Prophet Muhammad admired ‘Uthmān for his simplicity, generosity and piety and thus married his daughter Ruqayyah to him.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Why did ‘Uthmān incur the hatred of his people after his sudden conversion?

### 3.3 ‘Uthmān’s Migration to Abyssinia and Conferment with the Title of Dhū `n-Nūrayn

When the persecution of the Makkans became hard on the Muslims Abu Bakr went to the Prophet (S) and sought for permission to take refuge in Abyssinia along with other Muslims having ‘Uthmān and his wife crossed the Red Sea together with other Muslims and migrated to Abyssinia. At the time of the migration, the Prophet Muhammad (S) remarked: “Uthmān is the first man of my “Ummah” to migrate (for the sake of Allah) with his family.” He stayed at Abyssinia for a couple of months before he came back to Makkah because of wrong information given him by somebody that the Quraysh had accepted Islam.

When he got to Makkah and discovered that the hearts of the people of Quraysh had not been inclined to Islam, he immediately migrated again with other Muslims to Madinah. ‘Uthmān could not partake in the first battle of Islam against non-believers of Makkah at Badr. At the time of the war, his wife was very ill and he needed to attend to her. The woman died before the Muslims returned from Badr after victory. To bring succor to Uthmān, the Holy Prophet (S) married his next daughter “Umm Kulthūm” to him and thus ‘Uthmān was conferred the title “*Dhū `n-Nūrayn*” (the man with two lights). Even when the second daughter died, the Prophet said that if he had another he would have married her to ‘Uthmān.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1. Discuss the events that led to the migration of ‘Uthmān and other Muslims to Abyssinia?
2. Discuss briefly the characteristics of ‘Uthmān and why the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) gave him the epithet of honour “Dhū Nūrayn”

#### 3.4 ‘Uthmān’s Services to Islam before His Reign as Caliph

‘Uthmān tremendously assisted the cause of Islam. He suffered persecution with the Prophet from the hands of Quraysh. He was among the emigrants to both Abyssinia and Madinah. He was wealthy and placed his money at the disposal of the Prophet for the service of Islam. “Uthmān was next to Abu Bakr when it comes to spending in the cause of Islam. He was simple and open-handed. He generously contributed in Madinah and in meeting the cost of campaigns of Islam. He served as a distinguished Companion of the Prophet. During the Caliphate of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar, Uthmān was among the principal counselors and assistants in the state affairs. He partook in all the wars of the Prophet with the unbelievers except Badr because at the time his wife took ill and even died before the victorious return of the Muslims from it (Badr). He was the one sent to Makkah for negotiation of Al-Hudaybiyyah. When there was a serious drought in Madinah, ‘Uthmān bought a well-named “Bi’ru r-Rumah” from a Jew for 20,000 dirhams for the use of the Muslims. ‘Uthmān was one of the scribes of the Prophet who wrote down revelations and other documents.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Highlight some of the services rendered to Islam by ‘Uthmān bn Affān before he became a Caliph.

#### 3.5 ‘Uthmān’s Election as the Third Caliph

It should be reiterated that Caliph ‘Umar in his sick-bed had nominated a body of six notable persons who would elect from among themselves a suitable successor. At the time of the death of Caliph ‘Umar, Talhah was unavoidably absent, so the five remaining nominees had to choose a Caliph after him. These five as usual formed the “*shūrā*”. The task was difficult because both ‘Alī and ‘Uthmān featured and only one of them was to be considered. They therefore resorted to election. Eventually after a serious struggle the weaker of them (‘Uthmān) emerged as the Caliph-elect. ‘Abdur-Rahman bn ‘Awf (R.A) was the first to take the oath of allegiance (*Bay’ah*). Other Muslims also took the oath and approved his candidature. Talhah the sixth person returned after the

election and equally swore allegiance to Caliph ‘Uthmān. In this way, he became the third Caliph.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Describe the election of the ‘Uthmān bn ‘Affān as the third Caliph?

### 3.6 ‘Uthmān’s Reign and Benevolent Institutions

‘Uthmān bn Affān ruled over the Muslim empire for 12 solid years. During his *Khilāfah*, the empire expanded in Asia and Africa. The first half of his reign was peaceful but the second half was turbulent. He suppressed many rebellions and forced many territories to recognise the sovereignty of Islam and pay tributes to the Muslim rulers. His reign constituted a glorious period in the history of Islam. He ensured that the territories of Islamic states were immensely extended. He made many conquests and recorded landmark victories. During his reign, he constructed a huge dam to protect Madinah against flood and to regulate the supply of water to the city. He built many roads and bridges, Mosques and guesthouses in different parts of the empire. He also expanded the Prophet’s Mosque in Madinah and embellished it. ‘Uthmān established Arab Navy and was the first to establish constabulary. Like his predecessor, Uthmān administered armed forces, provinces, revenue and public treasury. He was a great scholar who spent a lot of his time in preaching to prisoners of war.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6

List some of the benevolent institutions, which ‘Uthmān constructed.

### 3.7 Redaction of the Holy *Qur’ān* during the Reign of Uthmān

A remarkable work of Caliph ‘Uthmān was the redaction of the Holy *Qur’ān*. During his reign, he noted that there were different reading and versions of the *Qur’ān* in different parts of the empire. He took a bold step in resolving dialectical differences. He therefore collected the correct version and set up a committee of scribes headed by Zayd bn Thābit. This board collected the authentic *Qur’ān* including the copy in the custody of Hafsa a wife of the Prophet. They made several copies of the standard edition and sent to different parts of the empire. They burnt the rest copies and retained the authentic *Qur’ān*. Since then the ‘Uthmānic edition remained in circulation.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 7

How did ‘Uthmān solve the dialectic problem regarding the recitation of the *Qur’ān* during his reign?

### 3.8 Causes of Strife that Ended the Reign of Caliph ‘Uthmān

The second and latter part of Uthmān’s reign was however less prosperous and was full of strife. Troubles broke out in the empire particularly in Egypt and Iraq where people took advantage of Uthmān’s soft nature to create chaos and disharmony. The ringleader of the mischief-mongers was one ‘Abdullah bn Saba’ who had a number of followers. He and his followers pretended to be good Muslims whereas they were not.

They incited the people against the Caliph and his governors. They accused ‘Uthmān of nepotism and favoritism. The people noted that he favoured his kinsmen, the Umayyad with high posts, valuable properties and estates. They charged all the governors he elected with inefficiency, oppression and misappropriation of the property of the *Baytu `l-māl*. It was also charged that many of the Umayyad acquired personal properties that were strictly forbidden in the *Khilāfah* of ‘Umar. Allegations also were that it was during the Caliphate of ‘Uthmān that Talhah purchased a big estate in Kūfah and that ‘Uthmān even burned the Holy *Qur’ān*. The Caliph refuted all the allegations notwithstanding. He vindicated himself saying that he spent nothing from the public money; that he ate only from his own earning and gave to his kinsmen from his big personal property.

On the other hand, Muslims were jealous of the ascendancy of the Umayyad in the *Khilāfah* of ‘Uthmān. They discovered that the Umayyad occupied enviable positions and thus flourished in wealth and privileges. Muslims were disgusted about the scandalous manner of the Umayyad. Many Umayyad would appear drunk; an example was the case of Walīd bn Uqbah Governor of Kufa who appeared drunk even in the Mosque.

Other causes of strife that ended the reign of Caliph ‘Uthmān are discussed below.

- The disappearance of the influence and position of the *Ansār* in Madinah.
- The Hashimites (i.e. ‘Alī and his people) lost their influence and position too in the rulership of ‘Uthmān; hence, they were not favourably disposed to the Caliph and his family.

- Promotion of Marwān to the high position of the secretary of the state became extremely unpopular. His promotion caused division between the Umayyad and the Hashimides.
- Simplicity and leniency of ‘Uthmān greatly accounted for his own doom. He lacked firmness, which is essential ingredient in governing unruly people.
- The banishment of Abu Dharr one of the most pious Muslims of his time irritated the feelings of the good Muslims.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 8

Give a brief critical account of allegations that caused the strife that rocked ‘Uthmān’s Caliphate.

### 3.9 ‘Uthmān’s Assassination and Its Effect on the Ummah

Rebellion broke out in Baṣra, Kūfah and Egypt. The insurgents drove away their governors and wanted them replaced. The Caliph promised to redress the grievances of the deputation and appointment of their choice. A letter written by Marwān to murder the deputation and their choice was intercepted when they reached Egypt. They asked the Caliph to surrender the writer, which he refused. ‘Alī pleaded with them but they besieged the Caliph’s house and slaughtered him on 17 June, 656CE, while reciting the *Qur’ān*. This was one of the worst crimes, which the Muslims had perpetrated, and one of the most important martyrdoms in the history of Islam. It can safely be concluded that the martyrdom of ‘Uthmān bn Affān opened the floodgate of bloodshed among the Muslims that could never be closed.

The assassination of Caliph ‘Uthmān was unparalleled in Islamic history.

- The assassination of ‘Uthmān bn Affan destroyed the sanctity and sacredness of the person of the Caliph. The killing of ‘Uthmān established the notion that the Caliph was answerable to the Muslims for his actions and that if he is found wanting in the discharge of his official duties, he could be sanctioned and removed.
- That though the right to remove the Caliph on reasonable grounds may be exercised by a people, the use of violence or gruesome murder of such person is certainly not to be enjoyed by any section of the people.
- The gruesome murder of ‘Uthmān revived the old barbaric tribal spirit of the Arabs which had once disappeared through the teaching of the Prophet (S.A.W.).
- The unhappy incident broke the tie and unity of the Muslims. It led to sharp division between the Umayyad and the Hashmides,



which culminated into rival and hostile camps. It also introduces bitterness and rancor between the Madinites Ansār and the Makkan Umayyad.

- The city of Madinah and the Ansār lost their position in the *Khilāfah* while Kufah and Damascus came into prominence.
- The expansion of the Arab Empire suffered setback because of troubles, which broke out after the killing of ‘Uthmān among the Muslims.
- The assassination of Caliph ‘Uthmān introduced civil strifes and wars in Islam. It resulted in the assassination of ‘Alī later. This assassination and the consequent civil wars gave rise to emergence of sects (schism) such as Shiites and Kharijites in Islam.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 9

What were the causes and effect of the assassination of Caliph Uthmān?

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Simplicity and generosity are qualities that made Uthmān to earn great respect from the Makkans at youth and when he converted, he became more prominent in spending in the cause of Allah. He abandoned his wealth, migrated twice with his relatives for the sake of Allah, and was even ready to shed his blood at all times for the triumph of Islam. He, apart from maintenance of legacy of his predecessors provided many amenities, which were of immense benefits to the Muslim Ummah. His reign also saw to the standardisation of the Holy Qur’ān.

The murder of pious and gentle Caliph ‘Uthmān was the most unfortunate event in the history of Islam. He was a man whose characteristic features are simplicity, generosity, and modesty. The laxity he had in the firmness of mind, his feeble reactions to issues and other negative traits culminated into his murder. The vindictiveness of the assailants and their failure to overlook shortcomings of others are result of the disintegration and lack of cohesion being experienced in the ‘Ummah of the Muslims.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have been acquainted with the youth of ‘Uthmān bn ‘Affān and his conversion to Islam. The unit has equally intimated you with the efforts made by ‘Uthmān for the attainment of stability and growth of Islam. We also saw reason why he bagged the title *‘Dhū n`-Nūrayn*.

Other aspects the unit examined include the allegations brought against the administration of Caliph ‘Uthmān, allegations that led to strife and pandemonium in the Islamic state, the murder of the Caliph and its consequent effects on the Ummah.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the benevolence institutions that constitute a legacy of Caliph ‘Uthmān bn Affān’s reign.
2. What are the services rendered by Caliph ‘Uthmān bn Affan to Islam prior to his reign as the Caliph?
3. In any egalitarian society, nepotism and favouritism do not bring about anything except rancor and animosity. Discuss this assertion in the light of the murder of ‘Uthmān.
4. Highlight some of the notable effects of the gruesome murder of ‘Uthmān on the Muslim Ummah.

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## **UNIT 2 CALIPH ‘ALĪ BN ABĪ TĀLIB (657-662 CE; 36 – 41)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 ‘Alī’s birth, Parentage and Early Life
  - 3.2 ‘Alī’s Bravery and Virtue
  - 3.3 ‘Alī’s Election as the Fourth Caliph and Policies
  - 3.4 Disobedience of Abdullah bn Saba and Other Problems
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Prophet Muhammad (S) reciprocated the guardianship he enjoyed from his uncle Abū Ṭālib by bringing up his cousin ‘Alī. This facilitated ‘Alī’s exposure to ideal and virtuous life right from the beginning of his life.

‘Alī was enthroned as the fourth Caliph because his predecessor was forced out of office through the wickedness of the assassins. The pandemonium and anarchy that were in vogue in Madinah the seat of government made ‘Alī a reluctant ruler. The trouble being fomented by the insurgents gave the signal to ‘Alī as to what policies he would make to have a hitch-free reign.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the early history of ‘Alī bn Abu Tālib
- state his characters, qualities and virtues
- highlight the issues that culminated into his election as the fourth Caliph
- discuss his policies during his reign.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 ‘Alī’s birth, Parentage, Youth and Character

‘Alī was born some 30 years after the birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) into the most respectable family of Quraysh the Banu Hāshim. His father was Abū Tālib an uncle of the Prophet (S). The father was the guardian and mentor of the Prophet after the death of Abdu `l-Muttalib the grandfather. Prophet Muhammad (S) took ‘Alī in his childhood from his father and brought him up like his own child. He did this in his household as a compensation for the valuable guardianship he enjoyed from his uncle Abū Tālib.

When the Prophet began receiving revelations, ‘Alī was just a boy of nine years or thereabouts. ‘Alī was the first among the youth to accept Islam. In fact, when the Prophet disclosed his mission before him, he unhesitatingly accepted. The Holy Prophet (S) loved him very much. ‘Alī supported the Holy Prophet in his mission from the beginning till the end.

On the night of Muhammad’s migration when the blood – thirsty tribesmen who plotted to assassinate him surrounded his house, ‘Alī risked his life by sleeping on the Holy Prophet’s bed. When the Holy Prophet eventually decided to embark on migration to Yathrib, he gave all the deposits kept with him by the Makkans to ‘Alī to return to the respective owners. ‘Alī acted according to the instruction of his uncle (Muhammad) and returned all the deposits as trust before he also migrated.

‘Alī from boyhood had been the constant companion of the Prophet in the propagation of Islam. He was a great and astute warrior who distinguished himself in all the battles against the polytheists and the Jews.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. Give brief account of the birth and parentage of ‘Alī bn Abi Tālib.
2. A good turn deserves another is a saying that has relevance to the upbringing of ‘Alī. Discuss.
3. How did ‘Alī display the “*Amānah*” he learnt from the Holy Prophet Muhammad after the latter’s migration.

### 3.2 ‘Alī’s bravery and Virtue

The closeness of ‘Alī to the Holy Prophet Muhammad at a point changed to permanent relationship. The Prophet gave his most affectionate daughter in marriage to Him. He thus out of grace of God became the father of Hasan and Husayn. The two boys were dearly and devotedly attached to their grandfather Muhammad (S).

‘Alī was a most accomplished man of his time. He was known as “the gate of wisdom.” He occupied the position of a prime consular in the Caliphate of both Abu Bakr and ‘Umar because of his learning, wisdom and intelligence. ‘Alī was generous and large-hearted. He was brave, simple and frank. Indeed, ‘Alī was an embodiment of all humane virtues. His simplicity and large-heartedness made it easy for his cunning enemies to outplay him most of the time. Because of his bravery, ‘Alī was popularly called “*Asadullah*” (The Lion of Allah), He displayed utmost bravery in all the battles and earned fame. He was ranked among the great warriors of Arabia. ‘Alī was not only a great warrior but a great scholar as well. About ‘Alī, the Prophet (S) said, “I am the city of knowledge and ‘Alī is its gate”. ‘Alī excelled in both sword and pen. He took pledges of loyalty on the hands of his predecessors and gave them fullest possible support.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

‘Alī was seen as the most accomplished man of his time. Discuss.

### 3.3 ‘Alī’s Election as the Fourth Caliph and Policies

Madinah, the seat of Islam, remained in state of anarchy after the murder of ‘Uthmān for few days. The mutineers stayed back and remained in power for these few days because who is who had fled to Damascus, some to Makkah. Most of the respected citizens disappeared into thin air. This situation was so because people like ‘Alī and other eminent Companions could never imagine the insurgents’ shameful act of assassination of the Caliph. After the rude shock, the mutineers became obsessed with the fact that the whole empire was now without a head and a government. In order not to allow the conquered provinces disintegrate into chaos, they quickly constituted central authority. They offered the Caliphate to ‘Alī which he reluctantly accepted. Thus, on 23rd of June 656CE, many swore allegiance to him as the fourth Caliph of Islam. Talhah and Zubayr at first did not want to take a pledge until the case of ‘Uthmān’s assassination was decided. They were compelled under the threats of the insurgents to take the pledge of loyalty at ‘Alī’s hands on the condition that ‘Alī should be ready to decide matters according to the Holy *Qur’ān* and *Sunnah* and that he should bring to

book all the assassins according to Islamic law. ‘Alī acceded to their conditions. Many of Banu Umayyah who refused to pledge went to Syria. The political situation of that time made some to decline the pledge. It is clear from the above that the rebels who murdered ‘Uthmān were the fore runners in the appointment of ‘Alī as Caliph. Majority of the Muslims in Madinah eventually took pledge at the hands of ‘Alī.

### ‘Alī’s Policies

Caliph ‘Alī after assumption of office, resolved to follow the ideals and policies of both Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. He determined to uphold the principle of *Baytu ‘l- mā’l* and re-acquire back to the public treasury all the illegal estates allegedly acquired by the Umayyad and others in the Caliphate of ‘Uthmān. Besides, he was ready to remove all the governors against whom the people had grievances. He reshuffled, replaced and sacked some. Many of the dismissed governors consented to the caliph's policy of reorganisation except Mu‘āwiyah the then governor of Syria who bluntly refused and ignored the dismissal order. So Caliph ‘Alī had to face troubles with him. The house of Umayyad represented by Mu‘āwiyah wanted ‘Alī to bring to book all the murderers of ‘Uthmān.

‘Alī though lamented the murder; he did not take any concrete step to avenge it. Added to ‘Alī’s trouble was the withdrawal of allegiance earlier given to him by Talhah and Zubayr on account of his refusal to punish the assassins of Caliph ‘Uthmān. The two contenders (Talhah and Zubayr) left for Baṣrah and met ‘Aisha who was returning from ‘Umrah on the way. Having informed her of the murder of ‘Uthmān and refusal of ‘Alī to punish the assassins, ‘Aisha who had continuously nursed the grudge against ‘Alī joined them (Talhah and Zubayr). They all went back to Makkah where they incited the house of Umayyad to avenge the death of ‘Uthmān on the head of ‘Alī’. The row caused by these people culminated into civil wars of 656-661CE.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1. Describe the situation at Madinah shortly after the murder of Caliph ‘Uthmān.
2. Summarise the instances that led to ‘Alī’s trouble after assumption of office as the Caliph.

### 3.4 Disobedience of Abdullah bn Saba’ and other Problems

On his third day in office, ‘Alī the fourth Caliph asked all the Sabaite insurgents to return to their places. Some of them complied while a party headed by ‘Abdullah bn Saba’ failed to obey the Caliph. Members of

this party all the while pretended to be his friends and loyalists whereas they had a sinister motive of creating mischief in the state. Their refusal in the history of Islam was the first.

Apart from the disobedience of the Sabaites, ‘Alī also faced with other difficult situations. Some of the major problems are:

- establishment of peace in the state and normalisation of deteriorating political situation
- the herculean task of fishing out the assassins and taking punitive measures against them
- the third problem was the measure to be adopted towards those Companions who would not pledge loyalty at the hands of ‘Alī unless he handed over the assassins to them or punish them according to Islamic law

Following these problems, ‘Alī established peace, which had eluded the Islamic state. He therefore wished to tackle the assassins after restoration of normalcy.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4**

Apart from the disobedience of the Sabaites what other problems, did Caliph ‘Alī face in his rulership? Discuss.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

‘Alī who earned the appellation “*Asadullah*” the lion of Allah was 30 years younger than his mentor Prophet Muhammad. Through the valuable guardianship he received from the noble prophet, he became so brave and highly knowledgeable. He indeed excelled in sword and pen. The sterling qualities he possessed earned him the great affection from the Prophet and thus became his son-in-law. From boyhood, he became constant Companion of the Prophet. He enjoyed with the Prophet and at the same time swallowed bitter pills with him. He even risked his life for the safety of the Prophet during his Hijrah.

The premonition that ‘Alī had that he would be fishing in a troubled water made him a reluctant ruler. Non-compliance of the Sabaites to the order of the Caliph and their pretension to be his loyalists including other difficult situations created a bottleneck for the Caliph. As a straightforward person, he knew that the Caliphate was a great trust, thus he first resorted to conflict resolution before tackling the assassins.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed the birth and lineage of ‘Alī bn Abī Tālib. We have also described his qualities and character at youthful age. In the unit also, you have learnt about the election of ‘Alī as the next Caliph after ‘Uthmān and the roles played by the insurgents who pretended to be his mentors and loyalists. You have also been acquainted with initial difficulties that faced ‘Alī in his reign. We have also discussed some of the policies he formulated to have meaningful and successful tenure.

## 6.0 TUTOR- MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Highlight some of ‘Alī’s good qualities when he was a young man.
2. Narrate important points in Ali’s life as a young Muslim until the event of Hijrah.
3. Account for the election of ‘Alī and highlight some of his initial problems in the Caliphate.

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## UNIT 3 CIVIL WARS FOUGHT BY ‘ALĪ AND HIS DEATH

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Battle of the Camel 656 CE
  - 3.2 Rebellion of Mu‘āwiyah and Battle of Şiffin
  - 3.3 Assassination of ‘Alī his Qualities and Achievements
  - 3.4 Assessment of the Rightly Guided Caliphs
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 Reference/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The refusal of Mu‘āwiyah and his ilk to give allegiance to the Caliphate of ‘Alī coupled with the failure of ‘Alī to bring instant punitive measure against the murderers of ‘Uthmān as demanded by Talhah and Zubayr caused a great dissatisfaction. The treachery and pretension displayed by the Sabaites and the demand by Āishah for the chastisement of the assassins led to Muslims preparing to fight against each other. Caliph ‘Alī got his supporters while the over- excited people on the tragic assassination got their supporters too. ‘Alī though did not want to go to war with them, he tried to sue for peace yet Abdullah bn Saba’ and his henchmen made peaceful settlement a total failure. The various troubles which confronted ‘Alī ' from the inception of his *Khilāfah* mainly accounted for his failure to suppress the treacherous rebellion of Mu‘āwiyah. In men and resources Mu‘āwiyah was much stronger than ‘Alī. The Caliph was just a general and a brave soldier, whereas Mu‘āwiyah his contender apart from being a clever politician was a shrewd diplomat. The barrage of problem coupled with the formidable rebellion of Talhah and Zubayr further weekend the position of ‘Alī and strengthened the hands of Mu‘āwiyah. To cap it, was the trouble being fomented by the Kharijites who hated both ‘Alī, Mu‘āwiyah and ‘Amr bn al-Āṣ and thus planned to eliminate all of them.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- expatiate upon the battle of the camel

- list names of the principal actors in the war and causes of rebellion
- discuss the battle of Siffin and the rise of the Kharijites
- mention some of the causes of ‘Alī's failure
- discuss the plan to assassinate ‘Alī, Mu‘āwiyah and Amr, and how ‘Alī alone was eventually killed
- state more qualities of ‘Alī
- assess the rightly guided Caliphs.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Battle of the Camel 656CE

Talhah and Zubayr were the principal actors that displayed treachery and revolt against Caliph ‘Alī. The battle was named *‘The Camel’* because Āishah the mother of the faithful who supported the two actors rode on a camel. Caliph ‘Alī did everything humanly possible to avoid the war. He sued for peaceful settlement which many interested people did not like. These people wanted trouble at all cost so that the Caliph might not give his attention to deal with the murderers of ‘Uthmān. At last, the inevitable battle took place and the superior military talent of ‘Alī soon succeeded in vanquishing the rebels. Both Talhah and Zubayr were slaughtered while trying to escape. Āishah was also taken hostage. Caliph ‘Alī treated her with utmost dignity and sent her back to Madinah. After the battle, ‘Alī settled in Kūfah and established authority in Baṣrah.

In this battle, about 10,000 Muslims on both sides lost their lives. ‘Alī felt deeply moved because of the loss of Muslim blood. ‘Alī after the battle took pledge of loyalty from the people of Baṣrah and appointed ‘Abdullah bn Abbās as the governor of Baṣrah. He also gave general amnesty to all those who fought against him including other persons of Banū Umayyah family.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What was the battle of the camel all about? Summarise the events of the battle.

#### 3.2 Rebellion of Mu‘āwiyah and the Battle of Siffin

Mu‘āwiyah bn Abu Sufyan who had always been on the neck of ‘Alī had inordinate ambition to become the Caliph; thus, he used the murder of ‘Uthmān to pursue his desire. Umayyad chief who had vast estate in Syria secured the support of his people so he became strengthened.

Apart from the support of his kinsmen, he also mustered the Syrian Arabs. With the support of people numbering thousand and enough money at his disposal, he had many opportunities to contest the post with 'Alī. He began the pursuit of his desire by discrediting Caliph 'Alī in the eye of the Muslims. He dangerously spread the campaign of calumny against 'Alī. He went to the extent of exciting the feeling of the people through the display of the relics of assassinated 'Uthmān and the chopped off fingers of his wife (Nāilah) who tried to save him in the mosque of Damascus. He (Mu'āwiyah) also demanded that 'Alī should fish out 'Uthmān's murderers and bring them to book.

Mu'āwiyah who had enough support became intoxicated. He refused to recognise the leadership of 'Alī. He advanced with a large army and met that of 'Alī's at the field of Siffin. Caliph 'Alī opted for peace but Mu'āwiyah was hell bent that there could be no peace unless the murderers were produced and punished. Failure to reach peace accord led to a fierce battle. 'Alī gallantly fought and cleared the field. Faced with disastrous defeat, Mu'āwiyah resorted to a trick by fastening copies of the *Qu'rān* to the lances of the soldiers. This strategy brought the fight to a halt and Mu'āwiyah escaped.

A conclusion was thereafter reached that the dispute should be referred to two arbitrators who would mediate-Mu'āwiyah was represented by the shrewd 'Amr bn al-Āṣ while Abu Musa al-Ash'arī stood in for 'Alī. Surprisingly, the soldiers of 'Alī who had earlier clamored for arbitration denounced it. They said that arbitration by men is sinful that genuine arbitration belongs to Allah only. 'Alī who had given his word for arbitration did not agree to renew fighting. By this, 12,000 of his soliders left his camp and began to foment trouble in the empire particularly in Iraq. These people were known as the Kharijites (Khawārij) seceders. 'Alī took arms against them and beat them severely. The arbitration thus ended in a farce because 'Amr bn-al- Āṣ suggested that both Mu'āwiyah and 'Alī should be deposed and fresh election to take place for the position of the Caliph. Abu Musa Al-Ash'arī acceded to his suggestion. Though 'Alī partly saw the proceeding of the arbitration as very treacherous, 'Alī lost in the arbitration while Mu'āwiyah gained equality. Meanwhile, the trouble being created at home by the Kharijites and others made it difficult for 'Alī to decisively deal with Mu'āwiyah. He therefore concluded a treaty with him and this settled the dispute.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. Explain the causes, way and manner of the rebellion of Mu'āwiyah against 'Alī.
2. Give account of the battle of Siffin and its outcome.

### 3.3 Assassination of ‘Alī, His Qualities and Achievements

The troubleshooters in the land hated the compromise reached by Caliph ‘Alī with Mu‘āwiyah. The Kharijites planned to eliminate ‘Alī, Mu‘āwiyah and ‘Amr bn al-‘Āṣ and choose a Caliph of their own. They therefore selected three assassins. The trio according to plan were to strike at their assailants (the three personalities) at the same time on the same day. The appointed assassins were Abdur- Rahman Muljam, Bark bn ‘Abdullah and ‘Amr bn-Bark. Early hour of 17th of Ramadan, 40AH was fixed for the operation.

As scheduled, the three appointed Khārijī assassins went straight to the respective houses of the targeted people on the 17th of Ramadan in the year 661CE (40AH) to carry out the dastardly act. Two of the Assassins missed their targets. Mu ‘āwiyah narrowly escaped with a scratch, ‘Amr bn-al- ‘Āṣ who was sick did not turn out either. Abdur – Rahmān the zealot who happened to be the third assassin struck a severe blow at ‘Alī while he was going to observe his morning prayer in the Mosque. It was a fatal blow, which led to the death of ‘Alī three days later. Before his death, he asked the Muslims to slay the apprehended assassin (Ibn Muljam) if the inevitable came. He also called on his sons and advised them to embrace Islam and be good to the Muslims. He was 60 years old at the time of his death and he ruled for about five years. His real grave is not known because his son Hasan exhumed his body from the grave where he was buried because of the fear of the Kharijites who might come and mutilate it. He buried him in an unknown place.

#### ‘Alī’s Qualities and Achievements

He was the best- hearted Muslim that ever lived.

He lived a very simple and ascetic life.

He was so meticulous and scrupulous in maintaining the ideals of Islam.

He adhered strictly to the principle of *Baytu `l-māl* and never spent a single farthing from the treasury on himself or his relatives.

His death saw the end of Islamic Republic and ideal days of Islam.

Mu‘āwiyah transformed the Islamic Republic to a “Mulk” and dynasty.

Madīnah, the Ansār and Arabs lost their influence in the Khilāfah.

Supremacy of Damascus and Syrian Arabs was introduced in the empire.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

1. How did the Kharijites hatch and carry out their plan to eliminate Caliph ‘Alī?
2. Highlight some of the qualities of ‘Alī and state his achievements.
3. How would you rate the performance of ‘Alī?

### 3.3 Assessment of the Rightly Guided Caliphs

Undoubtedly, the period within which the rightly guided Caliphs ruled was the most glorious age in the history of Islam. The period lasted thirty years between 632 – 661CE. During this period, none of the traditions, ideals and policies of the Prophet Muhammad was jettisoned by his successors. His ideals and teachings were rather perpetuated by these noble successors. The period nourished and popularised the democratic ideals of Islam and initiated a State, which the Muslims looked up to with pride and satisfaction.

No Caliph was ordinarily nominated for the *Khilāfah*; rather, they were appointed through *shūrā* system. They were all consensus candidates. This is so because the institution of the Caliphate was and remains a sacred office. Thus, whoever occupies it must in fact be appointed based on *Shūrā* and general consent.

The period of the orthodox Caliphs was momentous in history. It consolidated and saved Islam. It also laid the basis of greatness of the Muslims. The pioneer Caliph Abu Bakr saved Islam from cracking and the Muslims from division on the issue of succession to leadership after the demise of the Holy Prophet (S). He also saved Islam from the great danger of apostasy and pseudo-prophets. ‘Umar like his predecessor consolidated Islam, reformed the vices-ridden Arabia and converted the wild sons of the desert into a disciplined race. He built a strong empire comprising Egypt, Iraq, Palestine, Persia and Syria.

The third Caliph ‘Uthmān also added colour to the flag of Islam. His reign witnessed expansion of Islamic empire in central Asia and Tripoli. The last Caliph ‘Alī did everything humanly possible to sustain the Caliphate. He witnessed a lot of internal squabbles and wrangling. He displayed magnanimity where he supposed to lose his head. His death eventually saw the end of State of Islam in the year 661CE.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Give a bird’s eye view assessment of the periods of the rightly guided Caliphs rules.

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

It was not easy for Caliph ‘Alī to find his bearings because of innumerable difficulties coming through the trouble shooters. Despite the fact that ‘Alī displayed certain rare qualities his life was targeted. The zealous and notorious killers eventually accomplished their aim when they eventually axed him down on the fateful day when he was

going to serve his Lord. The republic that would have endured on was therefore abruptly terminated.

The reluctance and conditions given by the subjects (Muslim) to ‘Alī before signing oath of allegiance and the eventual withdrawal of allegiance by Talhah and Zubayr led to the battle of the camel. Other Muslims lost their precious lives in the Siffin through the shrewdness of Mu‘āwiyah who cunningly fasted the *Qur’ān* on the lances in order to deceive ‘Alī. What more was the resentment of the 12,000 Khawarij on the arbitration of man rather than that of God and their withdrawal from ‘Alī’s camp. The unit also saw the magnanimity and respect displayed by ‘Alī on Āishah the murder of the faithful.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt about the key figures (Mu‘āwiyah, Talhah, Zubayr and Abdullah bn Saba’) who played prominent roles in the civil wars within the Muslim fold. You have also seen the over-excitement of some people on the tragic murder of ‘Uthmān. The unit has also exposed you to the inordinate ambition of Mu‘āwiyah to become the Caliph. The unit also discussed the war strategy used by Mu‘āwiyah which brought about arbitration of four men and his eventual gaining of equality with ‘Alī through treaty.

In this unit, we have described ‘Alī as an embodiment of virtue. We have also discussed the evil plans of his adversaries and highlighted some of the causes of his failure and laxity, which eventually resulted to his murder. We took a cursory look at the performance of all the orthodox Caliphs and gave a bird’s eye view assessment of them.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Write short notes on the battle of camel and Siffin.
2. What role did Abu Musa al – Ash’ari and Amr bn al-Āṣ play in the arbitration between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah?
3. Highlight some of the factors that led to the killing of Caliph ‘Alī.

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## MODULE 4

Unit 1	The Fall of The Caliphate and Mu‘āwiyah’s Foundation of The Umayyad Dynasty
Unit 2	External Relation during Mu‘āwiyah’s Caliphate
Unit 3	Marwān Bn Al-Hakam and Abdu `l-Malik Bn Marwān
Unit 4	Abdu `L-Malik Bn Marwān (Contd)

### UNIT 1 THE FALL OF THE CALIPHATE AND MU‘ĀWIYAH’S FOUNDATION OF THE Umayyad Dynasty

#### CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objective
3.0	Main Content
3.1	The Fall of the Caliphate
3.2	Mu‘āwiyah bn Abī Sufyān (41 – 60 AH / 661 – 680)
3.3	Factors Responsible for Mu‘āwiyah’s Assumption of the Caliphate
3.4	Changes Introduced by Mu‘āwiyah to the Caliphate
3.5	Social Situation during Mu‘āwiyah’s Reign
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will learn about how Mu‘āwiyah ascended to the seat of Caliphate and introduced dynasty system into Islam. It would interest you to note that the inordinate ambition of Mu‘āwiyah to rulership in the Muslim empire would only materialise consequent upon certain factors which shall be dealt with in this unit. In other words, this unit will intimate you with the events that led to the seizure of the caliphate by Mu‘āwiyah bn Abi Sufyān and how he succeeded in transforming the Caliphate which was the commonwealth of Islam into a hereditary affair among the Umayyads.

#### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- identify factors that contributed to the collapse of the Caliphate
- discuss Mu‘āwiyah's ascension to the seat of Caliphate.



### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Fall of the Caliphate

A number of factors contributed to the collapse of the Caliphate and the rise of the Umayyads. These include:

1. Assassination of 'Uthmān (R.A.) by the insurgents: The shrewd Mu'āwiyah exploited the assassination of Caliph 'Uthmān to discredit Caliph 'Alī in the eyes of the Muslims. Thus strengthened, he refused to recognise 'Alī as Caliph and defied his order. He demanded the immediate punishment of the murderers. Furthermore, he alleged that 'Alī harboured some of 'Uthmān's murderers within his soldiers. He repulsively incited his followers unrelentingly. As a matter of fact, he denied 'Alī any chance to arrange for the punishment of the murderers of 'Uthmān. However, soon afterwards, Mu'āwiyah's ulterior motives became obvious to Caliph 'Alī who hoped to stabilise the situation to enable him engage in other matters.
2. The Battle of Ṣiffīn in the Month of Safar 37AH: Subsequent to the murder of Caliph 'Uthmān bn 'Affān, 'Alī bn Abī Ṭālib was proclaimed as the fourth Caliph of the Muslim Commonwealth of nation and the whole Muslim Ummah acknowledged it. On his assumption of duty, all the governors against whom the people had grievances were asked to resign and make place for new governors. They all agreed except Mu'āwiyah, the governor of Syria. He refused to obey Caliph 'Alī, remonstrated him and alleged his complacency in the assassination of 'Uthmān. Not only that, Caliph 'Alī also instigated the Syrian Arabs against him and made a large army. Caliph 'Alī deemed it incumbent upon himself to compel obedience from Mu'āwiyah and repel his rebellion. Caliph 'Alī moved at the head of 90,000 men while Mu'āwiyah advanced with a large army numbering 80,000 to oppose the Caliph army. The two faced each other in the field of Siffīn by the side of Euphrate's river.

The fierce battle between the two sides lasted for forty days. Faced with a disastrous defeat, crafty Mu'āwiyah on the advice of his cunning associate, 'Amr bn al- Āṣ fastened the copies of the *Qur'ān* to the lances of the soldiers, and thus demanded the reference of the dispute to the *Qur'ān*. 'Alī saw into the trick and ordered his soldiers to continue the battle. However, his soldiers clamoured to stop fighting. Therefore, fighting stopped and they were doomed to failure.

3. *At-Tahkīm* (Arbitration): After fighting stopped, it was decided that the dispute should be referred to two arbitrators. 'Alī's side was represented by Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī while the Syrians appointed 'Amr bn `l-Āṣ to be an arbitrator from Mu'āwiyah's side; the two sides assembled at a place known as Dawmat-al Jandal in the month of Ramadan Year 37 AH. It was concluded that both 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah should be deposed and fresh election should take place in order to allow the Ummah elect new person that they are pleased with by mutual consent.

Accordingly, Abū Mūsā first declared the deposition of Caliph 'Alī bn Abi Tālib and his contender Mu'āwiyah. 'Amr bn `l-Āṣ, on the other hand, feigned ignorance of the mutual consensus and proclaimed the installation of Mu'āwiyah to the vacant seat of Caliphate. This treacherous proceedings of the arbitrators enraged 'Alī's party men and the arbitration ended in a farce. This proceeding among other things accounted for division among 'Alī's party as well as the emergence of Khawārij (Kharijites) in addition to an unflinching support of the Syrians for Mu'āwiyah and their inexhaustible sources of strength all these accounted for 'Alī's failure to suppress the rebellion of Mu'āwiyah.

4. Assassination of 'Alī on the 7th of Ramadan 40 AH: Three men among the Khawārij came to terms and plotted to murder Caliph 'Alī bn Abi Tālib, Mu'āwiyah and 'Amr bn `l-Āṣ. Accordingly, they set out to execute their plot. Abdur-Rahmān ibn Muljam, the Kharijī zealot, struck a severe blow at 'Alī, while his two associate were both unsuccessful in their quest to assassinate the two remaining contenders; Mu'āwiyah and 'Amr. Mu'āwiyah afterwards declared himself Caliph and called for his recognition. He then assumed the title of Amīr al-Mūminīn, or the Commander of the faithful. Syria and Egypt as well as those provinces that were under his possession recognised him.
5. Abdication of Hasan bn 'Alī from the Caliphate seat in favour of Mu'āwiyah in the Year 41AH: This seems to be the largest stride that facilitated Mu'āwiyah's accession to the seat of Caliphate. That is to say that the Iraqi Arabs acknowledged Hasan ibn 'Alī as a sovereign leader after the assassination of his father. Mu'āwiyah thus invaded Kūfah with a large army intending to remove the Caliph Hasan in statecraft and shrewdness. He was superior to his rival. Hasan on the other hand advanced with Iraqi armies to oppose the invasion but when they halted at the city of Madain, the Kūfans proved very fickle in their support of Hasan so Mu'āwiyah easily dispensed with him.

Being disgusted with the fickle mindedness of the Kufan armies while they sneaked away from him and obliged by his own peace loving nature, Hasan agreed to abdicate in order to avoid bloodshed of the Muslims. This was done on the offer of certain conditions, which both the two parties agreed on. With the abdication of Hasan, Mu'āwiyah became the undisputable Caliph of Islam and this was designated as the year of party.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

List five factors that contributed to the ascension of Mu'āwiyah to the seat of the Caliphate.

### 3.2 Mu'āwiyah bn Abī Sufyān (41 – 60 AH/ 661 – 680)

Mu'āwiyahh was the bn Abu Sufyān bn Ṣakhr bn Harb bn Umayyah bn Abd Manāf. His mother was bint 'Utbah bn Rabī 'ah. He was born at Khayf in Mina, 15 years before *hijrah*. He embraced Islam during the conquest of Makkah. He was shrewd and perfect in the art of writing and Mathematics. By the virtue of these qualities and being a brother in law of the Prophet, he won the confidence of the Prophet, was honoured the position of the prophet's scribe and became dignified. He took prominent part in all Muslim conquest during the early time of the pious Caliphs in Syria and was appointed to govern Jordan while his brother Yazīd bn Abu Sufyān was appointed to rule Syria. After the latter's death, Mu'āwiyah eventually succeeded his brother to the governorship of Syria. Thus, he had at his disposal the entire resources of the vast and fertile provinces of Syria until after the death of 'Uthmān.

Mu'āwiyah ruled over the entire Syria provinces for over 12 years during the reign of Caliph 'Umar and eventually subjugated it during the course of his rebellion with Caliph 'Alī bn Abi Tālib. He was finally proclaimed as the Caliph as an aftermath of the arbitration proceeding which further the struggle between him and 'Alī.

As Hasan bn 'Alī agreed to abdicate the seat of the Caliphate in favour of Mu'āwiyah, Mu'āwiyah eventually became the undisputed Caliph of the Muslim empire in the 41 AH as we have previously mentioned.

It must be recalled that the Kūfans elected Hasan the eldest son of 'Alī to the *khilāfah* and the people of Madinah recognised him as their Caliph at the same time Mu'āwiyah who had contested the position with 'Alī declared himself at Damascus. Syrians and Egypt recognised him too.

Being at vantage position, Mu'āwiyah planned to remove Hasan and invaded Kufah with a large army. Hasan was forced to take the field. Qays his faithful general was sent to arrest the advance of the invading army of Mu'āwiyah while himself stayed with the main army at Madinah. At this time Mu'āwiyah displayed his shrewdness and militarism thus surpassing his rival. Besides, the Kufans proved fickle in their support of Hasan thus Mu'āwiyah easily dispensed with him.

Hasan became disgusted with the fickle mindedness of the Kufans and obliged by his peace – loving nature agreed to abdicate in favour of Mu'āwiyah on the condition that his younger brother Husayn would be made Caliph after Mu'āwiyah. This and other conditions were agreed upon by the two parties having avoided bloodshed of the Muslims and agreeing on the terms, Hasan abdicated the throne and Mu'āwiyah became the undisputable Caliph of Islam.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Give a brief profile of Muawiyah and how he assumed office as Caliph.

### **3.3 Factors Responsible for Mu'āwiyah's Assumption of the Caliphate**

A number of factors contributed to the eventual accession of Mu'āwiyah to the Caliphate. First, the assassination of 'Uthmān bn Affan and the failure of 'Alī his successor to expose and punish the assailants was exploited by Mu'āwiyah. It led to his discrediting 'Alī and his refusal to carry out 'Alī's order by resignation. Also, his instigation of the Syrian Arabs against 'Alī contributed to Mu'āwiyah's becoming the Caliph at last.

Another factor that aided the enthronement of Mu'āwiyah was the war strategies he adopted in the Šiffīn war whereby copies of the Holy Qur'ān were fastened on swords and lances; and the clamour by the 'Alī's soldiers to stop war. Another factor was the deception displayed by 'Amr bn al-Āṣ, one of the arbitrators in the dispute between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah.

Other factor is the division among 'Alī's party and emergence of Khawārij coupled with immense support Mu'āwiyah received from the Syrians.

Besides the above factors was the failure of the Khawārij to murder along with 'Alī other two contenders (Mu'āwiyah and 'Amr bn al-Āṣ) and the eventual abdication of Hasan bn 'Alī from the Caliphate seat in favour of Mu'āwiyah in the year 41 A.H. The stand of Hasan to create

avenue for peace in the empire seemed to be the largest stride that facilitated Mu'āwiyah's accession to the seat of Caliphate.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Enumerate the factors that facilitated Mu'āwiyah's ascension to the seat of Caliphate.

### 3.4 Changes Introduced by Mu'āwiyah to the Caliphate

The accession of Mu'āwiyah to the seat of the *Khilāfah* became a turning point in the history of Islam. Shortly after his accession, he ensured the removal of the Islamic capital from Madinah to Damascus. This led to the loss of the imperial position of Madinah and Kufa in the politics of *Khilāfah*. The Arabs also lost their ascendancy and privileged position in the *Khilāfah*. Mu'āwiyah ensured that the ascendancy and aristocracy of the Syrian Arabs were established in the Arab empire. He thus removed the influence of the Anṣār.

Mu'āwiyah followed the policy of ruining the family of 'Alī so that rivalry to the tool of authority between the Hashimides and the Umayyad might cease forever.

The *Khilāfah* of Mu'āwiyah also saw the revival of the old tribal feuds and spirit of the Arabs including the resurfacing of the animosity between the Yemen and Hijāz Arabs. He did this partly due to his faction's tendency and partly for the interest of his *Khilāfah*.

Another momentous change in the *Khilāfah* of Mu'āwiyah was the transformation of the Republic of Islam into monarchy. He simply terminated the democratic commonwealth and converted the *Khilāfah* into a "Mulk". His nomination of Yezīd his son as successor to the tool on 679 CE established the dynastic rule of his family in the Caliphate. Mu'āwiyah in doing this employed persuasion, inducement and cajolry to obtain allegiance of the principal men of the empire for his successor in his presence. He through this technically and cunningly introduced hereditary principle of succession and suppressed the elective principle employed throughout the periods of the pious Caliphs.

Mu'āwiyah was the first monarch in the history of Islam. He converted the *Bayt al – Māl* into his personal property; utilised, spent and disposed of it at will without caring for the purpose the "*Bayti `l-Māl*" was meant for.

Mu'āwiyah threw into the dustbin the simplicity which characterised the pious Caliphs. He surrounded himself with splendid bodyguards who

followed him anywhere he went. He involved in pomp, grandeur and pageantry befitting a Persian or Byzantine Emperor and not a successor of the rightly guided Caliphs such as Abu Bakr and 'Umar.

He also introduced royal throne and set up a bower inside the Mosque reserved mainly for the exclusive use of the Caliph. He also introduced the reading of Friday *Khutbah* while sitting.

A change, which seemed remarkable, was the discarding of the "Shūrā " council of elders. Mu'āwiyah erased the system of consultation and maintained the absolute power of the ruler.

Finally Mu'āwiyah pioneered the system of becoming addicted to sensuality pleasure and conviviality rather than simplicity and piety.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4**

Highlight some of the changes that were introduced in the political and spiritual arenas during the rulership of Mu'āwiyah.

### **3.5 Social Situation during Mu'āwiyah's Reign**

The accession of Mu'āwiyah to the throne brought about the emergence of three different sects each of which had a divergent opinion which they thought should form the basis of electing a would be Caliph to the throne. Those sects include:

1. The Partisans of the Umayyads: These were of two categories:  
*Al-Murji'ah*: They were those that made peace with all and never accused any one of disbelief. They gave preference to an established fact and mutually accorded the Umayyads their allegiance. The second category included the petitioners and those that sought for political appointments.
2. *Ash-Shī'ah* (The Shīites): They were the supporters of 'Alī and his offsprings. They favoured Caliph 'Alī and his offsprings to the throne. They asserted that 'Alī and his offspring had the testamentary claim to the Caliphate than anyone else. For that reason they refused to accord the dynasty of Mu'āwiyah any recognition but considered him as a usurper.

*Ash-Shī'ah* were carrying on their activities against the Umayyad's administrators in Kufa, they defied and protested the authority of the governor. Although they took up no harms in their activities they resisted the blackmail of Caliph 'Alī.

Hajar bn Adī was the leading figure in the repulsive activities. He

championed the course of leading rebellion against Muḡīrah bn Shu ‘bah, the governor of Kufa and Zayād bn Sumayyah his successor. Eventually, Hajar and his associates were arrested and banished to Damascus. They were mercilessly tracked down during the course of their journey before they arrived the capital city.

Insurgent activities were gradually disappearing because of this tragic events but it is only done secretly.

3. *Al-Khawārij* (The Kharijites): They had the notion that the seat of Caliphate should not be a hereditary monarchy but a potential right of every Muslim that possessed the required qualities. They upbraided the dynasty of Mu‘āwiyah. The Umayyad’s Caliphate according to them was absurd because it was devoid of mutual consultation. It lacked credibility. Thus, the group saw the Umayyads as usurpers.

The Kharijites deem it lawful to shed blood and extort property from anyone who is insubordinate to them. For that reason, they began spreading sedition and trouble in the empire. In Iraq and Kūfah, even the position of the Caliph was far from secure. No sooner than Mu ‘āwiyah had established his position as the Caliph that Farwal ibn Nawfal al-Ashja‘,ī) revolted against him and attacked Kūfah. It took the intervention of the Kūfah Arabs out of intimidation by the Caliph before he was finally killed.

Then emerged another dissident from the same region named Mustawrad bn ‘Alfī a`-t-Taymī. Al Muḡīrah unleashed his forces on him eliminated him and dispersed his troops.

Having settled with the above menace of the Kharijites the Umayyads had to contend with other rebellious activities that were spearheaded by Abu Bilāl Murād bn ‘Adī. It took the formidable efforts of Ubaydullah ibn Zayād the then governor of Kufa to overcome him. He unleashed his forces on him and he was eventually eliminated and his union was dispersed.

In this manner, all insurgent activities were finally suppressed and the position of Mu‘āwiyah was finally secured. He could finally place his dynasty on a stable and solid foundation.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

Describe the social situation during Mu‘āwiyah’s reign.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

The inordinate ambition Mu'āwiyah had in rulership led to the optimum utilisation of his potentials. His shrewdness, organising capability, administrative ingenuity and constructive statesmanship gave him an upper hand over his rivals. The solidarity given to Mu'āwiyah by his immediate family members and the loyalty the Syrians constituted the source of his strength. This led to his transforming the *Khilāfah* into hereditary monarchy of the Umayyad.

He discarded the "*Majlis Shūrā*" system of consultation and maintained authoritarianism. Despite all the anomalies he introduced into the Islamic State, he was credited to have been the pioneer of many good things such as establishment of *Dīwānu 'l – Barīd*, *Dīwānu 'l – Khātām* and building the Arab navy.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed the early history of Mu'āwiyah and factors that facilitated his accession to Caliphate. The unit has equally highlighted some of the reasons that accounted for the successes recorded by Mu'āwiyah during his Caliphate. The unit has equally explained some of the changes brought into the *Khilāfah* by Mu'āwiyah as well as his administrative prowess including legacies he left behind in the dynasty.

#### 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Highlight the factors responsible for the fall of the Orthodox Caliphate.
2. Examine the military ingenuity of Caliph Mu'āwiyah bn Abī Sufyān.
3. Mu'āwiyah was said to involve in calumny and bitterness in achieving his political ambition. Discuss.

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## **UNIT 2      EXTERNAL RELATION DURING MU‘ĀWIYAH’S CALIPHATE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Consolidation and Expansion in the Eastern Territories
  - 3.2 Conquest and Expansion in Africa (Western Sahara)
  - 3.3 Conquest and Expansion in the Byzantine Territories
  - 3.4 Mu‘āwiyah's Administrative Efficiency, His Character, Death and Legacies
  - 3.5 Causes of Mu‘āwiyah’s Success and His Death
  - 3.6 Yazīd's Succession to the Throne and the Battle of Karbala
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The foregoing unit has offered you an insight to the fall of the era of the four rightly guided caliphs and the transformation of *Shūrā* consultative system into establishment of Umayyad dynasty. The biography of Mu‘āwiyah who was responsible for the transformation, his qualities, the social situation during his reign were all also presented briefly. This unit continues the contribution of the man Muawiyah to the history and civilisation of Islam.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the consolidation and expansion of the the Islamic territories in the Eastern frontiers during Mu‘āwiyah’s reign
- give account of the conquests and expansion in the Western Provinces (Africa: South Sahara) during the caliphate of Mu‘āwiyah
- discuss the conquest and expansion in the Byzantine territories during the reign of Mu‘āwiyah
- discuss Mu‘āwiyah's administrative efficiency, his characters, death and legacies
- highlight the causes of Mu‘āwiyah's success and his death
- discuss Yazid's succession to the throne, the Battle of Karbala and others fought during his tenure.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Expansion and Consolidation in the Eastern Territories

In the east, the Muslims completed the subjugation and conquest of some territories like Hīrah and Kabūl the two provinces of Sijistān. Those two provinces revolted against the authority and refused to pay *Jizyah*. The period Mu‘āwiyah consolidated his government sequel the struggle between him and Caliph ‘Alī. Mu‘āwiyah ordered his soldiers to march towards the two territories where they were subjugated and compelled to pay *jizyah* to the Islamic empire.

Similarly, Mu‘āwiyah through the policy of expansion established the supremacy of his dynasty over the frontiers of Sind and eventually conquered Bukhārah in 45 AD and Samarqand later in 47 AH.

#### 3.2 Conquest and Expansion in Africa (Westren Sahara)

Mu‘āwiyah, troubled by the raids of the Romans from the North, sent Amr’s lieutenant Uqbah bn Nāfi‘i for further expansion within the provinces of Northern Africa in 50 AH. This was done amicably and on an Islamic principle. He later proceeded towards the Western direction and eventually took possession of the whole North Africa. He forcefully dislodged the Romans and annexed the territory to the Arab empire. He later advanced with his forces towards the shore of Atlantic Ocean. In 55 AD, he founded the city of Qayrawān to become a fortress for the Muslims against any external assault. Soon afterwards, he was relieved of his duty in North Africa, then remained isolated until the end of Mu‘āwiyah’s Caliphate. Abu-Al Mājir who was an associate of Muslima bn Mujahid, the governor of Syria was appointed to his office.

#### 3.3 Conquest and Expansion in the Byzantine Territories

After he had consolidated his position as the Caliph, Mu‘āwiyah projected a naval expedition that is made up of one thousand seven hundred naval fleet under the crown prince Yazīd. This expedition was sent against Constantinople.

The Caliph had to utilise all time of the season for both the land and sea forces, but the most significant expansion was the land and sea expedition that was launched against the Byzantine. The expedition conquered Constantinople in 48 AH under Sufyān bn ‘Awf and the crown prince Yazīd bn Mu‘āwiyah. Some leading Companions took part except that the expedition could not achieve its result; the strong position of the Roman's capital baffled the attempts of the Arabs because of the insurmountable barriers created by the Romans and the

havoc made by the blazing fire as a result of the attack by the Greeks. This however indicated an immense strength of the Muslims in the battlefield; advancing towards the Byzantine capital is considered as a great military achievement and supreme self-confidence in themselves and in Almighty Allah. With rare and courage they could overcome an adverse situation.

They also captured a naval base in Cyprus and they had temporary occupation of Rhodes and Crete from the hands of the Roman.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Highlight the conquest and expansion of the Islamic State during the tenure of Muawiyah as Caliph.

### **3.4 Mu'āwiyah's Administrative Efficiency, Characters, Death and Legacies**

Mu'āwiyah brought about tremendous changes in the administration of the country and built up a well-organised government. Out of the chaotic situation, Mu'āwiyah developed an orderly society. He was forced to find a new basis for the cohesion of the Empire, which has become decentralised due to a general instability and lack of unity. At that time, the theocratic bond, which had held together the early Caliphate had been irrevocably destroyed by the murder of 'Uthmān, the (Siffin) civil war that followed it and the removal of the capital from Madinah to Damascus. Considering all these difficulties, Mu'āwiyah thus transformed the religious sovereignty into a secular state without completely removing the religious element in the governance.

At first instance, he ensured that his government was founded based on strong and efficient army. He thus relied on his loyal and faithful Syrian army who stood by him in the gravest hours of peril.

Mu'āwiyah had to his credit being the first in Islam to establish Registry Department (*Dīwān al-Khātām*), whereby every ordinance issued by the Caliph was to be documented in a register while the original one was to be sealed and dispatched to its destination.

Postal service (*Dīwānu 'l – Barīd*) was equally established by Mu'āwiyah. The post master (*Barīd*) was in position to inform the central government as to what was going on in the provincial administration and through this medium Mu'āwiyah enforced the authority of the central government.

Mu'āwiyah established two secretariats, the central and provincial. The central was the imperial one whose medium was Arabic while the provincial at the periphery used the Greek and Persian languages.

Mu'āwiyah in order to check the power of the governors at the provinces put the governors in charge of political administration and appointed special officers for the collection of revenue. The officers bore the title "*Ṣāhibu 'l-Kharāj*". This officer was independent of the governor, he reported to the Caliph directly and the governor himself depended on him for money to run his administration.

Mu'āwiyah was also the first Arab ruler to build the Arab navy. He started doing this when he was a governor of Syria during the caliphate of 'Uthmān bn Affān. The foundation of the Arab navy which he laid became supreme in the Eastern Mediterranean sea during his *Khilāfah*.

Mu'āwiyah followed a very liberal policy towards the Christians and other non-Muslims in his empire. His wife Maysūm, the mother of Yazīd was a Christian. He appointed Christians in high offices; his physician and poet laureate were also Christians. He displayed his generosity to the Christians by rebuilding their churches, which was demolished by an earthquake. The Christians too held him in high esteem and even brought their religious dispute to the Caliph and most gladly accepted his decision.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. Explain briefly the liberal policy of Caliph Mu'āwiyah.
2. How did Mu'āwiyah deviate from the *shūrā* principles that the pious Caliphs followed.

### 3.5 Causes of Mu'āwiyah's Success and His Death

Many a cause accounted for the success recorded by Mu'āwiyah in his struggle for the *khilāfah*. The most important cause was Mu'āwiyah's surpassing his rivals in shrewdness and organising capacity. Though not a warrior, he was a great military strategist. He has long become an administrative genius in organising ability and constructive statesmanship. Mu'āwiyah combined in his person all the qualities of a ruler, politician and administrator. He was a keen student of human nature and acquired a keen insight into human mind. For these reasons, he could secure the services of ablest leaders, administrators, politicians of the time and other shrewd army generals.

His success hinged on the solidarity and support of his immediate family and clan. Being a great benefactor of the Syrians he gained their sincere loyalty and indeed they formed the source of his strength and the

bulwark of his *Khilāfah*. Having garnered all contributory factors, Mu'āwiyah established the dynastic rule and transformed the republican *khilāfah* into the hereditary monarchy of the Umayyad.

Mu'āwiyah died in Damascus on the first of Rajab, 60AH (April 680AD) in his 8th decade. By his wisdom and statesmanship his reign flourished with extra support and collaboration of clever and astute men in the state-craft and organising capacity, and associates who constituted the political geniuses of the Muslim Arabs of their period in the like of 'Amru bn al-Āṣ, Mughīrah bn Shu'bah, Zayād bn Sumayyah and lastly, 'Ubaydullah bn Zayād.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Adduce reasons why Mu'āwiyahh recorded significant success on becoming the Caliph.

### 3.6 Yazīd's Succession to the Throne and the Battle of Karbala

Mu'āwiyah saw observed that the main reason for dispute and discrimination intensify among the Muslims was as a result of their overwhelming aspiration to the position of authority. Thus, he proposed that one individual should decide their affairs. So there would not be any dispute emanating among them. Just as it had happened during the battle of Şiffīn he said "let there be no shedding of blood again"

Shrewd and prudent Mu'āwiyah and as a perfect master of art of diplomacy, he could win friends and supporters. He obtained by persuasion, inducements, cajolery or forces the allegiance of his principal men of the empire for his successor in his presence. In this manner, Mu'āwiyah introduced the hereditary principle of succession to the Caliphate.

Ibn Khaldun however, upheld the manners in which Mu'āwiyah had forced this allegiance. He said:

"What prompted Mu'āwiyah to give precedence to his son was nothing than the consideration for general welfare of the people which call for the unanimity of their desire with those in position of authority among the clan of Banu Umayyah. For this reason, they have no consent for anyone other than their kinsmen. They were the league from the Quraysh tribe and the people of supremacy that was why he gave priority to them over others. He had to alternate the position and place the mantle of leadership in the hands of those who did not merit it irrespective of abundant competent hands that were vast existing within the empire."

He gave the reason that there is need to guarantee the unanimity of voice and aspiration. In spite of this, ibn Khaldun suggested that "Mu'āwiyahh ought not to have appointed his son amidst the excess of talented and competent hand that were vast abound in the empire, among those people were those who could bear all the cumbersome responsibility of being in position of authority than Yazid himself.

After the death of Mu'āwiyahh, his son Yazid succeeded him in the *Khilāfah*. He reigned for a very short period (60-64 AH). His period was characterised with all sorts of political unrest. On his succession, the principle of hereditary succession was followed. As a Monarch, he proved himself to be a worse ruler and was notorious for his bad way of life.

Yazid was unworthy to be a Caliph of Islam. His irreligious behaviour and vices made him a scandalous figure in the history of Islamic *Khilāfah*.

Husayn son of 'Alī, Abdullah bn Zubayr as well as Ibn 'Umar could not accept an irreligious man.

### **The Battle of Karbala**

Upright, spiritual, brave and magnanimous like his father, Husayn refused to recognise Yazid as Caliph and thought of fighting for the honour of Islam. The Muslims of Madina backed him but he needed more substantial help to fight against the massive power of the Umayyads. The Kūfah Shiites had invited Husayn to Kufah assuring him of their support for the *Khilāfah*. Husayn's well-wishers advised him not to rely on the promise of the fickle minded Kūfans. However, very soon the situation changed. The Kūfans were won over by Ubaydullah bn Zayyād. Husayn did not know about this development, which was detrimental to his cause. He had not proceeded far in his journey when his advance was checked by a detachment of forces under Ubaydullah. He was in a state of blockade everywhere he found himself; thus, his approach to Kūfah was being cut off.

Finding himself in a precarious position with his retinue and their families, Husayn wanted to return to Madinah; but the cruel enemy would not allow him to do so. He made several alternative proposals to 'Umar Sa'īd bn Abī Waqāṣ (the Commander of Yazīd's Soulders) saying "let me return to the place from where I came; if not, then lead me to Yazīd in Damascus, so that I may speak with him face to face. Or if thou will do neither of these things then send me far away to the frontiers where I shall fight as Caliph's faithful should against the enemies of Islam." Umar refused to accept any of these proposals. He

insisted on the unconditional surrender of Husayn. Husayn preferred to die honourably than submit to such disgrace.”

The battle of Karbala was fought on the 10th of Muharram 61 AH. It was an unequal fight between Husayn’s small band of fighting men contesting against a large number of enemy forces. Yet they fought gallantly. He including his young sons and nephews fell in the field of Karbala. It was only the women and young children that were spared and conveyed to Yazid who ordered them to be taken back to Madinah.

### 3.7 `Al- Hīrah and the Besiege of Makkah

The tragedy of Karbala sent a thrill of horror through the Muslim territories. The Muslims of Makkah and Madina were greatly shocked and enraged at the savagery of Yazīd on the grand son of the Prophet. Abdullah bn Zubayr inflamed further the sentiment of the Makkans against the impious Umayyads and seized the opportunity to declare himself as the Caliph. While in Madina, agitation ran high against the perpetrators of the pathetic scene of Karbala. The people of Madina disowned Yazīd as Caliph and appointed Abdullah bn Hanzalah as their new leader. Yazīd on the other hand had sent a Syrian Army under Muslim bn ‘Uqbah to suppress the Caliphate in Madinah. The Madinite chivalry fought the Syrian army at Hīrah and died fighting for the honour of the Prophet’s family. The Syrian army sacked Madina; desecrated it for three days and overthrew the government of Ibn Hanzalah.

Muslim advanced against Makkah but died on his way to the city. Then Ibn Numayr assumed the duty immediately and the city was closely besieged by the Syrian army and was subjected to the rain of stones from the catapult on the 4th Rabi ‘u `l-Awwal, 64 AH. Not very long, Yazīd died on the 14th of Rabī ‘u `l-Awwal, 64 AH the news of his death made the Syrians withdraw siege and return to Damascus.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Who was Yazīd bn Mu‘āwiyah? Assess his role as a Caliph in the history of Islam.

### 3.8 Mu‘āwiyah II

Yazīd was succeeded by his son Mu‘āwiyah II who was obliged to retire from *Khilāfah* in favour of the person that people preferred.



## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The era of Mu'āwiyah bn Abī Sufyān witnessed the subjugation of Hīrah and Kabūl the two provinces of Sijistān and the conquest of Sind and Bukhārah in the Eastern frontiers. As the Islamic State expanded in the Western Provinces of Africa during his reign, the city of Qayrawan was founded.

With a projected naval expedition that is made up of one thousand seven hundred naval fleet an expedition was sent against Constantinople the capital of Byzantine. The attempt was however abortive because of the insurmountable barriers created by the Romans and the havoc made by the blazing fire as a result of the attack by the Greeks. The Muslim's army however captured a naval base in Cyprus and they had temporary occupation of Rhodes and Crete.

Mu'āwiyah had to his credit being the first in Islam to establish Registry Department (*Dīwān al-Khātām*), Postal service (*Dīwānu 'l – Barīd*); he established established central and provincial secretariats. Mu'āwiyah put the governors in charge of political administration and appointed *Ṣāhibu 'l-Kharāj*". The foundation of the Arab navy which Mu'āwiyah laid became supreme in the Eastern Mediterranean sea during his *Khilāfah*.

Mu'āwiyah followed a very liberal policy towards the Christians and other non-Muslims in his empire.

After the death of Mu'āwiyah, his son Yazid succeeded him in the *Khilāfah*. He reigned for a very short period (60-64 AH) which was characterised with all sorts of political unrest the worse of which was the battle of Karbala. On his succession, the principle of hereditary succession was followed. As a Monarch, he proved himself a worse ruler and was notorious for his bad way of life.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this, we have discussed conquests, expansion in the Western Provinces (Africa: South Sahara) and an account of the conquest and expansion in the Byzantine territories during the reign of Mu'āwiyah. Other issues examined include Mu'āwiyah's administrative efficiency, his characters, death and legacies. The unit also highlights the causes of Mu'āwiyah's success and his death. The last section of the unit deals with Yazid's succession to the throne, the Battle of Karbala and others fought during his tenure. Mention is made of succession of Yazīd by his son Mu'āwiyah II who was obliged to retire from *Khilāfah* in favour of the person that people preferred.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the conquests and expansion of Islamic empire during the reign of Caliph Mu'āwiyah bn Abi Sufyān.
2. Highlight the glittering aspects of Islamic civilisation during the tenure of Mu'āwiyah as Caliph.
3. How will you account for Mu'āwiyah's success.
4. Write short note on Yazīd bn Mu'āwiyah.

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## **UNIT 3     MARWĀN BN AL-HAKAM AND ABDU `L-MALIK BN MARWĀN**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Caliphate of Marwān bn al-Hakam
  - 3.2 Ascension of Abdu `l-Malik bn Marwān and His Early Difficulties
  - 3.3 The Rise of Mukhtār and Its Significance
  - 3.4 The Defeat of the Kharijites
  - 3.5 The Fall of 'Abdullah, Siege of Makkah and Death of 'Abdullah
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, you will be learning about Marwān bn al-Hakam, the rise of his son Abdul Mālik bn Marwān to the position of authority and the early difficulties encountered by the latter. The unit will equally intimate you with the role played by al-Mukhtār in the administration and the fall of Abdullah. You will also be exposed to the reconquest of Africa as well as the reforms introduced by Abdu `l- Malik including his character and death.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the Caliphate of Marwān bn al-Hakam
- give vivid account of the accession of Abdul Mālik to the throne
- analyse his initial difficulties and how he surmounted them
- discuss the rise of Al-Mukhtār and its significance
- give account of the defeat of the Kharijites.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Caliphate of Marwān bn Al-Hakam

Mu'āwiyah II was obliged to abdicate the Caliphate in favour of Marwān because the scepter of the *Khilāfah* was being disturbed and the Umayyad Dynasty was in tottering condition falling out with one another. The Umayyad's summoned a congress at a place known as (*Al-Aṣabiyyah*) which lasted for 40 days. They all agreed on a basic resolution that would favour all Umayyad partisans by appointing Marwān bn al-Hakam as the new Caliph while the remaining two contenders were to be the successors to the throne (Crown Princes).

Marwān succeeded the throne in 64 AH. His first task was to reestablish his supremacy over those dynasties that were under the control of the Umayyads.

He inherited a legacy of troubles, which had begun from the time of Yazīd; Abdullah bn Zubayr, the rival Caliph, had made himself master of Arabia, Iraq and part of Syria.

The Caliphate was therefore not a bed of roses for Marwān. He had to fight to establish peace and sovereignty. He marched against Dhaq bn Qays, Abdullah's deputy in Syria and defeated him in the battle of Marj Rahit. This victory saved the Umayyad dynasty from collapse. Thereupon he advanced against Egypt, established his authority there and appointed his son Abdu `l- 'Azīz bn Marwān as governor of that region.

Marwān wanted to deal with the Kūfah and the Madina Arabs but could not accomplish his mission until his demise in the month of Ramadan 65 AH.

He was said to have gained supporters by means of persuasions and inducement. He had promised that Khālīd bn Yazīd would succeed him after his death but he forgot to fulfill that promise to him. He entrusted the throne to his two sons Abdu `l-Malik and then Abdu `l- 'Azīz to succeed him respectively after his death.

The offspring of Marwān had consecutively succeeded one another to the throne until the end of the Umayyad dynasty. That is to say, the seat of the Caliphate had shifted from the offspring of Abu Sufyān to the descendants of Marwān.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Write short notes on the caliphate of Marwān bn Al-Hakam.

### 3.2 Ascension of 'Abdu `l-Malik bn Marwān (685-705) to the Seat of the Caliphate and Early Difficulties

Before 'Abdul Mālik came on board there had been pronounced turbulence in the empire. Yazīd the son of Mu'āwiyah followed the footsteps of his father. He maintained hereditary principle of succession. Yazīd ruled for a short period full of notoriety and irreligiosity. As a scandalous figure, he could not be accepted by people such as Husayn, 'Abdullah bn Zubayr and Ibn 'Umar. Within the shortest period that Yazīd ruled, blood of innocent people flowed. Husayn and many of the warriors including his young sons and nephews fell in the field of Karbala. Only a sick child of Husayn called 'Alī (later known as Zaynu `l-Ābidīn) survived the tragedy. When the wicked Yazīd eventually died, his son Mu'āwiyah the second succeeded him. This son because of his mild disposition began his reign well but could not last for he was poisoned after six months reign. Khālīd his minor brother could not withstand the enormity of the trouble in the Caliphate. He thus voluntarily abdicated the *Khilāfah* in favour of Marwān who promised him the Caliphate after attaining manhood. Marwān in order to strengthen his position married the widowed mother of Khālīd. Marwān inherited troubles, which had begun from the time of Yazīd. Activities of the Shiites and Kharijites against the Umayyads went on unabated. At the same time, Abdullah ibn Zubayr the rival Caliph had the control of Arabia, Iraq and part of Syria in his hand. Marwān at this point in time did not find things easy. He took arms against Abdullah's deputy in Syria, defeated him and saved Umayyad dynasty from collapse. He also dealt ruthlessly with the Shiites of Kūfah and consolidated his position. He however forgot his promise to Khālīd and nominated his son Abdu `l-Malik as his successor to the *Khilāfah*. The prank played by Marwān infuriated Khālīd's mother and thus murdered him to death one night.

After the death of Marwān in 685CE, Abdul Mālik his eldest son and the *Khalīfah* elect succeeded him. By this, the offspring of Marwān succeeded one another to the throne till the end of Umayyad dynasty.

Abdul Mālik was born in Madinah in 26AH. He mastered the Qur'ān under 'Uthmān bn Affān and studied Hadith from Jabir and Abu Hurayrah. He proved himself to be a successful ruler under the rule of Abdu `l-Malik and his four sons who succeeded him in the Umayyad Caliphate not only reached the peak of its glory and power, the empire also reached its greatest expansion and the zenith of its prosperity.

The time Abdu `l-Malik assumed the position of authority, Umayyad throne and empire was in tottering condition. There were formidable enemies in all sides. Funny enough he was not daunted by the magnitude of troubles. He rather remained energetic and courageous.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

How did Marwān save Umayyad dynasty from imminent collapse?

### 3.3 The Rise of Mukhtār and Its Significance

During the Caliphate of Abdu, `l-Malik Mukhtār who was a scheming adventurer and Shiite zealot cast himself in the role of avenger of the murder of Husayn. At this time, the governor of Kūfah suspected him of his sinister motives, he arrested and cast him into prison. He shortly gained freedom and mustered the Kūfah Penitents around himself. Mukhtar targeted `Ubaydullah bn Zayd, the man who was responsible for the tragedy of Karbala. He therefore sent his army under Ibn al-Ashtar against Ubaydullah bn Zayd. During the encounter, Mukhtār's forces defeated the Umayyad army with a terrible slaughter. The villain Ubaydullah was not spared too but was cut to pieces. It was a goodluck for Abdu `l-Malik that Mus `ab a brother and deputy of the rival Caliph Abdullah bn Zubayr came to the rescue by advancing to Baṣrah with a large number of men who were unfavourably disposed to Mukhtār. Mus`ab and his men marched against the Penitents and dealt a dead blow on Mukhtār and his men thus Ibn Zubayr successfully took possession of Iraq.

The rise of Mukhtār was a turning point and significant event in the history of Islam. He championed the Shiites and supporters of `Alī's family against the Umayyad dynasty. The death of Husayn at Karbala was avenged under his leadership. It was remarkable that the Shiites made the first organised attempt in favour of `Alī's family. This move naturally gave momentum to the Shiite movement in Islam. The Iranians and Iraqīs who had glorious past hated playing second fiddle to the Arab aristocracy, they teamed up with Mukhtār in order to regain their lost glory and to be at par with the Arab aristocracy.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

The rise of Mukhtār was a turning point in the history of Islam. Discuss.

### 3.4 The Defeat of the Kharijites

Various troubles that emanated from the Kharijites epitomized the era of Caliph Abdu `l-Malik. They demonstrated a vast deal of courage and rare energy to over-run the authority of the Umayyads. Notable among these sects include:

1. Al-Azāriqah: They were the adherents of Nāfi' bn al-Azraq
2. Aṣ-Ṣafariyyah: They were the partisans of Zayyād bn Al-Asfar.

**Al-Azāriqah:** When the Kharijites gave their support for Abdullah bn Zubayr, no sooner it became obvious to them that he was not what they had expected. Thus, they deserted the city of Makkah in 64AH. The Nāfiu's faction went back to Iraq and occupied part of its territory. They adopted the policy of harassing the Baṣrah settlement everyday until its inhabitants came out against them to defend themselves and Nāfiu was eventually killed. However, the Baṣrans fell in subsequent encounter with the Kharijites in 65 AH.

Thereafter, the Baṣrans appointed Muhallab bn Ṣufrah to lead them in another engagement with the Kharijites on account of what he was known to be as a valiant and efficient general. Muhallab lived up to their expectation when he defeated the enemy and forced them to retreat to Kirma and Ishfahān.

At the assumption of office by Muṣ'ab bn Zubayr as the new governor of Iraq, he quickly recalled Muhallab from his duty and appointed another person in his place. This marked a successful culmination of a campaign for the Kharijites. Their influence was quickly extended and their menace intensified. To clear the air of uncertainty about their future, the people of Baṣrah however made their grievances known to Muṣ'ab, they clamoured for Muhallab reinstatement as the commander of the forces against the Kharijites on account of his experience with their manner and assault and Muṣ'ab pleasantly approved their demand. In the mean time, the Kharijite's leadership had passed to Qutur bn al-Fujā'h, the renowned poet. Still, the Kharijites continued their hostility against the people but Muhallab managed to resist their advances for a period of eight months.

Although, the Iraqī's subordination to the government of 'Abdu `l-Malik bn Marwān offered a good opportunity to the Kharijites again. This is because the Umayyad governor in Iraq had deposed Muhallab from his office. This among other things brought about the fall of governor's forces shortly afterwards before the Kharijites army.

In consideration of this hostilities, Caliph 'Abdu `l-Malik had to reinstate Muhallab to his position and the two sides repeatedly fought each other with alternative successes. Often the Kharijites in many encounters outbalanced the empire's forces. This was as a result of fickle attitude of the Iraqī Arabs. Muhallab could not rely on them during the course of the battle.

As the Caliph 'Abdu `l-Malik felt that the safety of the empire possessions necessitated other positive changes, he then appointed Hajjāj to the position of authority in the eastern provinces with Kūfah as the capital. Vested with unlimited powers, Hajjāj stood out as an

embodiment of cruelty and enormous bloodshed to the people. His attitude had forced many people to leave their homes and swell the forces of Muhallab. This however was a source of strength to the adventitious general. Although, the Kharijites menace was thus removed for some time, the empire found it relatively difficult to overwhelm the dissident soldiers in several engagements for a period of one year.

Soon afterwards, the adherents of the Azraqiyyah fell out with one another; the Arabs among them rallied round Qutur while the non-Arab Muslims of the empire (Al-Mawālīs) embraced Abdu `l-Rabīh Al-Kabīr, so there was an outbreak of war between the two factions. However, the empire forces eventually vanquished the Kharijites. Thus, Qutur and his followers ran off to Tabaristan, while the rest of the Kharijites remained under Abdu `r-Rabīh in Kirma; and so Muhallab laid siege to Jiraft and broke their resistance in 77 A.H. At the same time, Hajjāj sent strong forces among Syrians army to hunt for Qutur. At last, he was caught and killed with some of his followers. By that means, Muhallab finally overcame the Kharijites. In this manner, he won for himself a great reputation and Kharijites trouble was put to rest.

**As-Şafariyyah:** They were the other branch of the Kharijites sect that emerged during this period. They had dominated part of Iraq (Mesopotamia) and declared themselves as enemy of the state. Its leadership is claimed to Şalih bn Masarraḥ At-Tamīmī while Shabīb bn Yazīd As-Shaybānī closely associated with them. However, when Şālīh was killed, Shabīb was appointed as the leader and he demonstrated a vast deal of courage in spite of the small soldiers he had and enormity of his enemy. He consequently ruled over Mosul city in Northan. Iraq and Al-Jazīrah in North-west Mesopotamia for three years.

More often, the State forces were completely overwhelmed; he repeatedly invaded Kūfah until Hajjāj was finally forced into exile and sought protection in Baṣrah. This provided the impetus for the Kharijites to mock the embattled general. When the Iraqi soldiers fell through in their struggle to curb the menace of Shabīb and his force, the restless Hajjāj felt obliged to resort to asking for reinforcements from the Caliph.

Abdu `l-Malik sent reinforcements whereas Shabīb repeatedly raided the city for more than 30 times, but the most intensive assault was the one he launched against Hajjāj in 77 AH at a place called (Sūqu `l-Hikmah), very close to Kūfah. Shortly afterward, Shabīb and his men were completely overwhelmed by the State's army in the battle of Dijil and he was obliged to wade through the river on horseback and was submerged.



The Syran's army subjected his men to series of attack until they were finally vanquished. This event marked the successful completion of a long campaign that culminated the decline of the Kharijite's activities within the empire.

### **Sedition of Ibn Al-Ash'ath**

During the reign of Hajjāj bn Yusuf as the governor of Iraq (Mesopotamia), there was a king known as Kabil. He ruled over certain province that was under the empire but gave little or no attention to the payment of *jizyah*. Then, the governor felt obliged to resort to punitive measure against the heedless king. With 40,000 men, the adventurous general proceeded to attack him and compel obedience from him. The State army as at that time was nicknamed (The Peacocks) because of its graceful looks and its propensity for combats.

Abdu `l-Rahmān bn al-Ash'ath was vested with the overall command of the troops. His approach to the mission was however too slow and wary. Consequently, Hajjāj insulted him to his face; he blamed him for his feeble mindedness. The furions Abdu `l-Rahmān could not hide his discontent. Therefore, he fell out with Hajjāj and ignored the order of Caliph Abdu l –Malik. His mutinous soldiers were also exhorted to pledge allegiance with him. He thus led them back to Iraq. No sooner, his seditious activities began to gain momentum the people of Kirmān, Ray, Jibal, Baṣrah and Kūfah began to accord him allegiance and remained subordinate to him. There was an imminent dooms day for Hajjāj.

To this end, the Caliph proposed to him to comply with his order and promised him that he would recall Hajjāj from the governorship of Iraq and appointed him in his place. He however rejected this proposal. This among other things prompted the Caliph to resolve to make the greatest effort in the course of subjugating the menace. Hence, the Caliph sent reinforcement to the Arab general. Mustered with the Syrian troops, they proceeded to attack the mutinous soldiers, so that he could purge the empire of all insurgent activities.

After a protracted fight and a frequent assaults which is more than 80 attempts, Hajjāj finally broke the resistance of Ibn Al-Ash'ath in 83AH in a decisive engagement at a place better known as Dayr Al-Jamasim. After 100 days of fierce battle, the seditious general quickly fled to Kabul and sought protection from its emperor who refused to grant him. He eventually fell off the top fort and died. His head was cut off and conveyed to Hajjāj in 85AH.

As the insurgent activities of Kharijites had been completely annihilated, peace and tranquility was eventually guaranteed; and Abdu l`-Malik finally consolidated his absolute rule over the Arab empire of the Umayyad dynasty.

### **3.5 The Fall of 'Abdullah, Siege of Makkah and Death of 'Abdullah**

In 692 CE 'Abdullah bn Zubayr had a vantage and stronger position than Abdu l`-Malik. This is because he possessed Arabia, Mesopotamia, Iraq and had some hold in Syria. His ineptitude and complacency in organising his resources and territories including the army on an efficient basis against his adversaries earned him his failure. Abdullah could have terminated the Umayyad *Khilāfah* if he came out of Makkah and attacked Damascus at the time of Marwān or even at the accession of Abdu l`-Malik.

Meanwhile, 'Abdu l`-Malik was consolidating his position gaining strength day by day whereas 'Abdullah relied on the arms of his brother Mus'ab. 'Abdu l`-Malik first attacked Mus'ab the backbone and brother of 'Abdullah in a bid to torpedo the army of 'Abdullah. In the encounter, Mus'ab was left with a small army after dispatching his men under his general Muhallab to fight against the Kharijites. Mus'ab gallantly fought with his small band against the large enemy forces but was vanquished. 'Abdullah thus lost the whole of Iraq and his great general and brother to 'Abdu l`-Malik.

After the subjugation of Iraq by 'Abdu l`-Malik, Hajjāj bn Yusuf, a iron-hand general, was sent to go and depose 'Abdullah by Zubayr. Makkah was besieged and subjected to strict blockade. The siege that lasted seven months caused untold hardship to the people and as such many people deserted 'Abdullah seeing his strength dwindling, he honourably summoned courage and rushed to the battle. He fought bravely with his small army against the vast Syrian force but was severely dealt with and killed in the encounter.

The death of 'Abdullah bn Zubayr closed the generations of civil wars of the Arabs which began with the murder of 'Uthmān. Traditions of Islam passed away with the death of Abdullah the last champion of the ideas. The Ansār's power was also ever broken. Arabians thus lost their lingering influence in the *Khilāfah* and the ascendancy of Damascus and Syrian Arabs in the Empire was confirmed.

The Syrian Army of Hajjāj subjugated the city of Madinah and Tāif and laid siege to Makkah. It was subjected to strict blockade and severe catapults. This caused great sufferings to the people and as such, many

people deserted Abdullahi; they took side and sought protection with Hajjāj's camp. Among those that deserted him were his two sons, Hamzah and Habeeb. Ibn Zubayr found his strength dwindled and decided to keep up with few minorities among his partisans.

At the inspiration of his mother 'Asma (daughter of Abu Bakr), Abdullah eventually thought that the only honourable course left to him was to die fighting. He rushed to the battle and fought bravely with his small army against the vast Syrian force. He was however defeated and killed in Jumadha al Akhirah 73AH. His body was undeservedly crucified by the brute general Hajjāj but was later brought down with the intervention of Caliph Abdu 'l-Malik.

The death of Abdullah bn Zubayr marked the successful culmination of a long campaign and confirmed the supremacy of Caliph 'Abdu 'l-Malik over the whole Arab empire. He eventually became the undisputed Caliph in 73AH. This year was designated as the year of congress and he was considered as the second founder of the Umayyad dynasty.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4**

Complacency and dependence on others are elements that retard progress. Discuss this assertion regarding the fall of 'Abdullah bn Zubayr.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

At al- *Aṣabiyyah* congress the Umayyads agreed on Marwān bn al-Hakam as the new Caliph while Khālīd bn Yazīd bn Mu'āwīyah and 'Amr bn Marwān bn al-Hakam were to be Crown Princes. By the time Caliph Marwan bn al-Hakam ascended the throne of *Khilāfah* the rival Caliph Abdullah bn Zubayr was supreme in Arabia and Iraq favoured by some partisans. Only Jordan remained under the control of the Umayyads. To establish peace and sovereignty, Marwan marched against Abdullah's deputy in Syria and defeated him in the battle of Marj Rahit. Thereafter, he advanced against Egypt and appointed his son Abdu 'l- 'Azīz as governor. Marwān had to deal with the Kūfah and the Madina Arabs but could not accomplish his mission until his demise in the month of Ramadan 65 AH. The offspring of Marwān had consecutively succeeded one another to the throne until the end of the Umayyad dynasty.

After the death of Marwān in 685CE, Abdul Mālīk his eldest son and the *Khilāfah* elect succeeded him. Abdu 'l-Malik was undaunted by the magnitude of troubles surrounding him when he assumed office; He rather remained energetic and courageous.

Al-Mukhtār rose to champion the supporters of ‘Alī’s family against the Umayyad dynasty. The death of Husayn at Karbala was avenged under his leadership. The Iranians and Iraqīs who had glorious past hated playing second fiddle to the Arab aristocracy teamed up with Mukhtār in order to regain their lost glory and to be at par with the Arab aristocracy.

The large army of ‘Abdu ‘l-Malik vanquished Abdullahi’s small band under his general and brother Mus‘ab thus gaining control over the whole of Iraq.

Similarly, Hajjāj bn Yusuf, “an iron hand general” of ‘Abdu ‘l-Malik besieged Makkah and deposed ‘Abdullah by Zubayr in fierce battle. ‘Abdu ‘l-Malik became the undisputed Caliph in year 73AH.

‘Abdu ‘l-Malik’s administrative reforms included making Arabic the official language and improving its script, substituting foreign coins with new gold and silver pieces with new engraving, minting of gold dinars and silver dirhams, development of postal system, bequest of a stable monarchical form of government. His legacies also include fiscal reforms, restructuring of Qubbatu ‘s-Sakhrah and al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. He patronised poets and endowed them with gifts generously.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit presents an account of how Marwān bn al-Hakam ascended the throne of *khilāfah* with a description of the chaotic situation that prevailed then. The series of wars he fought for peace and stability to reign in the caliphate are then discussed. The fact that the seat of caliphate shifted from the Sufyanids to the Marwanids until the end of Umayyad dynasty is also established.

Other issues raised in the unit include the succession of ‘Abdu ‘l-Malik to his father, the rise of Al-Mukhtar and its significance, the fall of parallel Caliph Abdullah bn Zubayr and the siege of Makkah. The unit also contains an account of wars prosecuted against the Kharijites, the Romans and Berber in North Africa and the administrative reforms of ‘Abdu ‘l-Malik. A brief account of ‘Abdu ‘l-Malik’s character and his death conclude the topics dealt with in the unit.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Give an account of the ascension of ‘Abdu ‘l-Malik bn Marwān to the seat of the caliphate and his early difficulties.
2. Discuss the rise of al-Mukhtār and its Significance.
3. Who was Abdullah bn Zubayr? State his contribution to the history of the caliphate.

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## **UNIT 4     ABDU `L-MALIK BN MARWĀN (contd)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Abdu `l-Malik's Reconstruction of al-Ka'bah
  - 3.2 The Islamic Coins
  - 3.3 Conquest and Expansion in the Eastern Territories
  - 3.4 The Conquest of Syria
  - 3.5 Wars in the Northern Africa
  - 3.6 Assessment of Abdu 'l- Malik
  - 3.7 Character of 'Abdul Mālik and Death
  - 3.8 Abdu `l-Malik's Death and Succession to the Throne
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The last unit presents to you a discussion of the Caliphate of Marwān bn al-Hakam. You were also acquainted with the ascension of his son and successor Abdu `l-Malik bn Marwān to the throne of the caliphate and the early difficulties that confronted him. Other important issues dealt with in this unit include the rise of Mukhtār and its significance, the defeat of the Kharijites and fall of Abdullah bn Zubayr who was a rival caliph in Madina, Makkah and other places. This unit continues where the last unit stopped regarding the discussion of life and contribution of Abdu `l-Malik as a prominent Umayyad caliph.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss Abdu `l-Malik's Reconstruction of al-Ka'bah
- discuss his introduction of Islamic coins
- narrate his conquest and expansion activities in the Eastern territories and his wars in Syria and the Northern Africa
- assess Abdu 'l- Malik's character and administrative ingenuity.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Abdu `l-Malik's Reconstruction of Al-Ka'bah

During the period of Abdullah bn Zubayr, there was a slide bent on the wall of the Ka'bah as a result of severe catapults shooting in 65AH; Caliph Abdu `l-Malik eventually leveled off the house. He dug up its foundation and inserted a stone into it because of the tradition that was reported by his mother Asma'u from his maternal aunt Aisha (R.A); that the Apostle of Allah (S) said "Had it not been for your people inexperience with disbelief, they would have demolished the Kabbah and place it on ground work of Ibrahim and created two doors for it." Bukhari and Muslim reported this Hadith.

When Abdullah Ibn Zubayr was killed, Hajjāj demolished the prop that had been built of stones and restored it so that it looks exactly the way it was during the ancient time of Quraysh.

The present prop is made up of Ibn Zubayr and Hajjaj construction.

#### 3.2 The Islamic Coins

There was no specific Islamic coins before the era of Abdu `l-Malik; the Muslim only tendered the Persian and Romans (monetary unit), dirhams and dinars.. Caliph Umar (R. A.) however ordered that the statement "Al hamdu lillahi" be engraved on the said Persians and Romans coins. At the same time, "Laa ilaaha illallah wahdahu" and "Muhammad Rasuulu llahi" were also included.

However, Abdul Malik eventually minted the real Islamic silver and gold coins during his period in 74 AH. The statement was "Laa ilaaha illa Allah wahdahu, laa sharika lahu , Qu `l-Huwa llahu Ahad, Allah Şamad, lam yalid wa lam yūlad" were engraved on one side of the coin while "Muhammad Rasulu llah, Arsalahu bil huda wa diini l haqq li yuzhirahu alaa diini kullihi" was inscribed on the other side of the coin. Shortly afterward, every province had mint house of its own. This meritorious work is credited to Caliph Abdu `l-Malik. Abdu `l-Malik's intensive effort in translating official records from various languages into Arabic should also be mentioned here.

#### 3.3 Conquest and Expansion in the Eastern Territories

Abdul Malik demonstrated his favour for campaigns for further expansion of his empire in the eastern territories and beyond especially the Transoxiana (across the river) for the cause of propagating Islam.

When Muhallab assumed the position of authority in Khurāsān, he adopted the policy of invading the territories that are beyond the river i.e Trans-oxiana and thus subjugated the province of Kush. Likewise, Abdul Malik's son, Yazīd conquered other fortresses. Then, this campaign was halted for a while as a result of widespread outrage of tribal fury between the Qaysites and the Yeminite.

### 3.4 The Conquest of Syria

At the time when Abdullah was preparing the ground to face Muṣ'ab bn Zubayr, the Romans suddenly invaded some Muslim possession in Northern Syria. As such, 'Abdu 'l-Malik felt that the safety of the empire's possessions necessitated a peace accord with the enemies. He agreed to pay the tax of one thousand dinar to them every week.

By the time he had finally secured his position, he desisted from further payment and eventually organised an all times and multi skilling troops to advance against the Byzantine. They eventually conquered Caesarea (ancient seaport in Palestine) in 81AH and Al-Masīṣah in 84AH. Both were formally a colony of the Romans in the lower Asia basin.

### 3.5 Wars in the Northern Africa

Shortly before the succession of Abdul Malik to the Caliphate, the Muslims lost al-Qayrawān when the combined forces of the Berbers and Romans made a surprise attack on the city and killed Uqbah bn Nāfi'. They captured the capital and took control of the whole Northern Africa until 69 AH. Abdul Malik sent an army under Zuhayr al-Balwī to reconquer Africa, Zuhayr defeated the Romans and Berbers and recovered Qayrawān. He eventually killed Kasilah, but the Berbers suddenly attacked him with his small army and slain him.

Thereafter, the Caliph sent another forces under Zuhayr lieutenant, Hassan bn 'n-Nūmān to subjugate and recover Qayrawān and Carthage respectively. Hassan successfully defeated the Romans and Berbers and recaptured Qayrawān as well as other territories of Africa to the Atlantic.

No sooner had the province been reconquered than a fresh trouble emerged there. "Kahina" a crafty woman, declared herself as a 'divine being' and established her supremacy over the ignorant Berbers by magical performances. She defied the imperial authority and defeated several Muslim forces and expelled them to al-Barqa (Cyrenaica) region of eastern Libya. She ruled over Africa for a period of three years. Hassan and his expeditionary force were subjected to a strict blockade by the priestess inside a fort known as Fort of Hasan in Al-barqa



(Cyrenaica). Thus, the situation persisted for some while. At the end, Hasan defeated and killed the priestess after the Caliph had eventually sent re-inforcements in 79 AH.

By his mild and generous rule, Hassan won over the priestess followers and children to Muslim rule and established peace and order in that region. Afterward, Islam spread gradually among the Berbers and they eventually turned out to be his force. With their combined effort, they could chase out the Romans from the land and Africa was completely brought under the authority of the Muslims.

### 3.6 Assessment of 'Abdu 'l-Malik

The Caliphate of 'Abdu 'l-Malik was not an autocracy of the old oriental type but a centralised monarchy modified by Arab tradition and by the remnant of the theocratic idea. It was during his reign that organisation and adjustment begun. He replaced the old Byzantine and Persian systems of administration in the provinces by a new Arab imperial system. He was the first ruler who felt the necessity of "Arabicising" the administration. He made Arabic the official language of administration and took steps to improve the Arabic script. He also introduced Arabic coins. He substituted the Persian and Byzantine coins which hitherto were in general use with new gold and silver pieces on which sentences from the *Qur'ān* were engraved. He also established an imperial mint in Damascus, minting gold Dinars and silver Dirhams. He developed the postal system established by Mu'āwiyah into a very efficient one.

During his epoch-making reign of 20 years, 'Abdu 'l-Malik bequeathed for his posterity a stable monarchical form of government. He divided the kingdom into ten administrative units and discharged the governmental functions in three-fold capacities.

'Abdu 'l-Malik also undertook some fiscal reforms. He ensured that all Muslims no matter their lineage or nationality paid Zakāt only and no any other tax.

He was also a great builder. He built in Jerusalem "Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah" Dome of the Rock with a view to diverting the attention of the pilgrims from Makkah to Jerusalem when Ibn Zubayr installed himself at Makkah as the rival Caliph of the Muslim empire. He also built the *Masjid al-Aqṣā* in Jerusalem. 'Abdu 'l-Malik liberally patronised poets; he himself was a composer and admitted celebrated poets like Farazdaq, Jarir and Akhṭal to adore his court.

He proved himself one of the outstanding Caliphs of the Umayyads. The empire was in a state of collapse as at the time of his accession to

the throne. This circumstances seems to herald an ominous end of the dynasty and could have died premature, but for the extraordinary energy and constructive statesmanship of 'Abdu `l-Malik, he thus preserved the unity of the empire and built a fresh and enduring dynasty on a firm and solid basis.

As at the time of his death, 'Abdu `l-Malik left a well consolidated State, which formed the basis of glories and greatness of his successor Al-Walīd. In spite of all these achievements, his government stands out as an incarnation of cruelty and enormous bloodshed committed on a large scale. He was accused of betraying 'Āmir bn Sa'īd after his reassurance to him. Moreover, he had granted unlimited powers to the veritable Hajjāj bn Yusuf in the administration of the eastern provinces which eventually ensued an enormous blood and inhumane treatment of the people.

### 3.7 Character of 'Abdul Mālīk and Death

'Abdu `l-Malik was an energetic, capable and efficient ruler. He possessed alertness, foresight and firm determination. During his reign, enemies and foes hemmed him in on all sides. In fact, the empire was in a state of collapse at the time. The circumstances at that time seem to herald an ominous end of the dynasty but for the extraordinary energy and constructive statesmanship of 'Abdu `l-Malik who preserved the empire and built a fresh and enduring dynasty on a firm and solid basis. 'Abdu `l-Malik was an embodiment of cruelty and unscrupulousness. He was at the same time humane. His cruelty was said to be due to his anxiety to safeguard and promote the interest of his dynasty. He was always just and kind to his friends and relations; 'Abdu `l-Malik was much given to piety and devotional exercises in his early days. His derailment started immediately he received the announcement that he has succeeded his father. He suddenly put aside the *Qur'ān*, which he had been reading with the remark; "This is my last time with thee".

'Abdu `l-Malik was the first to act treacherously in Islam. The first who forbade speaking in the presence of the Caliphs and the first who prohibited exhortations to justice saying: "Let no one enjoin equity and the fear of God upon me, or I will strike his head from off his shoulders". Because 'Abdu `l-Malik paved ways for his children to succeed himself to the Caliphate, he was called "the father of kings". In character he resembled Charlemagne but certainly less cruel than him. In gifts of originality and humanity, 'Abdu `l-Malik surpassed Charlemagne.

'Abdu `l-Malik died in the middle of Shawwal 86AH (October 705CE) at Damascus. He was buried at the basin. He spent 60 years on earth.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Trace the events that led to 'Abdu `l-Malik's statement "This is my last time with the Qur'ān".

### 3.8 Abdu `l-Malik's Death and Succession to the Throne

Abdu `l-Malik died in the middle of Shawwal 86 AH (October 705 AD) at Damascus at the age of 60 years and was buried at the basin after ruling for 21 years. He had ruled the empire for the period of 13 years by common consent and absolute sovereignty.

With directive from his father Marwān, Abdul Azīz with the support of veritable Commander Hajjāj bn Yusuf, the incumbent Abdu `l-Malik ignored his father's directive and imposed his son on the position of authority. Thus, he exerted all his power to remove his sibling from the position and made people accept his plan. But for the sudden death of Abdul-Azīz in 85 AH, it could not have been possible for Al-Walīd to succeed his father. Thus, people were obliged to pledge allegiance with his two sons Al-Wāhid then Sulayman.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

'Abdul Mālik met on ground barrage of problems on assumption of office. His undaunted spirit and determination tremendously aided him in surmounting the problems. His relentless effort coupled with that of his generals such as Hajjāj bn Yusuf accounted for his triumph over his adversaries. Together with accomplished general, he recaptured Africa and subjugated the dissident groups.

Despite the fact that he brought about laudable reforms and displayed humane character, his absolute power made him to display notoriety and unscrupulness.

The Kharijis were defeated in many engagements and their menace removed for some generations. The Arab warriors under Zuhayr defeated the Romans and Berbers in fierce battle and recovered Qayrawān. The Romans and Berbers regrouped again and again to recapture Africa. 'Abdu `l-Malik again and again sent Arab generals to re-capture Qayrawān and other territories of Africa to the Atlantic. The woman (Kāhina) who reared her ugly head and defeated several Muslim forces in the North African sub-region was defeated and killed in 70 AH. Africa was eventually brought under the authority of the Muslims.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

We have presented to you in this unit the biographical account of 'Abdu `l-Malik his enthronement and the early difficulties he encountered. The unit has equally exposed you to the account of the rise of Mukhtar and the frantic effort he made in avenging the murder of Husayn.

The unit has highlighted some of the conquests of 'Abdu `l-Malik, his victory over the Romans and Berbers and the recapture of Africa. It has also exposed you to some of the reforms made by 'Abdu l`- Malik during his administration. You have equally learnt about his accomplishment and character.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Discuss the attitude of 'Abdu `l- Malik towards the avowed enemies of his empire?
2. Examine the administrative acumen displayed by 'Abdu `l-Malik during his reign.
3. What reason can you adduce for 'Abdu `l-Malik to be called "the father of Kings"?

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## MODULE 5

Unit 1	Al-Walīd bn Abdu `l-Malik ( 86 – 96 AH / 705 – 715 AD)
Unit 2	Sulayman bn Abdu `l-Malik (96 - 99 AH / 715 - 717 AD)
Unit 3	General Survey of the Remaining Umayyad Caliphs

### UNIT 1 AL-WALĪD BN ABDU `L-MALIK (86 – 96 AH/ 705 – 715 AD)

#### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Birth of Al-Walīd and His Ascention to the Throne of *Khilāfah*
  - 3.2 Services of ‘Umar bn ‘Abdu `l-‘Azīz, Hajjāj bn Yūsuf and Mūsā bn Nuṣayr to Al-Walī d
  - 3.3 The External Relation and Expansion of the Empire
  - 3.4 Domestic Development of Al-Walīd
  - 3.5 Character and Achievements of Al-Walīd
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, you will learn about the accession of Al-Walīd bn Abdul Mālīk to the throne and recruitment of capable administration into his cabinet. The unit will equally intimate you with the laudable contributions made by his service men to the administration. The unit will expose you to domestic development and conquests. The unit will finally highlight Al-Walīd's character and achievements.

#### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- narrate how Al-Walīd assumed the stool of his father
- narrate how he enlisted the services of capable hands
- expatiate the outstanding performance of Al-Walīd's service chiefs
- give account of his conquests, character and achievements.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Birth of Al-Walīd and His Ascension to the Throne of Khilāfah

Al-Walīd was born in 50 AH. His father ‘Abdul Mālik had prepared ground for him to take over the dynasty after his demise. Therefore, in 705CE, al-Walīd ascended the throne of Damascus after the death of his father. His reign formed the most brilliant chapter in the history of the Umayyad dynasty. This was so because his reign inaugurated an era of comparative peace and prosperity. He was so fortunate that no internal feud or dissension disturbed his tenure. The menace of the Kharijites that would have beset his reign had been put down with an iron hand in the time of his father. At the same time, the father had built an orderly state and guaranteed social harmony.

Besides al-Walīd was fortunate again in having under him some generals who possessed uncommon ability and indomitable courage like the heroes of the first generation under Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. This peace and tranquility naturally led to the unhindered expansion of the empire and its all-round development. The galaxy of the veritable administrators and generals under Walīd were ‘Umar bn ‘Abdu ‘l-‘Azīz, Hajjāj bn Yusuf, Mūsā bn Nuṣayr, Tāriq bn Zayyā, Muhammad bn Qāsim and Qutaybah. They all toiled tirelessly and together built the dynasty.

#### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Give a vivid picture of the Umayyad dynasty when al-Walīd assumed the office of the Caliph.

#### 3.2 Services of ‘Umar bn Abdul Azīz, Hajjāj bn Yūsuf and Mūsā bn Nuṣayr to Al-Walīd

Al – Walīd in order to appease the family of ‘Abdul ‘Azīz who held the title of the Caliphate after Abdu ‘l-Malik, appointed the former's son ‘Umar as the governor of Arabia. His choice of a pious and mild ‘Umar as the governor of the holy cities was an acceptable one. By character and temperament, ‘Umar was the best fitted to rule the people of Makkah and Madinah and heal the wounds caused to the cities by some generations of Umayyad rule. ‘Umar therefore distinguished himself as a pious and prudent ruler. He became extremely popular in the Holy cities. He had a council of learned men to help him in the administrative matters. In his bid to bring considerable developments into the holy cities, he beautified and enlarged the Mosque of Madinah. He also built roads and constructed wells and canals for the benefit of the people.

Through 'Umar's wise and beneficial rule he endeared himself to the people and was able to reconcile Makkah and Madinah to the rule of the Umayyad dynasty. The mild and generous rule of 'Umar began to attract many people to Arabia. The people of Iraq, repressed and harassed by Hajjāj bn Yūsuf, flocked to Arabia to be saved from his tortures. As Arabia became an asylum for the oppressed and the down trodden, Hajjāj raised eyebrow and complained to the Caliph against 'Umar for giving shelter to the renegades and malcontent subjects. In order not to displease the most valuable servant of his Khilāfah, al-Walīd had to yield to the pressure of Hajjāj and recalled 'Umar bn 'Abdu `l-'Azīz from the governorship of Arabia.

**Hajjāj bn Yūsuf a`th-Thaqafī:** He was Walīd's viceroy in the Eastern provinces of the Arab empire. Hajjāj bn Yusuf proved to be the ablest administrator of the time. A young schoolteacher at Taif became a distinguished general after laying down the pen and chalk. It must be recalled that Hajjāj the great general assisted 'Abdul Malīk in fighting 'Abdullah bn Zubayr, the rival Caliph. Hajjāj fought the rival and put an end to his life. The same Hajjāj pacified Arabia with a strong hand and established 'Abdu `l-Malik's authority there. He also subjugated Iraq and executed suspected people who displayed disloyalty to the Umayyad *Khilāfah*.

Hajjāj was represented by the Arab historians as a blood – thirsty and veritable Nero. He used his iron hand to destroy human lives totaling 120,000. Abdu `l-Malik who enjoyed the services of Hajjāj vested him with unlimited powers in the administration of Eastern provinces. In appreciating Hajjāj 'Abdu `l-Malik in his last advice to his son Al-Walīd said "Hajjāj has made our names to be heard in the world" Al-Walīd who confirmed Hajjāj as the valuable, servant of his family in the viceroyalty of the east also gave him absolute powers. Hajjāj was seen to be cruel, yet his cruelty was always for the peace, prosperity and welfare of the Umayyad Empire.

Yazīd bn al-Muhallab who was appointed governor of Khurāsān was dismissed by Hajjāj because of certain misgivings against him. Yazīd was cast into prison on the charge of embezzlement. Hajjāj subjected him to the cruelest torture; it was Walīd who salvaged him through intercession. Immediately after his release, Hajjāj appointed one of his able lieutenants as the governor of Khurāsān.

Hajjāj bn Yusuf was one of the best administrators and statesmen of the history of Islam – peace, consolidation and prosperity of the *Khilāfah* were the aims of his administration. Though a general and administrator, Hajjāj did not lose his previous interest in learning. He reformed Arabic orthography and gave commendable patronage to poetry and science.

Despite Hajjāj's achievement, he was a devil incarnate in cruelty for he committed bloodshed and inhumanity in a large scale. He died in 714 CE.

### **Mūsā bn Nuṣayr**

He was the viceroy of Al-Walīd in Africa and Western possessions of the Arabs Empire. The conquests on the Western front under Musa and his lieutenants were not less brilliant and spectacular than those on the east by Hajjāj bn Yūsuf and his generals. Mūsā who succeeded Hasan who has held Africa with comparative peace and safety equally proved his military mettle when he became the viceroy. He suppressed a formidable Berber insurrection, drove away the Greek conspirators from African and pacified the entire country. By a policy of mildness, reconciliation and introduction of beneficent measures Mūsā won over the confidence of the Berbers who soon became peace-loving citizens of Islam. Thereafter, he turned to the Romans who frequently raided the Arab territories from their settlement in the Mediterranean. He sent out expeditions, which conquered and incorporated Mayorca, Minorca and Irica with the empire of Islam.

You shall know more about this Muslim warrior who contributed to the spread of Islam into North Africa under our discussions on notable rulers of the Umayyad dynasty in the concluding unit of this course.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

1. As governor of the holy cities, (Makkah, Madinah) how did 'Umar bn Abdu `l-Azīz distinguish himself as a pious and prudent ruler?
2. "Hajjāj has made our names to be heard in the world": To what extent can this statement be justified.

### **3.3 The External Relation and Expansion of the Empire**

**Conquest of Sind:** The Muslim had made several attempts to subjugate this region ever since the era of the rightly guided Caliphs. However, some efforts turned out well for the Muslims in the occupation of Deibul frontiers as well as the cities that are situated between Kabul and Multan in the southern provinces of Punjab. Yet this was not effective, more often, the provinces revolted against the Muslims authority whenever the Muslims returned to their towns.

During the era of Caliph Walīd bn Abdu `l-Malik, the Arab merchant's ships were destroyed by the pirates of Sind and the Arab merchants were at the same time cruelly treated. Thus, Hajjāj was determined to have the



wrongs redressed by sword and put an end to the predatory activities of these pirates. He then organised a well equipped force under Muhammad bn Qāsim At-Thaqafī. He sent them to invade Sind in 81AH and thus make the Persian Gulf a safe route for the Muslim merchant ships. Muhammad Ibn Qasim laid siege to Deibul the port capital of Sind (Karachi), until he finally subjugated it and built a mosque there.

The victorious march of Muhammad continued from there on and he came as far as Sind River (Mahran). Thereupon, Dahir the king of Sind gave an heroic resistance with a tremendous army marched behind a large number of elephants advanced against the Muslims in a fierce battle which eventually went other way round for him, he was defeated and killed at last.

Then, the victorious general proceeded further and went as far as Multan. He destroyed Al-Badd and killed its custodians, at the same time he took possession of the Gold house. Sind finally fell to the hand of the Muslims rule and Islam replaced idolatry.

### **Conquest and Expansion of Territories beyond the Rivers**

Ever since the period of Caliph ‘Uthmān (r.a may Allah be pleased with him), the Arab had attempted to invade the territories that are beyond the river (the present day Turkistan), but all the efforts to subjugate this territory was to no avail. Due to the fact that those vast regions were divided into several political entities, such as Bukhārā, Samarqand and Khawarismi. A sovereign king from Turkey rules each region. Thus, the situation exhausted every possibility by the Muslim to subjugate the vast territories. The most successful and effective attempt was eventually made by Qutaybah bn Muslim Al-Bāhilī during the period of Caliph Al-Walid.

The distinguished lieutenant and general had assumed the position of authority in 86 AH, but found the region in a torturing condition with an overwhelming sense of tribal outrage. However, the astute general cautiously dissipated the tension in the air. Qutaybah bn Muslim Al-Bāhilī made a large army out of the tribe that had been engulfed in violence, sent them on a military expedition to the external territories, and made them forget the tribal fury among themselves. He however led the force to an expedition. In the meantime they conquered the city of Balkh in 86 AH, and then followed by the city of Baykand in 87 AH. However, the latter revolted against him and he however launched another campaign against them, and eventually captured them.

The victory of Baykand was followed by the capitulation of Karmiyyah and Bukhārā respectively to the able general in 88AH aftermath of a

protracted toil. Moreover, in 93AH he had subjugated the city of Khawārazm under the obligation of peace accord and reconciliation. The victorious general then conquered Samarqand after a protracted battle. Similarly, he had won over the two cities of Farganah and Kashan respectively in 94 AH. The latter was the capital of this vast region. This astounding success of the Muslim made them to gain a footing in that region. They subjugated the whole Central Asia and carried the Arab boundary to the confines of China. Therefore, the ruler of those territories felt obliged to obey the order of the Muslims and pay tax to the authority.

The ultimate effect of this campaign was beneficial to Islam, because the mild and generous rule of the able viceroy Qutaybah bn Muslim attracted many people from that region to Islam and he even encouraged them to embrace the religion. Moreover, the influx of Muslim kinsfolk from Khurasan who came and settled in these regions provided the main impetus for the growth of Islam.

As a result of this successful campaign, this region was to later stand out as fountain of some of the distinguished Muslim scholars that emerged during that period such as Bukhāri, Khawarzimi, Fārabi and others.

### **The Conquest of Spain (Andalus)**

The Muslims had named the region known as Iberian Peninsula (Algeciras) as Andalus. These include present day Spain and Portugal. The capture of these territories was completed during the period of Caliph Walīd bn Abdu `l-Malik by the two great generals Tāriq bn Zayyād and Mūsā bn Nusayr.

The civil strife of the Gothic kingdom that ruled over the territories and the persisted dispute that were created internally gave the rare opportunity to the Muslims in their successful campaign.

### **The Conquest and Its Prelude**

The consolidation of the Muslim sovereignty in North West Africa and their victorious march against the city of Tangier had provided an initial impetus and a rare opportunity to launch a systematic campaign against the cities of Spain.

As at that time, the deposed Gothic ruler (Akhyula) and Prince Julian the ruler of the Ceuta appealed to the Muslim authority to liberate them from the oppressive rule of Roderick the usurper of their throne. They facilitated the campaign and promised the Muslim every possible help for the conquest of Spain. Then Mūsā bn Nuṣayr the able viceroy of

Africa consulted Caliph Walīd in respect of this, so the Caliph permitted him to proceed but warned him to be more cautious in his approach. Then the adventurous general sent an expeditionary force numbering about 7,000 under his young and energetic lieutenant Tāriq bn Zayyād, mustered with soldiers from the Arabs and Berbers. The Muslim army crossed the Mediterranean Sea to the European shore for the first time. They first landed at a place, which was known as Jabal Tāriq and occupied it.

Taking possession of this strategic base, Tāriq advanced further inland to the northern side, but when Roderick learnt of the Muslim arrival; he came with a large army and resisted their advance of Tāriq with a troop numbered one hundred thousand. Tāriq had to send for reinforcement from the Caliph Walīd and his troop was swelled to 12,000. As the two sides were about to confront one another in another battle, Tāriq quickly made a thrilling speech to his force, this speech is considered as the choicest works of Arabic prose. Then the war broke out. The Muslim army was destined to triumph; the resolute Muslim force defeated and dispersed the army of Spain and Roderick himself was eventually killed by Tāriq in Ramadhan, 92AH. This victory facilitated the subjugation of the remaining territories of Spain by the Muslims aftermath of an uncomplicated engagement with the Spanish force.

The Able general Tāriq divided his forces into three divisions and assigned to each division the task of achieving victory over every region to deprive them the opportunity of regrouping and launching a fresh attack. As a result of this, they successfully conquered Malaga, Granada, Cordova and Toledo. Afterward, Tāriq wrote to the viceroy Mūsā bn Nuṣayr in respect of this victory but he was jealous of his lieutenant's achievement. As a result of this, he himself came to Spain with his army to share with him the glory and pride of victory. Cautiously enough, he was also intent to check his lieutenant sudden incursion into the territories that they were not acquainted with, so he ordered him to stop his advances for a while to catch up with him. Tāriq however paid no heed to the directive of this Arab viceroy, he felt that his troop could not be made safe from the impending danger of the Goths unless he proceeded further and drove them out. Then Mūsā met his lieutenant at Talavera but he was furious that the young man had violated his directive. Thus, he lashed out at him, ordered him to handover the loots and gains of war, and eventually jailed him. So unjustifiable was this retribution on Tāriq that Caliph Walīd himself was touched save for his intercession that bailed out the unfortunate man from the prison after he had appealed through a letter written to him in Damascus from the prison. Then he was freed and reinstated to his position and he resolved to obey the order.

Thereupon, Mūsā with the combined effort of his lieutenant conquered the city of Arjon, Castilla, Catalonia and other cities. In fact, the whole of Spain as far as the Pyrenees Mountain between Iberia region and France came under the rule of Muslims. With the exception of some areas within the North West region known as Jalīqa, which harboured most of the eminent Gothic chief and would later endanger the Muslims.

Moreover, Mūsā and Tāriq were intent on conquering France as prevailed at that time, this country could have been easily conquered by these two generals. However, the cautious and hesitating policy of the empire at Damascus could not consent to this campaign to avert an impending doom for the Muslim force. After making necessary arrangement for the administration of the newly conquered territories of Spain, the Caliph ordered Mūsā and Tāriq back to Damascus in 96 AH and Caliph subsequently appointed Mūsā son Abdul Azeez bn Nuṣayr as the viceroy of Spain and Abdullah bn Mūsā as the Viceroy of Africa.

That was how the Muslim conquered Spain and thus created an avenue for extending their territories and Islam spread gradually to this region. As a matter of fact, the Muslim organised a wonderful kingdom that was built on a firm and solid basis, which lasted for centuries. Thus, Islamic civilisation flourished and reached its watermark during this period. In addition, which when Europe was plunged in darkness and barbaric ignorance, alone held the torch of learning and civilization bright and shining before the Western world. In fact it was the immediate cause of modern European renaissance.

### **Effects of Conquest of Spain**

- The conquest of Spain opened most glorious period of the history of Spain.
- It produced an important social revolution in Spain by sweeping away the privileges enjoyed by the nobles and clergies alone
- Just and equitable taxation was brought in by the Arabs rule
- It gave liberty and equality to all
- The so called gentiles and serfs got their freedom, the peasants who were under serious oppression also got their freedom
- Spain was made the most prosperous state in Europe through the rule of the Arabs
- Arab's rule converted Spain into most brilliant and illustrious centre of learning and helped in the enlightenment of Europe.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Spain, which was ruled by Roderick the oppressor latter, became egalitarian society after conquest. Highlight some other effects, which the conquest brought to the Spanish people.

#### 3.4 Domestic Development during the Reign of Al-Walīd

Despite the immeasurable efforts made by al-Walīd in the external conquests, he demonstrated his vast commitment to domestic development. He ordered his lieutenant in Madinah Umar bn Abdu `l-Azīz to further renovate and expand the prophet's Mosque. The design incorporated the rooms for the mothers of the faithful. Other edifices were included in the Mosque so much that the court yards extended up to 200 yards square metres. Indeed, the ostentatious decoration given to the edifices surpassed and exceeded the accustomed design.

Among his major reforms was this steps he took in camphorating the lots of the people. He built asylums for the leprous thereby restricting them from the midst of the people he catered for their isolation and made enough provisions for them.

Al-Walīd forbade begging and thus made available regular provisions for the poor and the needy. He provided paid servants to assist the physically challenged people and provide guides for the blind.

At the same time, he built the Ummayyads mosque in Damascus and a huge financial resource were committed to the edifice so that its splendid look could replicate the strength and fortune of the Arab Islamic empire. Indeed, he had ostentatiously decorated the edifice and it eventually exceeded the accustomed design. He equally gave a face lift to the Holy mosque of Ka'bah and covered it with a roofing teak, his floor was tiled with coloured marble.

Likewise, he ordered his lieutenant in Egypt to give a face-lift to the Mosque of 'Amr bn `l-Āṣ in Al Fustāt (Ancient Egypt)

He built houses and stations enroute Makkah and constructed wells and canals for the benefit of the pilgrims. Among his major reforms was his steps to ameliorate the lots of the people, He built asylums for the leprous thereby restricted them from the midst of the people and made provisions for them.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Write short notes on the development that Al-Walīd brought to Makkah and Madinah.

### 3.5 Character and Achievement of Al-Walīd

Caliph Walīd was a worthy son of a gifted father because he proved to be one of the most powerful and magnificent monarchs of history.

His reign formed the most brilliant chapter in the history of Umayyad dynasty. The empire at his time reached the Zenith of its prosperity. Walīd might not have surpassed his father Abdu `l-Malik in originality and administrative reforms nonetheless he won fame as a good ruler, a successful conqueror, a builder of state and a beneficent administrator with the interest in public works. His reign witnessed an unprecedented increase in the territory of the Caliphate in all the three continents namely Asia, Africa and Europe. The vast region stretching from the confines of China in the east and from the shores of Atlantic Ocean the West and from the Great Sahara desert and Sudan in the South and to the Pyrenees mountain in the north were made to obey his orders. Infact his word was law. During al-Walid's reign art and culture flourished. Art and literature equally received stimulus under his vitle. He encouraged agriculture, trade and industry. He had great interest in manufacture and visited markets to encourage the manufacturers.

He was perhaps the first ruler in medieval times to build hospitals for persons with chronic diseases. He established orphanages for the support and education of poor children. He constructed good roads and planted trees on both sides.

Due to his mild and enlightened rule, peace and order reigned supreme in the empire. A snag in his administration was his attempt to usurp the principal position of his brother Sulayman and make his son Abdu `l-Azīz as his successor, to the throne. Unfortunately his son died before his plan was hatched he had no option than to assign position of authority. Caliph Walīd died in 96<sup>AH</sup> at the age of 46. He reigned for ten years.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5

The reign of Al-Walīd was said to form the most brilliant chapter in the history of Umayyad dynasty. Discuss.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

Al-Walīd started his reign with a silver spoon in his mouth. His father Abdu `l- Malik had already prepared ground for him. Like his father and to make his job in the Caliphate much easier he recruited capable and result-oriented administrators into his cabinet. These seasoned generals and veritable administrators worked tirelessly with him and together they built the dynasty.

Apart from his domestic commitment to development, al-Walid recorded landmark victories externally. He conquered many territories in continents such as Asia, Africa and Europe and subjugated them. His reign therefore was glorious both at home and abroad. The empire reached its Zenith during his reign and peace, harmony and tranquility reigned supreme.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have narrated how Al-Walīd assumed power and how he worked with people of like mind to achieve goals. The unit has equally acquainted you with the excellent and outstanding performances of his service chiefs. The unit has equally intimated you with the sterling qualities of Caliph Al-W`Alī d as well as his achievements.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

It is a popular saying that charity always begins at home. How would you describe the vast commitment Al-Walīd demonstrated to domestic development?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 2      SULAYMĀN BN ABDU `L-MALĪK (96 - 99 AH / 715 - 717 AD) AND `UMAR BN ABDU L-`AZĪZ (99 - 101 AH; 717 – 720 CE)**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Internal Situation during the Era of Sulayman bn Abdu `l- Malik
  - 3.2 The External Wars Fought by Sulayman bn Abdu `l- Malik
  - 3.3 Succession to the Throne and Assessment of Sulayman bn `Abdu `l-Malik
  - 3.4 Early life of Umar bn Abdu `l-`Azīz
  - 3.5 His Reforms and Some Important Issues during His Tenureā
  - 3.6 The Kharijites during His Tenure
  - 3.7 His Merits and Death
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In unit one, you were acquainted with the account of how Abdu `l-Malik had already prepared the ground for his son Al-Walīd as a result of which the latter started his reign on a rosy note. The unit also acquainted you with how Abdu `l- Malik recruited capable and result-oriented administrators into his cabinet who all worked tirelessly with him to build the Umayyad dynasty. You also saw how apart from his domestic commitment to development al-Walid recorded landmark victories externally and the empire reached its Zenith during his reign.

This unit presents the accounts of the era of Sulayman bn al-Walid, which contrasts that of his father to a large extent, and an account of the era of `Umar bn Abdu `l-`Azīz has always been referred to as the best in the era of the Umayyads.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- make presentation on internal situation during the era of

Sulayman bn Abdu `l- Malik

- discuss the external wars fought by Sulayman bn Abdu `l- Malik
- discuss succession to the throne and assess Sulayman bn `Abdu `l-Malik
- give account of early life of Umar bn Abdu `l-`Azīz
- appraise his reforms and mention some important issues during his tenure
- evaluate the situation of the Shiites and the Kharijites during the reign of Umar bn Abdu `l-`Azīz
- assess `Umar's place in the history of Umayyad caliphate.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Internal Situation during the Era of Sulayman bn**

Sulayman assumed the position of authority under an obligation from his father. He reigned for a short period of two years, but his period is epitomised with the policy that disturbed the internal peace of the Caliphate; he revived the bitter feud between the Hijāz and the Yemen Arabs. His approach also checked the expansion and prosperity of the empire, though the campaign was successful at one time, it also proved farce in others.

Sulayman was profoundly partisan in his policy of administration. Being favourably disposed toward the Yemen-Arabs, he elevated their status because of their kinship with him as a maternal uncle. He dismissed the privilege position of the clergy and Syrian-Arabs from the North. Yielded to his own personal desires, he thus lacks the ability and devotion to the responsibility of the high office, which eventually disturbed the internal peace of his Caliphate.

He dismissed and oppressed the principal men and generals of his brother reign because of their collaboration with the immediate Caliph in his attempt to appoint his son as his successor instead of Sulayman. Most of these generals were dismissed and oppressed while some were killed in spite of their devoted services to the glory of the previous administration; they gave their toil and blood for building the greatness of the immediate Caliphate. Muhammad Ibn Qasim the conqueror of Sind was killed with inhuman cruelty, while Qutaybah Ibn Muslim was tortured and Mūsā Ibn Nusayr and his two children were ill treated and prosecuted, they eventually died in misery.

The imprudent policy of Sulayman showed no regard for their spirited efforts and heroic display which they had demonstrated in service of his brother. This we shall mention later by the special Grace of God in their biography.

However, the Yemen-Arab gain more prestige during the reign of Sulayman, Yazīd bn Muhallab was appointed to higher offices of the state in the eastern province.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

What was the internal situation in the State when Sulayman bn Abdu `l-Malik assumed the mantle of Caliphate?

### **3.2 The External Wars Fought by Sulayman bn Abdu `l-Malik Conquest of Jurjan and Tabaristān**

Yazīd son of Al – Muhallab during his reign conquered districts of Jurjan and Tabaristan. These are situated around Qazvin Sea. He was able to conquer them after a fierce battle. Later, people of Jurjan killed the military commandant and the governor and robbed the Muslims on their ways. Yazīd got back on them, killed them ruthlessly and conquered them for the last time with regard to this, he wrote to Sulaimon.

The message is as follows, “The powerful Sabur was incapable of conquering it (Jurjan) as well as Caesar son of Qubadh and Caesar son of Hurmuz. Umar bn Khattāb Al – Faruq and ‘Uthmān bn ‘Affān and those Caliphs after were unable to conquer it (Jurjan). But Allah made the conquest easier for the commander of the faithful. This is an honour and increase in bounty of Allah on him’. One- fifth of bounty, which Allah gave to the Muslims, is with me after which booty and spoils of war have been distributed to the rightful owners? As of 1,000,000, I am taking that to commander of the faithful if Allah wills. This letter has its impact on Yazīd because he was later jailed because of it. We shall discuss it later, if Allah wills.

### **The Siege of Constantinople**

Walīd at the part of his life prepared military campaign to conquer Constantinople the capital of Roman Empire. When Sulaymān took over after, he quickly executed the project. In 98AH, he sent military force of 80,000 men under the leadership of his brother Muslimah bn ‘Abdu `l-Malik and another naval force under the leadership of ‘Umar bn Hubayrah. He himself positioned a large battalion at Dabiq to reinforce the forces at emergency.

### **Departure of the Military Forces**

Muslimah went to Amuriyyah and layed siege on it until its Roman leader Leo agreed with him on assisting the Muslims to capture Roman

Empire. He also gave similar promise to pay tax annually to the Caliph. Both of them went to Constantinople. On his way to the place, Muslimah overran similar cities in Asia. He crossed the sea to the place until he stood on the fence while the naval fleet met him there. They all assisted him to lay the siege on them. Therefore, Leo exhumed Constantinople and made agreement with the people. He lined them to destruct the siege and made him ruler. They assisted him dethroning the reigning emperor and attaining the leadership. He later became the emperor. By so doing, he had failed the agreement he had with Muslimah. Later, Muslimah made the siege on the city stronger, tightened all the blockades and scattered everything around the city. Hunger engulfed the Muslim soldiers and was compelled to eat meats of all sorts of animal; however, Greek fire destroyed naval ships, despite this, the Muslims were strong in laying the siege until the death of Sulayman and Umar bn, 'Abdu `l-'Azīz succeeded him. He then ordered withdrawal of the military forces. They returned without accomplishment of their aim.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2**

Discuss the external wars fought by Sulayman bn Abdu `l- Malik.

### **3.3 Succession to the Throne and Assessment of Sulayman bn 'Abdu `l-Malik**

Sulayman had obtained succession to the Caliphate to his son Ayub when he was alive but he died in his father's lifetime. When Sulayman got sick he thought among his children should be made Caliph despite their young age but later considered 'Umar bn Abdu `l-Azīz to the post upon consultation with some of his advisers.

#### **His Assessment**

He was blamed for refueling odious tribalism between people of Mudar and Yemen. He was also blamed for relying on great warriors and rulers for selfish purposes. The greater of his misdeed was his evident greediness for food and women. Therefore, luxurious and opulent life paraded the Caliph's palace while corruption spread among the governors and rulers.

#### **His Merits**

He gave amnesty to prisoners, redeemed Muslim captivity and deposed oppressors among the governors. He was also refined for his efforts in laying siege on Constantinople. But the greatest of his merits was his choice of 'Umar bn Abdu `l- 'Azīz as Caliph after his reign.

## His Death

Sulayman died on Friday 20 Şafar 99AH at Dabiq and was buried there after he had spent two years and eight months on the Caliphate.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Assess Sulayman bn ‘Abdu `l-Malik and discuss the process of succession in the caliphate after his death.

### 3.4 The Caliphate and Reforms of ‘Umar bn ‘Abdu `l – ‘Azīz (99 – 101 AH; 717 – 720 C E)

#### His Early Life

He was born in 620 AH. His mother was Ummu Āşim daughter of Āşim son of Umar bn Khattāb. He memorized the Qur’ān at tender age. Later, his father sent him to Madinah for learning. He reported that *Hadīth* excelled in *Fiqh* and was influenced with religious life of Madinah. He was still at Madinah when his uncle Abdu `l-Malik invited him to Damascus and married him his daughter Fātimah. However, during the time the Caliphate returned to Walīd, he was made to govern Madinah.

‘Umar bn ‘Abdu `l-Azīz performed wonderfully well in Madinah. He let justice to reign to the extent that people of Iraq migrated there because of his impartiality and from severity of Hajjāj. Though Hajjāj had requested from him to send them back to Iraq, Umar refused. Thereafter, Hajjāj complained to al-Walīd in this regard. Because of this, Umar was deposed from ruling Madinah. The small district of Madinah was a testing ground for him in manner of governance. His name was popular among people and they attested to his piety and fairness. Upon his dethronement he stayed in Damascus till he became Caliph on the agreement of Sulaimon as we have said earlier.

#### His Caliphate

The Caliphate did not change ‘Umar but he followed new course which no Umayyad Caliph before him had followed. His characters were: asceticism, simplicity, modesty, unrestricted justice and absolute implementations of *Sharī‘ah*.

#### His First Sermon as Caliph:

“O people! No other book beside the *Qur’ān* and no other Prophet after Muhammad; may peace and blessings of Allah be on him. Verily! I am not a judge but executor (of justice). I

am not an originator but a follower, and am not better than anyone of you but my burden is the heaviest among you, so a man who runs away from tyrant leader is not an offender. A creature should not be obeyed at the expense of committing sin to the creator”.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4**

Give a brief account of early life of Umar bn Abdu `l-‘Azīz.

### **3.5 His Reforms and Some Important Issues during His Tenure**

Umar introduced many reformations into the governance during his time some of which are:

1. He exempted the payment of tax from whoever became Muslim even if pretentiously. Because of this policy the number of converts increased and tax payment decreased especially in the public treasury and the situation made the district rulers complained to the Caliph to re-launch and make tax payment an obligation of the new converts to Islam as did the Umayyad Caliphs before him. But he bluntly refused. His refusal to the governor of Egypt is as follows: “Do not collect tax from whoever becomes Muslim. May Allah shame your opinion. Because Allah sent Muhammad (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) as guidance not tax collector. Indeed, Umar will be most troubled man that all the people should be converted to Islam.
2. He worked to spread Islam by exempting new convert from paying tax as you have known. He sent letter to Leo, Emperor of Rome and to kings of Sind, India and places beyond the river. He invited them to Islam on the agreement that they would not pay tax and they would have their freedom. Most kings of Sind agreed with him. He also sent ten Jurists to North Africa in order to spread Islam among the Berbers. So, many among them became Muslim due to their efforts.
3. His eradication of reproach of ‘Alī bn Abī Tālib on the pulpit which was the habit in the Umayyad period before him. He therefore, replaced the reproach with the following Allah’s word: “Allah command justice and doing good ...” and this Allah’s word; “O our lord, forgive us our sin and those of our brothers who have superseded us in faith...”. With regards to this, Kathir ‘Azzah, a Shiites said: O you do not abuse ‘Alī and not fear any

mankind nor follow word of sinner. You talk and your deed verifies your word. In doing so, all Muslims are pleased (with you). Sharīf A`r-Radī, the `Alid eulogizes him that:

O son of Abdu `l- Azīz, if you will weep on a hero from the Umayyad dynasty, I would have wept for you. You save us from reproach and abuse. If I had chance of rewarding someone, I would have rewarded you. But I will say that you are in good spirit. If it doesn't, your house will not thrive.

Dain of Sam'ān, may the enemy not speed over you because the deceased of Marwān household is the best of deceased.

4. He returned Fadak to what it was during the time of the Messenger (may the peace and blessings of Allah be on him). He also dispossessed feudal estates from Umayyad rulers and returned it to public treasury. He did same to his wife's ornaments.
5. He prohibited execution of killing or cutting (of hands) unless he was informed.  
Before his Caliphate, bloods were shed at the willing of rulers and governors without referring to the Caliph.
6. He cancelled obligatory fine and imposed tax which Hajjāj invented in Iraq.
7. He built rest houses in remote towns situated at borders, so that Muslim travelers will stay and be accommodated there, because roads were not safe and they were near to enemy's base.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Appraise the reforms of Caliph `Umar bn `Abdu `l-`Azīz and mention some important Issues during his tenure.

### 3.6 The Kharijites during His Tenure

The Kharijites were not comfortable at the time of Walīd and Sulaymān. However, during the time of `Umar, Bastam Al – Yashkari known as Shawdhab revolted in Iraq and many Kharijites joined him. Umar was lenient with them and told his governor not to wage war on them unless they shed blood or cause destruction. He later wrote to Shawdhab engaging him in discussion he said: "if the truth is with us you must join what others had done but if you are with the truth we will see to our affair". Then Shawdhab sent two persons from his people to engage him in discussion but eventually he won them in all the discussions. Perhaps he could not overcome them in the objection of Yazīd as his successor so he made request from them to stay for three days but he died before completion of the days. This situation made some historians to admit

that the Umayyad poisoned him in order not to depose Yazīd or that all affair would not avail them.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 5**

What was the attitude of Caliph ‘Umar bn Abdu `l-‘Azīz towards the Shiites and the Kharijites during his reign?

### **3.7 His Merits and Death**

Umar was acclaimed as the best among Umayyad Caliphs. He was the best among them in conduct, uncorrupt file, leniency, propagation of Islam and in elevating word of Allah. In fact, the historians concluded that his tenure was the complement of the four rightly guided Caliphs. If his tenure was long, he would have opened a glorious page in Islamic history and Umayyad Dynasty. The Muslims did not forget his glory even his adversaries among the Abbasids did not. They did not excavate his tomb in recognition of his honour and good conduct. It was a regret that all the reformations ‘Umar made none was continued after his demise. Only that everything went back to what it was before ‘Umar. There was return of tribalism and bad habits of leaders. This contributed to termination of Umayyad Dynasty.

Umar may Allah be pleased with him died on 25th of Rajab 101AH at Dair Sam‘ān, northern part of Shām after he had spent two years and five months, he was 39 years old; he was buried at Dair Sam‘an.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 6**

Assess ‘Umar’s place in the history of Umayyad caliphate.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Sulayman bn Abdu `l- Malik and Umar bn Abdu `l-‘Azīz were two caliphs who ruled during the Umayyad dynasty between year 96 – 101 AH.;717 – 720 CE to be specific. Sulayman’s rule recorded few successes in conquests and expansion and defeat and loss in battlefields. His two-year’s rule rule was also notorious for refueling of odious tribalism between the Hijāzī Arabs and the Yemenites, reliance on warriors and rulers for selfish reasons and evident greed for food and women. Caliph Umar on the other hands was adjudged the best of the Umayyads in terms of conduct, propagation of Islam and application of Shariah. Thus, you will agree that we deserve to know something about these two Caliphs.



## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed internal situation during the era of Sulayman bn Abdu `l- Malik. This is followed by an account of the successes and failure recorded in the area of military activities with particular reference to the failed attempts to conquer Constantinople. The other issues dealt with relating to the Caliph include an assessment of his achievement, conduct and succession to the throne after his demise. Issues relating to the exemplary Caliph Umar bn `Abdu `l- `Azīz were also treated. This unit ends with an appraisal of the life/style of the caliph, survey of the Umayyad rulers year 1010-132 AH when the dynasty fell into the hands of the Abbasids.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Assess the tenure of Sulayman bn Abdu `l-Malik with particular reference to the Internal and external relations.
2. Discuss briefly the reign of Caliph `Umar bn `Abdu `l-`Azīz and why?
3. Write a general survey of the Caliphs who reigned between year 101 AH and 132 AH towards the end of Umayyad dynasty.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Murad, M. K. (1969 – 1389 AH). *Mudhkkirah fi `d-Dawlati `Umayyiyah*. Riyadh:Khalid Establishment Press.
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### UNIT 3      **GENERAL SURVEY OF THE REMAINING UMAYYAD CALIPHS AND PROFILE OF SELECTED NOTABLE HEROES**

#### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 General Survey of Remaining Umayyad Caliphs
  - 3.2 Notable Military Commanders of the Umayyad Dynasty
    - 3.2.1 Al-Hajjāj bn Yūsuf a`th-Thaqafī
    - 3.2.2 Musa bn Nuṣayr
    - 3.2.3 Ṭāriq bn Zayyād
  - 3.3 Factors Responsible for the Fall of the Umayyad Dynasty
- 3.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

There was interval of 32 years between the death of ‘Umar bn Abdu `l-Azīz and expiration of Umayyad Dynasty. Six Caliphs governed between these periods. They were:

- |    |  |                           |
|----|--|---------------------------|
| 1. | Yazīd bn Abdu `l-Malik                 | 101 – 105AH; 720 – 724AD  |
| 2. | Hishām bn Abdu `l-Malik                | 105 – 125AH ;724 – 743AD  |
| 3. | Al – Walīd bn Yazīd bn Abdu `l-Malik   | 125 – 126AH ; 743 – 744AD |
| 4. | Yazīd bn Al – Walīd bn Abdu `l-Malik   | 126 – 126AH; 744 – 744AD  |
| 5. | Ibrahim bn Al – Walīd bn Abdu `l-Malik | 126 – 127AH; 744AD        |
| 6. | Marwān bn Muhammad bn Marwān           | 127 – 132AH; 744 – 750AD  |

This unit presents a summary of assessment of each of the periods followed by brief profile of three out of the heroes who played prominent roles in the history of Umayyad dynasty. The concluding part of the unit highlights the factors responsible for the termination of the Umayyad dynasty.

#### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- give a general survey of Umayyad Caliphs who ruled between 101 and 132 AH

- present the profile of Hajjāj bn Yūsuf, Musa bn Nuṣayr and Tariq bn Zayyād
- highlight some of the factors that led to the fall of the Umayyads and rise of the Abbasids.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 General Survey of Remaining Umayyad Caliphs

The period of Yazīd bn Abdu `l-Malik was marked with opulence and surplus of maids to the extent that they interfered in governmental affairs and reviving tribalism. Perhaps the greatest rebellion against him was the one led by Yazīd bn Muhallab bn Abī Ṣufrah. Ibn al-Muhallab was eventually killed in this upsurge by Muslimah bn Abdu `l-Malik.

As of Hisham, his tenure was long. He was bent on executing some form of reforms according to his capacity. Because of this, it was hoped that his Caliphate might return Umayyad Dynasty to their former political strength. Only that features of weakness of his predecessors in governance was so strong that his political brilliance could not stamp out. But when his tenure ended governance was still healthy.

After his demise, strong disturbances erupted. Al-Walīd bn Yazīd bn Abdu `l-Malik started spending the money which Hishām left in government extravagantly. In doing so, moral depravity emerged from him and the people began to hate him. Then, his cousin Yazīd bn Walīd bn Abdu `l-Malik campaigned against him and gained many supporters. In the fight that ensued, he killed him and became the Caliph. Confusion engulfed the Caliphate affairs and there was riot everywhere. Most of the regions stood against the Caliph, such as Jordan and Palestine. Humṣ and Iraq also revolted. So also was Naṣr bn Sayyār governor of Khurāsān.

Nearly six months on the throne the Caliph died. So his brother Ibrahim bn al-Walīd bn Abdu `l-Malik became the Caliph. He also was not comfortable in government because only Damascus payed homage to him. After three months, he was deposed by Marwān bn Muhammad bn Marwān who waged war against him and snatched the Caliphate from him for himself.

Marwān bn Muhammad bn Marwān was the last Caliph in Umayyad Dynasty and the Caliphate was terminated with him. His tenure was wholly time of disturbance because all the governors were against him. During his time, Shiites' propaganda was so strong. The Kharijites were also energetic. Therefore, Marwān was busy extinguishing fire from the riots and demonstrations throughout his tenure until Abu Muslim

Khurāsānī leader of Abbasid campaign emerged. Abbasid soldiers later took possession of the Caliph's regions from the clan of Marwān. They took it region after another. They overpowered Khurāsān, Iraq, Sham and Egypt. It was at Egypt that they killed Marwān in 132AH. His killing ended Umayyad Dynasty and the beginning of Abbasid Dynasty.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1**

Summarise the history of the Umayyad dynasty from year 101-132 AH.

### **3.2 Profile of Select Notable Heroes**

#### **3.2.1 Al-Hajjāj bn Yūsuf a`th-Thaqafi**

##### **Origin and Birth**

He was Hajaj bin Yusuf bin Hakam bin Abi Uqael Thaqafi. He was one of the pillars on which Mirwan household depended; also, he was one of the famous leader and governor of Umayyad dynasty during the time of Abdul M'Alī k and his son W'Alī d. He governed Iraq and the Eastern part altogether for 20 years. Hajaj was born in Taif in the year 41AH.

##### **Beginning of his fame:**

He memorised the *Qur'ān* when he was young and possessed features of brilliance which subjected him to envies from his peers. However, when he joined Rawh bn Zalbā'a head of Abdul Malik's police force, he became popular; consequently, he became one among Ruh's soldiers. However, the time Abdul M'Alī k intended to wage war on Zafar bin Harith, he observed reluctance of the soldiers towards the idea. Ruh then advised Abdul M'Alī k to instruct Hajaj as leader of the combatant because he has noticed his strength. So the Caliph agreed to this. At a point in time, some of Zalbā's soldier displayed laxity but Hajaj set ablaze their tent and furniture; and used whip to strike them.

Abdu `l-Malik kept him to himself when he was becoming older. He later selected him to lead the soldiers prepared to eliminate Zubayr at Makkah. He did this when the senior war leaders were hesitating on executing this plan. This have Hajaj made shedding of blood lawful, and outlawed the illegal in other to please Abdu `l-Malik.

When he laid siege on Makkah and set up catapult on its surroundings, got near it and touched on a sensitive spot on it. He did not have fear nor differentiated among things. His soldiers followed his course until they were victorious. He killed Ibn Zubayr and on this account, Abdu `l-Malik compensated him as a ruler of Makkah, Yemen, Yamamah and eventually Medinah. He started debating and ran down on them. Ibn

Umar lodged complaints to the Caliph and he stopped him from doing so.

In-fact, these districts which had since two years been governed with severity, stress and harshness were distinct for terminating opposition to Ummayyad Dynasty in these areas. Hajjaj was however not satisfied in ruling these districts so he wrote Abdu `l-Malik. Abdu `l-Malik then selected him to govern Iraq in 75AH.

### **His Rulership of Iraq**

Abdu `l-Malik made him ruler of this district for two reasons:

1. Because of what Hajjāj was known for as being capable, severe, cruel and determined.
2. Unrest in Iraq being location of the Shiites. The kharijites also emerged there whom Iraqi people could not overcome. They left the *Al-Muhallab* to engage them in the trouble alone without rendering assistance to him.

Because of these reasons, the Caliph order Hajjāj to rule them and with immediate effect, Hajjāj got to Kufa with 12 expert riders. Thereafter, Hajjāj kept silent and with veil. He did this for a long time until people thought he has measles. Suddenly he talked to them with his famous sermon: "I am a famous known man and energetic". With mere suspicions, he had punished many to the extent of becoming extravagant in killing. He would kill a set of people in order to threaten others. This mode of governing was effective in the period in shaping and making Iraqi people to be submissive to Hajjāj. They all prepared to be enlisted in *Al-Muhallab's* soldier because they had the fear that Hajjāj will punish them. These steps taken by Hajjāj might result to temporal peace and interim submission. However, it could not guarantee peace nor produce organised society.

### **Unrest of Ibn al-Ash'ath**

The people of Iraq associated with Abdu `l-Rahmān bn al-Ash-‘ath when he revolted hoping to escape Hajjāj's oppression and injustice. Some mawālīs (clients) also associated themselves with him because upon being Muslims Hajjāj imposed tax payment on them.

Hajjāj met difficulties in putting the unrest to an end because of his injustices and peoples' desire to gain freedom from him. However, the Caliph had rewarded him on this works by adding Khurasan, Sijistan 'Omān to his district. In that manner, Hajjāj became governor on nearly half of the districts under Ummayyad Dynasty.

### **Role of Hajjāj during the Caliphate of Walīd**

When Abdu `l-Malik died, al-Walīd retained Hajjāj in his post. He was loyal to Walīd as he did to Abdu `l-Malik. He dispatched all the soldiers at the reign of Walīd to conquer neighboring towns of the Muslims. He commanded Muhammad ibn Qasim's soldiers to conquer places located after the river. Therefore, he became overlord on all towns in the east. He ruled the places with absolute power until he died in 95AH in the reign of Walīd.

### **His Assessment**

The historian enumerated many vices of Hajjāj, some of which are:

1. His boldness in striking catapult to Ka'aba and his disrespect to its sanctity
2. He frightened the people of Makkah and starved them during the siege.
3. He was hand on Abdullah bin Zubar – may Allah be pleased with him – after his death.
4. He treated people of Madinah with levity hand and attempted to humiliate them.
5. He spread terrorism in Iraq.
6. He over killed to the extent of reporting him of killing more than one hundred and twenty thousand people.
7. He betrayed people of Basrah after the protection when they had risen against ibn Asath.
8. He was intemperance in jailing innocent people to the extent that the prisons were over filled.
9. He exceedingly tortured whoever embraced Islam among supporters of Ibn Al-Ash-'ath.
10. He imposed tax on who embraced Islam among the dhimmīs.

### **His Merits**

1. He gathered and defended the Muslim Ummah under one Caliph-disunity.
2. He strove to crush the kharijites who disobeyed and caused destruction in the city.
3. He extended territory of the Umayyad Dynasty and his armies conquered Sanda and towns located beyond the river.
4. He built the city of West in between Kufan, Basrah, Madain and Ahawaz. So that it would remain barrack and fortress to sham's soldiers at the midst of Iraq with this development, disturbances in Iraq were rested.

5. He was prudent in spending, upon his long tenure of office; he left after his demise a copy of the *Qur'ān*, a sound and some dirham.
6. He was known for being kindness, when he entered Madinah, he distributed the sum of ten thousand diners to the people. Also, he borrowed some money from the traders and distributed them on the people.
7. In Iraq however, he would feed 10,000 people daily. His messengers would invite people to his feast. After a while, he said: "O people! My message to you is the sun, when it shines assemble for the lunch and when it sets assemble for dinner."
8. He was famous for his eloquence and avoidance of solecism. He also ordered that the *Qur'ān* be marked; and changed administrative document from been written in Persian to Arabic.

Certainly, there were good and bad in the man (Hajjāj) as observed. However, any good thing said of him will not erase his traces of oppression and injustice.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Enumerate the merits recorded for and vices recorded against Hajjāj by historians.

### 3.2.2 Mūsā bn Nuṣayr

#### Early life

Mūsā bn Nuṣayr was a maid to the clan of Lakhan who made Muslims strong in North Africa and conquered Spaniard region.

His father Nuṣayr was among those who were captured by Khālīd bn al-Walīd from 'Ayn `t-Tamr. He got promotion until he became great among men in Umayyad Dynasty and police officer in Damascus. His son Mūsā received military and political education from the Umayyad people but later for a long time refrained from them. He also fought them with Dahak bin Qais Al-Fahri. When Dahak was defeated, Mūsā sought refuge with Abdul Aziz bin Mirwan and became a member of his team. He later remained among his companion in Egypt for a while. Thereafter, Abdu `l-Malik appointed him minister to his brother Bashar bin Mirwan when he was ruler of Kufah.

#### His popularity

He rose to fame when Walīd made him ruler of North Africa. He governed with determination and courage. He saw to the spread of Islam

among the Berbers and sent soldiers to subdue the remaining communities in Northern Africa.

Tāriq bin Zayyad conquered the city of Tanjah and established there a big garrison. Later, he subdued Algeria at Mediterranean Sea. So Mūsā's influence extended from Egypt to Atlantic Ocean. Thereafter, he has a greater opportunity to execute a project that immortalised his name in the book of history. That was his conquest of Andalus. He had provided army led by Tāriq. He himself led another new army and collaborated Tāriq in conquering that big nation.

When he got to southern France, he proposed reaching Constantinople from the west side, but this would not be realised unless he conquered all countries in Europe from the west to the east. That was from France to capital eastern Roman government. On this move, he sought advice of the Caliph, but he rejected the idea because of the welfare of Muslim soldiers. May be the Caliph was afraid that Mūsā might had greater influence as he conquered many big nations.

### **His end**

The Caliph called Mūsā and Tāriq back to Damascus. Mūsā then made his son Abdul Aziz to deputise him in Andalus and another son Abdullah bin Mūsā as his leader in his absence in an African state. He himself and Tāriq returned to Damascus in 96AH. They brought with them large war booty they acquired in Andalus. However, before they reached the capital Walīd had last sickness. In the case, Sulaimon requested that Mūsā should wait so that he would arrive only after the demise of Walīd when Sulaiman would have been the Caliph.

Mūsā disobeyed Sulaiman but continued with the journey until he met Walīd before he died. On the account of this, Sulaiman harboured his hatred. When he became the Caliph, he molested and removed him from ruling. He fined him a huge amount of money, which he could not pay. He was forced to beg people to assist him pay his debt.

The Caliph also deposed his son Abdullah from ruler-ship of North Africa. Moreover, he constructed commandants in Andalus to kill his son Abdul Aziz and sent his head to Damascus. This incident compounded Mūsā's grievances after seeing his son's head. The Caliph did not pity his old age but Mūsā remained calm on the incidence and said: "Congratulations to him on being died as a martyr. You have killed him but Allah is the most right and powerful".

Mūsā later spent last part of his life in wretchedness, poverty and penury until his death at Wadil Qurah on his way to Hajj in 97AH. He was 80



years old. Because of this, he was the third victim of Sulaiman bin Abdu `l-Mālik and indeed victim of selfish interest.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3**

Write a brief life history of Musa bn Nuṣayr.

#### **3.2.3 Tāriq bn Zayād Origin and Works**

He was a Companion to Mūsā bin Nasir. He was the conqueror of Tanjah and Andulus. There were controversies to his origin; some historians said he was from Berber in North Africa of a Nafawah tribe or Zanatah.

Others agreed that he was one of the Persian patrons from Hamadhan city. However, Mūsā bin Nasir had trust in him and instructed him to lead some of the army. He was successful in conquering Tenja and ruled over it.

Later on, Mūsā called him upon seeing in him braveness, courage and sound rhetoric. He then carried out the Project charged him in the best form. He was victorious over army of Qut and killed their king at Sharbish battle. He proceeded later on enquiring but Mūsā stopped him. However, Tāriq and his commandants taught of the danger in stopping the war, because it might give enemy chances to reassemble, while war always necessitates continuance of conquering. In this case, he disobeyed Mūsā. Perhaps Mūsā was angry with him and removed him from ruler-ship but whip him at the presence of the soldiers. He also jailed him together with senior members of his army. However, Tāriq was able to complain to the Caliph in Damascus on what had befallen him while at prison in Andalus. The Caliph ordered Mūsā to release him from prison and return him to leading the war. And he did, while both of them participated together in completing the conquest. Later on, Walīd called both of them back to Damascus. They both traveled and carried with them war booty as we have explained to you in the biography of Mūsā.

#### **His End**

Because of this incident, books of history are silent in mentioning Tāriq. Nothing tangible was traced to him. It is understood from this that war and political life had ended. If the Caliph had tasked him to execute some projects, the historians might mention that in their books. If he had afflicted injury on him as he did with others, they would have talked about it.

This was how life of this commandant ended in ambiguity as it started in ambiguous way despite his commendable striveness in conquering. However, some historians concluded that he died in 102AH.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4**

Write a critical evaluation of Tāriq bn Zayyād's life and contribution to history showing how he was immortalised.

### **3.3 Factors Responsible for the Fall of the Umayyad Dynasty**

We hereby present some of the factors that weakened Umayyad Dynasty and hastened its termination to conclude this unit.

#### **(i) Assigning two heirs to the throne**

This was the main factor that inculcated disunity and rivalry among members of the Umayyad ruling house. The originator of this was Marwān bn al-Hakam when he made his two sons Abdu `l-Malik and Abdu `l-Azīz heirs to the throne. We are aware of Abdu `l-Malik's effort to dethrone his brother.

By mentioning his two sons Walīd and Sulaymān as heirs Abdu `l-Malik also made the same mistake. The same thing was the mistake Sulaymān made by making Umar bn Abdu `l-Azīz and Yazīd bn Abdu `l-Malik heir to the throne. So the early death of Umar made people thought that Yazīd poisoned him.

Yazīd also fell into similar mistake. He mentioned his brother Hishām and his son Walīd bn Yazīd as heirs. Hishām strove to remove Walīd unsuccessfully. This compelled Walīd to avenge from all who aided Hishām. Therefore, Umayyad household broke within itself and its strength depreciated. This paved way for its downfall.

#### **(ii) Tribalism among Arabs**

Islam removed tribalism from among the Arabs and they become one. However, tribalism later resurfaced during the period of Marwān bn al-Hakam at the battle of Marj Rāhit. Therefore, Umayyad Caliphs took to it and popularised it among themselves. Caliph Sulayman would show love to Yemen Arabs at the expense of Arabs of Mudar. When Yazīd came after him, he was inclined to Arabs of Mudar and debased Arabs of Yemen. This was how the tribes scattered. Old rancor was resuscitated and their affairs worsened. Abu Muslim of Khurasan seized opportunity of this disunity to ruin the Umayyad and restored the Abbasid.

### **(iii) The Umayyad inclination to Arab Racism**

The Umayyad referred the Arabs and disregarded the Mawālīs (Clients). He belittled them and did not treat them as equal to the Arabs in duties and appointments. The Mawālīs thus hated Umayyad Dynasty and hoped for its downfall. Because of this, they joined revolution of al-Mukhtār a`th-Thaqafī and the Kharijites. They also participated in disturbances of Abdu `l-Rahmān bn al-Ash-‘ath and that of Yazīd bn al-Muhallab and also in the Abbasid propaganda.

The Abbasid cleverly seized this opportunity and sought support against the Umayyad and dethroned them.

### **(iv) Immorality of some Umayyad Caliphs**

Examples are the action taken by Yazīd bn Mu‘āwiyah at the battle of Harrah, the killing of Husayn and the strike of Ka‘bah. In addition, he was famous for loving luxury, listening to music and using dangerous animals like cheetah, young lions and dogs.

Among this was action of Abdu `l-Malik as the Ka‘bah was struck by his commandants Hajjāj; crucifixion of Abdullah bn Zubayr and betrayal of Amr bin Sa‘id. Yazīd was also popular engaging more in pleasure and involvement in interacting with maids.

Walīd was known for loving amusement, buffoonery, dissolute life and other acts that are considered immoral in Islam. This made the Muslim to hate Umayyad mode of governance and hoped for their downfall.

### **(v) Abbasid Propaganda**

Muhammad bn ‘Alī bn Abdullah bn Abbās prepared and spread it so that the Caliphate would be removed from the Umayyad household to Abbasid household. The Abbasid exercised patience and cleverness in their propaganda till they assembled supporters. They made them enthusiasts, which aided them to wreck pillars of Umayyad dynasty in 132AH.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The main factor that inculcated disunity and rivalry among members of the Umayyad ruling house was assigning two heirs to the throne. Other factors responsible for the fall of the Umayyad dynasty include tribalism among Arabs, the Umayyad inclination to Arab racism, immorality of some Umayyad Caliphs and the Abbasid propaganda.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed Umayyad caliphs who ruled between 101 and 132 AH. We also looked into the biography of al-Hajjāj bn Yūsuf a`th-Thaqafī and examined the factors responsible for the fall of the Umayyads.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Give a general survey of Umayyad caliphs who ruled between 101 and 132 AH.
2. Write a short biography of al-Hajjāj bn Yūsuf a`th-Thaqafī highlighting what made him a great warrior during the Umayyad era.
3. Write short notes on the following figures of the Umayyad era.  
(i) Musa bn Nuşayr      (ii) Tāriq bn Zayyād
4. Highlight some of the factors that led to the fall of the Umayyads and rise of the Abbasids.

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