

## **4 Rightly Guided Caliphs**

### **Caliph Abu Bakr (ra)**

#### **Why was the relationship between the Prophet and Abu Bakr special?**

Among the various friends of the prophet (s.a.w) there have been some who were so close to him that their names are forever mentioned in the history of Islam. One of these names is Abu Bakr (ra). The following paragraphs will elaborate on his life and the relationship between the prophet and himself.

Abu Bakr was from a simple family of the Quraish people. He was two years and three months younger than the holy prophet (s.a.w). He had a common ancestor with the prophet in Murra. He received no formal education but he was known for his experience and high level of intellect and wisdom. Both the prophet and himself were friends from childhood and they were both traders. After the Prophet married Khadijah they lived in the same neighbourhood in Mecca and often met each other. When the Prophet proclaimed Islam, Abu Bakr was the first one to have recognised this as the truth and became the first adult male to become Muslim and declare it openly. It was due to Abu Bakr's persuasion that many of his friends became Muslim such as Uthman bin Affan, Talha, Zubayr, Abdur Rahman bin Awf, Saad bin Abi Waqqas and Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah. Abu Bakr gave all of his wealth for the cause of Islam and bought the freedom of many slaves in Mecca who had become Muslim. An example can be Bilal. When the prophet spread Islam the Muslims were persecuted.

Abu Bakr also suffered persecution in Mecca along with the Prophet and other Muslims. The prophet gave him the title of the Testifier of the Truth (as Siddiq) due to his immediate belief in the Night Journey known as Isra wal Mi'raj. The Prophet and Abu Bakr migrated (made Hijrah) to Madina together. Allah mentioned this event in the Qur'an saying "when the unbelievers drove them out, they two were in the cave ...". This verse is an indication of the importance of Abu Bakr though not mentioned by name in the verse. In order to consolidate that relationship Abu Bakr wanted the prophet to get married to his daughter. Then the Prophet married Aisha. Another event showing how Abu Bakr was esteemed by the prophet was when he was asked by the Prophet to lead the first Hajj. The prophet didn't take part but the delegation was under the control of Abu Bakr. When the prophet was in his last months, he allowed Abu Bakr the leadership of swalaat. When the Prophet was ill he said that "I have paid back everyone's debts, but my debt to Abu Bakr will be paid by Allah on Day of Judgement".

#### **Describe how Abu Bakr was elected as Caliph.**

After the death of the prophet there was no one as leader to take over the khilafat. The prophet did not nominate a successor and there was confusion. The situation was chaotic and Abu Bakr had to calm people down after Prophet died saying that "if you worship Muhammad know that he is dead. If you worship Allah, know He will never die...". At this the situation changed for the best and the Ansar gathered to discuss the appointment of a successor. There were some

prominent companions like Abu Bakr, Umar, and Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah. The Ansar wanted a Caliph from amongst them and the Muhajiroun wanted one from them. As it was the custom, Abu Bakr said that the Arabs would like an “Amir” from the Quraish. The Ansar suggested one from each group, but this will create problems with 2 leaders at the same place and time. Umar objected as this would create confusion. Abu Ubaidah said “O Ansar, you were the first to uphold Islam. Do not be the first also to sow the seed of dissention in it”. The Ansar agreed remembering that the Prophet was a Quraish from the noble tribe of the Quraish and from Banu Hashim.

As such, Abu Bakr proposed the names of Umar and Abu Ubaidah to be considered as future caliph. However, in the presence of Abu Bakr, no one present at that time wanted to become the caliph instead of the friend of the prophet. There were many reasons for that hesitation. Among these reasons we can say that Abu Bakr held unusual honour of being the one who migrated with the Prophet, he was also asked by the Prophet to lead the prayers when he was ill and he was the best friend of the prophet. As such, Umar held the hand of Abu Bakr reminding everyone that he was mentioned in the Qur’an as being the second in the cave of Thawr and the one having the title of As Swadiq. The companions remembered the Prophet saying ‘I have paid back everyone’s debts, but my debt to Abu Bakr will be paid by Allah on Day of Judgement’. That was enough as convincing points for Abu Bakr to be accepted by the public. Umar took his hand and the oath of loyalty to Abu Bakr and all those present followed the footsteps of Umar. The next day others pledged their loyalty in the mosque of Medina.

The first caliph thus delivered his unforgettable speech and said that “I have been elected as your Ameer, although I am not better than you. Help me, if I am in the right; set me right if I am in the wrong; obey me as long as I obey Allah and His prophet; when I disobey Him and His prophet, then obey me not”. That was the opening speech of Abu Bakr. It is a sign of the continuity of the democratic society set by the prophet and a society based on the words of Allah and His prophet. Abu Bakr didn’t want to become caliph but as the Islamic state is a system based on democracy, he was thus chosen by the prominent companions present there and by the public as the one most suitable to continue the work of the last prophet of Islam.

### **What were the main achievements of Abu Bakr?**

Once at the head of the state, he dedicated his time for the smooth running of the society. **Firstly**, he created and founded a truly democratic state where each of his people was authorised to have their say in the society. They had the liberty to choose their own leader and at the same time there was freedom of speech and religion.

**Next**, he created and reinforced the Majlis Shura for a better consultation with his companions. He increased the number of the members of the Majlis from 7 to 11. In this way, he would have a better control and individual as well as group opinions.

**In addition**, in order to have a better control over his state, he divided Arabia into provinces – each one with officers to work. They would then meet during the month of Hajj in order to discuss the problems or / and achievements of the respective provinces.

**Fourthly**, he established Military cantonments and a reserve force for his army and for better security. His security would extend to all members of his Ummah under his flag. He conquered and reinforced different countries like Bahrain, Oman, Mahrah, Yemen, Hadramuth, eastern and western Iraq, Hira, Damascus, Syria, Basrah and Ajnadein.

**Moreover**, many tribes converted to Islam due to the way his armies would deal with them. That was because of the advice of the caliph. Before setting his armies to different missions and countries he would always advise them not to raise arms against women, children, old persons, priests and even on trees.

**In addition**, he observed the Rights of both Muslims and non-Muslims ensuring freedom and security for all his people. All those living in the Islamic state were subjected to have the same rights and have the liberty to complain. He was kind with all his fellowmen and also with the unbelievers.

**More to the point**, he was the first one to undertake the work of Preservation of the Qur'an for the benefit of his Ummah especially for future generations. As such he appointed Zaid bin Thabit who was a hafiz of the Qur'an to collect all Qur'anic verses in circulation from all those who had in their possessions at least one verse.

**Eighthly**, he emphasized much on the idea and concept of morality and self-respect among his people. His society was known for the high degree of morality and spirituality. It was the period of the blessed Ashab and then the Tabi'in.

However, there had been some problems that were dealt by Abu Bakr and that could be considered as among his achievements. Before the death of the prophet (s.a.w), the latter had assigned Usamah bin Zaid for an expedition to Syria. The army had not the time to leave Madina when the prophet (s.a.w) passed away. Now, many people thought that it would be better not to send any army outside Madina for its security. Some proposed to assign a more experienced commander for the expedition due to his young age and being the son of a slave. However, Abu Bakr adhered by the decision of the prophet (s.a.w). Later after several months, Usamah returned victoriously.

**A second important fact** is that after the death of the prophet (s.a.w) many persons rose and pretended to be prophets. Among them there was *Aswad Ansi* from the tribe of Ansi in Yemen. He was known as the Veiled Prophet for his ugliness. Another one was *Tulaiha* from north Arabia who claimed prophethood during the time of the prophet (s.a.w). He was known as the Liar. When Khalid bin Walid attacked him at Buzaka, he fled to Syria. When Syria was conquered by the Muslims, he converted to Islam. Another false prophet was Musailima / Musailama – belonging to Banu Hanifa tribe. He wanted to imitate the prophet and reduced the number of namaz, he abolished zakaat and sawm. He Legalised drinking and adultery and composed sentences and pretended them to be Wahy. He was known as *Musailima* the Liar. He was killed by Khalid bin Walid. A false prophetess rose in the name of *Sajjah* – a Christian woman belonging to Tamim Tribe. She got married to Musailima to reinforce their army. When Iraq was conquered, she converted to Islam.

**A third problem** was the refusal to pay Zakaat by some tribes such as Banu Asad, Banu Ghatafan, Banu Abbas, Banu Murrah. The caliph despatched an army of eleven battalions to face and crush all problems. In less than one year there was calm and security in the Islamic dominion.

Abu Bakr would never allow anyone to go against the Ummah or the Islamic Law. He would instead make it a must that the Law of Allah and His prophet would be established and enforced. At the same time he would respect the rights of all individuals muslims and non muslims.

### Caliph ‘Umar

#### **Describe the events that led up to Umar becoming a Muslim.**

Among the Ashab of the holy prophet (s.a.w), Hazrat Umar was one of the bravest. He was known for his sincerity in his work, his high personality and his bravery. There had been many crucial events where his presence had been of utmost importance. He was born from a Merchant family and he developed the sharp idea of a successful businessman. His Father was Khattab and his Mother was Khatmah. According to history he was 12/13 years younger than the prophet (s.a.w) and they shared a common Ancestor in Ka’ab. He received both Formal and informal education making him suitable and apt for reading and writing Arabic Language. He was very Learned, Intelligent and studious to the extent that no one was able to challenge him in educational field. He was a successful trader as well as a wise and loyal friend. He was admired for his sharp mind, his dedication to his work, his loyalty towards his relatives, his eagerness towards his religion and for his bravery.

He was among the polytheists and the idol worshippers but Allah had planned otherwise. He opposed the Muslims because he believed in the gods of the Kaaba amounted to 360 idols. He was aware of the mission of the prophet and he felt strongly about killing him to end all problems arising in Mecca and to avoid any risk of conversion. So, in the year 616 (in the 6th year of the prophet’s mission) he set out with his sword. On his way he met and told a clansman known as Nu’aym bin Abdullah where he was going and about his objective. The clansman said to him that “By God, you have deceived yourself, O Umar! Do you think that Banu Abd Manaf would let you run around alive once you kill Muhammad? Your sister is a Muslim now. Why don’t you return to your own house and set it straight?” In a furious mood, he angrily returned to his sister’s house. Arriving there he saw one of the companions, Khabbab, spreading Islam to his sister and his brother in law. He was moreover angry when he noticed that Fatima, his sister hid a few pages of Qur’an she was reading. The pagans used to call that rubbish reading. Her sister knew about his character and what he could do if these pages would fall into his hands. She didn’t want to give the paper on her brother’s request. In the meantime Khabbab slipped away. Umar began hitting Sa’id, his brother in law and when Fatima wanted to interfere and to defend her husband, she got hit by Umar. She received a slap in the face and she was bleeding. The sight of blood stopped Umar and the latter was very sorry as he loved his sister so much that he never harmed her. It was not done intentionally. He was a bit calm and he was sorry. He asked to read the pages but still

Fatima did not trust him. Fatima wanted him to wash himself before touching and handling these pages.

As such Umar returned home, took off his sword and washed himself, then came to his sister. Fatima then hand over the pages to him. He was reading surah Ta Ha and he was so impressed by these words. Umar's eyes filled with hot tears and asked "Is this what we were against? The One who has spoken these words needs to be worshipped." He then left and went towards the prophet (s.a.w). During that period the Muslims would gather in the house of a companion known as Arqam ibn Abil Arqam to say their congregational prayers. They were just beginning to assemble, when one of them, looking out the window, saw Umar approaching the house with a drawn sword. In a state of considerable alarm, he told other members of the congregation what he saw. Presumably, they too were alarmed. But Hamza, the uncle of the prophet who six months earlier converted to Islam was also present in the house of Arqam, reassured them, and said that if Umar was coming with good intentions, then it was all right but if not, then he (Hamza) would run him (Umar) through with his (Umar's) own sword. When he knocked the door the prophet asked the companions to let him in but they were ready for anything to happen. The prophet asked him why he had come. Umar faced the prophet with humility and joy and said, "O Messenger of God, I have come for no reason except to say I believe in God and his Messenger". Prophet Muhammad was overcome with joy and cried out that God was Great! Within days, Umar lead a procession of Muslims to the house of God where they prayed openly. It was on this occasion that Prophet Muhammad gave him the nickname Al Farooq – the criterion. It denotes one who is able to distinguish truth from falsehood. Islam was strengthened with Umar, his fierce hatred melted into a love that knew no bound. His life and his death were now for the sake of God and his Messenger. That was unexpected and everyone rejoiced saying Allahu Akbar. According to hadith the prophet was praying Allah to strengthen Islam through Umar.

### **Assess the main achievements of his Caliphate.**

There had been many different achievements in the caliphate of Umar. He was a very successful leader as he continued the principles of the prophet and Hazrat Abu Bakr with an iron fist. He was not the one to tolerate any **unislamic aspects and immoralities** in his society.

He continued with the **Majlis shurah with 11 members** for decision making. That was done to facilitate decision making and taking.

He divided his **caliphate into provinces and districts** under different governors. He had regular checks on them. They would in return report to him during the period of Hajj on annual basis.

He established **office of judge** (qadi) independent of provincial governor.

He was the one who **created the Hijri calendar**.

He contributed to the expansion of **cultivated lands and new tax (ushr)** was levied on produce of land.

He established the **finance department** known as diwan of those entitled to state pensions for helping in wars.

There were different **sources of revenue** such as Jizya (poll tax), zakaat, kharaj (spoils of war), Fay (income from crown lands) and ushr (1/10 of produce). All these were meant for funding the Baitul Maal (public treasury).

In order to have a better control on the territories his armies were **forbidden to buy land in conquered territories**.

He settled his army in new planned towns such as Kufa and Basra and these were accessible when there was the need to fight. He had a well-disciplined army and considered the welfare of soldiers, both Muslims and non-Muslims.

He standardised the Military division, Police department and the Educational department.

To have a better control over his population, he had regular census.

In order to ensure the spreading of Islam, teachers were sent throughout country to teach how to read the Qur'an and other Islamic fields.

He constructed mosques, schools, roads and outposts for travellers.

He gave individuals the right to question him or / and all officials and complain. This was a means of a strong democratic government.

He checked weights and measures and prevented profiteering and hoarding.

He dedicated great deal of time to religious affairs and he spiritualised the whole state. Some of his personal example could be seen in the fact that he was clear in thought, deeds, fair, pious and upright.

Moreover, Hazrat Umar was a successful military commander. He was victorious in the Battle of Namarraq against Sassanians (Persians), in the Battle of Buwaib, against Sassanians again, in the battle of Qadisiya in 14 AH and finally broke strength of Sassanians. He was victorious in the Battle of Yarmuk 15AH against the Romans and at the Battle of Nahawand in 21AH. There was the fall of Jerusalem into Muslim hands in 16AH and the conquest of Egypt in 17AH.

There are other achievements of Hazrat Umar such as the establishment of Public Treasury, the establishments of courts of Justice and appointment of Judges, the establishment of Postal service, the survey and assessment of lands, the public census, the punishment of those who practice Monopoly by exile to different lands, the establishment of and use of Jails, the building of Canals and Bridges, the use of the Whip, the establishment of Public Rest Areas, hostels and *Wudu* (Ablution) Stations, the use of secret reports and specially designated emissaries to provide first reports as what is really going on in different provinces, the salary for Imams, *Muadhin* (Callers to prayer), teachers and public lectures, the stipends for the poor among the Jews and Christians who lived in conquered lands, the punishment for drunkenness, written satires and lampoons, the establishment of Guilds for certain trades, the prohibition of the mention of women's names in poetry, the holding of *tarawih* (Ramadan night prayers) in congregation, the

providing of lighting in the Mosques at night, the persuading of Abu Bakr to collect the Qur'an in one book, the establishment of Military bases at strategic points in the different provinces, the personally making nightly rounds to check on the condition of the people first hand, the formulation of the Principal of *Qiyas* (Analogical Reasoning.) for determining rulings on newly encountered matters in *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence.), the establishment of a more exact system of calculation of the inheritance, the limiting the relationship between Muslims and Non-Muslims, the establishing a stable for the lost camels, the state intervention to control the price of merchandise and the enlargement the *al-Haram* (the Sacred Mosque) at Mecca.

### **Caliph Uthman**

#### **Describe the achievements of Uthman as Caliph.**

Caliph Uthman was the son of the father Affan and the mother Arwa. He was born in Macca in the 6th year of elephant and he was **5 years younger than the Holy Prophet** (s.a.w). They were related through the common ancestor Abd Manaf. As from his formal education, he was able to read and write Arabic language. He was much learned, intelligent, wise (wisdom) and studious. In addition, he was a successful trader and was always polite with his customers and business partners. Well before his conversion to Islam, he was a pious man. He never indulged in polytheism and idol worshipping. He was among the Hanif.

He embraced Islam at the demand of Hazrat Abu Bakr (ra). He was a very tender hearted person. He would cater for the needy, destitute, low class and the poor. He would always come to the help of the persecuted. After the death of Umar, he became caliph and his reign lasted for 12 years (645-656 CE) and his empire greatly enlarged in the initial five or six years of rule. He enlarged both mosques in the cities of Mecca and Medina to suit the needs of the growing number of Muslims.

**Secondly**, he embarked on the digging of wells for the convenience of both the people of Hijaz and the travellers. He also improved existing water courses to prevent flood.

**Next**, he built large naval fleet and consolidated his army and through years he conquered places like Crete, Cyprus and Rhodes. He also sent his army to Egypt against Romans 646.

**Moreover**, he sent Mu'awiyah as the governor of Syria into Asia Minor and Khurasan to conquer and consolidate the countries and the state of the Islamic religion and creed.

**Fifthly** there were many military expeditions to North Africa and Tripoli was conquered. There were also quelled revolts in Armenia and Azerbaijan where the Muslim armies crushed all revolts.

**A six point is that**, the caliph engaged in the standardisation of the Qur'an which was already compiled, but differences in recitation of Qur'an were noticed in far areas. Uthman was told about the situation and he took the mushaf from Hafsa (the Prophet's wife).

**Another point** is to ensure the authenticity of the Qur'an, he instructed Zaid bin Thabit as the head of the project. Zaid made a public announcement that anyone having any verse should come forward to participate in this endeavour.

**Another point is** that compilation was also checked from the memories of other companions who were huffaz of the Qur'an. After this step Zaid was instructed to make new copies of Qur'an and other new copies were made and sent to all corners of Muslim empire.

**Ninthly** in order to ensure that the old copies would not be in circulation, Uthman ordered his men to collect and burn all the old circulating copies of the whole Islamic empire. As such the old copies were destroyed.

**Tenthly** the move of Uthman to standardise the Qur'an was to ensure that today we have the real and authentic Qur'an sent by Allah upon the prophet (s.a.w) of Islam. The Qur'an we read now is the same one from the time of Uthman.

### **Why do you think problems arose during his Caliphate?**

There were many problems during the time of Uthman due to specific reasons. When he came to power, he wanted to make some changes in the posts of his government. He wanted to place his trusted men for a better control and to crush all problems. He did never want to give any favour to any member of his family, but instead, he was accused of appointing inefficient relatives as governors and he was so weak at commanding his people. He was also accused of his wrong and bad administrative measures of replacing already existing governors and that he did not check his newly appointed officers. He was charged of all the problems emerging in his dominion. He was accused of being too tender hearted towards those breaching the Shari'ah. He took lesser decisions against them. The greatest accusation was that he burned down the words and message of Allah – the Qur'an. Some of the rebellious persons accused him of corruption and upsurging the right of his people and money from the Bait-ul-Maal. All these accusations came from the Khawarij.

As such, **firstly**, Uthman's mild disposition was in severe contrast to Umar's reputation of being strong and the defeated Persians and Romans presumed that Uthman was not be able to hold empire together and that resulted in revolts in outlying areas.

**Secondly**, due to large empire and the passing of time there was only few alive as role models who remembered the Prophet (s.a.w) personally and the high ideals of Islam. Many Muslims converts had lived with other values (not as honest and generous) which were difficult to change. They were led by their own customs. Uthman was unable to take strong decisions against all these kinds of corruptions.

**Thirdly**, there was the question of the position of governors given to family members by Uthman (Umayyads). That situation revived the old rivalry between the Umayyad and the Hashimites again. That renewed the already existing enemies especially when more wealth was coming in from conquered territories. There was an urge to take over power.



**Fourthly**, Uthman himself was too gentle towards his men, governors and people. Some advisors took advantage of his age and weakness. In this Abdullah bin Saba was the main ring leader of dissenting voices leading to exploiting the situation.

**Fifthly**, there were many critics about him concerning the burning of the copies of the Qur'an after new compilations and standardisations of the Qur'an left to Hafsa were made. Uthman felt that differing versions of the Qur'an would cause conflict in his community and for later nations in later centuries.

### **Caliph 'Ali**

**Describe the relationship between the Prophet and Ali in the years after the first revelation.**

He was the son of Abu Talib and as mother Faatima. He was a descendant of Hashim, cousin and in-law of Holy Prophet (s.a.w). He was 30 years younger than the Holy Prophet (s.a.w). Due to his surroundings, he obtained formal education by which he was able to read and write. He was learned, intelligent and studious. He learned the Qur'an by heart and was pious well before his acceptance of Islam. He had a good guide in the person of the holy prophet (s.a.w).

Both the prophet (s.a.w) and Hazrat Ali (ra) were very close. Ali was brought up in the Prophet's household since childhood. He had been acquainted with the life style and family members of the prophet. It is to be noted that when the prophet (s.a.w) spread Islam, Hazrat Ali was the first child to accept Islam and when the Prophet was instructed to 'warn thy nearest kin' (26:214) Ali said 'I will be your helper'. In fact he listened and learned from the Prophet. It can be well said that the prophet was his direct teacher. During the whole mission of the prophet, Ali would always be by his side to spread Islam or to support the prophet and his family in so many different ways. Years passing by reaching the days before the Hijra to Madina, everyone waited for that right moment. Ali and Abu Bakr stayed behind in Mecca with the Prophet before the Hijra. Ali had risked his own life by sleeping in the Prophet's bed on the night of hijra for the Khawarij planned to burst into the house of the prophet to kill him in his bed. This was decided as such as Ali had a specific mission to perform that is to return things kept with the Prophet for safekeeping to their right owners. Later on when it became the time in Madina for brotherhood the Prophet declared Ali to be his brother.

He was so close to the prophet that he was married to Fatima, the Prophet's daughter. However, there was no show off out of this marriage. Ali and his family lived a frugal (economical) and simple life, just like the Prophet's family. He worked as a labourer with Prophet and engaged in building the mosque in Medina. He was the father of the famous Hasan and Husain, the Prophet's beloved grandchildren known so much in history for their piety and firmness on deen. As he was literate, he was a scribe of the Prophet and for the treaty of Hudaibiyah he was the main scribe. He was made standard bearer for the Muslims and he honoured his responsibility. He participated in the battles of the prophet and was a great warrior in all of them during the Prophet's lifetime. It is praiseworthy to mention here that there is the Ghadir Khumm episode where the prophet took the

hand of Ali, raised it in the air and declared: 'For whomever I am the authority and guide Ali is also his guide and authority. Oh God! Be friendly with the friends of Ali and be enemy of his enemies. Whoever helps him, help him, and whoever leaves him, leave him.' This is to show how Ali was honoured by the prophet. Finally, it is known that Ali, along with others, washed the Prophet's body and buried him.

### **To what extent was Ali successful during his Caliphate?**

After the death of the prophet (s.a.w) there were 3 caliphs before Hazrat Ali in the name of Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman. All the 3 did their best at their own level to be a good leader. However, with events led by the Khawarij and after the assassination of Uthman, there were 3 days where there was no leader as caliph. When the Khawarij gave an ultimatum of 24 hours then Ali was chosen by the public. Muslims held Ali in high esteem due to being the son in law of the Prophet (s.a.w). He was born in the family of the prophet and he knew the message and practice of the Prophet better than most of the people of that time and he was revered for his knowledge of the Qur'an and the Shari'ah. He was then appointed as Caliph at assassination of Uthman where there was chaos in Madina. He maintained the Shari'ah and he was successful in doing so.

**Secondly**, he faced challenges to his rule right from the start of his short Caliphate which lasted for 5 years. The opponents wanted him to find Uthman's murderer immediately but it was in vain. Ali's priority was the consolidation and the reorganisation of his Caliphate first. He dismissed some provincial governors and appointed new ones and that was an unpopular move. There were as such oppositions from Mu'awiya, the governor of Syria who was related to Uthman and who accused Ali of siding with the rebels at time of Uthman's death. This was considered as unsuccessful.

**Thirdly**, with the desire to find the murderers of Uthman Aisha, Talha and Zubayr went north to get support in their quest. This resulted in battle of the Camel (Jamal) in against Ali. That was the first civil war in Islam between two muslims' armies. However, Ali was successful in this move. Though there was fighting but it was in the favour of the caliph.

**Fourthly**, Ali shifted the Islamic capital to Kufa where he would have more support there and it was closer to Syria which was Mu'awiyah's base and that gave him an opportunity to fight him. However, the armies were reluctant to fight Mu'awiya at Siffin and that led to an arbitration agreed upon. Some soldiers from Ali's army (the Kharijites) opted out of arbitration and Mu'awiyah became Caliph in Damascus (Syria). Ali had no choice than to step down though he remained Caliph but he lost Syria. As such he was unsuccessful.

**Fifthly**, Ali fought Kharijites at Nahrawan and won this battle. However, this was the third war between Muslims. Ali then wanted his army to fight Mu'awiyah in Syria but his soldiers didn't agree. Following this the Kharijites planned the assassination of Ali, Mu'awiyah and Amr but only Ali was martyred while praying. Ali was a radical and an idealist person but he was not prepared to play the dirty game of politics. He was thus unsuccessful in uniting the Muslims politically which resulted in Sunni/Shi'a split.