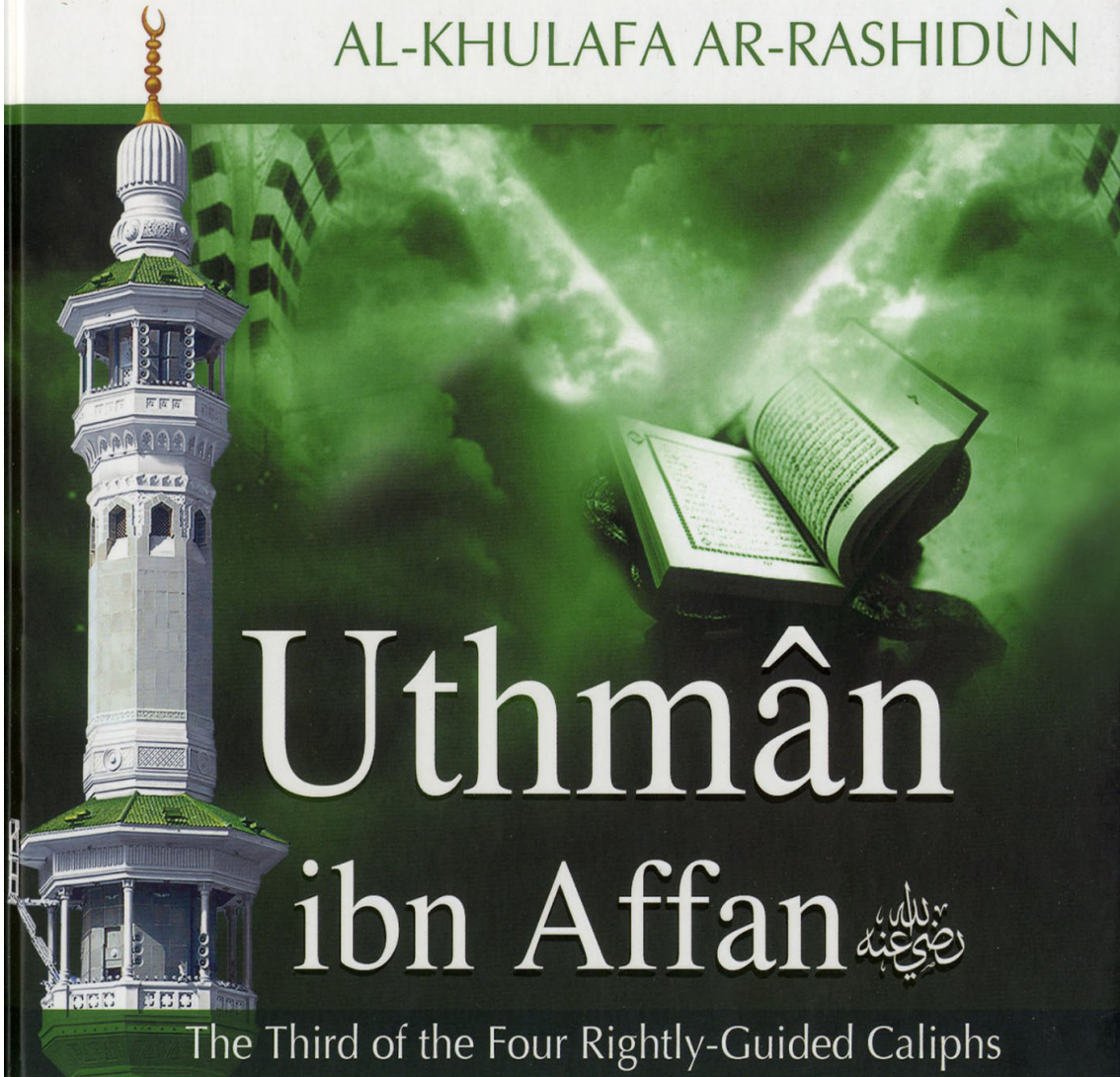


HISTORY OF ISLAM

The Age of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs
AL-KHULAFÄ AR-RASHIDÜN



Uthmân ibn Affan رضي الله عنه

The Third of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs

Maulvi Abdul Aziz



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History of Islam “A Reader Series” The Age of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs:

Al- Khulafa Ar-Rashidun

Uthman ibn Affan

(May Allah be pleased with him)

The Third of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs

By: Maulvi Abdul Aziz

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Publisher's Note



In the Name of Allah, the Lord of Grace, the Ever Merciful

For many years, I have been looking for textbooks on the History of Islam for English-speaking students, yet I have found very few. Most did not overcome a common problem: they did not go beyond the era of the Four Rightly-guided Caliphs, may Allah be pleased with them all.

Bearing this in mind, we, at Darussalam, have resolved to present the entire History of Islam to our youth in language that appeals to them, in a simple yet lucid manner. The first four volumes in this series explore Islamic history during the period of the first Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Later volumes would be devoted to the History of Islam, down through the ages to modern times, in sha' Allah.

Our past, present, and future are interconnected and interdependent. Therefore, knowing and understanding our history is not optional; it is essential.

This is the third volume from this series, which deals with the life of Uthman ibn Affan, the third of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Uthman ibn Affan was the most qualified to become the Caliph during his time; his claim to the caliphate was valid and his caliphate was legitimate. He led the people on the path of truth and ruled with justice, until he was martyred.

We would like to thank the author Maulvi Abdul Aziz, the editor and the designer Mr. Shahzad Ahmed for their diligent efforts in preparing this volume. We hope this work will inspire our youth to form a personal relationship with Uthman ibn Affan, and encourage them to commit their lives sincerely to his mission of serving justice even at the cost of their own lives, which he has left behind as our common heritage.

Abdul Malik Mujahid

Muharram 23, 1433

Darussalam, Riyadh (December 18, 2011)

Chapter 1: Uthman ibn Affan (May Allah be pleased with him) The Third of the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs

The six-man electoral council set up by Umar ibn Al-Khattab finally selected Uthman ibn Affan as the third caliph.

The Early Life of Uthman ibn Affan

Uthman was born in At-Taif in the year 576 CE, six years after the Year of the Elephant. He was about five years younger than the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). His lineage coincides with that of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) in their common ancestor Abd Manaf. His mother was Arwa bint Kurayz. Arwa's mother was Umm Hakim, who was the full sister of Abdullah, the father of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). Uthman's father was Affan, who died during the Jahiliyyah or the Period of Ignorance. Uthman's mother became Muslim and died during the Caliphate of her son Uthman, and he was among those who carried her to her grave.

Uthman's Kunya or nickname during the period of Jahiliyyah was Abu Amr. When Ruqayyah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) bore him a son, he named him Abdullah. So the Muslims called him by the Kunya of Abu Abdullah. Uthman belonged to the influential Bani Umayyah clan of the Quraysh tribe.



Uthman was known by the Honorific Title of Dhu'n Nurayn

Uthman was known by the title Dhu'n Nurayn: 'He of the Two Lights'. Why was Uthman called Dhu'n Nurayn? This was because after becoming Muslim, he was first married to Ruqayyah, a daughter of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), and upon her death, he married Umm Kulthum, another daughter of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). For this distinction, he earned the honorific Dhu'n Nurayn 'He of the Two Lights'. It is significant to note that no one else was ever married to two daughters of a Prophet, from the time Allah created Adam until the arrival of the Hour, except Uthman. When Umm Kulthum died, Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) used to say that he loved Uthman so dearly that, if he had another daughter remaining, he would have married her to him.

His Physical Appearance

He was neither short nor tall. He was soft-skinned, with a long thick beard, big-boned, broad-shouldered, with thick hair on his head. He had a hooked nose, fleshy calves and long arms covered with hair. He had a handsome face. His hair came down below his ears. He was elegant and neat in appearance.

Uthman's Family



Uthman married eight wives in all, all of them after Islam. Two of them were the daughters of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). He had nine sons from four wives. One of them was Abdullah, whose mother was Ruqayyah the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). He was born two years before the Hijrah or emigration. His mother took him with her when she migrated with her husband Uthman to Madinah. During his first days in Madinah, a rooster pecked him on the face. Ultimately, he died in 4 AH when he was six years old. Aban was also one of his nine sons. His mother was Umm Amr bint Jundub. He was a leading scholar of Fiqh or Islamic Jurisprudence. He was governor of Madinah for seven years during the Caliphate of Abdul Malik ibn Marwan. Aban narrated a number of Ahadith or Traditions including the most popular Hadith, which he narrated from Uthman:

‘Whoever says at the beginning of each day and night: In the Name of Allah with whose Name nothing can cause harm on earth or in heaven, and He is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing’; nothing will harm him that day or that night.’

This Hadith is recorded by At-Tirmidhi. Aban was regarded as one of the Fuqaha or jurists of his time. He died in 105 AH. Uthman ibn Affan had seven daughters from five wives.

His Status during Jahiliyyah or the pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance

During the Jahiliyyah, Uthman was among the best of his people. He had a high status, was very wealthy and extremely modest. His people loved him dearly and respected him. He never prostrated to any idol during the period of Jahiliyyah. He never committed any immoral act. He did not drink alcohol before Islam. He used to say, “Alcohol destroys reason. The most sublime thing that Allah has given man is intellect or reason. Man should elevate himself by means of reason. He should not destroy it.”

He was well versed in the knowledge that was available to the Arabs during the period of Jahiliyyah, which included genealogy. Genealogy is the study of family history, which includes the study of the ancestors of a particular person. Uthman had good knowledge of proverbs. He knew the history of important events. He travelled to Syria and Abyssinia, mixed with the non-Arabs and learnt aspects of their lives and customs that no one else knew.

Uthman came from a rich family engaged in trade and as he grew older, he himself became a successful businessman. He took care of the business that he inherited from his father, and his wealth grew. He was regarded as one of the men of Banu Umayyah who were held in high esteem by all of the Quraysh and among his own people, and he was loved dearly.

Uthman's Acceptance of Islam

During the pre-Islamic days, Uthman was a good friend of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq. Uthman was thirty-four years old when Abu Bakr called him to Islam; he responded immediately and embraced Islam. Thus, he was one of the earliest Muslims. He accepted Islam after Abu Bakr, Ali, and Zayd ibn Harithah was Uthman, making him the fourth man to accept Islam.

Uthman's Marriage to Ruqayyah, the Daughter of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him)

Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) had given Ruqayyah in marriage to Utbah ibn Abi Lahab; and he had given her sister Umm Kulthum in marriage to Utaybah ibn Abi Lahab. However, when Surah Al-Masad [Surah 111 of the Glorious Qur'an] was revealed, Abu Lahab and his wife Umm Jamil asked their sons to leave the daughters of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), so they separated from them. It is significant to note that the marriage had not been consummated yet. Thus, it came as an honour to the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) and his household but for the sons of Abu Lahab, it turned out to be a humiliation.

No sooner did Uthman hear the news of the divorce of Ruqayyah than he was filled with joy and he hastened to propose marriage to her through the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) gave her in marriage to him. Uthman was one of the most handsome men of Quraysh, and Ruqayyah competed with him in beauty and grace. It was said to her when she was presented to him: 'The best looking couple anyone has ever seen is Ruqayyah and her husband Uthman.'



Umm Jamil and her husband Abu Lahab thought that by divorcing Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum they would deal a severe blow to the family of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) or at least weaken them. However, Allah chose what was better for Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum. The marriage caused a great deal of anger and frustration for Umm Jamil and Abu Lahab. They did not achieve anything. Thus, Allah sufficed the household of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) against their evil. And the Command of Allah is a decree determined.

His Persecution and Emigration to Abyssinia



Companions of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) underwent severe trials and tribulations for embracing Islam. Even the prominent Muslims were not spared these trials. Uthman was tortured and persecuted for the sake of Allah at the hands of his paternal uncle, Al-Hakam ibn Abi'l Aas ibn Umayyah. He caught Uthman and tied him up, and said, 'Will you turn away from the religion of your forefathers for a new religion? I will not let you go until you give up this religion.' Uthman said, 'By Allah! I will never give it up or leave it.' When Al-Hakam saw his steadfastness in adhering to his Faith, he let him go.'

The persecution intensified and affected all the Muslims. Yasir and his wife Sumayyah were killed. Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) was deeply grieved. He wondered where the Muslims could go. Then Allah's Messenger (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) thought of Abyssinia. Abyssinia is the old name for Ethiopia. The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) pointed out that a religious king in whose land no one was wronged ruled Abyssinia.

The emigration began. The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) felt very sad to see the group of believers leaving Makkah quietly. Among the emigrants during the first and the second migration to Abyssinia was Uthman ibn Affan. His wife Ruqayyah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), accompanied him. They arrived in Abyssinia in the month of Rajab, in the fifth year after the Prophet's mission began. They found safety, security, and freedom to worship.

Uthman benefited greatly from this emigration. He gained experience and learnt lessons that would stand him in good stead later in his life. He learnt that the steadfastness of the believers in the face of torture and persecution was a clear sign of their sincere Faith. Uthman learnt compassion towards the Ummah or community from the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him). His compassion was displayed when he lived in Madinah during the time of the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him), Abu Bakr As-Siddiq and Umar ibn Al-Khattab, as well as when he became Caliph.

The Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) first suggested to the Muslims in Makkah to immigrate to Abyssinia, and in doing so, chose a safe place for his community and his message, so that it was protected from being wiped out. This is how the Prophet (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) trained the Muslim leaders to plan wisely and with farsightedness in order to protect the call to Islam and the callers. Thus, the Messenger of Allah (May the peace and blessing of Allah be on him) trained the Muslims to look for a safe land for the call and a centre from where they could spread the message of Islam.