

VOL 2



# BIOGRAPHY OF Ali Ibn Abi-Talib

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**DARUSSALAM**  
GLOBAL LEADER IN ISLAMIC BOOKS

# Biography of Ali Ibn Abi Talib

(May Allah be pleased with him)

## Volume II

A Comprehensive Study of His Personality and Era

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By: 'Ali Muhammad As-Sallabi

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## The Battles of the Camel and Siffin and the Matter of Arbitration

﴿ وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَاقْتُلُوا الَّتِي تَبَغَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٩﴾ إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴾

Allah (SWT) says:

*“And if two factions among the believers should fight, then make settlement between the two. But if one of them oppresses the other, then fight against the one that oppresses until it returns to the ordinance of Allah. And if it returns, then make settlement between them in justice and act justly. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. The believers are but brothers, so make reconciliation between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy.” (Al-Hujurat, 49: 9, 10)*

It is narrated that Anas Bin Malik said: It was said to the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him):” Why don’t you go to Abdullah Ibn Ubayy [and persuade him to accept Islam]?” So he went to him, riding a donkey, and the Muslims set out too, and [they passed over] salty ground. When the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) came to him, he said:” Do not come near me, for by Allah the stench of your donkey offends me.” One of the Ansar said:” By Allah, the donkey of Allah’s Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) smells better than you.” One of Abdullah’s people got angry on his behalf, then the two groups got angry with one another and hit each another with palm branches, hands, and shoes. We heard that the following words were revealed concerning them:

﴿ وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا ﴾

*“And if two parties (or groups) among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them both.” (Al-Hujurat, 49:9)*

Al-Hasan narrated from ‘Ali Bin Abi Talhah, who narrated from Ibn ‘Abbas (May Allah be pleased with him), that he said [concerning the Statement],

﴿ وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَاقْتُلُوا الَّتِي تَبَغَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ ﴾

*“And if two parties (or groups) among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them both. But if one of them outrages against the other, then fight you (all) against the one which outrages till it complies with the Command of Allâh” (Al-Hujurat, 49:9)*

“Allah (SWT) commanded the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) and the believers that if two groups among the believers fight, they should call them to the ruling of Allah and reach a fair deal between them. If they resound, then they should be judged in accordance with the Book of Allah, so that the group that was wronged may settle scores with the group that wronged them. If they refuse to comply, then they have committed a transgression, and it is the duty of the leader of the believers to fight against them until they return to the command of Allah and accept the rule of Allah (SWT).”

This means if two groups of Muslims fight, then the Muslim rulers must seek to reconcile between them by giving them advice, inviting them to Allah's rule, guiding them, and removing any doubts from their minds, as well as (address) the cause of difference (between them). Using the word "if" (in the Ayah) indicates that the believers should not fall into a fight. If it were to happen then that is the rare exception. The ones being addressed in the Ayah are the (Muslim) rulers, and the imperative command in it indicates that (the mentioned rule) is obligatory.

Al-Bukhari and others (i.e., scholars) used this (Ayah) as proof that the sin (of a Muslim) does not take him out of the fold of Islam, even if it is a major one, contrary to the view of the Kharijites who say that a Muslim who commits a major sin becomes a disbeliever and he is destined to the Hellfire (forever).

It is authentically reported in Sahih Al-Bukhari that Abu Bakr (May Allah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) gave a speech one day, and with him on the Minbar was Al-Hasan Ibn 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him). The Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) started to looking from him to the people, and said: "This son of mine is a leader, and perhaps Allah will reconcile two great groups among the Muslims through him." It occurred as he (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said. Through him, Allah brought about reconciliation between the people of Sham and the people of Iraq, after the battles that took place between them.

Allah (SWT) then says:

﴿وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا﴾

*"And if two parties (or groups) among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them both."*  
(Al-Hujarat, 49:9)

This means: If one of the two parties transgresses and exceeds its limit, and does not submit to Allah's rule and to the (ruler's) advice, then it becomes incumbent upon the Muslims to fight the rebellious group until it returns to the ordinance of Allah in terms of not rebelling. Fighting is allowed with weapons and other means. The arbitrator should choose what will fulfill the obligation, which is the return (to the command of Allah). If the obligation is fulfilled without the use of weapons, then that is incumbent. If weapons are required then he should use them until they return (to the command of Allah).

Allah says:

﴿فَإِنْ بَغَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَىٰ فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّىٰ تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ﴾

*"But if one of them outrages against the other, then fight you (all) against the one which outrages till it complies with the Command of Allāh"* (Al-Hujurat, 49:9)

This means if the rebellious party leaves its rebellion after the fight and accept the command of Allah and His rule, then the Muslims must rule justly between the two parties.

They should try their best to reach the correct judgment that is in accordance with Allah's rule. They should punish the oppressive party until it leaves its oppression and fulfills its duties toward the other party, so that the fight does not repeat itself.

﴿فَإِنْ فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ﴾

*“Then if it complies, then make reconciliation between them justly, and be equitable. Verily, Allāh loves those who are the equitable.” (Al-Hujurat, 49:9)*

This is a commandment to be just in all matters.

Allah’s Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) said:” Those who are just will be seated upon pulpits of light on the right of Allah, and both of His Hands are ‘right’ Hands. They are those who are fair in their judgment, with their family, and with those under their authority.”

Then Allah enjoined reconciliation among the Muslims in cases other than fighting, even in the slightest dispute. He says:

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ﴾

*“The believers are but brothers, so make reconciliation between your brothers.” (Al-Hujurat 49:10)*

This Ayah is one of the foundations that regulate the Muslim’s relationship with his Muslim brother.

Allah did not say that either or both groups are disbelievers, even in a case where fighting occurs between them. The people who are most worthy of being included in the meaning of this Ayah are the leaders of the believers, the noble Companions, regardless of what occurred in the Battles of the Camel and Siffin.

The Commander of the Believers ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) applied this Ayah out of his keenness to bring about reconciliation.

Talhah and Az-Zubair (may Allah be pleased with them) accepted this request. However, the followers of ‘Abdullah Bin Saba’ started a war between the two parties, the details of which will be discussed in its proper place, by Allah’s will.

The Commander of the Believers ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) was keen on conciliatory action with the people of Sham. He exerted all his efforts in using peaceful methods. However, Mu’awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) stipulated that the killers of ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) be handed over, and fighting took place. Mu’awiyah’s opinion was wrong, and the truth was with the Commander of the Believers ‘Ali. He only unsheathed his sword after all attempts at reconciliation had failed, and with the intention for Mu’awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) to follow the command of Allah and hear and obey, and to bring about unity in the Muslim state.

The words of Allah (SWT),

﴿إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ﴾

*“The believers are but brothers,” (Al-Hujurat, 49:10)*

describes all the Muslims who have fought each other as having brotherhood based on Eeman. Even more deserving of this (quality) was ‘Ali, Talhah, and Az-Zubair in the Battle of the Camel and to what happened with Mu’awiyah at Siffin. Therefore, it becomes clear to us that the fighters at the Battle of the Camel and Siffin were indeed believers.



There is no valid basis for criticizing the Companions due to these historical events, attempting to negate their Eeman (faith), or spreading distorted lies about them. In refuting these false Statements, it suffices to mention that this Ayah confirms their brotherhood based on faith. More details of what occurred between them will be discussed soon.

Thus, it is obligatory to reconcile between brothers who have a dispute. To magnify the importance of reconciling between a pair of (Muslim) brothers, Allah, here, enjoined Taqwa. The expression means, reconcile between them and let the cause of this reconciliation and the cause of all of your actions be Taqwa of Allah and fear of Him. (This should be attained) by abiding by truth and justice. Do not incline or have a bias toward one brother (over the other), for they are both your brothers and Islam has made them all equal. So do not prefer one over the other when there is no difference between them. You shall attain mercy due to (your) Taqwa, which means: abiding by the commandments and avoiding the prohibitions (of Islam).

The noble Ayah makes the reconciliation between brothers and Taqwa of Allah a cause for Allah's Mercy to descend. This shows the greatness of reconciliation between the Muslims.

Note that He did not say this in the case of reconciliation between two parties. This is because when the dispute is between two men, it is feared that the dispute will spread to more people, but in the case when two parties (are disputing) then the effect of the tribulation and the harm has already encompassed everyone.

The word 'inna' (indeed) is restrictive. Its usage indicates that there is no brotherhood except between believers and that there is no brotherhood between a believer and a disbeliever. This is because Islam is the universal tie between its followers. Its usage also indicates that the commandment of reconciliation and its obligation is only applicable in the presence of brotherhood based on Islam, and not in the case where it exists between the disbelievers. However, if the disbeliever (who has a dispute) is a Dhimmi or Musta'man then it is obligatory (for the Muslims) to aid him, defend him, and remove oppression from him, as it is obligatory to give the Muslim absolute aid if his opponent is a Harbi.

Ibn Al-'Arabi said, "This Ayah serves as a foundation on (how to deal with) Muslim infighting. It is a pillar regarding going to war against the people who rebel due to a misunderstanding. The Companions depended on it (in their actions). It was the Ayah intended by the Prophet when he said: "Ammar [ibn Yassir] will be killed by the party that is in the wrong. '(This Verse) indicates that fighting the rebellious people is a communal obligation; if some people fulfill it, it is not obligatory upon the rest. This is why some of the Companions stayed away from it."

There are many rules that we will discuss as we narrate the events that occurred between the Companions, by the will of Allah.

The system of arbitration and fighting the rebellious group until it returns to the command of Allah is a system that is better than all human attempts at reconciliation. The system (established by Allah) is perfect, and free of faults and weaknesses, as opposed to the pitiful and crippled human attempts. Furthermore, the system carries the traits of absolute sincerity, trustworthiness, and justice. This is because ruling by it is completely devoid of personal gains and whims. It is (a system) free of faults and shortcomings.

The attempts of reconciliation did not end, from the time of the eruption of the war until it was crowned with the reconciliation which was planned by the Commander of the Believers Al-Hasan Bin 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him).

## **The Events That Took Place Before the Battle of the Camel**

The tribulation of the murder of ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) was a cause of many other difficulties, and it cast a shadow over the turbulent events that followed. Many factors contributed to the murder of ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him).

From them are:

Affluence and its effect on the community

The natural transformation of the community during his era

‘Uthmaan’s leadership after ‘Umar (May Allah be pleased with him)

The departure of senior Companions from Madinah

Bigotry based on ignorance

Cessation of new Conquests

Ignorance-based religiosity

Aspirations of the ambitious people

The plots of spiteful people

The planned propagation of complaints against ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him)

The usage of methods and means to incite people

The role of ‘Abdullah Bin Saba’ in the tribulation

The details of these factors have been mentioned in my book Tayseer Al-Karim Al-Mannan Fi Sirat ‘Uthmaan Bin ‘Affan.

The people loved ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) very much because of his good conduct, his closeness to the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him), the Hadeeths that praised him, and the fact that he married two of the Prophet’s daughters and he is called Dhun-nurayn (the one with two lights). He was from the senior Companions and was given glad tidings of Paradise.

He was subjected to oppression in his lifetime by criminal mobs. He was capable of putting an end to them, but he desisted for fear of being the first to shed blood from amongst the Ummah of Muhammad (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him).

His murder was an enormous catastrophe for the Muslims that split the Muslim community and divided the people. The stance of the Companions regarding his murder is that his status and innocence only grew further from the charges that were falsely attributed to him. All of them were in agreement that he was innocent. They also agreed that they must avenge his blood; however they disagreed on how to go about it. This will soon be discussed in detail, by the will of Allah. Now, we wish to shed light upon the role ‘Abdullah Bin Saba’ played in this catastrophe in general.

## **First: The Effect of the Saba'is in Causing the Tribulation**

### **1- 'Abdullah Bin Saba' and the Saba' is: Reality or myth?**

Traditional scholars (from the past) all agreed, without exception, that he was a person who undoubtedly existed in history. However, a few modern scholars, mostly from the Shiites, disagree. The proof of those who deny his existence is their claim that he was "invented" by Sayf Bin 'Umar At-Tamimi, who was criticized in his narration of Hadeeth by some of the scholars of Hadeeth. However, the scholars did consider him trustworthy when it came to reporting historical events.

It should be known that many narrations were reported by Ibn 'Asakir which mention 'Abdullah Bin Saba', and its narrators do not include Sayf Bin 'Umar. Some of the chains of these narrations have been authenticated by Albani.

This is besides the many narrations about Ibn Saba' mentioned in the books of the Shiites, most notably their books about factions, narrators, or Hadeeth. They do not have the aforementioned 'Umar in their chain of narrators either and he is nowhere to be found (in the chain). One of the reasons they started casting doubts on the existence of 'Abdullah Bin Saba' in an attempt to negate the role of spiteful Jewish elements in planting (the seeds of) tribulation amongst the Muslims.

Another reason is (it gives them the opportunity) to accuse the Companions of being the cause of the tribulation, with the intent of destroying their status as great examples and radiant role models amongst the Muslims. Some of the modernists followed their footsteps in denying the existence of 'Abdullah Bin Saba', all of them being Shiite Rafidis. They did this to fulfill their goal, which was to (unsuccessfully) attempt to absolve the origin of their religion from its true founder (i.e. 'Abdullah Bin Saba') – a matter which was agreed upon by the earlier scholars including the Shiites.

It is important to note that the so-called "Sunnis" who denied the existence of 'Abdullah Bin Saba' happened to be students of the Orientalists who were heavily influenced by them. And what heights of shamelessness and ignorance they reached!

His biography filled the books of history and sects. The narrators relayed his actions, and news about him spread far and wide. The historians, scholars of Hadeeth, and the authors of the books of sects, religion, biographies, literature, and lineage, who mentioned the Saba'is, unanimously agreed that 'Abdullah Bin Saba' – the one who is mentioned in the narrations regarding this tribulation – existed.

The role of Ibn Saba' in this (tribulation) was not limited to the narrations in Imam At-Tabari's book on history, nor was it solely based on the narrations of Sayf Bin 'Umar At-Tamimi in it (i.e., At-Tabari's historical treatise). Rather, his reports are spread throughout the narrations of the earlier reporters, and in the books which narrate the events of Islamic history and the beliefs of the various sects and religions that existed at the time.

However, the significance of Imam At-Tabari's book of history over others is that it holds more content and it is more detailed, and nothing more than that. Thus, doubting these events without a chain of narration and without any proof, based on the claim that 'Abdullah Bin Saba' is not mentioned except through the narration of Sayf Bin 'Umar – even though he is mentioned in other authentic narrations which do not include Sayf Bin 'Umar, as we previously mentioned – amounts to nothing but obliterating and discrediting these (authentic) reports and scholars, and fabricating historical facts.

Since when has (research) methodology become a form of logical deductions which contradict many texts and narrations? Can it be a (proper) methodology when it turns away from the many sources, old and

new, which establish Ibn Saba' as a real personality?

Ibn Saba' is mentioned in many of the books of Ahl As-Sunnah. From them are the following:

The Saba'is were mentioned by A'sha Hamadan who died 83 AH. He lampooned Al-Mukhtar Bin Abi 'Ubaid Ath-Thaqafi and his supporters from the people of Kufa, after he fled with the nobles of tribes from Kufa to Basra, with his Statement:

I bear witness that you are Saba'is,

And I am well aware of you, O' emblems of disbelief.

There is also a report narrated by ash-Sha'bi (d. 103 AH, 721 AD) which reveals the deceitfulness of 'Abdullah Bin Saba'.

Ibn Habib (d. 245 AH, 860 AD) spoke about Ibn Saba' and considered him one of the sons of an Ethiopian woman.

Abu 'Asim Khushaysh Bin Asram (d. 253 AH) narrates the event of 'Ali burning a group of the followers of Ibn Saba' in his book Al-Istiqaama.

Al-Jahidh (sd. 255) is considered one of the first (authors) to mention 'Abdullah Bin Saba'.

However, his narration is not the oldest narration regarding Ibn Saba', as was reported by Dr. Jawwad 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him).

The story of 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) the story of burying a group of Zindeeqs (infidels) is established in authentic reports in the (reliable books of Hadeeth such as the) Sahihs, Sunan, and Musnad.

It is not uncommon to see the term 'Zindeeqs' (infidels) being used to describe 'Abdullah Bin Saba' and his sect.

Ibn Taymiyah said," The idea of Rafd only started with the Zindeeq 'Abdullah Bin Saba'."

Adh-Dhahabi said," 'Abdullah (i.e. Bin Saba') is from the extreme Zindeeqs, misguided, and a misguider."

Ibn Hajar said," 'Abdullah Bin Saba' is from the extreme Zindeeqs...he has followers who are called the Saba'is. They believed in the divinity of 'Ali Bin Abi Taalib (May Allah be pleased with him). 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) burned them (to death) during his Caliphate."

Ibn Saba' is also mentioned in the books of Jarh and Ta'deel. Ibn Hibban (d. 354 A.H.) said," Al-Kalbi – Muhammad Bin As-Sa'ib Al-Ikhbari – was a Saba'i from the companions of 'Abdullah Bin Saba', and from those who said, 'Verily 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) did not die, and he will return to this world before the Hour' ... If they see a cloud, they say, 'The Commander of the Believers is inside it. "'

Furthermore, the books of lineage also establish the relationship between the Saba'is and 'Abdullah Bin Saba', and they are extreme Rafidis. Ibn Saba' was originally from Yemen. He was a Jew, and then he pretended to accept Islam.

Sayf Bin 'Umar was not the only source who mentioned 'Abdullah Ibn Saba'. Ibn 'Asakir reports in his history book narrations that do not include Sayf in their chain. These narrations further establish (the existence of) Ibn Saba' and his deeds.

Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (d. 728 A.H.) mentions that the origin of Rafd was from the hypocritical infidels (Zindeeqs). It was innovated by Ibn Saba', the Zindeeq who publicized his extreme beliefs in 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), and claimed that he was the appointed successor of Allah's Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him).

Ash-Shatibi (d. 790 A.H.) mentions that the innovation of the Saba'is is one of the innovations which involve believing in another deity along with Allah, and this was an innovation that differed from others..

In Al-Khutab by Al-Maqrizi (d. 845 A.H.) it is mentioned that 'Abdullah Bin Saba' appeared during the era of 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), innovating the beliefs of Wasiyyah, Raj'a, and reincarnation.

As for the Shiite sources which mention Ibn Saba' (then here is an example): Al-Kishi narrates from Muhammad Bin Qawlawayyah that he said, Sa'd Bin Abdullah informed me that Ya'qub Bin Yazid and Muhammad Bin 'Isa informed him that 'Ali Bin Mahziyar narrated from Fudala Bin Ayyub Al-Azdi who narrated from Abban Bin 'Uthmaan who said:" I heard Abu 'Abdullah saying, 'May Allah curse 'Abdullah Bin Saba' who claimed the divinity of the Commander of the Believers. By Allah, the Commander of the Believers was an obedient slave (of Allah). Woe to those who lie about us! Indeed there is a group of people who say about us what we do not say about ourselves. We ask Allah to disassociate us from them. "According to the Shiites, the chain of this narration is authentic.

In the book Al-Khisal, Al-Qummi reports the same narration, except it is narrated through a different chain which is connected.

The author of Rawdat Al-Jannat mentioned Ibn Saba' upon the tongue of As-Sadiq Al-Masduq (the truthful one, the one who is believed by others; meaning the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him)) who cursed Ibn Saba' and accused him of lying, fabrication, spreading secrets, and misinterpreting and twisting the meanings (of the Verses).

Dr. Sulaiman Al-'Awda mentioned in his book a number of narrations and reports regarding Ibn Saba' which fill the books of the Shiites. The closest thing they serve as are recorded documentations of the later Shiites' attempt to deny 'Abdullah Bin Saba' or cast doubts regarding his reports with the excuse that the sources which narrate his reports are few or weak.

The persona of Ibn Saba' is an undoubted historical fact established in the Sunni and Shiite sources, old and new alike.

Likewise, (it is an established fact) amongst most Orientalists, the likes of Julius Wellhausen, Van Fulton, Levi Dela Vida, Goldzieher, Roynald Nicholson, Dwight Ronaldson and others.

At the same time, the existence of Ibn Saba' is a matter of doubt or a mere myth to a few Orientalists, such as Caetani, Bernard Lewis, and the indecisive Fred Linder – keeping in mind that we do not rely on their accounts of the events of our history.

Whoever studies the Sunni and Shiite sources, whether old or new, becomes certain that the existence of Ibn Saba' is a reality that is established by the historical reports. He is mentioned frequently in the books of creed, Hadeeth, narrators, lineage, literature, and language. This was the methodology followed by many examiners, researchers, and the scholars of Hadeeth.

It seems that the first to doubt the existence of Ibn Saba' were the Orientalists.

The majority of modern Shiites then supported this view; some denied his existence completely.

Later, some Arab researchers, influenced by the views of the Orientalists and the works of modern Shiite authors, also adopted this view. However, all of those (mentioned above) do not have anything to support their doubts and their denial except doubt itself and the reliance on mere whims, fancies, and assumptions.

In order to know more about the Sunni, Shiite, and Orientalist sources and references which mention Ibn Saba', review the books: Tahqiq Mawaqif As-Sahaba Fil Fitnah by Dr. Muhammad Amahzun and 'Abdullah Ibn Saba' Wa Atharuh Fi Ahdath Al-Fitnah Fi Sadr Al-Islam by Dr. Sulaiman Bin Hamad Al-'Awda.

## 2- The Role of 'Abdullah Bin Saba' in Inciting the Tribulation:

During the last years of the Caliphate of 'Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) signs of trouble in the Muslim society began to loom on the horizon, due to the changes that we have listed previously.

Some of the Jews started waiting for an opportunity to take control by taking advantage of the factors which cause tribulation and by pretending to accept Islam and hiding their true beliefs and motives. From amongst them was 'Abdullah Bin Saba', who was nicknamed Ibn As-Sawda' (the son of the black woman).

Even though it is not permissible to make out the character of Ibn Saba' as something larger-than-life and overly sinister as some people did when over-exaggerating his role in the tribulation, it is, at the same time, not permissible to doubt or belittle the role he played in the events of the tribulation. He was one of its causes and he was the most obvious and most severe of them. However, the atmosphere was ripe for this tribulation, which paved the way for him, along with other factors which helped him (achieve his goals).

The most that Ibn Saba' brought were views and beliefs which he claimed, fabricated and created on his own, out of the spite for Islam that Jews held in their nature. He began propagating these views seeking a goal, and this was to infiltrate into the Islamic community in order to attack its unity, ignite the fire of tribulation, and plant the seeds of discord between its members.

Thus, this was one of the factors which led to the murder of the Commander of the Believers 'Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) and the division of the Ummah into sects and factions. In summary, what he did was that he took valid precepts and built upon them invalid ideas which became popular amongst the extremely naïve masses and those who followed their whims.

He treaded various twisted paths to deceive those around him until they (finally) united with him. He went to the Qur'an and started twisting its meanings to suit his invalid claims. He said, "It is amazing how some people claim that Jesus will return and disbelieve in Muhammad's return, when Allah (SWT) says:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لَرَادُّكَ إِلَىٰ مَعَادٍ﴾

*"Indeed, [O Muhammad], He who imposed upon you the Qur'an will take you back to a place of return.  
'(Al-Qasas, 28:85)*

Thus, Muhammad is more deserving of returning than Jesus.”

He also tread upon the path of invalid Qiyas by claiming that ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) was the rightful heir appointed by the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) to succeed him; he said:” There were one thousand prophets, and each prophet had a rightfully appointed heir, and ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) was the rightfully appointed heir of Muhammad.” Then he said:” Muhammad was the seal of the prophets, and ‘Ali was the seal of the heirs.”

When these ideas were firmly set in the hearts of his followers, he moved to his planned goal: for the people to revolt against the Caliph ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him). That happened to coincide with the whims and desires of some of the people when he said to them:” Who does more wrong than the one who did not fulfil the final wishes of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him), who pushed aside ‘Ali, the rightfully appointed successor for the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him), and took control of the Ummah?”

After that, he said to them,” Indeed ‘Uthmaan took it without right, and this (i.e. ‘Ali) is the appointed successor of Allah’s Messenger. Arise for this matter and get it started. Start by criticizing your governors. Show (others) that you are commanding good and forbidding evil so that you may gain the support of the people, and start propagating this message.”

He sent out his propagators and wrote to his supporters in other cities, and they started calling to their message in secret while appearing to be commanding good and forbidding the evil. They started writing letters to people in different cities complaining about faults they fabricated about their governors, and their co-conspirators would write the same back to them.

The members from each city would write to the other cities explaining what they were doing. They would read the letters publicly to the people in their city, and the others would do the same in their cities, until the message reached the entire city.

They publicized their message throughout the lands. However, what they showed was contrary to their intentions. They hid what they would not show. The people in the cities would say,” We are in a state of well-being compared to other people.” The tactics used by Ibn Saba’ become evident through the narrations. He wanted the people to think certain thoughts regarding two of the senior Companions. He made one the victim, and that was ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), and the other the oppressor, and that was ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him).

After that, he attempted to incite the people, especially the people of Kufa, against their rulers in the name of commanding good and forbidding evil. Thus, these people (i.e., his supporters) started rioting against their rulers over the smallest issues. It should be known that he focused his agenda on the Bedouins who had traits that went well with the execution of his plan.

He attracted the Qurra’ (reciters of the Qur’an) among them under the pretext of” commanding good and forbidding evil.” As for the greedy ones, he incited their souls by spreading fabricated, biased rumors against ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him); such as his alleged bias towards his relatives, showering them with money from the Islamic treasury, building a safety zone for himself, as well as other accusations and criticisms which incited the souls of the ignorant masses against ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him).

Then he started encouraging his followers to send letters which carried terrible, shocking news regarding their cities to the other cities. Thus, people from all the cities started believing that the situation couldn’t

get any worse. The ones who benefitted from this were the Saba'is, because if the people believed that, then they could easily ignite the spark of tribulation within the Islamic community.

'Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) realized that there were plots in other provinces, and that the Ummah was facing a bad time. He said: "By Allah, the millstone [of evil] is churning. 'Uthmaan is blessed if he dies without moving it."

Egypt was the country where Ibn Saba' resided. There he started organizing his assault against 'Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) there, urging the people to go to Madiinah and stir up unrest on the premise that 'Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) had become Caliph unlawfully by snatching it from 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), who was the true heir of the Messenger of Allah.

However, when the Bedouins came to Madinah and met with the Companions, they denied writing the letters that had been attributed to them, and the Bedouins did not receive any encouragement from them.

They found 'Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) respecting the rights (of others). He even debated with them regarding their accusations and refuted their claims and explained to them the truth regarding his actions. (They were shocked) to the extent that one of their leaders, Malik Bin Al-Ashtar An-Nakha'i said, "Perhaps he was plotted against, as well as you against you all."

Adh-Dhahabi considered 'Abdullah Bin Saba' to be the one who incited the tribulation and planted the seeds of strife and resentment toward the governors, then toward the Commander of the Believers 'Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him).

Ibn Kathir was of the view that the root cause of the plots against 'Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) was due to Ibn Saba's presence (amongst the Muslims), his journey to Egypt and his propagation of fabricated ideas and stories amongst the people. As a result, many of the Egyptians were deceived by him.

Indeed, the famous historians and scholars from the predecessors as well as the successors of the Ummah unanimously agreed that Ibn Saba' appeared amongst the Muslims bringing Saba'i beliefs, ideas, and plots in order to sway the Muslims away from their religion and the obedience of their leader and to cause division and conflict between them.

Some of the criminal mobs of society united with him and created the well-known Saba'i sect, which was one of the causes of the tribulation which resulted in the murder of 'Uthmaan Bin 'Affan, and its aftermath such as the Battles of the Camel and Siffin and others.

When studying the plot of the Saba'is, it appears to have been much more organized than imagined. It was efficient in propagating its message and spreading its ideology, and in controlling the path of its propaganda and influencing the riffraff amongst the people.

It was also energetic in establishing branches, whether in Basra, Kufa, or Egypt, while taking advantage of tribal partisanship. It also had the ability to stir the hidden complaints of the Bedouins, slaves, and non-Arabs, through knowledge of the sensitive issues in their lives and their personal aspirations.

## **Second: The difference amongst the Companions regarding the way 'Uthmaan's murderers should be rightfully executed.**

The disagreement that took place with the Leader of the Believers 'Ali on one side and Talhah, Az-Zubayr and Aishah on the other, and (then) between 'Ali and Mu'awiyah, (May Allah be pleased with them) was not due to any opposition on their part regarding 'Ali's right to be the Caliph or to his



leadership of the Muslims. In fact, they unanimously agreed about this issue. Ibn Hazm said in this regard,” Mu’awiyah never once denied the merit of ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) or his right to be the Caliph. However his Ijtihad (an Islamic judgment based on knowledge) led him to view that priority should be given to rightfully avenging the assassination of Uthman (May Allah be pleased with him) before pledging allegiance to ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him). He believed that he was the one most responsible for dealing with ‘Uthmaan’s murderers.”

Ibn Taymiyyah stated,” Mu’awiyah never claimed the position of Caliph for himself and no one pledged allegiance to him as Caliph when he fought ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him). He never fought on the basis that he was a Caliph or even that he was entitled to be the Caliph. The others acknowledged that and Mu’awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) also admitted this to whoever questioned him regarding it. Furthermore, Mu’awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) and his supporters did not hold the view that they should initiate a battle with ‘Ali, nor did they do so...”

He also said,” Each of the differing groups agree on and acknowledge the fact that Mu’awiyah was not equally entitled to the position of Caliph as ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) was and that he could not possibly be the Caliph as long as it was possible for ‘Ali to take this position. This is because ‘Ali’s merit, knowledge, piety, courage and other virtues were apparent and well-known among them, just as was the case with his brothers; Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, and ‘Uthmaan, (May Allah be pleased with them).

Thus, the root cause of the difference between them was not an opposition or criticism on their part to ‘Ali’s leadership, but their disagreement as to how to solve the problem (of applying the death penalty to the murderers of ‘Uthmaan). They never differed on this fundamental principle (that ‘Uthmaan’s death should be avenged), but only on how to resolve this issue most effectively. The Commander of the Believers ‘Ali, was in complete agreement that ‘Uthmaan’s murderers had to be executed by law, but he believed that this issue should be put aside temporarily until the situation stabilized and calmed down and unity was attained.

An-Nawawi said,” You should be aware of the fact that the cause of these battles was that the matter was confusing. Due to the great amount of confusion, they all arrived to different views (as to how to deal with it Islamically) and divided into three groups. One group believed, based on their Islamic knowledge and deduction, that the truth was on their side and that those who opposed this truth were transgressors. According to their belief, they were then required (Islamically) to support the truth and fight the transgressors, and that is exactly what they did. If this was true, it would then be impermissible for anyone to refrain from helping their just ruler in fighting the transgressing party. The second group reached the opposite conclusion. Their knowledge and deduction led them to believe that the truth was on the other side. Thus (they believed) that they were required to support them and fight the transgressors against them.

The third group remained confused and was unable to determine which side was correct, so they refrained from getting involved with either group. In this context, they considered removing themselves from this dispute as the correct approach because it is forbidden to fight another Muslim unless it is clear that he (Islamically) deserves it. Had this third group, in their attempt to deduce the truth, concluded clearly that either side was correct, then in that case it would be forbidden for them to hold back from supporting them and fighting those transgressing against them.”

### **Third - The position of the avengers of ‘Uthmaan Bin ‘Affan’s blood, such as Talhah, Az-Zubayr, Aishah, Mu’awiyah and those who subscribed to their view:**

#### **1-Aishah, (May Allah be pleased with her) (Mother of the Believers):**

Having received the news of ‘Uthmaan Bin ‘Affan’s death (May Allah be pleased with him) as she was on her way back from Makkah to Madinah, Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) decided to turn around and head back to Makkah. Immediately, she entered the Masjid Al-Haraam (“Holy Sanctuary”) and went straight to the Hajar Al-Aswad (“Black Stone”) where she concealed herself. Upon doing so, the people gathered around her and then she began to appeal to them by saying: “O people! Indeed, the mob belongs to the people of the major cities and the people of Al-Mayaah, and concerning them the servants of Madinah have reached a consensus to chastise the instigators of this malicious murder. The matter of sanctity must be protected from them, as this pertains to issues of precedence that nothing else can rectify. For this reason, pursue them and challenge them to mend their ways but when they fail to admit the truth in breach of their faith then admonish them and hasten to them with hostility. Their actions certainly contradict their words, with their shedding of unlawful blood, usurping the sanctified land, appropriating unlawful money and violating the sacred month. By Allah! ‘Uthmaan’s toe is far better than a vast land filled with the likes of them. Therefore seek redemption with whoever will unite with you concerning it until they fear you and become fearful of each other to the point of their own fragmentation. By Allah! If that which they are in violation of is a sin, we shall be redeemed of it just as gold is cleared of impurities or a garment is cleansed of filth. In that sense, infiltrate them in the same way that a garment is infiltrated by water.”

There is a narration stating that after Aishah had turned back and gone to Makkah, ‘Abdullah Bin ‘Amir Al-Hadrami – the then Governor of Makkah – went out to her and said: “What caused you to come back, O Umm Al-Mu’minin?” She replied: “My return is due to ‘Uthmaan’s unjust murder and the matter will never be resolved in this state of tumult. You should therefore demand vengeance for ‘Uthmaan’s murder and offer solace to Islam.”

Aishah’s commendation of ‘Uthmaan and legal chastisement of his murderers is verified by authentic, sound documentation, which gives further testimony to the sayings of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) pertaining to ‘Uthmaan’s merits and virtues. On the authority of Fatimah Bint ‘Abd Ar-Rahman Al-Yaskuriyyah, she narrated that her mother had been making enquiries to Aishah when she received a message from her paternal uncle that said: “Indeed, one of your brethren extends greeting of peace to you and enquires to you concerning ‘Uthmaan Bin ‘Affan, for verily the people are rallying against him” . Aishah’s reply was: “May Allah’s curse be on whosoever curses him as, by Allah, he was like a pillar to the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) whenever he (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) needed support and when Jibril (upon him peace) was revealing the Qur’an to him, during which time the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) would say: ‘Write, ‘Uthmaan. ‘Certainly, Allah does not grant someone this station except out of honor of Himself and His Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him).”

On the authority of Masruq, Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) is reported to have said: “When ‘Uthmaan was killed, you left him like an unblemished garment from dirt. You then closed in on him and butchered him as if you were butchering a ram.” Masruq then said to her: “That is according to you, while it was really you who wrote to the people instructing them to go out to him.” To that Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) remarked: “No, by Him in Whom the Mu’minun believe and the Kufar disbelieve! I never wrote to him right up until this very gathering.”

Many of the lies invented by the Saba'ites (a contingent of insurgents led by 'Abdullah Bin Saba') about the person of 'Uthmaan Bin 'Affan (May Allah be pleased with him) became widespread and they even went so far as to write letters to the citizens of the major cities in which they slandered and told untruths about the Mother of the Believers, Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her). Despite these being weak and fabricated narrations, the chains of which trace back to recognised liars, they have unfortunately managed to convince some contemporaries who continue to perpetuate their circulation. The relationship falsely depicted between Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) and 'Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) completely contradicts what is mentioned in the authentic, reliable narrations. For example, some fabricated narrations allege that Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) conspired against 'Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him); that she spoke of discord between them and that she played a fundamental, active role in his killing. Even the likes of At-Tabari, who represents a major source of reference for many historians, relate these allegations. In his book, he writes: "'Ali Bin Ahmad Bin Al-Hasan Al-'Ajli wrote to me informing me that Al-Husayn Bin Nasr Al-'Attar reported that upon arriving in Sarif (a place between Makkah and Madinah), Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) decided to return to Makkah. There, she was encountered by 'Abd Bin Umm Kilab, also known as 'Abd Bin Abu Salamah through his mother's side, to whom she said, 'Wait. He responded, 'They killed 'Uthmaan Bin 'Affan ((May Allah be pleased with him)) after having resided there for eight days'. She said," Then what did they do?" He answered, 'They then convened with the citizens of Madinah who permitted them to rectify matters for the best, and so they reached a consensus on 'Ali Bin Abi Taalib'. She exclaimed, 'Take me back! Take me back! By Allah, if that proves to be the case then it is over for your friend (i.e. 'Ali)!"

As she set out to Makkah, she began to proclaim," By Allah! 'Uthmaan was killed unjustly. By Allah! It is our duty to avenge his blood." Ibn Umm Kilab then said to her," Why, when the first one to initiate it was you? All this time, you have been saying: 'Kill the old fool! He has disbelieved (in Allah). "' She remarked:" On the contrary! They pretended to appeal to him and instead they killed him. That is what you said and it is what they say. My final Statement is better than my first." Ibn Umm Kilab therefore began to recite:

*"From You is the beginning and from You are the vicissitudes of fate*

*From You is the wind and from You is the rain*

*And you commissioned the killing of the leader*

*And you said to us: 'Verily, he has committed disbelief.'"*

Upon her arrival in Makkah, she dismounted at the door of the Masjid and headed towards the Hajar Al-Aswad ("Black Stone") where she concealed herself and then the people began to gather around her. At that point, she said to them: "Indeed, 'Uthmaan was killed unjustly. By Allah! I demand that you avenge his blood!"

As we can see, At-Tabari's account is not viable; suffice it to say that one the antecedents ascribed to the chain of narration is Nasr Bin Mazahim Al-'Attar who is categorised in the books of Ar-Rijal ("antecedents") by the following characteristics: Shi'ite, denied, abandoned and flogged. The second problem is that the narration is also based on the authority of 'Umar Bin Sa'ad who was the commander of the detachment that killed Al-Husayn (May Allah be pleased with him) and who is therefore considered unrecognised in the science of Hadeeth antecedents. Hence, based on a flawed chain of narration, in two respects, the account is not accepted as authentic. In fact, this applies to the plethora of weak and fabricated narrations that emerge out of history books and literature which, like the

aforementioned narration, cannot stand the test of scientific scrutiny due to being based on a crooked attempt to defame our Mother Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her).

As for the narrations that appear in the treatise Al-Aqdul Farid (The Unrivalled Creed), the books entitled Al-Aghani (The Book of Songs), Tarikh Al-Ya'qubi (Ya'qubi's History), Tarikh Al-Mas'udi (Mas'udi's History), Al-Ansab Al-Ashraf (Noble Ancestors) and a long list of other books, they provide ample proof and information regarding the political role Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) played during the lifetime of 'Uthmaan Bin 'Affan (May Allah be pleased with him). As such, her opposition is not deemed derogatory in any of the authentic narrations but contrary to such claims they testify to her integrity. As a matter of fact, there appear to be more unsubstantiated narrations about her than verified ones, which lend justification to the Statement that narrations without recognised chains need not be related at all, since this only adds to the corruption already present in the body of the texts. Rather, only narrations that stand the test of scrutiny and are closer to the truth should be of concern.

The respected researcher, Fatima Muhammad Ahmad, conducted an extensive study of the chains and textual bodies of narrations wherein she discusses the political role of Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) in connection with the controversial events. She goes on to scrutinize narrations that talk of the political discord between Aishah and 'Uthmaan in the works of Tabari and others and by doing so successfully proves their falseness and deceptiveness. She later states: "It is necessary to mention here that we should refrain from mentioning them [fabricated narrations] altogether in order to prevent them from creeping in and reaching us through some reliable source. On the contrary, the only means by which these narrations are able to spread is through the perpetrators of partisanship, deceit and rebelliousness in an attempt to justify their own claims and interests. Moreover, they seek to devise a history of discord and denial between 'Uthmaan and Aishah, and between 'Uthmaan and the other Sahaba (Companions) that in reality did not exist.

If it were true that Aishah encouraged the rebels to incite against 'Uthmaan Bin 'Affan (May Allah be pleased with him), then one would have expected her to sympathize with these rebels in some way; yet Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) did nothing of the sort. Besides, if anything from these narrations proved to be even slightly true in their descriptions of the Mother of the Believers Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her), as well as of those Companions who joined with her, then we could never accept them on the basis of what we know of their excellent virtues in accordance with the Statements of Allah and His Messenger (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him); ultimately, this alone should suffice to disprove such narrations. Nevertheless, we read these narrations and still find ourselves collecting together all the religious, scientific and historical facts in order to ascertain their credibility, or lack of it. Needless to say, the allegations levied against Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) are neither verified in terms of their chains of narration nor through the lens of scientific reason.

## **2- Talhah and Az-Zubayr (May Allah be pleased with them)**

Talhah, Az-Zubayr and a group of the Companions who were with them demanded the Amir Al-Mu'minin, 'Ali Bin Abi Taalib (May Allah be pleased with him), to hasten in punishing the culprits responsible for 'Uthmaan's murder. In spite of this, the Amir Al-Mu'minin, 'Ali, said to them, "O brothers! I am not ignorant of what you know but how should I deal with a people that do not have authority over us nor do we have authority over them? Are they not the ones with whom your slaves revolted with, and your fellow 'Arab Bedouin returned to? While they were your friends did they not humiliate you? In this case, do you not realise the delicacy of the situation that you are referring to?" When they replied in the negative, he remarked, "Then no, by Allah! I will only consider one option, which you will be able to understand by the will of Allah, for this is certainly a matter of Jahiliyyah (ignorance). Those people definitely have substance, and that is that the Shaytan (Satan) did not allow for the regulation of the Shari'ah (Islamic law) whatsoever and he has not left that land ever since he seized

control of it. It is the people involved that need to be liberated from such matters. One party is of the same opinion as you while the other party is not and therefore action cannot be taken until the people calm down, hearts are appeased and rights are granted. So, please wait. I will do my duty as soon as conditions allow me.”

In spite of this being a wise strategy, some of them failed to appreciate it, as people tend to do once they are consumed by anger until the reality is obscured and they are unable to make a sound judgment. Under such inverted circumstances, they began to consider the impossible, which is why they said, “We have decided that we must not put it off” and instead they insisted on exercising the Hudud (legal punishment) upon ‘Uthmaan’s killers.”

‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) expressed his concern at this and tried to convince them that neither he nor they should do anything under strained circumstances like those. He called out, “When a slave is relieved of his covenant, he does not go back to his masters!” At that, the Saba’ites and the Arabs grumbled and said, “Our tomorrow is like that and we will not be able to protest with them on anything!” It was as if the instigators of Fitnah (controversy; discord) among the Saba’ites had become beset with the idea that the Caliph wanted to deprive them of their aides and supporters who had been of great assistance to them and for this reason they went to stay in close proximity to them. This stirred matter further, particularly once they began to provoke the ‘Arabs to remain with them, which many of them did, such that eventually they were staying in the same place as each other. Hence, on the third day after the Bay’ah (“pledging of allegiance”), ‘Ali went out and said to them: “Leave the Arabs alone.” He also said: “O community of Arabs! Go to your watering holes,” but the Saba’ites refused to listen and the Arabs followed suit. ‘Ali therefore went into his house, following which Talhah, Az-Zubayr and a number of the Sahaba (Companions) of the Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) entered upon him. There, ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) said to them, “Beware of your vendettas!” So they said in return, “They have become dim-sighted concerning that.” ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) therefore said to them: “After today, by Allah, I am dim-sighted and reject them.” He then began to recite:

*“If my nation tendered their distinguished figures to me,*

*I would command them with a rule that would send their enemies dizzy.”*

Up until this moment, ‘Ali, Talhah, Az-Zubayr and the rest of the Sahaba appeared to be in total agreement over the necessity of refraining from chastising whoever dissented from the community, challenged it and killed the Caliph, not forgetting the harm they caused to the religion in general. So far, they had shown cooperation with regards to the matter and ‘Ali’s position had seemed completely logical, whereby the Sahaba were in concord with him. However, how they dealt with the mob that began to dominate matters in an arbitrary manner that would soon result in the slaves and Arabs joining forces with them to demand of the people of Madinah whatever they desired. Thus, there had been no effort to fight against them up until then.

Talhah and Az-Zubayr approached ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) to propose that he should suppress the Saba’ites within his vicinity. On this subject, Talhah (May Allah be pleased with him) said to him: “Let me come to Al-Basra, as you will not be ambushed so long as I am riding with you.” Likewise, Az-Zubayr (May Allah be pleased with him) said: “Let me come to Al-Kufa, as you will not be ambushed so long as I am riding with you.” However, ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), after some consideration, said to them: “I will think about it.”

Perhaps it was because of ‘Ali’s fear of Fitnah (controversy; discord) and the eruption of a civil war within Madinah that he did not succumb to Talhah and Az-Zubayr’s requests. In fact, Talhah and Az-Zubayr’s proposal to ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) serves as proof of their conviction at this

particular time with what ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) said regarding the penetration of the mob from within, namely, that they exercised authority over the Muslims, though the Muslims did not exercise authority over them. In light of this, Talhah and Az-Zubayr (May Allah be pleased with him) tried to shorten the period of postponement before enforcing the law of Allah upon them as well as strengthening ‘Ali’s position in order to facilitate its successful execution. Although the Companions had waited in anticipation of ‘Ali’s decision in that regard, ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) believed the Caliphate was a trust and so whatever happened had to be handled carefully and accordingly, and also that Fitnah was from the Fire, therefore the more it is kindled, the greater the blaze.

Az-Zubayr, Talhah and the other Companions who had banded with them witnessed the passing of four months since the time of ‘Uthmaan’s killing, while ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) could still not reach a decision to chastise ‘Uthmaan’s killers. This was due to the fact that those who had gone out against ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) had infiltrated and gained a footing within ‘Ali’s army. Talhah and Az-Zubayr (May Allah be pleased with him) then said to ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him),” If we are compelled to leave Madinah then we will either strive to overcome the situation or we can submit.” So ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) said,” I will contain the situation, it will not be seized. On the other hand, in the event that I do not find a way out, the last resort will be to deal with it with an iron hand.”

‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) was aware that their departure from Madinah was their way of arriving at some kind of a solution, which he did not forbid them from doing. Perhaps this was because he was also keen to resolve the problem, which he had tried to do, in his own special way.

Some modern researchers have engaged in futile explanations of the text related to Talhah and Az-Zubayr’s request for permission to go to Basra and Al-Kufa, the cavalry ambush to defeat the mob over there, and ‘Ali’s refusal to comply – to no avail. In this regard, they maintain:” He was scared in front of the two men and he feared that they would come back and reopen the whole issue. He wanted to dismiss ‘Uthmaan’s governors from the provinces while they were in his company, and so forth. Of course, speculations such as these attribute more to the text than it can bear.” Furthermore, it is wrong and exceeds the bounds of truth regarding the integrity of the Companions.

Az-Zubayr and Talhah had gone to Makkah and met with innumerable remorseful Muslims who sought the legal punishment of ‘Uthmaan’s killers (May Allah be pleased with him). This will be discussed in greater detail at a later stage, with the permission of Allah.

### **3- Mu’awiyah Bin Abi Sufyan (May Allah be pleased with him):**

The topic of ‘Ali and Mu’awiyah’s differences has dominated discussions old and new. This is primarily because of ‘Ali’s relinquishing of the Caliphate to Mu’awiyah and the latter’s refusal to pledge his loyalty to ‘Ali due to him having dismissed Mu’awiyah from his post as Governor of Sham (Levant). A narration cited in the book entitled *Al-Imamah Wa As-Siyasah* (The Imamate and Politics) attributed to Ibn Qutayba Ad-Dinwari, mentions that Mu’awiyah laid claim to the Caliphate. This is based on what Ibn Al-Kawā’ said to Abi Musa Al-Ash’ari (May Allah be pleased with him) in another narration: “Know that Mu’awiyah is a Taleeq of Islam (name of those Makkans who remained heathen until the surrender of Makkah) and that his father is the head of the confederates (parties). He laid claim to the Caliphate without consultation. Should he speak the truth to you then it is permissible for you to denounce him and if he lies to you then it is impermissible for you to speak to him.”

This Statement does not apply to the Amir Al-Mu’minin, ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), as it is in reference to the Imamate, but as for what we find written in the book *Al-Imamah Wa As-Siyasah* (The

Imamate and Politics), we shall expose the lies and false testimonies used to distort historical facts at a more appropriate time by the permission of Allah (SWT).

As we said earlier, history and literary books are littered with false and weak narrations alleging all sorts of crooked claims, such as the one that states that Mu'awiyah vied with 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) for the sake of the monarchy, leadership and authority.

The truth of the matter is that the discrepancy between 'Ali and Mu'awiyah pertained to Mu'awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) and his comrade's accession to pledge loyalty to 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) before or after the legal chastisement of 'Uthmaan's killers. With respect to the Caliphate, this does not represent an issue of concern, given that Mu'awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) and the surrounding people of Sham (Levant) shared the view that once 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) had taken action against 'Uthmaan's killers, they would subsequently offer their pledge of allegiance to him.

The judge Ibn Al-Arabi maintains that the motive behind the fighting between the people of Sham and Iraq derived from the emergence of decisive incidents. On one hand, the people of Iraq advocated pledging allegiance to 'Ali's Caliphate and the consolidation of an Imam (religious leader) whilst the others, i.e. the people of Sham, called for heightened reprisals against 'Uthmaan's killers, declaring, "We will not pledge allegiance to whoever accommodates his killers."

In the view of the Imam of the Haramayn ("two holy sanctuaries, i.e. Makkah and Madinah), Al-Jawayni, he asserts in his Lama 'Al-Adillah (The Glimmer of Proofs) that even if Mu'awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) had fought against 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him), he neither denied his Imamate nor laid claim to it himself, and although he demanded 'Uthmaan's killers thinking he was right, he was in fact wrong.

Al-Haytami says: "Among the doctrines of the Ahl As-Sunnah Wa Al-Jama'ah is the stance that whatever ensued between Mu'awiyah and 'Ali during the wars, Mu'awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) did not contest 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) over the Caliphate based on his acknowledgement of 'Ali's right and legal claim to it. Consequently, it was not this that prompted the Fitnah, rather it was instigated because Mu'awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) was 'Uthmaan's paternal cousin and 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) rejected this.

Closely connected narrations suggest that Mu'awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) had taken his stance in pursuit of 'Uthmaan's vengeance, although he had declared that he would enter into allegiance with 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) in the event that legal punishment was carried out against 'Uthmaan's killers. Had it been incumbent upon Mu'awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) to deal with the assassins and take revenge as a pretext for fighting against 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) and seizing control, the question arises then of what would have happened if 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) had been able to execute legal punishment on them?

Inevitably, the result would have seen Mu'awiyah's submission to 'Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) and the offering of his allegiance, given that he would have been obliged to do that within that controversial milieu, as would all of those who had waged war with him on the premise that they were taking vengeance on 'Uthmaan's killers. In the view that Mu'awiyah had ulterior motives that he had not made apparent, this position would have proven extremely risky and he would not have been able to accomplish his ambitions even if he were a covetous person.

It is noteworthy to state at this point that Mu'awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) was one of the scribes of Revelation, among the best of the Companions, most honest in his speech and one of the most insightful amongst them. In light of that, how could he have considered fighting against the official



Caliph and spilling the blood of Muslims all for the sake of a fleeting monarchy? Was it not he who said: “By Allah! I do not choose between two things: Allah and other than Allah, except that I choose Allah over the other.” It is verified on the authority of the Messenger of Allah (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) that he said concerning Mu’awiyah: “O Allah! Make him a rightly guided guide and guide through him.” And he (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) also said: “O Allah! Teach him the Book [the Qur’an] and protect him from the punishment.”

By taking the stance that he did concerning the murder of ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him), Mu’awiyah made the mistake of displaying his refusal to pledge loyalty to ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) before he had taken the initiative to chastise the culprits. In addition to that, Mu’awiyah feared for himself due to his previous attitude with the mob who he had provoked to kill him. However, he had been requested to facilitate this for them with the knowledge that demanding revenge was not a fit judgment. Rather, offering his obedience, raising his claim to the ruler and demanding his rights from him would have been the proper course of action for him to take. The leaders of fatwa (legal rulings) are agreed on the point that it is not permissible for anyone to chastise someone else and take his right without the ruling authority or whoever the ruling authority has appointed to office, as this leads to Fitnah and spreads chaos.

It is plausible to say that Mu’awiyah (May Allah be pleased with him) was striving on the basis on a misinterpretation that had ardently consumed his mind to the extent that he believed he was in the right. Following this, he stood up to address the people of Sham (Levant), after he had assembled them and reminded them that he was the heir of ‘Uthmaan (his paternal cousin) who had been was slain unjustly, then he recited the Verse:

﴿وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُومًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لَوْلِيَّهِ سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يَسْرِفُ فِي الْقَتْلِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مَنْصُورًا﴾

*“And whoever is killed wrongfully is killed wrongfully (‘mazluman’: intentionally with hostility and oppression and not by mistake), We have given his heir the authority [to demand ‘qisaas’: law of equality in punishment or to forgive, or to take ‘diyah’: blood money]. But let him not exceed limits in the matter of taking life (i.e. he should not kill except the killer). Verily, he is helped (by the Islamic law)” ]. (Al-Isra’, 17:33)*

He then went on to say: “I would like you to inform me from yourselves about ‘Uthmaan’s killing” . At that point, the people of Sham stood up in unison and responded by demanding vengeance for ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) and it was on that premise that they pledged their allegiance to him, accorded him their pacts and covenants, and vowed to offer him every assistance, financially and physically, until they had taken their revenge or Allah had caused them to perish.

If we were to draw a comparison between Talhah and Az-Zubayr on one side and Mu’awiyah on the other, we would notice that Talhah and Az-Zubayr were closer to the truth than Mu’awiyah was (May Allah be pleased with him) in four respects:

- (1) they pledged allegiance to ‘Ali in compliance with their acknowledgment of his precedence and merits, while Mu’awiyah did not despite acknowledging his precedence
- (2) their superior status from the Islamic and Muslim perspective, while Mu’awiyah is indisputably not one of them
- (3) they only wanted to kill the Kharijites (Dissenters) over the death of ‘Uthmaan (May Allah be pleased with him) and they did not buttress the battle against ‘Ali (May Allah be pleased with him) and his