

MIFTAAH SEMINAR

THE END OF AN ERA



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The End of an Era – Martyrdom of Ali (RA)

Introduction to Ali Ibn Abi Talib (RA)

- Ali Ibn Abi Talib (RA) was one of the earliest Muslims and the first youngster to accept Islam.
- He never prostrated to an idol during his childhood, unlike the Arabs of Jahiliyyah.
- The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ raised Ali (RA).
 - Ali's father, Abu Talib, was financially distressed, so the Prophet ﷺ offered to care for Ali as Abu Talib had once cared for him.
 - This upbringing led Ali (RA) to grow up closely attached to the Prophet ﷺ, not just as a cousin but as a constant companion.

Ali's (RA) Care for the Prophet ﷺ

- Ali (RA) was deeply aware of the Prophet's ﷺ needs.
 - **Narration:** Ali (RA) noticed the Prophet ﷺ hadn't eaten for days and quietly sought work.
 - He worked for a man with a date orchard, pulling water for irrigation.
 - After earning 16 dates, Ali (RA) brought them to the Prophet ﷺ and said: *"I saw you were hungry, so please eat."*

Relationship Between the Prophet ﷺ and Ali (RA)

- The Prophet ﷺ frequently visited the home of Ali and Fatima (RA), often on a daily basis.
- After returning from any journey, the Prophet ﷺ would visit Fatima (RA)'s home first.

Battle of Ahzab (The Battle of the Trench)

- Ali's bravery shone during the **Battle of Ahzab** (Al-Khandaq), particularly in his duel with Amr ibn Abd Wudd.
 - Amr ibn Abd Wudd was a renowned warrior, capable of fighting 100 men.
 - He crossed the trench and challenged the Muslims to single combat.
 - Ali (RA) repeatedly sought permission from the Prophet ﷺ to face him. Initially, the Prophet ﷺ declined but eventually allowed him.
 - **Duel:**
 - Amr mocked Ali (RA), saying: *"I do not want to soil my sword with the blood of a youngster."*
 - Ali (RA) replied: *"But I want to soil my sword with your blood!"*
 - During the duel, Amr struck Ali's shield, piercing it and wounding his head.
 - Ali (RA) retaliated with a single blow, killing Amr.
 - The Muslims exclaimed "Allahu Akbar!" upon seeing Amr defeated, discouraging the Quraysh from further attempts to cross the trench.

Ali's Worship and Piety

- Ali (RA) was deeply connected to Allah and would cry during worship.
 - **Description:**
 - He was described as "يتململ تململ السليم" (squirming like a

- snake-bitten person) while crying to Allah.
- He addressed the dunya, saying: “Oh dunya, you have your eyes on me? Never! Go trick someone else. I have divorced you three times.”

Ali (RA) as Khalifa

- After the assassination of Uthman (RA), Ali (RA) was appointed as the fourth Khalifa.
 - **Initial Response:** Ali (RA) rebuked his sons for not guarding Uthman (RA) effectively.
 - Despite his reluctance, people unanimously pledged allegiance to him as the rightful leader.
- Ali (RA)'s priorities included:
 - Avenge Uthman (RA)'s assassination.
 - Stabilize the governance of the Muslim state.

Conflicts and Misunderstandings

- Ali (RA) sought to organize the state before pursuing Uthman (RA)'s killers, which led to disagreements among the companions.
- **Key Figures:**
 - Aisha (RA), Talha (RA), and Zubair (RA) believed avenging Uthman (RA) was the first priority.
- Miscommunication fueled tensions, as instigators like Abdullah ibn Saba spread rumors.

Battle of Jamal (Battle of the Camel)

- Aisha (RA) and her supporters traveled to Iraq for resolution. Ali (RA) also moved toward Iraq to address the issue.
- Both groups initially agreed to discussions, but instigators provoked fighting.
 - Aisha (RA)'s camel became the focal point of the battle.

- Ali (RA) ordered the camel's legs cut to stop the fighting and ensure her safety.
- After the battle, Ali (RA) personally ensured Aisha (RA) was escorted back to Medina with honor.

Background and Correspondence with Muawiya ibn Abi Sufyan (RA)

- **Key Issue:** Muawiya (RA) did not challenge Ali's (RA) legitimacy as the caliph but insisted that avenging Uthman's (RA) murder must take precedence before other governance matters.
- **Actions Taken by Muawiya (RA):**
 - Initiated investigations to locate and capture individuals involved in the siege of Uthman (RA).
 - Pressured Ali (RA) to act, stating the people of Sham (modern-day Syria) would not pledge allegiance until justice was served.
- **Response of Ali (RA):**
 - Affirmed his commitment to addressing Uthman's murder but emphasized the need for collective effort and cooperation across the Muslim ummah to maintain stability.
 - Asserted that resolving this matter alone would not suffice without maintaining the broader welfare of the ummah.

The Build-Up to the Battle

- **Skirmishes Begin:**
 - Initial clashes between small groups occurred, highlighting the reluctance of both sides to engage in full-scale war.
 - Despite differences, soldiers from both armies exhibited remarkable camaraderie, sharing water and provisions during pauses in fighting.
- **Proposed Resolution:**
 - Muawiya (RA) presented the idea of arbitration, invoking the Qur'an for guidance.

- Both sides agreed to appoint mediators:
 - **Muawiya's side:** Amr ibn Al-Aas (RA).
 - **Ali's side:** Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari (RA).

The Incident of Tahkeem (Arbitration)

- Mediators were tasked with resolving the conflict based on the Qur'an and the principles of justice.
- Terms included:
 - Binding decisions on both parties.
 - Replacement of mediators if any passed away during the process.
- **Khawarij Rebellion:**
 - The Prophet ﷺ warned of a group arising from Dhul Khuwaisara's lineage:

إِنَّهُ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ ضَيْضِيءٍ هَذَا قَوْمٌ يَخْفِزُ أَحَدَكُمْ صَلَاتَهُ مَعَ صَلَاتِهِمْ وَصِيَامَهُ مَعَ صِيَامِهِمْ، يَمْرُقُونَ مِنَ الدِّينِ مُزُوقٍ الشَّهْمِ مِنَ الرَّمِيَّةِ

"From the progeny of this man will arise people whose worship will make yours seem insignificant, yet they will leave Islam as an arrow pierces its target."

- **Characteristics of the Khawarij:**
 - Zealous worshippers with evident marks of prostration.
 - Misguided, rigid in understanding, and violent in actions.
- These extremists, later known as the **Khawarij**, rebelled against Ali (RA), declaring him a disbeliever. Ali (RA) refrained from fighting them until they began looting, killing, and creating chaos.
- **Battle at Nahrawan:**
 - The Khawarij formed an army and faced Ali (RA) near the river Nahrawan. Before the battle, Ali (RA) sent Abdullah ibn Abbas (RA) to reason with them.

Dialogue with Abdullah ibn Abbas:

- **Criticism of Arbitration (Tahkeem):**

- The Khawarij claimed that appointing arbitrators contradicted:
 - **إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ** *"The decision is only for Allah."* (Yusuf, 40)
 - **وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ** *"Whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed, they are disbelievers."* (Al-Ma'idah, 44).

- Abdullah ibn Abbas responded with examples of arbitration in the Quran:

- **For compensating hunted animals:**

- **يَحْكُمُ بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ** *"Judged by two just men among you."* (Al-Ma'idah, 95).

- **For resolving marital disputes:**

- **فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا** *"Appoint one arbitrator from his family and one from hers."* (An-Nisa, 35).
- He argued that if arbitration is valid for minor matters, it is justified in major conflicts between Muslims.

- **Criticism of Not Taking Captives at the Battle of Jamal:**

- The Khawarij questioned why captives were not taken.
- Abdullah ibn Abbas reminded them that Aisha (RA), the Prophet's wife, was present, asking, *"Would you consider it permissible to enslave your own mother?"*
- This silenced their argument.

- **Erasing the Title "Amir al-Mu'mineen":**

- The Khawarij objected to Ali (RA) omitting this title in the letter of arbitration.
- Ibn Abbas cited the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, where the Prophet ﷺ instructed Ali (RA) to erase "Rasulullah" when the Quraysh objected.
- He argued that if the Prophet ﷺ could erase his title for peace, Ali (RA) could do the same.

- **Impact:**

- Approximately 2,000 Khawarij returned to Ali's side, but a significant faction remained defiant.

Assassination Plot Against Ali, Muawiya, and Amr ibn Al-Aas (RA)

- **The Plan:**

- Three Khawarij plotted to assassinate key leaders on the 17th of Ramadan:
 - Abdulrahman Ibn Muljam assigned to Ali ibn Abi Talib (RA)
 - Amr ibn Abdillah assigned to Muawiya ibn Abi Sufyan (RA)
 - Bukar assigned to Amr ibn Al-Aas (RA)

- **Execution of the Plot:**

- **Ibn Muljam's Mission:**

- Traveled to Kufa with a concealed plan to assassinate Ali (RA).
- Became distracted by a woman, Katam, who demanded Ali's (RA) assassination as part of her dowry (mahr).
- Collaborated with Shabib and others, sharpening his sword for 40 days and dipping it in poison.

Tragic End

- **Ali (RA) at Fajr Prayer:**

- On the fateful day, Ibn Muljam attacked Ali (RA) during Fajr salah, striking him fatally.
- Ali (RA) recited a few couplets:

شُدُّ حَيَازِيمِكَ لِلْمَوْتِ فَإِنَّ الْمَوْتَ لَأَقْبِكَ وَلَا تَجْزَعِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ إِذَا حَلَّ بِوَادِيكَ

“Prepare yourself for death when death comes down and don't be scared of death, when you come and confront death.”

Ali's (RA) Injury and Wasiyyah:

- Ali (RA) was severely injured, with his wound reaching his brain. The physicians confirmed he would not survive.
- As he lay dying, he gave advice to his sons and the people:

- Be pious, God-fearing, and compassionate toward others, especially the poor.
- He instructed that if the assassin was captured, he should not be killed immediately. If Ali (RA) died, he would allow for qisas (retribution); if he survived, he would decide his fate.
- When ibn Muljam was brought to Ali (RA), he confessed his role, explaining he had sharpened his sword for 40 days, intending to kill the "worst of Allah's creation," referring to Ali (RA).
- Ali (RA) responded, "I think you're the one who will be killed with it."
- **Final Moments and Death:**
 - After Ali (RA) succumbed to his injuries, ibn Muljam was executed for his crime.
 - There was controversy regarding the burial place of Ali (RA). Some believed his grave was in Najaf, but for the first three centuries, no one considered it his burial site. This claim likely arose later, and the actual grave remains uncertain.

Key Takeaways:

1. The Importance of Justice and Unity:

- Ali's (RA) approach highlighted the need for a balanced response to justice and governance.

2. Lessons from the Khawarij:

- Extremism, rigidity, and self-righteousness lead to divisions and harm.
- True understanding of Islam requires balance and adherence to the Sunnah.

3. Leadership Under Pressure:

- Ali (RA) demonstrated remarkable patience and wisdom in navigating a tumultuous period.

4. The Prophet's Forewarnings:

- The emergence of extremist factions was foretold, offering

- in vigilance and understanding the deeper teachings of Islam.

Conclusion

The discussion of the Khulafa al-Rashideen highlights the complexity of conflicts and how they can sometimes unfold despite the best intentions of those involved. It underscores the importance of prioritizing calmness, deliberation, and the protection of common interests in matters of faith. Both Ali (RA) and Muawiya (RA) were honorable companions of the Prophet ﷺ, with Ali (RA) being among the greatest Muslims and Muawiya (RA) also holding a revered status. When Omar bin Abdulaziz was asked about the bloodshed among the Sahabah, he wisely refrained from judgment, comparing them to one's eyes—delicate and best left untroubled. May Allah grant us the wisdom to draw life lessons from their stories and inspire us to follow the noble path of the Sahabah.