

**THE
STATUS OF
SAYYIDUNA
ABU BAKR**

رضي الله عنه

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INTRODUCTION

Abu Bakr Siddiq radiallahu anhu was:

- The first adult male to accept Islam.
- Rasulullah's sallallahu alaihi wasallam father-in-law; Hadrat A'isha radiallahu anha was his daughter.
- Rasulullah's sallallahu alaihi wasallam companion during the journey of Hijrat.
- The most senior Sahabi of Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam.
- Rasulullah's sallallahu alaihi wasallam first khalifah.

In the following pages we will briefly discuss some of the aayaat and ahaadith that highlight the virtue and status of Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu.

May Allah Ta'ala accept this booklet and may He fill our hearts with divine guidance and love for all His pious servants, especially the Sahabah radiallahu anhum. Ameen.

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AAYAAT OF THE QUR'AN

Aayah One

"If you do not help him (Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam), (then remember that) Allah had certainly helped him when those who disbelieve drove him forth (from Makkah), the second of two; when they were in the cave, when he (i.e. Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam) said to his companion: Do not grieve, certainly Allah is with us ..." [Surah Tawbah Ayah 40]

In order to appreciate the relationship of this ayah to our present topic of discussion, we must remember that:

- a. Abu Bakr Siddiq radiallahu anhu accompanied Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam through-out the journey of Hijrat, including Rasulullah's sallallahu alaihi wasallam three day stay in the cave of Thaur. Therefore the companion referred to in the above ayah is Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu.
- b. This ayah was revealed in the ninth year after Hijrat when some people hesitated in responding to Rasulullah's sallallahu alaihi wasallam call for them to proceed in Jihad (the expedition of Tabuk).

Having understood the above it should be easier to understand how this ayah is testimony of the lofty status of Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu. Imam Sha'bi rahmatullahi alayh, an ustadh of Imam Abu Hanifah rahmatullahi alayh, said that in this ayah Allah Ta'ala is reproaching all the people of the earth besides Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu. Elucidating the same point Qadi Ibn

'Arabi rahmatullahi alayh says that in this aayah "Allah has placed the entire ummah in one half (pan of the scale) and Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu in the other pan".

Aayah Two

"And let not those who possess dignity and ease among you swear not to give to the near of kin and to the needy and to those who migrate in the path of Allah. Let them forgive and show pardon. Do you not yearn that Allah may forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." [Surah Nur Ayah 22]

Mistah radiallahu anhu was a very poor cousin of Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu. Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu would therefore render a lot of assistance to him. When Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu learnt that Mistah radiallahu anhu was among those who had slandered his daughter Hadrat A'isha radiallahu anha, he took an oath to discontinue supporting Mistah radiallahu anhu. This ayah was revealed in response to Hadrat Abu Bakr's oath, advising him to continue supporting Mistah radiallahu anhu.

This ayah is related to our topic because it includes Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu among "those who possess dignity".

Aayah Three

"Far removed from it (the fire of Jahannam) will be the most righteous. Who gives his wealth that he may be cleansed (from sin). And none has with him any favour for reward (none have shown any kindness to him which he is now repaying), except as

seeking the pleasure of his Rabb Most High; He verily will be content." [Surah Layl Ayah 17-21]

Mufasssirin explain that although the words of these ayat are general, we understand from the sabab-un-nuzul (cause of revelation) that these aayaat refer specifically to Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu. In fact, many Mufasssireen claim that there is ijma' (concensus) in this regard.

There were seven Muslim slaves in Makkah who, having accepted Islam, were mercilessly persecuted by their Mushrik masters. Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu spent a huge sum of money in purchasing them and thereafter setting them free. These ayat were revealed extolling his sincerity in freeing them from the oppressive treatment of their masters even though none of them had previously shown any favour or kindness to him.

AHAADITH OF RASULULLAH sallallahu alaihi wasallam

Hadith One

It is narrated from Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri radiallahu anhu that Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said: "Certainly the kindest of people to me in his companionship and wealth is Abu Bakr. If I were to take a bosom friend I would take Abu Bakr as my friend; but we have the brotherhood and love of Islam between us. No window should be left in the masjid except the window of Abu Bakr." [Bukhari and Muslim]

Explanation:

"Certainly the kindest...is Abu Bakr."

This sentence means that no one was more kind to Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam than Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu - he had spent more time in Rasulullah's sallallahu alaihi wasallam company than anyone else and he had spent more of his wealth on Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam than anyone else.

"If I were to take a bosom friend..."

In this sentence Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam is expressing his extreme love and affection for Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu. He says that if it had been permissible for him to take a bosom friend from anyone of the worldly people, he would have chosen Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu as his bosom friend. This was however not permissible because, as we learn from a similar narration recorded by Imam Tirmidhi rahmatullahi alayh, Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said that he is Khalilullah (the bosom friend of Allah).

". . . But the brotherhood and love of Islam."

Although Abu Bakr cannot be my bosom friend, he is still my brother and beloved in Islam.

"No window should be left in the masjid except the window of Abu Bakr."

A few Sahabah radiallahu anhum had built their homes alongside the masjid in a manner that the entrance of the house would be behind the masjid, but there would be a window-like aperture in the wall separating the house from the masjid courtyard. These Sahabah radiallahu anhum would very often enter the masjid from these window-like apertures. Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam is in this sentence commanding that all such apertures should be permanently sealed except the aperture of Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu.

The scholars of Hadith explain that just as this Hadith shows Hadrat Abu Bakr's excellence over the rest of the Sahabah, and hence over the rest of the ummah, it is also a hint that Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu should succeed him.

Hadith Two

It is narrated from Hadrat Abu Hurayrah radiallahu anhu that Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said: "Nobody has bestowed any favour upon us except that we have repaid him besides Abu Bakr - he has bestowed such a favour upon us for which Allah will repay him on the Day of Qiyamah. Nobodies wealth benefitted me as much as Abu Bakr's wealth..." [Tirmidhi]

Hadith Three

A'isha radiallahu anha says that during his final illness Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam commanded her to call her father (Abu Bakr RA) and her brother Abdur Rahman bin Abu Bakr. He said to her: "Call your father, Abu Bakr, and your brother so that I may dictate a statement because I fear that some people may desire (leadership/khilafat) and say: I and nobody else (only I deserve leadership), but Allah and the Believers will refuse to accept anybody) besides Abu Bakr." [Muslim]

In simple words, Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam commanded Hadrat A'isha radiallahu anha to call Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu and her brother Abdur Rahman so that he could dictate a statement to them. We understand from the rest of the Hadith that the statement was regarding the appointment of a successor (khalifah). We however also understand from the last sentence that Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam thereafter decided not to dictate any such statement because he knew that just as Allah would not allow anyone other than Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu to succeed him, the Believers too would not appoint anyone other than Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu as their leader. Moulana Idris Kandehlwī rahmatullahi alayh writes that this Hadith is an indication that whoever rejects Hadrat Abu Bakr's khilafat is not a Believer and he is displeased with Allah's command.

Hadith Four

It is narrated from Jubayr bin Mut'im radiallahu anhu that a lady came to Nabi sallallahu alaihi wasallam and spoke to him regarding something. He told her to (go home) and come back. She said: "O Rasul of Allah! Tell me (what should I do) if I come and I don't find you?" The narrator says she meant death. As though she said: Tell me, what should I do if you pass away before I return)? Nabi sallallahu alaihi wasallam replied: "If you don't find me, go to Abu Bakr." [Bukhari and Muslim]

Hafiz Ibn Asakir rahmatullahi alayh has narrated this Hadith from Hadrat Ibn Abbas radiallahu anhu. His narration also has the words "because he will be the khalifah (successor) after me".

Imam Nawawi rahmatullahi alayh, a famous Shafi'i scholar of Hadith writes that although this Hadith is not nass (a clear command) that Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu should succeed him, it is a prediction that this is exactly what would happen.

Hadith Five

Hadrat Amr bin 'As radiallahu anhu once asked Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam, "Who from the people is most beloved to you?" Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam replied: "A'isha." Hadrat Amr radiallahu anhu then asked, "And from the men?" Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam replied: "Her father." [Bukhari and Muslim]

Hadith Six

We learn from a Hadith that Imam Bukhari rahmatullahi alayh has narrated from Abu Darda radiallahu anhu that Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu once had an argument with Hadrat Umar radiallahu anhu due to which he spoke harshly to him. He then regretted having spoken harshly to Umar radiallahu anhu and asked him for forgiveness. Umar radiallahu anhu however refused to pardon him. This perturbed Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu who immediately went to complain to Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam. Meanwhile Umar radiallahu anhu also began regretting his behaviour and went looking for Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu. When he did not find Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu at home, he also went to Nabi sallallahu alaihi wasallam. As he greeted, Nabi sallallahu alaihi wasallam became extremely angry. Seeing Nabi's sallallahu alaihi wasallam anger Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu became frightened. He thus sat on his knees and said: "O Rasulullah! In the name of Allah, it was I who erred, it was I who erred." Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam then said: "Allah sent me to you and you said: You have lied. But Abu Bakr said: He has spoken the truth. (He accepted me when the rest of you rejected me.) He helped me physically and financially. So will you leave my friend for me? Will you leave my friend for me?" [Bukhari]

This Hadith is also a clear indication of Rasulullah's sallallahu alaihi wasallam love and affection for Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu. Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam is in the last sentence prohibiting the rest of the Sahabah radiallahu anhum, and the rest of us also, from annoying Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu.

Hadith Seven

It is narrated from Hadrat Abu Hurayrah radiallahu anhu that Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said: "Whoever spends a pair in the path of Allah will be called from the doors of Jannah: O servant of Allah! This is best! So whoever was from the people of Salah will be called from the door of Salah. Whoever was from the people of Jihad will be called from the door of Jihad. Whoever was from the people of Saum will be called from the door of Rayyan. Whoever was from the people of Sadaqah will be called from the door of Sadaqah."

Abu Hurayrah radiallahu anhu says that at that moment Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu said: "May my parents be sacrificed for you O Rasul of Allah! That person will have no need (to fear) who will be called from all these doors, so, will anybody be called from all these doors?" Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said: "Yes, and I hope that you are from them. (I hope that you are among those who will be called from all the doors of Jannah." [Bukhari]

Hadith Eight

It is narrated from Hadrat Abu Hurayrah radiallahu anhu that one day Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam asked the Sahabah radiallahu anhum the following questions:

- "Who among you started the day fasting?" (Who from you is fasting today?)
- "Who among you fed a poor person today?"
- "Who among you followed a janazah procession today?"
- "Who among you visited an ill person today?"

Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu replied to each of the above questions in the affirmative. Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam then said: "These qualities (fasting, feeding the poor, following the janazah procession and visiting the ill) are never found in a person except that he will enter Jannah!" [Ibn Khuzaimah]

Hadith Nine

It is narrated from Hadrat Ibn Umar radiallahu anhu that Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said to Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu: "You were my companion in the cave and you will be my companion at the pond (of Kawther)." [Tirmidhi]

Hadith Ten

It is narrated from Hadrat A'isha radiallahu anha that Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu one day visited Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam. When Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu entered, Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said to him: "You are the one that Allah has emancipated from the fire." [Tirmidhi]

Hadith Eleven

It is narrated from Hadrat Abu Hurayrah radiallahu anhu that Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said: "Jibra'il came to me and took my hand. He then showed me the door of Jannah from which my ummah will enter." At that moment Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu said: "O Rasul of Allah! I wish I was with you so that I could have seen it." Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said: You, O Abu Bakr, will be the first from my ummah to enter Jannah." [Abu Da'ud]

Hadith Twelve

Hadrat Ibn Umar radiallahu anhu said: "We never regarded anybody equal to Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu in the time of Nabi sallallahu alaihi wasallam, then Umar and then Uthman..." [Bukhari]

The above narration is also recorded by Imam Abu Da'ud rahmatullahi alayh. His narration reads: "While Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam was still alive we would say: The best of Nabi's sallallahu alaihi wasallam ummah after Nabi sallallahu alaihi wasallam himself is Abu Bakr, then Umar and then Uthman Radiallahu Anhum."

Sayyiduna Ali's radiallahu anhu Opinion

1. Hafiz Ibn Abdil Bar rahmatullahi alayh, the famous Maliki scholar of Hadith, writes in his book al-Isti'aab that Hasan Basri rahmatullahi alayh had narrated from Qais bin'Ubadah radiallahu anhu that Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu told him that during Rasulallah's sallallahu alaihi wasallam last illness he had commanded Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu to lead the people in Salah. "Thus, when Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam passed away, I pondered and realised that Salah is the flag of Islam and the foundation of Din. We therefore chose for our dunya (worldly affairs) the person who Rasulallah sallallahu alaihi wasallam had chosen for our Din. We thus pledged obedience to Abu Bakr."
2. When Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu pledged obedience to Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu he addressed the audience saying: "...We (the Ahlul-Bayt) regard Abu Bakr as most

deserving of Khilafah after Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam. He was the companion of the cave and the second of the two. We acknowledge his honour and age. (After-all) Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam had commanded him to lead the people in Salah while he sallallahu alaihi wasallam was still alive."

3. It is recorded in Kanzul Ummal (a famous compilation of Hadith) that after Hadrat Abu Bakr's appointment as Khalifah, he stood on the mimbar (pulpit) of Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam and said: "Is there anyone who dislikes my appointment so that I may resign?" He repeated this statement thrice after which Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu stood up and said: "In the name of Allah! We will neither accept your resignation nor will we ask you to resign."
4. Hadrat A'isha radiallahu anha narrates that once, while Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu was leaving Madinah with the intention of Jihad, Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu came to him and said: "Where are you going O Khalifah of Allah's Rasul? I say to you the same words which Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said to you on the day of Uhud: 'Sheath your sword and don't scare us with yourself!' In the name of Allah! There will be no system in Islam (the Muslims) if any calamity has to befall us due to you (due to your death)." Hadrat A'isha radiallahu anha says that Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu accepted Hadrat Ali's advice and returned to Madinah.

Note:

- The words "Where are you going O Khalifah of Allah's Rasul?" show that Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu accepted Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu as the correct Khalifah of Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam.
- The sentence "There will be no system in Islam (the Muslims) if any calamity has to befall us due to you (due to your death)" was uttered by Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu. In order to understand this sentence we must remember that this incident occurred shortly after Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu was appointed the Khalifah. Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu meant that if Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu had to pass away at that moment in time, the Muslim world would never recover from the chaos caused by the false-claimants of prophethood and the apostates. Al-Hamdulillah, history bears testimony that Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu was able to restore peace and order within a very short period of time.
- After Hadrat Fatimah radiallahu anha passed away, Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu married a lady from the Bani Hanifah tribe. A son was born to Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu from this marriage and he was named Muhammed. In order to avoid any misconception that this Muhammed was also from the Ahlul Bayt, he was called Muhammed ibnul Hanafiyyah. Muhammed ibnul Hanafiyyah rahmatullahi alayh says that he one day asked Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu "who is the best person after Nabi sallallahu alaihi wasallam?" Hadrat Ali

radiallahu anhu replied that Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu is the best person after Nabi sallallahu alaihi wasallam. He then asked Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu who was the next best person (second best person) after Nabi sallallahu alaihi wasallam. Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu replied that the next best person is Hadrat Umar radiallahu anhu. Muhammed ibnul Hanafiyyah says that he feared that if he asked who was next, Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu would reply that Hadrat Uthman is next (ie. the third best person after Nabi sallallahu alaihi wasallam). He therefore asked, "Are you next?". Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu replied, "I am but a man from the Muslims." [Bukhari]

- Hafiz Ibn Kathir rahmatullahi alayh, a famous Shafi'i scholar of Hadith, writes in his widely acclaimed Al Bidayah Wan Nihayah:

"It is established with Tawatur (continuity) that he (Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu) delivered a sermon in Kufah during the days of his Khilafah. He said: O People! Certainly the best of this Ummah after its Nabi is Abu Bakr, then Umar, and if I wish to mention the third (best), I will do so." Hafiz Ibn Kathir then explains that it is also narrated that while descending the pulpit he (Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu) said: "then Uthman, then Uthman."

- Hafiz Ibn Taymiyyah rahmatullahi alayh and Hafiz Dhahabi rahmatullahi alayh write in Minhajus Sunnah and Al Muntaqa respectively that: "It is narrated with Tawatur (continuity) from Amirul Mu'minin Ali bin Abi Talib radiallahu anhu that

he said: The best of this Ummah after it's Nabi is Abu Bakr and then Umar." Both authors thereafter note that this statement has been narrated from Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu through eighty chains of transmission.

Conclusion

We conclude from this discussion that:

1. Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu enjoys an extremely high status in the court of Allah and His Rasul Muhammed sallallahu alaihi wasallam.
2. Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam had given Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu several glad-tidings of entry into Jannah and complete safety from Jahannam.
3. Although Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam did not appoint a successor, he had on more than one occasion hinted that Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu should be his Khalifah.
4. Rasulullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam had on at least two occasions predicted that Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu would be his Khalifah.
5. All the Sahabah radiallahu anhum acknowledged Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu's excellence.
6. Even Hadrat Ali radiallahu anhu acknowledged Hadrat Abu Bakr radiallahu anhu's excellence and khilaafah.

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