

# Syedna Umar bin Khitab

## Sermon on the Seerah and Virtues of Hazrat Umar Farooq (RA)

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الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ رَحْمَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ  
وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ، أَمَا بَعْدُ

Allah swt says in the Glorious Quran:

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۗ اَعْدِلُوا هُوَ اَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى ۗ وَاَتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ  
خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ

Do not let the hatred of a people lead you to injustice. Be just!  
That is closer to righteousness. And be mindful of Allah. Surely  
Allah is All-Aware of what you do. (Qur'an 5:8)

Today, we reflect on the life and virtues of one of the greatest companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, Sayyiduna Umar ibn al-Khattab (RA), the Second Rightly Guided Caliph, known as **Al-Farooq** - the one who distinguished truth from falsehood.

### Umar's Early Life

Umar ibn al-Khattab (RA) was born in Makkah into the Quraysh tribe. As a young man, he worked as a shepherd, learned horseback riding, wrestling, and became known for his strength, intelligence, and eloquence. At a time when literacy was rare, Umar was among the few who could read and write.

Initially, he was a fierce opponent of Islam and sought to suppress the new faith. Yet Allah had decreed a great destiny for him.

### The Acceptance of Islam

The Prophet ﷺ recognized Umar's remarkable qualities and supplicated for his guidance.

Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Abbas (RA) narrates that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِزَّ الْإِسْلَامَ بِأَحَبِّ هَدَيْنِ الرَّجُلَيْنِ إِلَيْكَ: بِأَبِي جَهْلِ بْنِ هِشَامٍ أَوْ بِعُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ

"O Allah, strengthen Islam with Abu Jahl ibn Hisham or Umar ibn al-Khattab." (Tirmidhi)

Allah answered the dua of His Messenger ﷺ, and Umar embraced Islam.

After his acceptance of Islam, Jibreel (AS) descended with glad tidings. Ibn Abbas (RA) narrates:

لَمَّا أَسْلَمَ عُمَرُ قَالَ جِبْرِيلُ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ، لَقَدْ اسْتَبَشَرَ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ بِإِسْلَامِ عُمَرَ

"O Muhammad, indeed, the inhabitants of the heavens are rejoicing at Umar's acceptance of Islam." (Ibn Majah)

His conversion marked a **turning point** in Islamic history. Muslims who had been worshipping secretly gained confidence and strength.

Sayyiduna Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (RA) said:

مَا زَلْنَا أَعَزَّةً مُنْذُ أَسْلَمَ عُمَرُ

"We became mighty since Umar accepted Islam." (Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Virtues of the Companions)

### His Special Status

The Prophet ﷺ greatly loved and respected Umar (RA). Among the many virtues narrated about him is the famous hadith:

لَوْ كَانَ بَعْدِي نَبِيٌّ لَكَانَ عُمَرُ بْنُ الْخَطَّابِ

"If there were to be a prophet after me, it would have been Umar ibn al-Khattab." (Tirmidhi)

This hadith does not imply the possibility of prophethood after Rasulallah ﷺ, for he is the Final Prophet. Rather, it demonstrates Umar's extraordinary faith, wisdom, and closeness to divine guidance.

### **His Love for the Prophet ﷺ**

Umar was among the closest companions and advisers of the Messenger ﷺ. His daughter, Hafsa (RA), became one of the Mothers of the Believers through marriage to the Prophet ﷺ.

His love for Rasulallah ﷺ was so profound that when the Prophet ﷺ passed away, Umar could not initially accept the reality of the loss. It was only after hearing Abu Bakr's famous address reminding the believers that Muhammad ﷺ had passed away but Allah remains Ever-Living, that Umar accepted the truth.

This demonstrates the depth of his love and devotion to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

### **Umar as Caliph**

After the passing of Abu Bakr (RA), Umar became the second Caliph of Islam. His rule became a model of justice, accountability, and service.

Allah says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people, judge with justice. (4:58)

Umar governed by this principle. Despite ruling a vast empire stretching from Libya to Persia, he lived a simple life. It is reported

that he would patrol the streets at night to ensure that no family went hungry. He viewed leadership not as a privilege but as a responsibility before Allah.

## Justice and Equality

One of Umar's greatest characteristics was justice.

On one occasion, he had a legal dispute with Ubayy ibn Ka'b (RA). The case was brought before Judge Zayd ibn Thabit (RA). Out of respect, the judge offered his seat to the Caliph. Umar immediately objected and said that this preferential treatment was itself an injustice. He then sat beside his opponent as an equal before the law.

This is a powerful lesson that in Islam, no one is above justice - not even the ruler.

## Religious Freedom

Under Umar's leadership, non-Muslim citizens enjoyed protection and freedom of religion. Their places of worship were safeguarded, and treaties guaranteed their rights.

This reflected the Qur'anic principle:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ

There is no compulsion in religion. (2:256)

His administration became known for fairness, security, and respect for the rights of all citizens.

## His Contributions

Among his many achievements:

- Expansion of the Muslim world.
- Establishment of the Islamic Hijri calendar.
- Development of administrative institutions.

- Strengthening systems of justice and public welfare.
- Protection of the rights of Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

His leadership combined strength with humility, authority with accountability, and power with compassion.

### The Islamic Principle of Justice for All

One of the greatest examples of justice in human history is the leadership of Umar ibn al-Khattab (RA). His justice was not limited to Muslims alone; it extended to all people living under Muslim rule, regardless of their religion, ethnicity, or social status.

Allah commands:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ

*"Indeed, Allah commands justice and excellence." (16:90)*

And Allah says:

لَا يَنْهَاكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ  
وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

*"Allah does not forbid you from being kind and just toward those who do not fight you because of religion nor drive you out of your homes. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly." (60:8)*

Umar ibn al-Khattab (RA) understood these commands and implemented them faithfully.

### Protection of Non-Muslim Citizens

The Prophet ﷺ said:

أَلَا مَنْ ظَلَمَ مُعَاهِدًا، أَوْ انْتَقَصَهُ، أَوْ كَلَفَهُ فَوْقَ طَاقَتِهِ، أَوْ أَخَذَ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا بَغَيْرِ طَيْبِ نَفْسٍ،  
فَأَنَا حَاجِبُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

*"Whoever wrongs a non-Muslim citizen under covenant, diminishes his rights, burdens him beyond his capacity, or takes anything from him unjustly, I will be his opponent on the Day of Resurrection." (Abu Dawud 3052)*

Umar (RA) governed according to this Prophetic teaching. He viewed the protection of non-Muslim citizens as a religious duty and a trust before Allah.

### **The Covenant of Jerusalem**

One of the most famous examples occurred when Jerusalem came under Muslim rule.

Umar personally travelled from Madinah to receive the city's surrender. He issued a covenant guaranteeing the safety of the city's Christian inhabitants, their churches, their property, and their freedom of worship.

Historical reports record that he granted protection to:

- Their lives
- Their wealth
- Their churches
- Their crosses
- Their religious practices

This became one of the earliest examples of religious protection under Islamic governance.

When the time for prayer arrived and he was invited to pray inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Umar declined. He feared that future Muslims might use his action as a reason to convert the church into a mosque. Instead, he prayed outside, preserving the church for its Christian worshippers.

This demonstrated foresight, justice, and respect for the rights of others.

### **Welfare for a Jewish Elderly Man**

One day Umar encountered an elderly Jewish man begging.

Upon learning that the man had paid taxes during his working years and was now unable to support himself, Umar was deeply moved.

He reportedly said:

والله ما أنصفناه إن أخذنا منه شاباً وتركناه شيخاً

"We have not treated him fairly if we took from him when he was young and then abandoned him when he became old."

He then ordered that the man receive support from the public treasury (Bayt al-Mal) and exempted him from taxation.

This established an important principle: social welfare was not restricted to Muslims alone.

### **Equality Before the Law**

Allah says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ

*O believers! Stand firmly for justice as witnesses for Allah. (4:135)*

Umar enforced justice regardless of religion or status.

A famous incident occurred when a Coptic Christian from Egypt complained that he had been struck unjustly by the son of the governor, Amr ibn al-As.

Umar summoned both the governor and his son to Madinah.

He handed the whip to the Christian complainant and instructed him to take retribution from the governor's son.

After justice was carried out, Umar addressed the governor with the famous words:

مَتَى اسْتَعْبَدْتُمْ النَّاسَ وَقَدْ وُلِدْتَهُمْ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ أَحْرَارًا؟

*"Since when have you enslaved people when their mothers gave birth to them free?"*

This is an illustration of Umar's well-known commitment to justice and human dignity.

### **Religious Freedom Under Umar**

Allah says:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ

*"There is no compulsion in religion." (2:256)*

Under Umar's rule, non-Muslims retained the freedom to:

- Practice their faith.
- Maintain their places of worship.
- Conduct their religious ceremonies.
- Resolve internal religious matters according to their traditions.

Numerous treaties issued during his caliphate guaranteed these rights.

### **A Leader Accountable Before Allah**

Umar understood that power was a trust.

He famously feared being questioned before Allah even about the welfare of animals under his authority.

It is reported that he said:

لو عثرت بغلة على ضفاف الفرات لخشيت أن يسألني الله عنها: لِمَ لَمْ أَسْوَ لها الطريق؟

If a mule were to stumble on the banks of the Euphrates, I fear that Allah would ask me why I did not level the road for it."

Whether Muslim or non-Muslim, rich or poor, Arab or non-Arab, Umar believed that every person under his care was a trust from Allah.

### **Lessons from Umar's Life**

The life of Umar (RA) teaches us:

1. Justice and accountability must be applied equally to all people regardless of status or position.
2. Religious minorities have rights protected by Islam.
3. Public welfare should include the vulnerable regardless of faith.
4. Leadership is a responsibility, not a privilege.
5. The strength of a society is measured by how it treats its weakest members.
6. Leaders are servants of the people, not masters over them.
7. Simplicity, humility, and accountability are signs of true greatness.
8. Guidance can come to anyone whom Allah wills.

### **His Martyrdom**

In the year 23 AH (644 CE), while leading the Fajr prayer, Umar ibn al-Khattab (RA) was attacked and fatally wounded. Before his passing four days later, he appointed a council of companions to select the next Caliph, demonstrating his commitment to consultation and unity.

He was buried in Madinah beside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (RA).

May Allah grant us the courage of Umar, the sincerity of Abu Bakr, the generosity of Uthman, and the knowledge and wisdom of Ali (رضي الله عنهم أجمعين)

## Concluding Duas

### Let us pray:

O Allah, send Your peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his noble family and companions.

O Allah, we thank You for the blessing of Islam, for the guidance of the Qur'an, and for sending us Your beloved Messenger Muhammad ﷺ as a mercy to all mankind.

O Allah, fill our hearts with love for Your Messenger ﷺ and all of his noble Companions. Grant us the ability to follow their example in faith, sincerity, patience, humility, and righteousness.

O Allah, grant us the generosity of Uthman (RA), the truthfulness of Abu Bakr (RA), the justice of Umar (RA), the courage of Ali (RA), and the noble character of Muhammad ﷺ.

O Allah, grant us faith like the faith of Umar, sincerity like his sincerity, courage like his courage, and steadfastness like his steadfastness.

O Allah, make us among those who stand for justice as Umar stood for justice. Protect us from oppression, wrongdoing, and favouritism. Help us to speak the truth even when it is difficult and grant us wisdom in our decisions.

O Allah, Grant us the concern for the poor, the weak, and the needy that Umar ibn al-Khattab possessed. Make us compassionate towards those under our care and accountable before You in all our affairs.

O Allah, gather us in Jannatul Firdaus with our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, with Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, Umar ibn al-Khattab, Uthman ibn Affan, Ali ibn Abi Talib, and all the noble Companions.

O Allah, as You honoured Umar with nearness to Your Messenger ﷺ in this world and in his resting place, grant us nearness to Your beloved Prophet ﷺ in the Hereafter.

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Our Lord, grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter and save us from the torment of the Fire.

I conclude my sermon with the verse from the Qur'an:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ۗ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

Indeed, Allah commands justice, grace, as well as generosity to close relatives. He forbids indecency, bad conduct and aggression. He instructs you so perhaps you will be mindful. (Quran 16: 90)

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

وَأَجْرُ دَعْوَانَا أَنْ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ