



### **UTHMAN BIN AFFAN (576 – 656 AD)**

Uthman bin Affan was born in 576 AD in Mecca. He belonged to the Umayyad clan of the Quraish tribe.

His father was a wealthy merchant who died when Uthman was still young.

Not much is known about his childhood but he was among the few people in Mecca who knew how to read and write.

When he grew up, he got interested in trade and he became a prosperous and a very rich merchant.

Uthman took over his father's business and became known as a hard-working and generous man.

He was truthful and trustworthy in his business and people respected him for that.

He was also generous that he used his money to help those who were in trouble.

In his travels, Uthman often interacted with people of different tribes and beliefs. Indeed it was during one of his business travels that he met people like Muhammad and Abu Bakr.

He was a very close friend to Abubakr. Indeed when Abubakr converted to Islam, he straight away informed Uthman, who readily accepted Islam; therefore he was among the earliest converts to Islam.

On his conversion to Islam, the Prophet offered Uthman his daughter Rukayah for marriage.

When Rukayah died, the Prophet gave Uthman his second daughter Umm Qulthum; for that Uthman won the title Dhul-Nurain or possessor of the two lights.

### **UTHMAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO ISLAM BEFORE CALIPHATE.**

1. He scarified his life for the sake of Islam, like when he migrated with the Muslims to Abbysinia.
2. He contributed generously his wealth to buy a well – Birr Rumah – in Medinah to be used by the Muslims.
3. When the Muslims migrated to Abbysinia, due to persecution in Mecca, Uthman was one of the leaders of the Muslims there.
4. He was tortured by his relatives for converting to Islam but never gave up and continued to show his love and interest in Islam.
5. He bought land adjacent the mosque in Medinah to be used for its expansion.
6. He fought in all the Muslim battles against the enemies of Islam except in the Battle of Badr when his wife Rukaya was ill.
7. Uthman was among those who negotiated with the Meccans at signing the Treaty of Hudaibiyah.
8. His supposedly arrest and rumours that he had been killed by the Meccans was one of the events that led to the signing of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah.
9. During the match of Tabuk, he contributed most of his wealth to the cause. He sponsored ten thousand soldiers, contributed one thousand camels, fifty horses and a thousand piece of gold to be used in the expedition.
10. Uthman was one of the secretaries of the Prophet because he was among those who knew how read and write.
11. He was among the scribes of Prophet who used to record Qur'anic revelations as they came down to the Prophet.
12. He was among those who first learnt the Holy Qur'anic by heart; thus, he brought the idea of establishing memorization centres.
13. When the Prophet died, Uthman participated in the election of Abubakr to succeed the Prophet.

14. He was a member of the Shura (consultative council); it's not surprising that when Umar died, he became the third caliph.
15. He actively and physically participated in the construction of the Prophet's Mosque in Medinah.
16. He contributed greatly to the purchase of land on which the Prophet's Mosque was built.

### **UTHMAN'S ELECTION AS THIRD CALIPH**

The second caliph, Umar Bin Khattab, was stabbed to death by a Persian slave named Feroz.

Mindful of the tumults that had occurred after the death of Muhammad, on his deathbed, Caliph Umar appointed a committee of six people to choose the next caliph from.

Umar's expectation was that the committee was to select his successor from among themselves within three days after the Caliph's death.

The committee included prominent companions of the prophet; like Uthman Bin Affan, Ali Bin Abu Talib, Abdul Rahman Bin Auf, Sa'ad Bin Abu Waqqas, Zubair Bin Awwam and Talha Bin Ubaidullah.

Meanwhile, Abdul Rahman Bin Auf withdrew his name for consideration for Caliph position and went on to act as presiding officer.

Members of the committee consulted one another and then other leaders for public opinion.

Ali and Uthman came out as leading contenders for the position of the Caliph.

However, the majority of the Muslims consulted who had come to attend Umar's funeral were in favour of uthman becoming the third caliph.

After the discussion and consultation, Uthman was declared the Caliph by Abdul Rahman, who had acted as chairman of the committee.

Abdul Rahman then pledged allegiance to Uthman as the third caliph and was followed by the rest of the Muslims gathering in the mosque.

## **UTHMAN'S CHOICE AS THE THIRD CALIPH**

1. Uthman was much older than Ali; yet the Arab custom emphasized the respect for age. Therefore Uthman was favoured to Ali.
2. During the Riddah Wars of Apostasy, Uthman remained in Medinah and acted as advisor to Abubakr.
3. Before his death, Abubakr had wished Uthman to succeed him but when Uthman, in his own accord, put in the name of Umar, Umar took over from Abubakr. However with the death of Umar, Uthman was destined to succeed Umar.
4. When Umar was elected as caliph, Uthman was topmost advisor; in fact he was a member of the Shura council that Umar always consulted.
5. Umar as a caliph was strict and harsh to people; so people wanted a change of personality; and thus favoured Uthman who was kind, mild and generous.
6. People wanted to reward Uthman for using his wealth for public welfare during the early stages of Islam and during the Muslim migration to Medinah.
7. Uthman contributed to Muslim infrastructural development; like he purchased the Birr Ruma well and also financed for the extension of the Prophet's mosque.
8. Abdul Rahman Bin Auf declared Uthman as caliph based on the influence of the Muslim community consideration.
9. About Ali, Abdul Rahman commented that Muslims considered him young and that there would be further opportunities for him to come to power.
10. After the Battle of Khandaq, Uthman liberated several slaves and worked for their conversion and settlement. These ex-slaves greatly supported him to the position.

## **UTHMAN AS CALIPH (644 – 656 AD)**

Uthman was a caliph for twelve years. The first six years were peaceful among the Muslims while the last six constituted problems.

These problems indeed led to the death of Caliph Uthman.

With the death of Umar, the Persians and Romans began instigating rebellions to regain their independence.

Uthman sent a successful campaign to the rebels of Persia and many territories were added to the Muslims empire.

### **UTHMAN'S ATTEMPT TO CRUSH REBELS**

When the Persians learnt of Umar's death, their emperor Yedzgird mobilized his people and attacked the Muslims.

Uthman managed to send there a Muslim force which crushed the enemies once and for all.

He conquered several places including Hisraf, Gazna, Herat and Kabul. He also took over Samarkand, Sejestan and other places now in Russia.

Provinces like Armenia and Azerbaijan which had been conquered by Umar rebelled but Uthman sent Walid bin Uqbah who ended their rebellion.

In Syria, the governor, Muawiyah fought back the Romans who had staged an army in Asia Minor.

From Asia Minor, Muawiyah turned to Mediterranean Sea and took over the Island of Cyprus from the Romans using the navy he had built.

Uthman's forces were also able to capture Alexandria in Africa and the Roman commander Gregory was killed.

The Muslim forces were also able to overrun the rebellion and made it possible for peace to prevail again.

The defeat of the Romans and Persians led to further expansion of the Islamic state to areas like Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.

Uthman then turned his attention to administration where he made changes at provincial levels.

Umar had made Muawiyah the governor of part of Shami (Syria) but Uthman elevated him to control the whole Syria in charge of Palestine and Jordan.

The governorship of Egypt during Umar's period had been divided between Amir bin Al-As, as the commander in chief of the forces and Abdullah bin Sarh in charge of revenue.

During Uthman's period, Sarh was promoted to be in charge of the whole of Egypt and Amr was recalled to Medinah. Amir was not happy with the Caliph's decision, though.

In Iraq, the governor Saad was deposed because he lived in luxury and owed the state treasury a lot. He was replaced with Walid bin Uqbah.

Walid was later maliciously accused of taking alcohol and liquor, which annoyed the caliph and replaced him with Sa'ad bin Al-As.

Unfortunately, the masses opposed Sa'ad's appointment and subsequently the caliph replaced him with Abu Musa Al-Ashari.

The caliph made similar changes elsewhere that brought him problems within his rule. This happened mainly in the last six years of his rule.

### **PROBLEMS UTHMAN FACED AS A CALIPH.**

1. The enemies of Islam led by Abdallah bin Sabah (Sabaites) started working against Islam and to disorganize the Muslims.
2. The Sabaites sent out people to disturb and spread malicious and false news against the Caliph and state officials especially the governors.
3. The enemies of the Caliph took advantage of his soft and kind heart to misbehave and this resulted in unrest.
4. The enemies labeled the Caliph and state officials as irreligious, non-practical and bad Muslims.

5. The enemies sent forged letters throughout the state to give an impression that there was injustice.
6. The enemies put people in the mood of wanting them to remove the Caliph.
7. The Sabaites were the real cause for the removal of governors from time to time when they said false news about them.
8. The enemies made malicious allegations against the Caliph that caused a lot of discontent among people.

#### **ACCUSATIONS/ALLEGATIONS AGAINST CALIPH UTHMAN.**

1. He was accused of nepotism and favouritism; that he favoured his relatives whom he gave valuable property and high posts in the state.
2. The enemies claimed that the Caliph was a weak leader and extravagant. He gave a lot of public money to his relatives.
3. The Caliph was accused of allowing provincial governors to acquire a lot of wealth contrary to the limits left by the previous Caliphs.
4. He was accused of appointing Marwan, his cousin, as his chief secretary; yet he was unpopular with people.
5. He was accused of employing Umayyad governors who were inefficient, oppressive and misused public wealth.
6. He was accused of letting his kinsmen acquire private property at the expense of public and crown-lands. For example, Hakam, Marwan's father, took the estate of Fadak.
7. He was accused of burning copies of the Qur'an when he ordered that all copies not in the Quraish dialect be destroyed.
8. He was accused of mistreating the prominent and pious companions of the Prophet. For example, that he sent Abu Dharr to a village in Rasdhah although the truth was that Abu Dharr had retired on his own.
9. He was accused of making unwise step of calling Hakam bin al-Aas back to Medinah yet he had been exiled by the Prophet.



10. He was accused of changing some religious rituals of Islam which the Prophet had left behind. For example he allowed to put up tents at Mina which was not done by the Prophet.
11. He was accused of allowing his kinsmen to graze their animals on the state farms.
12. He was accused of being aged (he was in his 80's) which meant that he could not easily react to the situations that required immediate attention.
13. He was accused of introducing unpopular reforms; like, he ordered for full prayers at Mina, yet the Prophet had shortened them.
14. He was accused of introducing taxes on horses which never existed originally.
15. He was accused of creating a social class of rich people who had acquired wealth through conquests and they had started living luxurious life.
16. He was accused of appointing young men in higher positions of responsibility who turned out to be luxurious and inefficient.
17. He was criticized of enlarging the Ka'abah during which people's houses were demolished against their will.
18. He was accused of spending money received as Sadaqah and Zakat on the persecution of wars and war projects.
19. He was accused of preserving state pasture for his personal use and his relatives denying other people a chance to use them.
20. He was accused of removing some governors and replaced them with his relatives; for instance, he removed Amir Bin al-Aas from Egypt and replaced him with his foster brother Ibn Salah.
21. He was accused of appointing young and inexperienced people in offices of responsibility and ignored senior companions.

22. He was accused of giving a fifth of the war-booty from North African expedition to his relative Abdullah Bin Balah instead of keeping it in the state treasury.

### **DEFENCE AGAINST THE ALLEGATIONS LABELLED AGAINST CALIPH UTHMAN**

1. Uthman as a caliph and leader had absolute powers to appoint whoever he willed and his decision would not be questioned.
2. There was no legal ruling in any form of governance that barred a leader from appointing a relative.
3. On accusation that he gave special consideration to his relatives, also, it is not a sin in religion or any form of governance to honour one's people
4. A number of Uthman's relatives; like his foster brother Abdullah Bin Salah were appointed by Umar; and Uthman only maintained them in their positions.
5. Some of the governors Uthman appointed were not even related to him; an example was Sa'd Bin Al-Waqqas of Kufah.
6. Some of the governors Uthman appointed, he did so after consulting the people of those areas and they proposed the names of such people.
7. Many appointments Uthman made were done after assessing the merits of the person concerned and were found to be the fittest at the time.
8. About dismissing some officers, Uthman was not the first to do so; Umar dismissed Khalid Bin Walid and Sa'ad Bin Abu Waqqas among others.
9. On charges of extravagancy from the Bait ul-Maal, it was an established fact that Uthman was the wealthiest among the

companions of the Prophet and thus never used any funds from the state treasury.

10. About the spendings he made, history has it that he was spending from his personal wealth.
11. The blame of burning the materials on which the Qur'an had been written was malicious because he intended to keep the authenticity of the Holy text.
12. On the issue of appointing inefficient officers who misused public wealth, Uthman called for evidence from people but nobody presented any.
13. It was not true that Uthman mistreated prominent companions like sending Abu Dharr to the village. The truth was that Abu Dharr had retired to the village on his own will.
14. On appointing young officers, this was not a new phenomenon as the Prophet, himself, also appointed Usama – a 20-year-old to lead an expedition to Syria.
15. On appointing young officers, Uthman reasoned that he found them able and capable of executing their duties.
16. On accusation of introducing new taxes, he explained that there were a lot of things to do yet the state treasury could not meet all the demands especially because of increased expeditions.
17. That he put up tents at Arafah which were not there during the Prophet's time, Uthman reasoned that there was change in climate and there was need to offer shelter to pilgrims from the scorching sun.
18. On offering full prayers while on pilgrimage, Uthman argued that he wanted to show people of Minah that they were supposed to offer full prayers since they were not on any journey like other pilgrims.
19. About the displaced people on plots near the Grand Mosque and the Ka'abah, Uthman responded that he compensated the affected people higher than they were supposed to get.

## CAUSES OF DISCONTENT AGAINST THE CALIPH

1. Many Muslims became jealous of the elevation of the Umayyads in Uthman's Caliphate yet they had opposed the Prophet.
2. The Ansaris of Medinah were dissatisfied when it seemed that the Umayyads eroded their power and influence.
3. The Umayyads had completely overshadowed the Hashimites and this resulted into hatred of the Caliph.
4. The appointment of Marwan bin Hakam to high post of chief secretary yet he was hated by many people because of his selfish and tribalistic behaviours.
5. The Caliph was simple in character and kindhearted in nature that made him to lack firmness. For example, when he was told to fight the rebels he refused claiming that he never wanted to be the first to shed blood.
6. The role of Ibn Sabah who spread false information about the Caliph and his governors disturbed peace and stability.
7. The Caliph's move to select young men, who lacked experience in places of responsibility led people to hate them and caused chaos in the state.
8. Towards the end of Uthman's Caliphate, struggle for leadership emerged which divided the people.
9. Tribalism was also a cause of discontent as people took advantage of Uthman's simplicity to start identifying themselves with their tribes.
10. The expansion of the Islamic State during Uthman's reign led to many people to struggle for leadership to control the conquered areas.
11. The expansion of the Islamic state also made it difficult for Uthman to control an expansive state.
12. Many Muslims had also become tired of the activities and characters of the Banu Umayyah; like being extravagant.

## UTHMAN'S DEATH

Caliph Uthman Bin Affan was assassinated by rioters from Kufah and Egypt to overthrow the Caliph

When Uthman heard of the plans against him, he called a meeting of his governors and prominent men to discuss the problem.

In the meeting, some of the members in the meeting wanted the rebels to be crushed, but the Caliph refused claiming that he never wanted to be the first one to shed blood.

Uthman, instead, asked Ali to speak with the rioters; however, the rebels demanded that the Caliph resigned and another Caliph be selected.

Nevertheless, the rebels decided to take action against Uthman when he refused to resign from the duty given to him.

The rebels surrounded Uthman's house threatening to kill him if he did not resign but he replied that he wasn't afraid of death.

The rebels forced their into Uthman's house. He was found reciting the Qur'an.

His wife, Naila, seeing one rebel making a beeline for the Caliph, threw herself on her husband's body trying to protect him.

She raised her hand to deflect the sword, but her fingers were chopped off in the process. The assailant pushed her aside and his next blow of the sword left fatal wounds on Uthman.

Uthman fell in a pool of blood and breathed his last. According to some traditions, the blood-stained Qur'an he was reciting from is still preserved in the museum in Tashkent – Uzbekistan.

After Uthman's death, there was violence in Medinah and his body was not buried for three days.

However, on the third day, tension eased a little and Uthman's body was buried still dressed in blood soaked clothes

Caliph Uthman is reported to have been killed on June the 17th 656 AD at the age of 80 years.

### **RESULTS OF UTHMAN'S MURDER.**

1. The murder of Uthman meant that people stopped respecting the person of the Caliph's calibre
2. The murder of Caliph brought a feeling among the Muslims that the Caliph was answerable to the Muslims for his actions.
3. Uthman's murder made tribalism to resurface yet the Prophet had preached against it.
4. The murder of Uthman broke down the unity among Muslims as the Umayyads became enemies of the Hashimites.
5. The city of Medinah lost its status as seat of Islam as headquarters were transferred to Kufah
6. The problems as brought about by the murder and the events that preceded brought the expansion of the Islamic empire to a standstill.
7. The Ansaris lost their position in Medinah since they had overshadowed those who had migrated from Mecca.
8. The murder of Uthman sparked off the Fitina Period in which Muslims started fighting fellow Muslims.
9. The murder of Uthman led to civil wars; first between lady Aisha and Ali and later between Ali and Muawiyah.
10. Uthman's murder revived the old clan conflicts of the Arabs which had disappeared with the coming of the Prophet.

11. It marked the beginning of hereditary rule in Islam when Muawiyah fought and defeated Ali and declared his son Yazid as his successor.
12. Uthman's murder led to the murder of caliph Ali

### **CALIPH UTHMAN'S ACHIEVEMENTS**

1. He expanded the conquests from where Umar had stopped; which widened the boundaries of the Muslim State; consequently, many areas of Africa like Morocco and Tripoli were conquered.
2. He managed to preserve the Shura system where on several occasions the Caliph consulted the masses and prominent companions.
3. Uthman created new provinces and also made adjustments in those left behind by Umar.
4. He created a new post of commander of the army unlike before when the governors of the provinces were to double as commanders of the army.
5. During Uthman's caliphate, there was strict supervision of his officials where accountability was always sought. For example, he dismissed Sa'd Bin Abi Waqqas when he took a loan from the treasury and failed to repay.
6. He set up a supervision team which used to travel from the capital to all provinces to check on the performance of the governors and report accordingly.
7. He strengthened and improved on the administrative structure of the state by setting up different departments of various sectors for efficient governance.
8. He controlled floods which used to hit Medinah through building an embarkment or dam called Band-al-Mehzor.
9. Uthman built a Muslim naval force, the first in the history of Islam, to fight and manage attacks on water.
10. He built several mosques and bridges which were all meant to improve on public welfare.

11. Uthman used the naval force he had built to capture the island of Cyprus and to destroy the Roman forces in the Mediterranean Sea.
12. He used to personally deliver lectures to prisoners-of-war on the virtues or goodness of Islam and asked them to convert; indeed some prisoners-of-war converted to Islam.
13. Uthman ended rebellions in various areas of the state after which he expanded the Islamic Empire.
14. He standardized the Holy Qur'an by burning all various versions which differed from that left by caliph Abubakr.
15. At one time, Medinah was threatened with floods and Uthman constructed a huge dam to protect the city.
16. He contributed to infrastructural development by constructing roads, bridges and mosques.
17. He sent Muslim teachers to the conquered territories to teach the new converts the principle of Islam.
18. He contributed to the welfare of his people by regulating the supply of water to Medinah.
19. He showed courage and determination to serve Allah when he refused to resign as his enemies demanded.
20. He established guest houses in different parts of the Islamic Empire.
21. He overpowered the revolts and moulded the people living in the defeated territories to accept Islam.
22. He formed a council of governors which always compiled and wrote reports about the happenings in their provinces and submitted them to the Caliph.
23. He separated the military department from the general administration and appointed permanent officers to look after it.
24. He overpowered the revolts and moulded the people living in the defeated territories to accept Islam.



25. He formed a council of governors which always compiled and wrote reports about the happenings in their provinces and submitted them to the Caliph.
26. He separated the military department from the general administration and appointed permanent officers to look after it.

### **RELIGIOUS UNDERTAKINGS BY CALIPH UTHMAN**

1. He acted as an example to the rest as he worked for promotion of Islam right from the time he converted to Islam.
2. He was one of those who knew the whole Qur'an by heart and he constantly recited it.
3. He used to dedicate a lot of his time to the recitation of the Qur'an; he could complete the whole Qur'an in one night.
4. His dedication to the Qur'an could also be evidenced at the time he was murdered; he was reading the Qur'an.
5. He standardized the Holy Qur'an when he ordered that all materials bearing versions divergent to the Quraish dialect be burned.
6. He ordered that copies of the Qur'an be made from the original and were sent to different areas throughout the Muslim Empire.
7. Uthman established many Qur'an memorization centres which helped many people to learn the Qur'an.
8. Uthman preserved the Qur'an in its original form free of any corruption when he left in one standard dialect.
9. He offered full prayers at Mina yet the Prophet had shortened them.
10. He expanded and beautified the Prophet's mosque at Medinah; indeed after its expansion, it became spacious.
11. He used to preach to the prisoners of war brought to Medinah about the goodness of Islam and asked them to convert to the faith.
12. He introduced a second call for prayers (Adhan) on Friday before the Jumah prayers.

13. He provided for the efficiency and effectiveness of the Muazzins (Callers for prayers) when he gave them allowances.
14. He used to send Muslim preachers to newly converted Muslims to teach them Islam.

### **ECONOMIC REFORMS INTRODUCED BY CALIPH UTHMAN**

1. He introduced a system of levying tax on horses and slaves.
2. He permitted the eminent companions of the Prophet to draw loans from the public treasury.
3. He removed the ban put by Umar on the sale of lands in the conquered territories.
4. He increased the income of the state treasury (Bait ul-Maal) when he introduced new taxes; like tax on horses.
5. He increased the allowances of civil servants and he also gave extra allowances in the month of Ramadhan.
6. He built and improved on several roads and bridges throughout the Muslim state.
7. He reserved many grazing fields in and around Medinah for upbringing of horses and camels.
8. He constructed bridges; canals and water reservoirs that helped boost agriculture in the state.

### **UTHMAN'S CHARACTER.**

1. On account of his endearing qualities, Uthman enjoyed great popularity among his people.
2. Uthman was charitable and generous having a concern for the poor and the needy He was the most modest of all the companions of the Prophet.
3. He was very soft in speech; if any person talked to him harshly, he always replied gently.

4. He spent a lot of his time reading the Qur'an; in fact at the time he was murdered, he was reading the Qur'an.
5. He was the most generous among the rich companions of the Prophet.
6. He was mindful of his people's welfare. He bought a well in Medinah for Muslims.
7. He was neither luxurious nor extravagant; he never took any allowance from the state treasury.
8. He had excessive fear for Allah; he would shed tears because of Allah's fear.
9. He had keen interest in education that he established a library behind his house.
10. He was truthful and trustworthy and people respected him for that.
11. He was so kind and honest which earned him great friends, most prominent being Abubakr.
12. He has exemplary to others like he strongly observed all Islamic rituals as taught by the Prophet.
13. He had a flair for social work; for example, he supported many poor families, widows and orphans who had no one to support them.
14. He was soft spoken and kind-hearted. He had a kind word for everyone who came across him.
15. He patronized his relatives, and gave liberal aid to such relatives who were in strained circumstances.
16. He was an embodiment of modesty. In spite of his wealth, there was no sense of pride in him nor did he boast of anything that he possessed.
17. He believed in action rather than talk. Many times he participated physically in setting up and developing Islamic projects.
18. He never tried to thrust his opinion on others – he was very particular that he did not offend anybody.

19. He was very handsome and many women were attracted to him, but he never touched any woman beyond wedlock.
20. He led a chaste (unsullied) life; he never touched or went near wine; he did not gamble and did not take part in frivolities which formed the pastime of the Jahiliyyah time.
21. He was scrupulously honest and believed in fair deal; indeed, he amassed considerable wealth through honest means.

