

# **Ammār ibn Yāsir's Position and Points of View Confronting the Incidents after Holy Prophet's Death**

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## **Abstract**

Ammār ibn Yāsir was one of the most devoted companions of Muhammad (PBUH) who had an eminent role in the history of Islam after the holy prophet's death. The present paper attempts to investigate his position and point of view regarding the incidents after the prophet's death and probe the results of his presence during the changes in that era. It tries to clarify on the neglected and undeniable historical facts found in Islamic resources. This historical study has an analytical, descriptive and critical perspective and is conducted using early Islamic historiography resources. The study concluded that Ammār ibn Yāsir grew up in close relation with Ahl al-Bayt and his ideas were formed through his deep and pure Islamic knowledge and had a great part in clarifying and promoting Islamic teachings and guiding the people in the community toward salvation.

**Keywords:** The holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH); Ali (PBUH); Ammār ibn Yāsir; Ghadir; Saqifah; Uthman

## **Introduction**

Historical studies express the social position and effects of external variables and not only helps comprehend the discourse dominating general perspective of different characters, but also provides the ground for rereading social and cultural events at the present time. The issue of the presence of Ammār ibn Yāsir in early days of Islam could be a great sample. Clarifying the background and reasons behind this issue along with its dimensions is not a simple task to accomplish; yet, discussing the issue from an analytical and critical point of view will certainly elaborate on some aspects.

Works like Taha Hussain in *al-Va'ad al-Hagh* (Dar Al-Ma'aref, 1952) and Gheis al-Attar (Dalil, 2000) in the *Diwan of Ammār ibn Yāsir* together with Kamal Sayid in the book *Ammār ibn Yāsir* (Ansarian, 2009), Ali Muhammad Ali Dakhil in the book *Companions of Muhammad (PBUH)* (The Organization for Islamic Propagation, 2004), Sayid Razi Sayid Nejad in the book *Eternal Symbols* (Imam Khomaini Institute, 2010), Javad Mohadessi in the book *Ammār Yāsir* (Boostan Ketab, 2003) and the MA thesis titled "the Social, Cultural and Political Role of Ammār ibn Yāsir" (Isfahan University of Quranic Knowledge, 2014) are all among the studies conducted by various scholars to clarify on the literal, traditional, historical character of Ammār ibn Yāsir in the history of Islam. The large number of these works represents the reason for the importance of this figure in the history of Islam, define his position as an eminent companion of the holy prophet and sometimes investigate the literary and traditional aspect of his character. On the other hand, numerous early historical resources like annals and biographies have mentioned the positions he had; however, they have failed to give reasons for them. The important point worth mentioning is that early researchers have related the events like any other story without any critical evaluation based on the common social and intellectual traditions governing the society.

## **1- The Approach toward Saqifah**

After the decease of the holy prophet, his companions neglected his divine commands and overt actions for the future of the Islamic society and pretended they had to choose a successor for him promptly (Tabari History, 2008: Ps. 204- 208 & P. 218). The instant outcome of these thoughts was forming Saqifah and conducting a Coup d'état. On the other hand, another group from companions protested and congregated in Bani Bayazah Quarter (Mohammad Bin Aghil, 1412 Hijri: Ps. 48- 49). This group with Ammār ibn Yāsir among, believed that, the succession for the holy prophet is for the Ahl al-Bayt. For Ammār, the position of Bani Taym in the government was negligible and wanted them to return to their real position. He reasoned that the holy prophet has clarified the issue of succession after himself and everyone has to abide (Zobair Bin Bakar, Without Date: P. 312). Ammār even protested in the first Friday Prayers after the holy prophet's decease. He addressed Abu Bakr and said "You the Quraysh tribe, clearly know that Ahl al-Bayt is much closer to the holy prophet than you are; thus, return the position to its owners who are more legitimate than you. Do not retrospect for the true merit in you will fall (Hussaini Tehrani, Without Date: 8/194).

## **2- The Presence of Ammār against the Heretics; Conquering and Ruling Kufa**

Ammār ibn Yāsir and Khalid bin Valid were present in the repression of Yamamah conspiracy. Accordigng to Vaghedi, Ammār recited epoees in the battlefield and killed the heretics using his Yamani spear called the Yamani Scripture (Vaghedi, 1410 Hijri: Ps. 123- 125).

Ammār was also connected to the Ahl al-Bayt and was present in the incidents related to the system of government under their supervision. The purpose he had was the good of Islam and public benefit therefore, he had positions in the Nahavand War and later as the ruler of Kufa in the time of second Caliph (Abu Naeim Esbahani, 1934: P. 23), participation in Darirmok (Vaghedi, 1417 Hijri: P. 202), Conquest of Shooshtar (Belazari, 1988: P. 369) and Ray (Ibn a'sam, 1411 Hijri: Ps. 289- 290). His role in the army of the Conquerors and his interaction with the Kufis, was under special consideration of Islamic references and several stories have been related on them (Ibn S'ad, 1410 Hijri: Ps. 191- 194). The point worth mentioning here is that he was removed from the position of ruling Kufa very shortly after he was assigned to the post for as it seems, the Caliph's policy and Ammār's personal traits and management style (Ibn A'sam, 1411 Hijri: Ps. 275- 323), along with social factors (Tabari, 2008: Ps. 163- 167).

### **3- Ammār's position toward the 6-man Council and the Caliphate of Uthman**

Uthman was selected as a Caliph by the council proposed by the second Caliph. Ammār criticized the members of the council and questioned the ones who accepted Uthman as the Caliph (Ibn Qutaibeh, 1363 Hijri: P. 28). For him, Ali (PBUH) was the most decent choice and mentioned the Ahl al-Bayt and Prophet Muhammad's ideas to be cautious and rejected the caliphate as a tribal ruling (Ibn Abd Rabeḥ, 1994: Ps. 27- 29).

Although Ammār followed the Ahl al-Bayt and tried to stop any conspiracy, he sometimes tried to give advice to Uthman (Zobayr bin Bakar, without date: P. 604). However, he was a serious critic of the Caliph's policies. He never gave a caliphate salutation to the caliph and divided Uthman's supporters into two groups: the ignorant oppressed and the negligent oppressor (ibid: Ps. 610- 617). On the other hand, the Caliph's positions toward the prophet's companions raised public protests and denouncements (Ibn Gotaybeh, 1984: P. 33). According to Ibn A'sam, Ammār represented some of those companions in writing a letter of disagreement to Uthman and went to Medina; yet, Uthman threw the letter away disrespectfully, called Ammār a liar and ordered to beat him so hard that he fainted (Ibn A'sam, 1411 Hijri: Ps. 373- 374). Moreover, Ammār was charged with raising rebellion against the caliph and Uthman decided to get rid of him (Ibn Ghotaybeh, 1414 Hijri: Ps. 232- 233).

### **4- The Position of Ammār in Imam Ali's Caliphate:**

Ammār was an eminent companion of the holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and supported his successors through helping Imam Ali (PBUH) establishing his Caliphate. He attended the meetings of the companions and disciples and emphasized on recognizing and obeying the true Imam. He invited people to stick together and asked them to give allegiance to Imam Ali (Ibn A'sam, 1411 Hijri: Ps. 441- 442). Besides, he was one of the advisors of Imam Ali and he applied Ammār's power, support, and supervision to elevate religious knowledge and propagate Islamic thought (Ibn Ghotaybeh, 1984: P. 89).

Ammār was actively present in Nakesin and Ghasetin conspiracy and told Imam Ali "we have given our allegiance to you and will not fight against you. Anyone who has given you his allegiance will fight for you for God has given you to us. This was God's covenant. Anyone breaking the allegiance breaks his promise with his self. Kufa is ours and so is Basra. We have reached what you desired and what you deserved. The deceived is the Syrian one who does not give up unless he is killed or defeated. Therefore, be hasty before he does anything." He wanted to gain control of the war and told people they had lost control over their self (Ibn Ghotaybeh, 1984: P. 89).

Ammār went to Kufa along with Hassan bin Ali to let the people know what goes around them and provide them with equipment needed in the war against Nakesin. Ibn A'sam reports a list of the messengers of Imam Ali to Kufa and gives the reason for their sending. Two of the messengers quoted Imam Ali to people and invited them to obey the righteous (Ibn A'sam, 1411 Hijri: Ps. 460- 461). Since he was of a prominent position among nobles of Kufa, they asked for the solution of their problems from him (Ghazi No'man, Without Date; Ps. 383- 386).

Although Ammār was over 90 years old when Imam Ali became the caliph, he was actively present in the battle of Camel and the battle of Siffin. He was still a close companion for Imam Ali when he was martyred. In the battle of Camel, he was the commander of the right wing mounted army (Blazeri, 1417 Hijri: Ps. 235- 237) and played a great role in imposing defeat to the Nakesin (Ibn A'sam, 1411 Hijri: Ps. 476- 480).

For Ammār, Ghasetin and their leader Muawiyah, were the symbols of ignorance and fighting against them along with Imam Ali was the sign of true training (Ibn Ghutaybeh, 1984 Hijri: Ps. 124- 125). He was one of the commanders of the army of Iraq in the battle of Siffin (Ibn A'sam, 1411: Ps. 566- 567). In the battlefield, he related stories from the life and characteristics of the holy prophet Muhammad and argued with the disbelievers (Ibn Asaker, 1415 Hijri: P. 356). The result was guidance of many of the Syrian army and disband among Nakesin (Ibn A'sam 1411 Hijri: Ps. 158- 161). The presence of Ammār beside Imam Ali in the battle had a big impact on the clarification of the truth and awakening the society. This was more important when people recalled traditions of the holy prophet Muhammad about Ammār. He once said "Wherever Ammār is present, the

truth is with him" (Ibn A'sam, 1411 Hijri: Ps. 158- 161). When Ammār was martyred in the battle of Siffin, Muawiyah rejoiced and named it "the Greatest Victory" of the battle (Ibn Abd Rabeh. 1994: Ps. 83- 85). He also related a false tradition from the holy prophet and said, "His murderer is the one who brought him to the battlefield" (Belazari, 1417 Hijri: Ps. 310- 313).

### Conclusion

1. Ammār selected companionship of the Ahl al-Bayt after the decease of the holy prophet Muhammad and tried to correct the Islamic society through performing religious rules. He did not ever fear storms for he believed truly and his only prize was martyrdom given to him by God almighty.
2. Saqifah incident was the point against Ghadir and showed the huge disband in the Islamic society. Ammār believed that whatever the holy prophet said had to be obeyed. He drew the attentions in a six-man meeting toward the holy prophet Muhammad and Imam Ali (PBUT). He believed they were the honours of the Islamic society.
3. His presence along with the Caliphs in wars and battles was the policy of the Ahl al-Bayt and should not be considered as his prejudice toward them. Considering his behaviour especially in the government of Uthman, it could be concluded his position was beyond common political approaches and proves his deep understanding of the time he was living in and the teachings of Ahl al-Bayt.
4. Ammār was one of the people who believed in the ruling of the Ahl al-Bayt. He tried to impose their rule over all aspects of the Islamic society and then many of their supporters would choose the right path and receive true guidance.
5. Ammār was one of the famous narrators of confidence and many traditions have been related from him. This has made many of the religious scholars and narrators to accept his position in understanding Islamic issues.

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