

## Caliph Abu Bakr Ash-Siddiq: Political Speeches And His Role In Fighting The Riddah

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### Abstract

*The death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in 11 AH/632 CE created a veil of power that threatened the stability of the Arabian Peninsula. Abu Bakr al-Siddiq was elected as the first caliph through a process held at the Saqifah Banu Sa'idah. The greatest challenge was not only succession, but the emergence of the Riddah phenomenon a rebellious movement by Arab tribes who refused to pay zakat or claimed to be false prophets. This study employed a qualitative research method with a library research approach. Data were obtained through a search of various Scopus-indexed international journals, books, scientific articles, and relevant academic documents from the past ten years. The data analysis technique used content analysis with a descriptive-critical approach. The results of this study examine a crucial phase in Islamic history after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), namely the caliphate of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. The main focus of this study is an analysis of Abu Bakar's inaugural speech which laid the foundations of theocratic-participatory democracy, as well as the political-military policies in suppressing the Riddah (dissidents).*

**Keywords:** Abu Bakr Ash-Siddiq, Political Speeches, The Riddah

## INTRODUCTION

The history of Islam after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) presented significant challenges for the Muslim community. One of the central figures who played a crucial role in maintaining the unity of the community was Caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq. He was the first caliph after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), leading the Muslim community during a time of turmoil, both politically and socially. One of his most significant moments was his political speech, which outlined the principles of Islamic leadership and the struggle against the Riddah (those who apostatized or refused to pay zakat after the Prophet's death).

This speech was not merely rhetorical, but also served as the basis for legitimizing leadership that upheld the values of shura (law), justice, and firmness of faith. Abu Bakr al-Siddiq's speech demonstrated his steadfastness in upholding Islamic law while also exemplifying humble leadership. In his speech, he emphasized that he was not the best among the people, but only a servant God is the one who is given the trust. This attitude of tawadhu is a sign of deep leadership Islam is not a struggle for power, but devotion. This is also in line with the word Allah in QS. An-Nisa [4]:59 regarding obedience to Allah, the Messenger, and the leader of among those who believe. Apart from his speech, Abu Bakar's toughest test was facing the Riddah people.

Movement This arose as a result of internal divisions, refusal to pay zakat, and the emergence of false prophets like Musailamah al-Kazzab. With a firm policy, Abu Bakr mobilized military force to maintain the unity of the people and enforce the obligation of zakat. The Riddah War at the end succeeded in re-solidifying the political, social and spiritual foundations of Muslims in the early days caliphate.

Caliph Abu Bakr al-Siddiq is known as one of the most respected Islamic leaders and is considered a role model in governing the nation. The strategic policies he implemented during his reign as Caliph Rashid played a key role in

establishing a solid foundation for the development of Islam (Muqorrobin et al., 2020). A thorough analysis of his policies provides a clearer picture of the challenges faced during that time and their relevance in the modern historical and political context (Sugianto et al., 2022). It is known that after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), Muslims were at the brink of disagreement in choosing his successor. Both the Ansar and the Muhajirin groups had their own arguments in determining the successor to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Ultimately, Abu Bakr, who bore the title or nickname of Ash-Siddiq, was chosen. The first caliph after the prophethood, he led the Muslim community for only 2 years and 3 months. a very short period.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research, aiming to analyze the biography of caliph abu Bakr al-Siddiq's political speeches, and the war against the Riddah people after the death of the Prophet Muhammad through a review of relevant academic literature. Data sources were obtained from scholarly books, reputable journal articles, Data collection was conducted through a systematic literature search, considering the relevance and credibility of the sources. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive-analytical techniques.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Biography of Caliph Abu Bakar Ash-Siddiq**

Abu Bakr Siddiq was the son of Abu Quhafah. His real name is Abdullah Ibn `Uthman (title Abu Quhafah) ibn Amir ibn Ka'ab ibn Sa`ad ibn Taim ibn Murrah al-Taimi. During the Jahiliyah period, his name was Abdul Kaaba, which was later changed by the Prophet Muhammad with the name Abdullah. His nickname is Abu Bakar, because from the start after he converted to Islam, his title was al-Siddiq, as he was quick to confirm Rasulullah in various events, especially the events of Isra' and Mi'raj (Rahmatullah, 2014).

From the Ummul Mukminin Aisha, she said, "I was in the house of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), while the Companions were in the courtyard. Between me and them was a cloth barrier. Suddenly, Abu Bakr came, and the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "Whoever wishes to see an Atiq (freed) from the fire of hell, let him see this man." Abu Bakr's name in his family was Abdullah ibn Uthman ibn Amir, but Atiq's name was more famous (Al-Mishri, 2010).

Regarding Abu Bakr's nickname as As-Sidiq, scholars also have different opinions. Some say that before converting to Islam, Abu Bakr was known for his honesty and trustworthiness. Even the people of Quraysh had no doubts about what Abu Bakr said. Therefore, he was nicknamed al-Siddiq. Another opinion says that he was nicknamed al-Siddiq because of his attitude of immediately confirmed the events of Isra` and Mi`raj Rasulullah SAW.

Travel done in one night from Grand Mosque to Al Aqsa Mosque and up to Shidratu al-Muntaha and back again going to earth to collect prayer orders is considered mere boasting by the Quraish people at that time. Because this is considered a thing impossible journey. But Abu Bakr firmly said, "Really I am." justify something more than that (the events of Isra and Mi`raj) and from everything news that comes from the sky (Haekal, 2003). Abu Bakr was the first person times converted to Islam among other friends. Told from Abdullah bin Abbas, he said "The person who first prayed was Abu Bakr ash-Siddiq" (Hasronghisam Sa, 2018). Abu Bakr was also group of friends who earned the nickname Assabiqunal Awwalun.

Abu Bakr died on Monday at night, which is exactly eight days before the end of the month of Final Jumadil 13 Hijriyah. Before he died, Abu Bakr was sick for fifteen days. When he was sick, Abu Bakr made a will The reins of government were given to Umar bin Khattab (Hasronghisam Sa, 2018). Abu Bakr ruled as caliph for two years and three months. He died at the age of 63 years. Among Abu Bakr's testaments to Aisyah, "I don't leaving property for

you except pregnant animals and slaves always helps us make Muslim swords. Therefore, if I If you die, please give it all to Umar. When Aisyah fulfilled her will his father said to Umar, then Umar said, "May Allah have mercy on Abu Bakr. Indeed, he made it difficult for those who became caliphs after him to follow him." He was buried alongside the Prophet's grave, which is located in Aisha's room. He was also prayed for by the Muslims led by Umar ibn Khattab (Hasronghisam Sa, 2018).

### **Indicators or Determining Factors of Political Speech by Caliph Abu Bakar Asy-Siddiq & Riddah War**

1. The Post-Death Context of the Prophet Muhammad The death of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) sparked a leadership crisis and division among the Muslim community. Some tribes felt that religious obligations, including zakat, were no longer binding. This situation underpinned the importance of Abu Bakr's political speech to affirm the legitimacy of the Caliphate's leadership.
2. The Principle of Leadership Trust In his speech, Abu Bakr emphasized that leadership is not an honor, but a trust. He asserted that he was not the best among the people, but would lead based on truth. This factor affirmed the moral foundation of Islamic politics.
3. The Rejection of Zakat by the Riddah Group The refusal to pay zakat was a major factor in the outbreak of the Riddah Wars. Abu Bakr rejected compromise on the issue of zakat, arguing that zakat was not merely an individual act of worship, but an economic and social pillar of the Muslim community.
4. The Emergence of False Prophets Figures such as Musailamah al-Kazzab, Tulaihah al-Asadi, and Sajah claimed prophethood after the Prophet's death. These claims weakened the faith of the community and challenged Islamic authority, triggering political and military confrontations.

5. Tribal Solidarity and Fanaticism Strong tribal ties led some tribes to support the Riddah movement. Tribal fanaticism complicated the consolidation of the Muslim community, forcing Abu Bakr to employ military strategy through Khalid ibn Walid's troops to subdue them.
6. Political & Social Impact of the Riddah War Abu Bakr's success in crushing the Riddah movement strengthened the caliphate, maintained the unity of the Muslim community, and paved the way for the expansion of Islamic preaching beyond the Arabian Peninsula. This factor made the Riddah War a turning point in early Islamic history.

### **Political Speech by Caliph Abu Bakr al-Shiddiq**

Abu Bakr's speech upon his appointment as caliph is known as one of the most important political orations in Islamic history. In his speech, Abu Bakr emphasized three main points: (1) leadership is a trust, not a privilege; (2) loyalty to the truth, not to individuals; and (3) the importance of deliberation in governance. He said, "*I have been appointed your leader, even though I am not the best among you. If I am right, then support me; but if I am wrong, then correct me*" (Narrated by Tabari, in *Tarikh al-Rusul wa al-Muluk*).

This speech reflects the concepts of accountability and transparency in Islam. Abu Bakr rejected the absolutism of power and even opened up space for criticism. In the context of modern politics, this principle aligns with the idea of good governance, namely a government that is transparent, accountable, and participatory. Important factors in Abu Bakar's speech:

1. Trust in Leadership – leadership is a responsibility, not a personal honor.
2. Justice and Truth – upholding sharia as the standard of policy.
3. Consultation (Shura) – listening to the advice of the people.
4. Tawadhu (Humility) – not feeling superior to others.

## **War Against the Riddah**

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, a wave of apostasy (Riddah) emerged in Jazirah Arab. Some tribes refuse to pay zakat, even considering that zakat is no longer an obligation applies. Apart from that, false prophets emerged such as Musailamah al-Kazzab, Tulaihah al-Asadi, and Sajah. This movement threatens the integrity of the Muslim community. Abu Bakr took a firm stance with states that zakat is a non-negotiable obligation. In history it is mentioned that Umar bin Khattab had suggested that Abu Bakr make concessions, but Abu Bakr said: *"By Allah, if they refuse to give me the rope of the previous camel they paid to the Messenger of Allah, I will definitely fight them"* (HR. Bukhari).

Abu Bakar's policy emphasizes that zakat is not just an individual act of worship, but an aspect socio-political that maintains the solidarity of the people. Thus, the rejection of zakat constituted a form of rebellion against the Islamic state. Abu Bakr's strategy involved sending troops under the leadership of Khalid ibn Walid to crush the Riddah movement in various regions. Factors Causing the Riddah Wars:

1. Rejection of zakat
2. The emergence of false prophets
3. Tribal fanaticism
4. Weakening of political ties after the Prophet's death
5. Economic and social interests

## **The Firmness of Abu Bakr's Leadership**

Abu Bakr's decision to fight the rebels demonstrated his firmness of principle. Despite opposition from several companions—including Umar ibn al-Khattab who feared the danger of civil war, Abu Bakr declared: "By Allah, I will fight anyone who separates prayer from zakat." This firmness is recognized by historians (such as Al-Tabari) as a step to save Islam. If Abu Bakr

had compromised, the state's authority would have been destroyed, and Islam would have become only a local religion in Medina and Mecca.

a. Military Strategy and Consolidation Approach

Abu Bakr divided the Muslim army into 11 main brigades. Legendary commanders such as Khalid ibn Walid, Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl, and Amr ibn al-As were deployed to various front lines. Tactical Strategy: Khalid bin Walid played a central role in the crucial fight against Musailamah in Yamamah (Yamamah War). Reconciliation Policy: After the military victory, Abu Bakr did not carry out ethnic cleansing. After the Riddah were accepted back into the Muslim community, this demonstrated a strategy of political integration that included inclusive control of the praise-giving center.

b. Impact of the Riddah

War The Riddah War had a major impact on the unity of the Muslim community. First, it successfully restored political stability and strengthened the authority of the Caliphate. Second, the success in crushing the Riddah group made the Muslim community more united and ready to expand its da'wah beyond the Arabian Peninsula. Third, this war demonstrated that zakat has an important political and economic dimension for the Islamic state. From a historical perspective, the Riddah War was a turning point that guaranteed the continuation of the Caliphate. Without Abu Bakr's decisiveness, the Muslim community might have become divided and Islamic law would have lost its authority. After the war, Abu Bakr sent troops to Syria and Iraq, marking the beginning of Islam's expansion into the international world.

## **CONCLUSION**

Abu Bakr al-Siddiq's political speeches demonstrated the principles of humble, just, and participatory leadership. He emphasized that leadership is a trust that must be safeguarded with truth, shura (consensus), and accountability. Meanwhile, the war against the Riddah (Islamic community) demonstrated Abu Bakr's firmness in upholding the obligation of zakat and the unity of the ummah. The Riddah War had a significant impact on strengthening

the foundations of the caliphate and paving the way for Islamic expansion. From this event, we learn that Islamic leadership requires not only moral refinement but also political decisiveness to safeguard religion and society.

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