

The Martyrdom of Hazrat Husayn ؑ

Tears, Treachery, and the Truth

(Translated excerpts from Badr al-Layali by Mufti Rida ul-Haq DB)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين، وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله رب السماوات والأرضين الواحد الأحد الفرد الصمد، الذي لم يلد ولم يولد ولم يكن له كفوا أحد. وأشهد أن محمدًا عبده ورسوله خاتم النبيين صلى الله تعالى عليه وعلى آله وأصحابه ومن سلك طريقهم وسار على نهجهم وسلم تسليمها دائما إلى يوم الدين. أما بعد:

Events Leading up to Karbalā'

Long before the Event of Karbalā', a Jew from Yemen, 'Abdullāh ibn Saba'¹, outwardly accepted Islām with the sole intent of undermining Islām and creating discord among the Muslims. He, along with his associates, openly opposed Mu'āwiyah ؑ and the Umayyads, and behind the scenes, also harboured hatred for 'Alī ؑ and his family.

'Alī ؑ was the one who had decisively defeated the last major Jewish stronghold in Arabia at Khaybar, dealing a decisive blow from which they never recovered. Till today, echoes of this memory can be found in slogans used against the Jews, such as:

خير خيبر يا يهود، جيش محمد سوف يعود

¹ Some Shī'ās nowadays deny his existence. However, both Sunnī and Shī'ī scholars have affirmed his historical presence and documented his outward conversion to Islām from Judaism. See: Rijāl al-Kashshī vol. 2, p. 20; al-Hidāyah al-Kubrā vol. 1, p. 139; Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah vol. 5, p. 6; Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn vol. 1, pp. 85–86; al-Tabṣīr fī al-Dīn pp. 71–72; al-Milal wa al-Niḥal vol. 1, p. 152.

Given this background, it is easy to understand the Sabā'ī faction's (followers of 'Abdullāh ibn Saba') hidden hatred towards 'Alī ؑ and his family.

Subsequently, they incited conflicts among the Muslims such as the Battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn, setting one group of Muslims against the other and hindering the momentum of the expansion of Islām. Later, when negotiations for reconciliation between 'Alī and Mu'āwiyah ؑ began, the Sabā'īs grew alarmed. They feared that unity between these two prominent leaders would ultimately thwart their plans. As a result, they dispatched three individuals to carry out targeted assassinations²:

- 'Amr ibn Bakr was sent to kill 'Amr ibn al-ʿĀṣ ؑ, but was unsuccessful.
- Barak ibn 'Abdullāh attempted to assassinate Mu'āwiyah ؑ, who survived despite being wounded.
- 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muljam was sent to assassinate 'Alī ؑ, and he succeeded, leading to the martyrdom of 'Alī ؑ.

Following this, Ḥasan ibn 'Alī ؑ assumed leadership. The Shī'ī work, *Kashf al-Ghummah fī Ma'rifat al-A'imma*, also affirms that 'Alī ؑ had designated his son, Ḥasan ؑ, as his successor.

Ḥasan ؑ clearly perceived the misguided schemes of the Shī'as and concluded that the honour of the Muslim Ummah depended on its unity. For this reason, he agreed to a treaty with Mu'āwiyah ؑ; a detailed account of which appears in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, h. 2740.

Because of Ḥasan ؑ's sincerity, selfless sacrifice, and concern for the welfare of the Muslim Ummah, the Muslims reached a consensus regarding their leader. That year became known as 'Ām al-Jamā'ah (the Year of Unity), and Mu'āwiyah ؑ was unanimously accepted as the leader of the Muslims. Military campaigns resumed and Mu'āwiyah ؑ came to rule roughly 645,500 square miles of territory. When he grew old, seeking to prevent further discord among the Ummah and to curb the mischief of wrongdoers, he sought counsel of the Ṣaḥābah ؓ and appointed his son, Yazīd, as his successor. His words to Ibn 'Umar ؓ were: "I fear lest the Ummah of Muḥammad be left like stray sheep without a shepherd³." (*al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāya* vol. 8, p.808)

Among the Ṣaḥābah ؓ, 'Abdullāh ibn al-Zubayr and Ḥusayn ؓ were unhappy with Yazīd's succession. They regarded it as inappropriate—especially in the presence of senior Ṣaḥābah ؓ—to elevate someone from the next generation above the Ṣaḥābah ؓ, and they also feared it would establish a precedent for hereditary rule. However, Mu'āwiyah and many other Ṣaḥābah ؓ believed Yazīd was capable and that his appointment would help preserve unity, and thus considered the decision, under the current circumstances, to be sound and correct.

From 56–60 AH, Mu'āwiyah ؑ served as Leader of the Muslims with Yazīd as his appointed successor. Yazīd then reigned as Leader of the Muslims from 60–64 AH.

² ذكر ابن جرير وغير واحد من علماء التاريخ والسير وأيام الناس، أن ثلاثة من الخوارج... اجتمعوا فتذاكروا قتل علي إخوانهم من أهل النهروان فترحموا عليهم وقالوا: ماذا نصنع بالبقاء بعدهم؟ كانوا من خير الناس وأكثرهم صلاة، وكانوا دعاة الناس إلى ربهم، لا يخافون في الله لومة لائم، فلو شربنا أنفسنا فأتينا أئمة الضلالة فقتلناهم فأرحنا منهم البلاد وأخذنا منهم ثأر إخواننا. فقال ابن ملجم أنا أكفيكم علي بن أبي طالب. وقال البرك بن عبد الله: أنا أكفيكم معاوية بن أبي سفيان. وقال عمرو بن بكر: أنا أكفيكم عمرو بن العاص (البداية والنهاية ١٣/١١)

³ قال لعبد الله بن عمر فيما خاطبه به: إني خفت أن أذر الرعية من بعدي كالغنم المطيرة ليس لها راع (البداية والنهاية ٨/٨٠٨)

Ḥasan ؑ later passed away as a result of poisoning, long before the succession of Yazīd.

During the lifetime of Mu‘āwiyah ؑ, Ḥusayn ؑ did not pledge his allegiance to Yazīd. Possible reasons for this include:

- opposition to appointing a successor from the later generations in the presence of Ṣaḥābah ؓ,
- belief that he held a greater claim to succession himself, or
- rejection of setting a precedent for hereditary succession.

Whatever his reasons might have been, he did not pledge allegiance to Yazīd during the lifetime of Mu‘āwiyah ؑ.

After the demise of Mu‘āwiyah ؑ, when Yazīd became caliph, Ḥusayn ؑ stated that he would give his pledge in the public assembly the next day, but this did not come to pass.

The full account of what transpired is as follows:

At the time of the demise of Mu‘āwiyah ؑ, Ḥusayn ؑ was residing in Madīnah. When Yazīd assumed the caliphate, he wrote to the governor of Madīnah, Walīd ibn ‘Utbah ibn Abī Sufyān, instructing him to obtain the pledge of allegiance from the people of Madīnah in general, and from the leading members of Quraysh in particular—especially Ḥusayn ؑ—while treating them with kindness and leniency⁴.

That very night, the governor summoned Ḥusayn ؑ and conveyed that Yazīd sought his pledge. Ḥusayn ؑ did not refuse outright; rather, he stated that he would not give the pledge in private, but would do so publicly, in the presence of the general public. He remained in Madīnah the following day in accordance with his word. Meanwhile, the authorities were preoccupied with finding ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Zubayr ؑ until evening. Later that night, a message was again sent to Ḥusayn ؑ, to which he replied: “Let morning come, then we shall consider the matter.” The envoys departed, and during that same night, Ḥusayn ؑ quietly left for Makkah with his family, leaving behind only his brother, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah⁵.

At this juncture, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah and others advised Ḥusayn ؑ against travelling to Makkah, but he had already resolved upon the journey. Likewise, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar ؑ expressed his disapproval of the departures of both ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Zubayr and Ḥusayn ؑ, saying,

اتقيا الله ولا تُفرِّقا جماعة المسلمين

“Fear Allāh and do not divide the unity of the Muslims.” (*al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* vol. 8 p. 148)

Ḥusayn ؑ remained in Makkah for some time. Thereafter, the people of Kūfah began sending him numerous letters, urging him to come to Kūfah and assuring him that he would be their leader, that they would follow him, and that more than 100,000 supporters were prepared to receive him. Later on, Ḥusayn ؑ referred to those letters. Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī (vol. 5, p. 402) mentions regarding those letters:

فقال الحسين: يا عقبة بن سمان، أخرج الخرجين اللذين فيهما كتبهم إلي، فأخرج خرجين مملوءين صحفا، فنشرها بين أيديهم

⁴ توفي معاوية ليلة النصف من رجب سنة ستين، وبايع الناس يزيد، فكتب يزيد مع عبد الله بن عمرو بن أويس العامري - عامر بن لؤي - إلى الوليد بن عتبة بن أبي سفيان وهو على المدينة؛ أن ادع الناس فبايعهم، وأبدأ بوجوه قريش، وليكن أول من تبدأ به الحسين بن علي، فإن أمير المؤمنين عهد إلي في أمره الرفق به واستصلاحه (البداية والنهاية ٢٣٢/٨)

⁵ ودعاه إلى البيعة، فاسترجع وترحم وقال: مثلي لا يبايع سرا ولا يكتفى بها مني، فإذا ظهرت إلى الناس ودعوتهم كان أمرنا واحدا وكنت أول محبوب...، وخرج ابن الزبير من ليلته مع أخيه جعفر وحدهما، وأخذوا طريق الفرع إلى مكة فسرح الرحالة في طلبه فلم يدركوه ورجعوا وتشاغلو بذلك عن الحسين سائر يومه. ثم أرسل إلى الحسين يدعوه فقال: أصبحوا وترون ونرى. وسار في الليلة الثانية ببنيه وإخوته وبني أخيه إلا محمد بن الحنفية. (تاريخ ابن خلدون ٢٥/٣)

Ḥusayn said, “O ‘Uqbah ibn Sam‘ān, bring forth the two saddlebags containing their letters to me.” He then brought out two saddlebags filled with written pages and spread them out before them.

It appears that Ḥusayn ؑ did not initially act upon these appeals. Subsequently, a delegation of 60 men were dispatched from Kūfah to Makkah to persuade Ḥusayn ؑ to travel there, presenting hopeful assurances that his arrival would resolve their affairs. Before setting out, Ḥusayn ؑ sent his cousin Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl to Kūfah. The Kūfans received him warmly, whereupon Muslim wrote to Ḥusayn ؑ encouraging him to come. Soon thereafter, however, Muslim was martyred.

Ḥusayn ؑ then prepared to depart, taking with him members of his household, including women and children. A number of senior Ṣaḥābah ؑ and other notable figures advised him against proceeding to Kūfah, including ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؑ, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah, Abū Bakr ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Hishām, al-Farazdaq, ‘Abdullāh ibn Ja‘far, and ‘Abdullāh ibn Muṭī‘ al-‘Adawī, among others⁶. Despite their counsel, Ḥusayn ؑ did not accept their advice. A detailed discussion of this can be found in *Abāṭil Yajibu an Tumḥā min al-Tārīkh* (by Dr. Ibrāhīm ‘Alī Sha‘ūṭ), pp. 241–243.

Why Did Ḥusayn ؑ Travel to Kūfah?

Three main explanations have been put forward regarding the departure of Ḥusayn ؑ:

1. That he set out to fight and wage jihād against Yazīd.
2. That he sought to claim the caliphate.
3. That his purpose was to advise and reform the rebels of Kūfah, who were threatening to destabilize Islāmic rule—urging them that if they truly regarded him as their leader, they should support Yazīd’s rule and abandon rebellion; and that any genuine grievances with Yazīd should be addressed through counsel and advice, rather than disorder. However, during the journey he came to realise that, if he pursued this approach, the Kūfans were intent on killing him. He expressed this fear more than once, and events ultimately unfolded as he had feared.

The first view—that Ḥusayn ؑ set out for jihād against Yazīd—is unlikely for several reasons:

- 1) When a number of Ṣaḥābah ؑ advised him not to go to Kūfah, Ḥusayn ؑ did not say that he was going for jihād. Rather, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؑ wrote to Yazīd stating that Ḥusayn ؑ’ s departure was not for a reason that would displease or harm him⁷.

⁶ قال ابن عمر ؓ: إن أهل العراق قوم مناكير، وقد قتلوا أباك، وضربوا أخاك، وفعلوا وفعلوا. (تاريخ دمشق لابن عساکر ۲۰۱/۱۴)

قال ابن عباس ؓ: لولا أن يُزروا بي وبك لَشَبَّثْتُ يدي في شعرك، إلى أين تخرج؟ إلى قوم قتلوا أباك، وطعنوا أخاك. (مصنف ابن أبي شيبة، رقم: ۳۸۱۹)

قال ابن الزبير ؓ: أخرج إلى قوم قتلوا أباك وأخرجوا أخاك؟. (البداية والنهاية ۱۶۱/۸)

قال أبو بكر بن عبد الرحمن بن الحارث ؓ: قد رأيت ما صنع أهل العراق بأبيك وأخيك وأنت تريد أن تسير إليهم وهم عبيد الدنيا فيقاتلك من قد وعدك أن يَنْصُرَكَ ويخُدُّكَ من أنت أحبُّ إليه ممن يَنْصُرُهُ فأذْكَرُكَ الله في نفسك. (تاريخ دمشق لابن عساکر ۲۰۹/۱۴)

قال أبو سعيد الخدري ؓ: غلبني الحسين بن علي على الخروج وقد قلت له اتق الله في نفسك والزم بيتك فلا تخرج على إمامك. (تاريخ دمشق لابن عساکر ۲۰۸/۱۴)

قال الذهبي ؓ: وهذا كان رأي ابن عمر، وأبي سعيد، وابن عباس، وجابر، وجماعة سواهم، وكلموه في ذلك. (تاريخ الإسلام ۶۳۶/۲)

⁷ فكتب إليه عبد الله بن عباس إني لأرجو أن لا يكون خروج الحسين لأمر تكبره، ولست أدع النصيحة له في كل ما يجمع الله به الألفة وتطقي به النائرة.

(تاريخ دمشق لابن عساکر ۲۱۰/۱۴، تهذيب الكمال ۴۲۰/۶، البداية والنهاية ۱۶۴/۸)

In addition, when Ḥusayn ؑ met ‘Umar ibn Sa‘d, he proposed three alternatives: that he be allowed to return to Madīnah, to proceed to one of the Muslim border regions, or to pledge allegiance to the Leader of the Muslims, Yazīd. When this proposal was conveyed to ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād, he reportedly accepted it, describing it as a letter of a man sincere to his leader and merciful to his people⁸. Another report in *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* even indicates that he set out toward Syria, in the direction of Yazīd⁹. Hence, these reports suggest that his aim was not warfare.

- 2) Had his intention been jihād, he would not have expressed a willingness to go to Yazīd or to withdraw to one of the Muslim border regions. Rather, one would expect a clear call to arms and a denunciation of Yazīd’s rule.
- 3) He travelled with his family, including women and children, which further suggests that this was not a military expedition. People do not ordinarily take young children into a war zone. Moreover, when he learned of the killing of Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl, he considered turning back—something that would be unlikely if he had set out with a firm intention to fight.
- 4) His brother, Ḥasan ؑ, had consistently urged both their father and Ḥusayn ؑ himself to avoid fighting. When Ḥasan ؑ became caliph, he chose reconciliation and thereby brought peace between two warring factions. It is extremely likely that Ḥusayn ؑ accepted his brother’s advice and also inclined toward conciliation¹⁰.
- 5) After the martyrdom of ‘Alī ؑ, the stability achieved through Ḥasan ؑ’s efforts makes it extremely unlikely that Ḥusayn ؑ would deliberately seek to undo that peace, plunge the community back into bloodshed, and negate the sacrifices his brother had made.

The Second View

The second view, adopted by Mawlānā Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān A‘zamī ؑ among others, is that Ḥusayn ؑ set out with the intention of seeking caliphate. His assessment is as follows:

The available indications and historical evidence suggest that Ḥusayn ؑ’s journey to Kūfah, accompanied by his family, was driven by this purpose. His decision seems to have been shaped by the repeated appeals from the Rawāfiḍ of Kūfah, and by his view that he was more entitled to the caliphate, while considering Yazīd less deserving.

A study of historical sources suggests that those who invited him did so in order to pledge allegiance to him as caliph; however, they ultimately proved treacherous. It should also be noted that setting out with the aim of assuming the caliphate—and regarding oneself as qualified for it—is not, in itself, unlawful.

Mawlānā Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān A‘zamī ؑ has discussed this perspective in detail. What follows is a concise summary of his argument:

⁸ هذا كتاب رجلٍ ناصحٍ لأميرِهِ، مشفِقٍ على قومِهِ، نعم قد قبلْتُ. (تاريخ الطبري ١٤/٥، تاريخ دمشق لابن عساكر ٥١/٤٥)

⁹ فانطلق يسير نحو طريق الشام نحو يزيد. (تاريخ الطبري ٣٩٢/٥ وإسناده صحيح)

¹⁰ وكذلك الحسن كان دائماً يشير على أبيهِ وأخيه بترك القتال، ولما صار الأمر إليه ترك القتال، وأصلح الله به بين الطائفتين المقتلتين. وعلي ؑ في آخر الأمر تبين له أن المصلحة في ترك القتال أعظم منها في فعله. (منهاج السنة النبوية ٥٣٥/٤)

In his work *Tabṣīrah bar Shahīd-e-Karbalā wa Yazīd* (pp. 13–19), he cites the statements of several Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم who regarded Ḥusayn عليه السلام’s departure as a pursuit of the caliphate, which was permissible for him, according to Mawlānā.

He first mentions ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, who advised Ḥusayn عليه السلام saying,

“Do not go out, for the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was given the choice between this world and the Hereafter, and he chose the Hereafter. You are a part of him, and will thus, not attain it (i.e., the world)¹¹.”

[Here, “the world” is understood to refer to political authority and leadership.]

Similarly, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه is reported to have said:

“Ḥusayn hastened to his destined end. By Allāh, had I reached him, I would not have allowed him to depart unless he overpowered me. With Banū Hāshim this matter (the caliphate) began, and with Banū Hāshim it will end. When you see a Hāshimī as caliph, then know that the end is near¹².”

Mawlānā A‘ẓamī رحمته الله also cites the advice of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه. In summary, Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه stated that if the people of Kūfah have already removed their governor, expelled their enemies, and established control over their lands, then Ḥusayn عليه السلام should accept their invitation. However, if their governor remains in authority and retains control, then their call amounts to an invitation to bloodshed (*al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8, p159).

In any case, the point here is that Ḥusayn عليه السلام’s departure to Kūfah in pursuit of the caliphate is not contrary to the belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah. In fact, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr رحمته الله explicitly titles a section in his book, *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* (vol. 8, p. 149):

قصة الحسين بن علي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنهما، وسبب خروجه بأهله من مكة إلى العراق في طلب الإمامة، وكيفيته مقتله رضي الله عنه

“The account of Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنهما, the reason for his departure with his family from Makkah to Iraq in pursuit of political authority, and the account of his martyrdom.”

Elsewhere, Mawlānā A‘ẓamī رحمته الله writes:

“The conclusion of this lengthy discussion is that there is no historical evidence, up to that time, establishing the immorality (*fisq*) of Yazīd, nor any evidence that Ḥusayn عليه السلام rose in order to wage *jihād* against such immorality. Rather, as previously mentioned, he regarded himself as superior to Yazīd and more deserving of the caliphate. There is no doubt that in terms of knowledge, virtue, the honour of the Prophet ﷺ’s companionship, kinship with the Prophet ﷺ, piety, and chastity, Yazīd was not equal even to the strap of his sandals.” (*Tabṣīrah bar Shahīd-e-Karbalā—Translated*, pp. 41–42)

The Third View

The third view—adopted by Shaykh Sanābilī in *Ḥādithah Karbalā aur Sabā’i Sāzish*, as well as by Mubashshir Naẓīr in *Sāniḥah Karbalā*, among others—is that Ḥusayn عليه السلام neither set out in pursuit of caliphate nor to wage war. Rather, his aim was to counsel and advise the people of Kūfah, restrain their agitation, and protect the

¹¹ لا تخرج فإن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم خير الله بين الدنيا والآخرة فاختر الآخرة، وإنك بضعه منه ولا تنالها- يعني الدنيا. (البداية والنهاية ١٦٣/٨). وقال

الهيثمي: رواه البزار والطبراني في الأوسط، ورجال البزار ثقات: مجمع الزوائد ١٩٢/٩

¹² عجل حسين قدره، والله لو أدركته ما تركته يخرج إلا أن يغلبني، ببني هاشم فتح هذا الأمر، وببني هاشم ختم، فإذا رأيت الهاشمي قد ملك فقد ذهب الزمان.

(تاريخ دمشق لابن عساكر ٢٠٣/١٤)

caliphate from descending into chaos and instability. His reasoning was that, once he himself pledged allegiance, those who looked to him as their leader would naturally follow suit. It may be added that, if there were genuine shortcomings within the ruling caliphate, he intended to address them through advice and reform.

However, along the journey, it became clear to him that this task would not be easily accomplished; rather, it entailed placing his very life at risk. In the course of this effort, Ḥusayn ؑ ultimately gave his life in the path of his Creator.

As for those Ṣaḥābah ؓ who described him as seeking caliphate, this was their own understanding of his actions. In the case of ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abbās ؓ, it later became evident to him that Ḥusayn ؑ’ s objective was not to oppose Yazīd’s rule but, rather, to lend it support. Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ then wrote to Yazīd, as mentioned previously, clarifying that Ḥusayn ؑ was not setting out for any purpose that would displease him¹³. Furthermore, it has already been noted that Ḥusayn ؑ did not refuse to pledge allegiance to Yazīd; rather, he expressed a preference to do so publicly¹⁴. Numerous reports indicate that Ḥusayn ؑ repeatedly expressed his willingness to pledge allegiance to Yazīd.

The following statement, transmitted by al-Khwārazmī (a Shī‘ī historian), clarifies Ḥusayn ؑ’ s stated purpose:

إني لم أخرج أشرا ولا بطرا ولا مفسدا ولا ظالما، وإنما خرجت لطلب الإصلاح في أمة جدي، أريد أن آمر بالمعروف وأنهى عن المنكر (مقتل الحسين للخوارزمي ١٨٩/١)¹⁵

“I did not set out because of arrogance or pride, nor as a spreader of corruption or an oppressor. Rather, I set out to seek reform in the Ummah of my grandfather. I wish to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong.”

Similarly, it is reported in *Ansāb al-Ashraf* of al-Balādhurī with an authentic chain of transmission:

فناشدهم الحسين أن يسيره إلى يزيد فيضع يده في يده. (أنساب الأشراف ١٧٣/٣، إسناده صحيح)

“Ḥusayn appealed to them to allow him to go to Yazīd so that he might place his hand in his.”

However, the Sabā‘ī faction could not tolerate such a resolution. Consequently, they attacked the caravan of Ḥusayn ؑ, leaving it devastated in bloodshed.

At the time, the identity of those responsible for the killing of Ḥusayn ؑ was widely known, both near and far. When the news of his martyrdom reached Madīnah, Umm Salamah ؓ is reported to have said:

“They (the Shī‘ah of Kūfah) killed him—may Allāh destroy them! They deceived him, humiliated him, and then murdered him. May Allāh’s curse be upon them”¹⁶.

¹³ See reference 7.

¹⁴ See reference 5.

¹⁵ انظر: (العوامل للبحراني ٣٢٩/١، ومعاليم المدرستين لمرتضى العسكري ٧٧/٣، ومكاتيب الرسول لعلي الأحمدي الميانجي ١٥٤/٢، ومجالس المؤمنين للكاظم البهائي: ص ٧٧)

¹⁶ عن شهر بن حوشب، قال: سمعت أم سلمة، زوج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم حين جاء نعي الحسين بن علي لعنت أهل العراق فقالت: قتلوه قتلهم الله، عَزَّوهُ وَذُلُّوهُ، لعنهم الله. (فضائل الصحابة للإمام أحمد، رقم: ١٣٩٢ . ومسنند أحمد، رقم: ٢٦٥٥. إسناده حسن)

Husayn ؑ's Martyrdom Was Not Due to Refusing Allegiance to Yazīd, but Rather Because of His Willingness to Reconcile

It is commonly assumed that Ḥusayn ؑ was martyred because he refused to pledge allegiance to Yazīd. However, the opposite is closer to reality: he was killed because of his willingness to reconcile and offer allegiance.

When Ḥusayn ؑ's caravan reached Tha'labiyyah, news arrived that Muslim ibn 'Aqīl had been killed. At that point, Ḥusayn ؑ considered returning. However, the brothers of Muslim ibn 'Aqīl opposed turning back, and the journey therefore continued¹⁷.

The commander appointed over the Levantine forces sent by Yazīd was 'Umar ibn Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ.

Numerous Sunnī and Shī'ī historical works¹⁸ report that once Ḥusayn ؑ realised the betrayal of the people of Kūfah, he presented three proposals to 'Umar ibn Sa'd:

- that he be allowed to return to Ḥijāz;
- that he be sent to one of the Muslim border regions to participate in jihād; or
- that he be permitted to go directly to Yazīd in Syria in order to reconcile with him and pledge allegiance.

'Umar ibn Sa'd conveyed these proposals to 'Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād, who accepted them. Ḥusayn ؑ's caravan then prepared to proceed toward Syria for reconciliation with Yazīd.

Ibn Kathīr ؑ writes:

وقال بعضهم: بل سأل منه إما أن يذهب إلى يزيد، أو يتركه يرجع إلى الحجاز، أو يذهب إلى بعض الثغور فيقاتل الترك، فكتب عمر إلى عبيد الله بذلك، فقال: نعم! قد قبلت. (البداية والنهاية ١٧٠/٨)

“Some historians mention that he requested either to be allowed to go to Yazīd, to return to the Ḥijāz, or to proceed to one of the Muslim border regions to fight the Turks. ‘Umar wrote this to ‘Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād, who replied: ‘Yes, I accept this.’”

فانطلق يسير نحو يزيد بن معاوية. (البداية والنهاية ١٧٠/٨، تبصره بر شهيد كربلا ويزيد، از-ابوالمآثر مولانا حبيب الرحمن اعظمي: ص ٣١)

“He (Ḥusayn ؑ) set out toward the direction of Yazīd.”

Shī'ī historical works likewise record these proposals in the following words:

¹⁷ فقلنا له: أرايت الراكب الذي استقبلك عشاء أمس؟ قال: نعم، وقد أردتُ مسألتَه؛ فقلنا: قد استبرأنا لك خبرَه، وكفيناك مسألتَه، وهو امرؤ من أسد منا، ذو رأي وصدق، وفضل وعقل، وإنه حدثنا أنه لم يخرج من الكوفة حتى قُتل مسلم بن عقيل وهانئ بن عروة، وحتى رآهما يُجرَّان في السوق بأرجلهما، فقال: إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون! رحمة الله عليهما، فردد ذلك مرارًا، فقلنا: ننشدُك الله في نفسك وأهل بيتك إلا انصرفت من مكانك هذا، فإنه ليس لك بالكوفة ناصرٌ ولا شيعة، بل نتخوَّف أن تكون عليك! قال: فوثب عند ذلك بنو عقيل بن أبي طالب. (تأريخ الطبري ٣٩٦/٥)

¹⁸ These proposals—including the offer to pledge allegiance to Yazīd—are cited in numerous Sunnī and Shī'ī historical works, such as:

تنزيه الأنبياء لشريف المرتضى: ص ٢٦١، كلمات الحسين للشريفي ١١٢/٢، مقتل الحسين لأبي مخنف ١٤٢/١، مواقف الشيعة لعلي الأحمد الميانجي ٧/٥، الإرشاد للمفيد ١٤٣/٣، إعلام الوري للطبرسي ٢٤٦/٢، لواعج الأشجان لمحسن الأمين: ص ١٤١، العوالم لعبد الله البحراني ٤٤٧/١، تاريخ الطبري ٢٢٥/٦، الكامل لابن الأثير ١٦٤/٣، تاريخ ابن خلكان ١٠٤/٢، تاريخ دمشق لابن عساكر ٥١/٤٥، البداية والنهاية ١٧٥/٨، أنساب الأشراف للبلاذري ١٨٢/٣، الإصابة في تمييز الصحابة لابن حجر ٧١/٢، تاريخ الخلفاء للسيوطي: ص ١٦٥، رأس الحسين للعلامة ابن تيمية: ص ٢٠. بے نظير ولا جواب مناظره از مولانا عبد الستار تونسوی: ص ٢١٧.

١- أن يرجع إلى المكان الذي أتى منه، ٢- أو أن يسير إلى ثغر من الثغور فيكون رجلاً من المسلمين، له ما لهم وعليه ما عليهم، ٣- أو أن يأتي أمير المؤمنين يزيد فيضع يده في يده، فيرى فيما بينه وبين رأيه، وفي هذا لكم رضى ولأمة صلاح. (الإرشاد للمفيد ١٤٣/٣، إعلام الوری للطبرسي ٢٤٦/٢، لواعج الأشجان لحسن الأمين: ص ١٤١، العوالم لعبد الله البحراني ٤٤٧/١)

“1. That he be allowed to return to the place from which he came; 2. Or that he be permitted to go to one of the Muslim border regions, where he would live as one among the Muslims, enjoying the same rights and bearing the same obligations as they do; 3. Or that he be allowed to go to the Leader of the Muslims, Yazīd, and place his hand in his hand, so that they may come to an understanding — in this there would be satisfaction for you and reconciliation for Ummah.”

Some historical narrations claim that a man named Shimr ibn Dhī al-Jawshan rejected Ḥusayn ؑ’s proposal. However, this seems extremely unlikely, given that both the governor and the military commander had already accepted the proposal.

At that stage, approximately sixty Kūfans remained with Ḥusayn ؑ, while the forces of Ibn Sa’d were stationed at some distance. These Kūfans repeatedly attempted to dissuade him from proceeding to Yazīd, but he refused. He is reported to have rebuked them saying,

“Woe to you! You are the same people who betrayed and killed my father, wounded my brother, and killed Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl. Only a fool would trust your promises.”

The Kūfans replied that he was unlike Muslim ibn ‘Aqīl and assured him that, upon entering Kūfah, the people would flock to pledge allegiance to him.

However, once these conspirators realised that Ḥusayn ؑ genuinely intended to reconcile with Yazīd, they feared exposure. If he reached Syria and presented the letters inviting him to rebellion, their treachery would become evident and they themselves could face punishment for rebellion and betrayal.

Consequently, they concluded that their only means of self-preservation was to prevent Ḥusayn ؑ from ever reaching Yazīd. They therefore resolved to kill him, destroy the correspondence that implicated them, and ensure that responsibility for the tragedy would ultimately be attributed to Yazīd.

Thus, when the caravan halted at Karbalā’ on the 10th of Muḥarram and reconciliation was within reach, these Sabā’ī conspirators launched a sudden assault upon the camp. The tents were then set ablaze in order to destroy the letters and eliminate the evidence.

By the time elements of Ibn Sa’d’s forces arrived, the attack had already been completed and Ḥusayn ؑ and his companions had attained martyrdom. Ibn Sa’d’s forces thereafter killed those sixty Kūfan conspirators. *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* mentions the deaths of over sixty Kūfans alongside eighteen members of the Ahl al-Bayt¹⁹.

After the tragedy, Ibn Sa’d escorted the surviving members of the Prophet ﷺ’s family to Damascus and presented them before Yazīd. Yazīd was deeply grieved by the martyrdom of Ḥusayn ؑ and treated the Ahl al-Bayt with honour and generosity. He personally attended to their needs and provisions, and when they

¹⁹ قتل من أهل الكوفة من أصحاب عمر بن سعد ثمانية وثمانون رجلاً سوى الجرحى (البداية والنهاية ٥٥٢/١١)

Once it is established that the Sabā’ī conspirators were the ones who murdered Ḥusayn ؑ, it becomes clear that the 88 men mentioned here were not from Ibn Sa’d’s forces but rather were killed by them.

expressed the wish to return to Madīnah rather than remain in Damascus, he supplied them with clothing, gifts, and travel assistance.

Narrations found in *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī* and *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah* state that Yazīd would not begin eating until Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn ﷺ had joined him at the table²⁰.

Regarding the personality of ʿUmar ibn Saʿd ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, Ibn Ḥajar ﷺ graded him as ṣadūq (truthful and reliable), while his father is among the ʿAsharah Mubashsharah. Imām al-ʿIjlī ﷺ describes him as follows:

عمر بن سعد مدني ثقة كان يروي عن أبيه أحاديث، وروى الناس عنه، وهو الذي قتل الحسين.

ʿUmar ibn Saʿd was a trustworthy Madanī Tābiʿī who narrated aḥādīth from his father, and people narrated from him. He was the one who killed Ḥusayn.

Al-Haythamī clarifies:

قال الهيثمي: قلت: كان أمير الجيش ولم يباشر قتله. (كتاب الثقات للعجلي، بترتيب الهيثمي والسبكي، ص ٣٥٧)

“He was the commander of the army, though he did not carry out the killing.”

The actual killers of Ḥusayn ﷺ were not ʿUmar ibn Saʿd himself, but the treacherous Shīʿah of Kūfah—a matter which even their own sources acknowledge, and which members of the Ahl al-Bayt themselves have affirmed.

Proofs from Shīʿī Sources that the Murderers of Ḥusayn ﷺ were the Shīʿah Themselves

(1) Ḥusayn ﷺ said:

إنهم دعونا لينصرونا ثم عدوا علينا يقاتلوننا. (مقتل الحسين لأبي مخنف ٢٩١/١، لواعج الأشجان: ص ٢١٧، إعلام الوری ٢٦٤/٢، الإرشاد للمفيد ١٨٥/٣)
“They invited us and promised to support us, but then they turned against us and fought us.”

(2) Ḥusayn ﷺ said:

لكنكم استسرعتم إلى بيعتنا كطيرة الدباء، وتهافتم كتهافت الفراش، ثم نقضتموها سفهاً وبعداً وسحقاً لطواغيت هذه الأمة وبقية الأحزاب وَبَدَّهَ الكتاب، ثم أنتم هؤلاء تتخاذلون عنا وتقتلوننا، ألا لعنة الله على الظالمين. (الاحتجاج ٤٢/٢)

“You rushed to pledge allegiance to us like swarms of locusts and gathered around us like moths. Then, in your ignorance, you broke your pledge and sided with the tyrants of this nation — the remnants of the confederates and rejecters of the Book. Now you have abandoned us and seek to kill us. Indeed, Allāh’s curse is upon the wrongdoers.”

(3) When Ḥusayn ﷺ saw the betrayal and treachery of his Shīʿī followers and realized they were determined to kill him, he made duʿā against them, saying:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ مَتَّعْتَهُمْ إِلَى حِينٍ فَفَرِّقْهُمْ فِرْقًا، وَاجْعَلْهُمْ طَرَائِقَ قَدَدَا، وَلَا تَرْضَ الْوَلَاةَ عَنْهُمْ أَبَدًا. (الإرشاد للمفيد ١٨٥/٣، إعلام الوری للطبرسي ٢٦٤/٢، مقتل الحسين لأبي مخنف ٢٩١/١)

“O Allāh, if You allow them to live for a while, then divide them into factions, scatter them into sects, and never let their rulers be satisfied with them.”

(4) Ḥusayn ﷺ said:

²⁰ ثم كان يزيد بعد ذلك يكرمه [أي: زين العابدين] ويعظمه، ويجلسه معه، ولا يأكل إلا وهو عنده، ثم بعثهم إلى المدينة مكرمين، وكان علي بالمدينة محترماً معظمًا. (البداية والنهاية ٤٨٠/١٢)

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ تَعْلَمُ إِنَّهُمْ دَعَوْنَا لِنَصْرُونَا، فَخَذَلُونَا وَأَعَانُوا عَلَيْنَا، اللَّهُمَّ احْبَسْ عَنْهُمْ قَطْرَ السَّمَاءِ، وَاحْرَمِهِمْ بَرَكَاتِكَ، اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَرْضَ عَنْهُمْ أَبَدًا. (صحيفة الحسين للقيومي، ص ٩، كلمات الإمام الحسين ٢/٢٦٩، ينابيع المودة للقندوزي)

“O Allāh, You know that these people invited us and promised to support us, but when we came to them, they abandoned and opposed us. O Allāh, withhold the rain of the heavens from them, deprive them of Your blessings, and never be pleased with them.”

(5) ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ؑ addressed the people of Kūfah, saying:

هيهات هيهات! أيها الغدرة المكرّة... قَتَلَ أَبِي بِالْأَمْسِ، وَأَهْلَ بَيْتِهِ مَعَهُ. (الاحتجاج للطبرسي ٢/٣٢، لوايع الأشجان: ٢٦٦. مثير الأحران: ص ٧٧، جلاء العيون، زندگانی سید الشهداء علیه السلام، خطبه حضرت ام کلثوم در کوفه ٢/٥٩٤-٥٩٦)

“Alas! Alas! O people of treachery and deception! In the past, my father was killed along with the members of his household.”

(6) ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ؑ said:

أيها الناس ناشدتكم بالله هل تعلمون أنكم كتبتم إلى أبي وخدعتموه، وأعطيتموه من أنفسكم العهد والميثاق والبيعة؟ قاتلتموه وخذلتموه قتلًا لكم ما قدمتم لأنفسكم وسوءًا لرأيكم، بأية عين تنظرون إلى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله، يقول لكم: قتلتم عترتي، وانتهكتم حرمتي، فلستم من أمتي. قال: فارتفعت أصوات الناس بالبكاء، ويدعو بعضهم بعضًا: هلكنم وما تعلمون. (مقتل الحسين لعبد الرزاق مقرر، ٣١٦-٣١٧، نور العين في مشهد الحسين لأبي إسحاق الإسفرائيني: ص ٨٦، مثير الأحران لابن نما الحلي: ص ٧٦، اللهوف لابن طاووس الحسيني: ص ٩١، العوالم لعبد الله البحراني ٢/٢١٩، الاحتجاج للطبرسي ٢/٤٦، العوالم لعبد الله البحراني ٢/٢١٩، مقتل الحسين لابن طاووس، ص ٩١، لوايع الأشجان: ص ٢٦٥، جلاء العيون، زندگانی سید الشهداء علیه السلام، خطبه حضرت ام کلثوم در کوفه ٢/٥٩٧-٥٩٦)

“O people of Kūfah! I ask you by Allāh: do you not know that you wrote to my father and then deceived him? You pledged allegiance to him and made covenants with him, yet you fought him and abandoned him. Ruin be upon you for what you have brought upon yourselves! How will you face the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ when he says to you: ‘You killed my family, violated my sanctity, and therefore you are not from my Ummah’?” Hearing this, the people began to weep and said to one another, “You are destroyed, yet you do not even realize it.”

(7) Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī writes that Imām Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ؑ said:

“O people of Kūfah — people of treachery, deception, and trickery! Do you now weep for us? You possess nothing but false claims and baseless speech. You yourselves killed us, and now you cry over us? By Allāh, you deserve to weep much and laugh little.” (Jilā’ al-‘Uyūn vol. 2, p.593)

(8) Muḥammad al-Bāqir ؑ reportedly said:

روي عن أبي جعفر محمد بن علي الباقر عليهما السلام أنه قال: ولم يزل (أي: علي) صاحب الأمر في صعود كؤود حتى قُتِلَ، فبويح الحسن ابنه وعوهده ثم غدر به وأسلم ووُثِبَ عليه أهل العراق حتى طعن بمخنجر في جنبه ونهبت عسكره...، ثم بايع الحسين عليه السلام من أهل العراق عشرون ألفًا ثم غدروا به وخرجوا عليه وبيعته في أعناقهم فقتلوه. (أعيان الشيعة ١/٢٦. وانظر: كتاب سليم بن قيس الهلالي ١/٢٦٠، وشرح نهج البلاغة لابن أبي الحديد ٥/٥٦، والدرجات الرفيعة، للسيد علي الشيرازي، ص ٢٨. وينابيع المودة لذوي القربى، للقندوزي ٣/٤٠١)

“Alī continued to endure severe hardship until he was killed. They later pledged allegiance to his son al-Ḥasan, stabbed him with a dagger, and looted his camp. After that, twenty thousand Iraqis pledged allegiance to al-Ḥusayn, yet they betrayed him, turned against him while his pledge was still upon them, and killed him.”

(9) Zaynab bint ‘Alī, who witnessed Karbalā’ firsthand, said:

يا أهل الكوفة، يا أهل الختل والغدر والخذل!!!... ويلكم أي كبد لمحمد صلى الله عليه وسلم فرثتم؟! وأي عهد نكثتم؟! وأي كريمة له أبرزتم؟! وأي حرمة له هتكتم؟! وأي دم له سفكتم؟! (الاحتجاج للطبرسي ٢/٢٩-٣٠، لوايع الأشجان: ص ٢٥٥، مواقف الشيعة ٣/١٤١، الأمالي للطوسي ١/١٥٠)

“O people of Kūfah, people of treachery, betrayal, and abandonment! ...Woe to you! What part of Muḥammad ﷺ’s heart have you torn apart? What covenant have you broken? What sanctity have you violated? And whose blood have you shed?”

(10) Umm Kulthūm bint ‘Alī made du‘ā against the people of Kūfah, saying:

يا أهل الكوفة سوءاً لكم مالكم خذلتم حسيماً وقتلتموه وانتهبتم أمواله وورثتموه وسبيتم نساءه ونكبتموه، فتنبأ لكم وسحقاً لكم، أي دواه دعتكم، وأي وزر على ظهوركم حملتم، وأي دماء سفكتموها، وأي كريمة أصبتموها، وأي صبية سلبتموها، وأي أموال انتهبتموها، قتلتم خير رجالات بعد النبي صلى الله عليه وآله، ونزعت الرحمة من قلوبكم. (اللهوف لابن طاووس، ص ٩١. وانظر: مقتل الحسين للمفهرم: ص ٣١٦، ولواعج الأشجان لمحسن الأمين: ص ١٥٧، ومقتل الحسين لمرتضى عياد ص ٨٦)

“O people of Kūfah! Shame upon you! You abandoned Ḥusayn, killed him, looted his wealth, seized his inheritance, and took his women captive, and afflicted him with calamity. Ruin and destruction be upon you! What a calamity that has afflicted you! What a terrible burden of sin you carry! What blood you have spilled! What noble women you have violated! What children you have left with nothing! What wealth you have plundered! You killed the best of men after the Prophet, and mercy has been removed from your hearts.”

(11) Fāṭimah bint al-Ḥusayn addressed the people of Kūfah, saying:

يا أهل الكوفة، يا أهل المكر والغدر والخيلاء... كذبتمونا، وكفرتونا، ورأيتم قتالنا حلالاً، وأموالنا نهباً... كما قتلتم جدنا بالأمس، وسيوفكم تقطر من دماننا أهل البيت. (الاحتجاج للطبرسي ٣٧/٢، العوالم لعبد الله البحراني ٢١٣/٢، لواعج الأشجان: ص ٢٦١، مواقف الشيعة ١٨٧/٥)

“O people of Kūfah, O people of treachery! You rejected us, declared us disbelievers, considered our killing lawful, and looted our wealth as spoils. Yesterday you killed our grandfather, and your swords are still dripping with the blood of the Ahl al-Bayt.”

(12) Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī narrates that Fāṭimah bint al-Ḥusayn said:

“O people of Kūfah — people of deceit, betrayal, arrogance, and trickery! Allāh tested us, the Household of Prophethood, through you, and tested you through us, while making our suffering a means of elevation for us. Yet you rejected us, declared us disbelievers, considered our killing lawful, and plundered our wealth. Yesterday you killed our grandfather, and the blood of the Ahl al-Bayt still drips from your swords.” (Jilā’ al-‘Uyūn-Translated vol. 2, pp. 594-595)

(13) Fāṭimah bint al-Ḥusayn addressed the people of Kūfah, declaring:

تباً لكم يا أهل الكوفة! كم تراث لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله قبلكم، وذحوله لديكم، ثم غدرتم بأخيه علي بن أبي طالب عليه السلام جدي، وبنيه عترة النبي الطيبين الأخيار. (الاحتجاج للطبرسي ٣٩/٢، العوالم لعبد الله البحراني ٢١٥/٢، اللهوف في قتلى الطفوف لابن طاووس: ص ٢٤٠، مواقف الشيعة ١٨٨/٥)

“Woe to you, people of Kūfah! How much of the inheritance of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is with you, and how many of his grievances rest with you? Yet, you betrayed my grandfather ‘Alī, then his two sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn — the pure and noble grandsons of the Prophet.”

(14) Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī narrates that Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn said:

“People of Kūfah! What blood do you seek from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, and what betrayal had he committed against you? Yet you betrayed my grandfather, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and the descendants of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, slaughtering them. Some among you even boasted: ‘We killed ‘Alī and the sons of ‘Alī with Indian swords.’” (Jilā’ al-‘Uyūn-Translated vol. 2, p. 595)

(15) Umm Kulthūm bint ‘Alī said:

“People of Kūfah! May humiliation and disgrace overtake you. Why did you invite our brother Ḥusayn, only to abandon him? Instead, you killed him and plundered his wealth.” (*Jilā’ al-‘Uyūn-Translated vol.2, p. 595*)

(16) The following narration is recorded in the authoritative work of the Shī‘ah, al-Kāfi:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله لعلي عليه السلام: هم شيعتك فسلم أولئك منهم أن يقتلوهم. (الكافي لأبي جعفر الكليني ٢٦٠/٨)

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, “Protect your children from your Shī‘ah, lest they kill them.”

(17) In Majālis al-Mu‘minīn, it is reported that after the tragedy of the Battle of Karbalā’, the Shī‘ah of Kūfah gathered in grief and lamented:

“We invited Ḥusayn, only to unsheathe our swords against him. We are ashamed of our wickedness, and there can be no repentance except that we strike one another with the sword, just as the Banū Isrā’īl did in repentance.” (*Majālis al-Mu‘minīn-Translated, Assembly Eight vol. 2, p.241; Arabic ed. vol. 3, pp. 249-250; see also Maqtal al-Ḥusayn by Abū Mikhnaḥ, p. 389*)

(18) Al-Ḥurr ibn Yazīd al-Tamīmī — who joined the camp of Ḥusayn ﷺ at Karbalā’ — stood and proclaimed:

يا أهل الكوفة لأمكم الهبل والعبر، دعوتكم هذا العبد الصالح حتى إذا أتاكم أسلمتموه، وزعمتم أنكم قاتلوا أنفسكم دونه، ثم عدوتم عليه لتقتلوه، أخذتم بكظمه، وأحطتم به من كل جانب لتمنعوه التوجه إلى بلاد الله العريضة، فصار كالأسير في أيديكم. (إعلام الوري بأعلام الهدى ٢٥٥/٢، لوايع الأشجان، ص ١٧٠)

“People of Kūfah! May ruin and sorrow befall you! You invited this righteous servant, yet when he came to you, you abandoned him. You claimed you would sacrifice your lives in his defence but instead turned against him to kill him. You seized him by the throat and surrounded him from every side, denying him freedom to move through the land of Allāh until he became like a captive in your hands.”

From these passages found in Shī‘ī works themselves, it is clear that the Shī‘ah of Kūfah — who had written numerous letters inviting Ḥusayn ﷺ and pledging support — later betrayed and killed him. Their own historical narrations repeatedly acknowledge this reality, and thus there remains no need to shift blame onto others based on fabricated reports from unreliable narrators. As the legal maxim states:

المرأ يُؤخذ بإقراره

A person is taken to account based on his own admission.

Therefore, when their own sources testify to this betrayal, such admissions are sufficient evidence in establishing responsibility.

Admissions from Shī‘ī Authors Themselves That the Murderers of Ḥusayn ﷺ Were the Treacherous Shī‘ah of Kūfah

(1) Kāẓim al-Aḥsā’ī al-Najafī wrote:

إن الجيش الذي خرج لحرب الإمام الحسين عليه السلام ثلاث مئة ألف كلهم من أهل الكوفة ليس فيهم شامي. (عاشوراء: ص ٨٩)

“The army that set out to fight Imām Ḥusayn numbered three hundred thousand, all of them from the people of Kūfah, not a single Levantine was among them.”

(2) Al-Mas‘ūdī wrote:

وكان جميع من حضر مقتل حسين من العساكر وحاربه وتولى قتله من أهل الكوفة خاصة، لم يحضرهم شامي. (مروج الذهب ٣٧٥/١)

“All those who participated in the killing of Husayn, fought him, and undertook his murder were exclusively from the people of Kūfah; no Levantine was present among them.”

(3) Al-Mas‘ūdī also wrote:

وقد كان زيد بن علي شاور أخاه أبا جعفر بن علي بن الحسين بن علي، فأشار عليه بأن لا يركن إلى أهل الكوفة، إذ كانوا أهل غدر ومكر، وقال له: بها قتل جدك علي، وبها طعن عمك الحسن، وبها قتل أبوك الحسين. (مروج الذهب ٢٠٦/٣)

“Zayd ibn ‘Alī consulted his brother Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī, who advised him not to rely upon the people of Kūfah, for they were people of treachery and deceit. He said to him: ‘There your grandfather ‘Alī was killed, there your uncle Ḥasan was stabbed, and there your father Ḥusayn was killed.’”

(4) Al-Mas‘ūdī wrote further:

ثم وثب عليه (أي: علي بن علي) شيعته وأنصاره وثقاته فقتلوه، ثم قام بعده الحسن بن علي رضي الله عنه... ثم قام من بعده الحسين بن علي رضي الله عنه، فخدعه أهل العراق وأهل الكوفة أهل الشقاق والنفاق والإغراق في الفتن. (مروج الذهب ٣٠٠/٣)

“Then his own Shī‘ah, supporters, and trusted followers rose against him (‘Alī) and killed him. After him came Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī... then after him came Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī, whom the people of Iraq and Kūfah deceived — the people of division, hypocrisy, and immersion in tribulations.”

(5) The Shī‘ī historian Muḥsin al-Amīn wrote:

ولم يزل (أي: علي) صاحب الأمر في صعود كؤود حتى قتل، فبويح الحسن ابنه وعُوهده ثم غدر به وأسلم ووثب عليه أهل العراق حتى طعن بخنجر في جنبه وانتهب عسكره... ثم بايع الحسين من أهل العراق عشرون ألفاً غدروا به وخرجوا عليه وبيعته في أعناقهم فقتلوه. (أعيان الشيعة ٢٦/١، وانظر: كتاب سليم بن قيس الهلالي ٢٦٠/١، وشرح نهج البلاغة لابن أبي الحديد ٥٦/٥، والدرجات الرفيعة، للسيد علي الشيرازي: ص ٢٨، وينايع المودة لذوي القربى للقمندوزي ٤٠١/٣)

“Alī continued to endure severe hardship until he was killed. Then allegiance was pledged to his son, Ḥasan, but he too was betrayed and abandoned. The people of Iraq attacked him until he was stabbed in the side with a dagger and his camp was looted... Then twenty thousand Iraqis pledged allegiance to Ḥusayn, but they betrayed him, revolted against him while his pledge was still upon their necks, and killed him.”

(6) Likewise, Abū Bakr al-Jawharī and ‘Abdullāh al-Baḥrānī wrote:

وتولى قتله من أهل الكوفة خاصة، لم يحضرهم شامي. (السقيفة وفدك للجوهري ١١٩/٣، العوالم لعبد الله البحراني ١٢١/٢)

“The responsibility for killing him was undertaken exclusively by the people of Kūfah; no Levantine participated with them.”

(7) The Shī‘ī historian al-Ya‘qūbī wrote:

لما دخل علي بن الحسين الكوفة رأى نساءً يبكين ويصرخن فقال: هؤلاء يبكين علينا فمن قتلنا؟ (تاريخ اليعقوبي ٢٣٥/١)

“When ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn entered Kūfah, he saw women there weeping and wailing. He said: ‘These people are weeping over us — then who was it that killed us?’”

(8) Ṭabasī wrote:

لما أتى علي بن الحسين زين العابدين بالنسوة من كربلاء، وكان مريضاً، وإذا نساء أهل الكوفة ينتدبن مشققات الجيوب، والرجال معهن يبكون. فقال زين العابدين بصوت ضئيل وقد نهكته العلة: إن هؤلاء يبكون علينا فمن قتلنا غيرهم. (الاحتجاج للطبرسي ٤١/٢)

When ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn brought the women from Karbalā’ to Kūfah, the women of Kūfah were mourning, tearing their collars, and the men were also weeping. Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, weakened by illness, said in a faint voice: “These people are weeping over us — who besides them killed us?”

(9) Ḥusayn ibn Aḥmad al-Najafī wrote:

قال القزويني: ومما نقم على أهل الكوفة أنهم طعنوا الحسن بن علي عليهما السلام، وقتلوا الحسين عليه السلام بعد أن استدعوه. (تاريخ الكوفة، ص ١١٣)

“Al-Qazwīnī said: Among the reasons for which the people of Kūfah are condemned is that they stabbed Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī and killed Ḥusayn after having invited him.”

(10) Ḥusayn Kawrānī writes:

ونجد موقفًا آخر يدل على نفاق أهل الكوفة، يأتي عبد الله بن حوزة التميمي يقف أمام الإمام الحسين عليه السلام ويصيح أفيكم حسين؟ وهذا من أهل الكوفة وكان بالأمس من شيعة علي عليه السلام، ومن الممكن أن يكون من الذين كتبوا للإمام...، ثم يقول: يا حسين أبشر بالنار. (في رحاب كربلاء، ص ٦١)

“We find another incident demonstrating the hypocrisy of the people of Kūfah. ‘Abdullāh ibn Ḥawzah al-Tamīmī came and stood before Imām Ḥusayn, shouting: ‘Is Ḥusayn among you?’ This man was from the people of Kūfah and had previously been among the Shī‘ah of ‘Alī. It is even possible that he was among those who had written letters to the Imām... Then he said: ‘O Ḥusayn, rejoice in Hell!’”

In light of the preceding statements, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- The Rawāfiḍ Shī‘ah harboured a longstanding enmity and hatred toward the Ahl al-Bayt.
- The killers of ‘Alī ؑ were also from among the Rawāfiḍ.
- The killers of Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ؑ were the Kūfan Rawāfiḍ and no one else.
- Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī, his son ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, Zaynab bint ‘Alī, and other members of the Ahl al-Bayt all stated that it was the Shī‘ah who killed them.
- Muḥammad al-Bāqir likewise bears witness to this.
- The accused themselves — namely the Kūfan Shī‘ah — admitted to the crime.

Accordingly, anyone wishing to argue otherwise must answer the testimony of Ḥusayn ؑ and the other members of the Ahl al-Bayt, the witness of Muḥammad al-Bāqir, and the confessions of the accused themselves. Otherwise, it would amount to accusing innocent people of a crime they did not commit. Allāh ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ خَطِيئَةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِ بَرِيئًا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلَ بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا﴾ (النساء: ١١٢)

“And whoever commits a sin or wrongdoing and then casts it upon an innocent person has indeed burdened himself with slander and manifest sin.”

Moreover, when Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī and the Ahl al-Bayt ؑ themselves have stated that their killers were the Shī‘ah, and the accused themselves confess to it, then on what basis can anyone else deny what is presented here?

In Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar ؑ is reported to have said,

أهل العراق يسألون عن الذباب، وقد قتلوا ابن بنت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم. (صحيح البخاري: ٣٧٥٣)

The people of Iraq are asking about a ruling regarding a fly, while they themselves killed the grandson of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ.”

Was the Blessed Head of Husayn ﷺ Brought to Yazīd in Syria?

Some reports mention that the blessed head of Husayn ﷺ was brought before Yazīd and that he treated it with disrespect. However, these narrations are not authentic. Ibn Kathīr ﷺ writes:

والصحيح أنه لم يبعث برأس الحسين إلى الشام. (البداية والنهاية ١٦٥/٨)

“The authentic view is that the head of Husayn was not sent to the Levant.”

Moreover, no reliable narration to this effect is reported from Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan, or ‘Amr ibn Ḥasan ﷺ, despite all of them having been present at Karbalā’.

Similarly, Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ states:

ولكن بعض الناس روى بإسناد منقطع (أن هذا النكت كان بحضرة يزيد بن معاوية) وهذا باطل. فإن أبا برزة، وأنس بن مالك، كانا بالعراق لم يكونا بالشام، ويزيد بن معاوية كان بالشام، لم يكن بالعراق حين مقتل الحسين، فمن نقل أنه نكت بالقضيب بحضرة هذين قدامه فهو كاذب قطعاً، كذباً معلوماً بالنقل المتواتر. (رأس الحسين ١٩٩/١، مجموع الفتاوى ٤٧٠/٢٧)

“Some people have narrated, through a disconnected chain, that the head of Husayn ﷺ was scratched with a stick in the presence of Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah. This is false. Abū Barzah and Anas ibn Mālīk were in Iraq, not the Levant, while Yazīd was in the Levant and not Iraq at the time of the killing of Husayn. Therefore, anyone who claims that he scratched the head with a stick in the presence of these two is certainly lying — a fabrication clearly disproven by mass-transmitted historical reports.”

Was Yazīd Involved in the Murder of Husayn ﷺ?

‘Allāmah Dhahabī and Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ both wrote that Yazīd had no involvement in the martyrdom of Husayn ﷺ. They state:

وأما يزيد فلم يأمر بقتل الحسين بإتفاق أهل النقل، ولكن كتب إلى ابن زياد أن يمنعه عن ولاية العراق...، ولما بلغ ذلك (أي: قتل الحسين) يزيد أظهر التوجع، وظهر البكاء في داره، ولم يسب لهم حريماً أصلاً، بل جهّزهم وأعطاهم، وبعثهم إلى وطنهم. (المنتقى من منهاج الاعتدال: ص ٢٦٦، منهاج السنة النبوية ٤٧٢/٤)

“As for Yazīd, according to the consensus of historians and transmitters, he did not order the killing of Husayn. Rather, he instructed Ibn Ziyād to prevent him from taking control of Iraq... When news of Husayn’s martyrdom reached Yazīd, he expressed grief; weeping was heard from within his household. He did not mistreat the women of the Prophet’s family in any way. Instead, he treated them with honour, provided for them, and sent them safely back to their homeland.”

Ibn Taymiyyah ﷺ further rejected the reports claiming that the women of the Prophet ﷺ’s household were humiliated, taken captive, or that the blessed head of Husayn ﷺ was sent to Yazīd.

Yazīd’s instruction was only that Husayn ﷺ and his companions should be prevented from initiating armed conflict. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr ﷺ writes:

وفي رواية أن يزيد كتب إلى ابن زياد: قد بلغني أن الحسين قد توجه إلى نحو العراق، فضع المناظر والمسالح، واحترس واحبس على الظنة وخذ على التهمة، غير أن لا تقتل إلا من قاتلك، واكتب إلي في كل ما يحدث من خبر والسلام. (البداية والنهاية ١٦٥/٨)

“In one narration, Yazīd wrote to Ibn Ziyād: ‘I have been informed that al-Ḥusayn is heading toward Iraq. Therefore, place guards and patrols, remain vigilant, detain on suspicion, and investigate upon accusation — but do not kill anyone unless he fights you. Keep me informed of every new development.’”

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr ؓ further states:

والذي يكاد يغلب على الظن أن يزيد لو قدر عليه قبل أن يقتل لعفا عنه، كما أوصاه بذلك أبوه، وكما صرح هو به مخبراً عن نفسه بذلك. (البداية والنهاية ٢٠٢/٨)

“It strongly appears that if Yazīd had gained control over Ḥusayn before he was killed, he would have pardoned him, just as his father had advised him, and just as Yazīd himself openly stated.”

Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ؓ, who was personally present at Karbalā’, never stated that Yazīd had killed his father. Even after Karbalā’, he remained upon his pledge of allegiance to Yazīd. Later, when some people of Madīnah rose in rebellion against Yazīd, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ؓ distanced himself from them²¹. Had Zayn al-‘Ābidīn believed Yazīd to be responsible for the killing of his father, why he would have maintained this position?

Imām al-Ghazālī ؓ stated that asserting Yazīd to be the murderer of Ḥusayn ؓ reflects extreme ignorance: وقد أفتى الإمام أبو حامد الغزالي رحمه الله تعالى...: ومن زعم أن يزيد أمر بقتل الحسين رضي الله عنه، أو رضي به فينبغي أن يعلم به غاية حماقة. (وفيات الأعيان ٢٨٨/٣، مرآة الجنان ١٣٥/٣)

“Imām Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī issued the verdict that whoever claims Yazīd ordered the killing of Ḥusayn ؓ or was pleased with it, should be recognized as possessing the utmost degree of foolishness.”

In Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn, Imām al-Ghazālī ؓ further writes that it has never been established that Yazīd ordered the killing of Ḥusayn ؓ:

هل يجوز لعن يزيد لأنه قاتل الحسين أو أمر به؟ قلنا: هذا لم يثبت أصلاً فلا يجوز أن يقال إنه قتله أو أمر به ما لم يثبت فضلاً عن اللعنة؛ لأنه لا تجوز نسبة مسلم إلى كبيرة من غير تحقيق. (إحياء علوم الدين ٤٨٨/٥، وانظر: فتاوى الرمي على هامش فتاوى الفقهية الكبرى ٣٣٤/٤، والفتاوى الحديثية لابن حجر المهيبي ١٩٣/٢)

“Is it permissible to curse Yazīd on the grounds that he killed al-Ḥusayn or ordered his killing? We say: this has not been established at all. Therefore, it is not permissible to claim that he killed him or ordered his killing without proof — let alone curse him — because attributing a major sin to a Muslim without verification is impermissible.”

If Yazīd Was Not Responsible for the Murder of Ḥusayn ؓ, Why Did He Not Punish the Killers?

One possible answer is that these events took place during a period of severe political turmoil and civil unrest. In such circumstances, identifying the actual perpetrators and implementing punishment can become extremely difficult — just as ‘Alī ؓ faced difficulty in bringing the killers of ‘Uthmān ؓ to justice.

A second response is that many of those who had invited Ḥusayn ؓ to Kūfah were themselves present in his caravan. However, when they realised that Ḥusayn ؓ was inclined towards accepting allegiance to Yazīd, they turned on him and participated in the attack that led to his martyrdom. Thereafter, a detachment from the army of ‘Umar ibn Sa‘d, stationed some distance away, killed those sixty Kūfans. Ibn Kathīr ؓ mentions the killing of over 60 Kūfans in *al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*²².

²¹ واعتزل الناس علي بن الحسين زين العابدين وكذلك عبد الله بن عمر بن الخطاب لم يخلعوا يزيد. (البداية والنهاية ٢١٨/٨)

²² See reference 19

A Brief Examination of the Narrations Alleging That Yazīd Was an Open Sinner and That His Army Participated in the Killing of Ḥusayn ﷺ

In 2016, a book titled *Revealing the True Facts of Yazeed, the Incident of Karbala and the Events that Followed* was published. In this work, the author gathered and cited narrations from numerous historical sources that portray Yazīd as an open sinner.

These narrations fall into two categories:

1. Narrations recorded during the earlier periods of Islamic history that include chains of transmission.
2. Narrations recorded in later periods without chains of transmission, or narrations merely quoting earlier historical works.

After retracing these reports, we found them to total 52 narrations. Upon examining their chains of transmission, it became clear that:

- 19 narrations were transmitted through Abū Mikhnaḥ, a known Shīʿī narrator who has been accused of habitual lying.
- 5 are narrated by al-Wāqidī.
- 4 are narrated by al-Kalbī.
- The remaining are narrated by narrators who each reported only one or two of these narrations.

Of these 52 narrations:

- 36 contain narrators accused of habitual lying (*muttahaḥ bil-kidhb*), many of whom were also accused of extreme Shīʿī tendencies (*rafḍ*).
- 7 have disconnected chains (*munqaṭiʿ*).
- 2 contain unknown narrators.
- 1 is transmitted by an Imāmī Shīʿī narrator.
- 1 contains a narrator classified as *munkar al-ḥadīth* (a narrator whose reports are rejected).
- 5 narrations are recorded without any chain of transmission at all.

Therefore, none of these narrations are sufficiently authentic to be accepted, particularly when they contain criticism of another Muslim. The same applies to most reports concerning Karbalāʾ and those claiming that Yazīd's army participated in the killing of Ḥusayn ﷺ.

Allāh ﷻ says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا

“O you who believe, if a sinful person comes to you with news, then verify it...” (al-Ḥujurāt 49:6)

While explaining this verse, Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ ﷻ writes:

مقتضى الآية إيجاب التثبت في خبر الفاسق، والنهي عن الإقدام على قبوله، والعمل به إلا بعد التبين والعلم بصحة مخبره. (أحكام القرآن للجصاص ٢٧٨/٥)

“The implication of this verse is that verification regarding the report of a sinful person is obligatory. It also prohibits accepting and acting upon such reports until their authenticity and correctness become known.”

In other words, the verse establishes that reports transmitted by unreliable individuals must be investigated thoroughly before they are accepted, transmitted, or acted upon.

Qāḍī Abū Bakr Ibn al-ʿArabī ؒ stated regarding historical narrations:

فاقبلوا الوصية، ولا تلتفتوا إلا إلى ما صح من الأخبار، واجتنبوا - كما ذكرت لكم - أهل التواريخ، فإنهم ذكروا عن السلف أخباراً صحيحة يسيرة ليتوسلوا بذلك إلى رواية الأباطيل، فيقذفوا - كما قدمنا - في قلوب الناس ما لا يرضاه الله تعالى، وليحتقروا السلف ويهونوا الدين، وهو أعز من ذلك، وهم أكرم منا، فرضي الله عن جميعهم. ومن نظر إلى أفعال الصحابة تبين منها بطلان هذه الهتوك التي يختلقها أهل التواريخ فيدسونها في قلوب الضعفاء. (العواصم من القواصم: ص ٢٥٦)

“Accept this advice and do not pay attention except to reports that are authentic. Avoid the historians, for they narrated a small number of authentic reports from the Salaf only as a means to circulate falsehoods. In doing so, they cast into the hearts of people matters that Allāh is not pleased with, causing people to belittle the Salaf and weaken respect for the religion. Yet the religion is far nobler than that, and they (the Salaf) are more honourable than us. May Allāh be pleased with them all. Whoever examines the actions of the Ṣaḥābah will realise the falsehood of these disgraceful reports fabricated by historians and inserted into the hearts of the weak.”

Ibn al-ʿArabī ؒ also wrote:

وقد بينت لكم أنكم لا تقبلون على أنفسكم في دينار، بل في درهم، إلا عدلاً بريئاً من التهم سليماً من الشهوة. فكيف تقبلون في أحوال السلف وما جرى بين الأوائل ممن ليس له مرتبة في الدين، فكيف في العدالة! (العواصم من القواصم، ص ٢٦٨)

“You would not accept from anyone regarding even a single dirham except from a trustworthy and upright person free from accusations and desires. So how can you accept reports concerning the affairs of the Salaf and the disputes that occurred among the early generations from those who possess neither standing in religion nor reliability in matters of justice?”

Accordingly, narrations transmitted by unreliable or extremely weak narrators cannot be accepted when they contain criticism of Muslims, especially when they are contradicted by other reports as well²³.

Some of Our Senior Scholars (Akābirīn) Calling Yazīd “an Open Sinner”

Mawlānā Amīn Okārwi ؒ wrote in *Tajalliyāt-e-Ṣafdar* that some of our senior scholars, such as Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Qāsim Nānotwī ؒ and Ḥaḍrat Gangohī ؒ, described Yazīd as an open sinner. This is indeed true; they did make such statements. However, the real question is: upon what basis were these statements made? Their judgement rested upon the historical reports available to them at that time, transmitted through narrators such as al-Wāqidī, al-Kalbī, and Abū Mikhnaḥ. Once the very foundation is weak, the entire claim loses its validity.

We wholeheartedly follow our Akābirīn and hold firm to their ways. However, if any statement attributed to them was based on a fabricated or baseless narration, then that statement cannot be accepted uncritically. To insist upon accepting a statement merely because it was made by our Akābirīn subtly amounts to attributing infallibility to them, whereas infallibility belongs exclusively to the prophets ؑ.

An example of this is that Ḥaḍrat Gangohī ؒ and Ḥaḍrat Madanī ؒ, among others, cited the statement attributed to the Prophet ﷺ:

علماء أمتي كأَنْبياء بني إسرائيل

²³ The above chapter and the citation from *Aḥkām al-Qurʿān* in the next chapter was adapted from other than Badr al-Layālī

“The scholars of my Ummah are like the prophets of Banī Isrā’īl.” (Bāqiyāt Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah, p. 526; Shihāb Thāqib, p. 20)

However, this well-known narration is in fact classified as mawḍū‘. Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar, Zarkashī, Suyūṭī, Sakhāwī, and Shawkānī   all stated regarding it:

لا أصل له

“It has no basis.”

(al-Maqāṣid al-Ḥasanah, no. 702; al-Durar al-Muntathirah, no. 294; al-Fawā’id al-Majmū‘ah, no. 47).

Likewise, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Darwīsh classified it as fabricated in Asnā al-Maṭālib (no. 889).

Therefore, when the narration itself lacks any authentic foundation, the error is not attributed to Ḥaḍrat Gangohī   or Ḥaḍrat Madanī  . Rather, the criticism is directed toward the narration itself.

Likewise, it is mentioned in Hikāyāt-e-Awliyā’ that on one occasion, Ḥaḍrat Mawlānā Gangohī   addressed those present in a gathering and remarked: “Mawlānā Qāsim had a profound love for roses. Do you know the reason for this?” One attendee replied that a weak narration mentions that the rose was created from the blessed perspiration of the Prophet  . Ḥaḍrat Gangohī   then said: “Yes, although the narration is weak, it is still a narration.” (Hikāyāt-e-Awliyā’-Translated, p. 249)

However, the muḥaddithūn have explicitly classified this narration as fabricated. Mullā ‘Alī al-Qārī   writes in al-Maṣnū‘ fī Ma‘rifat al-Ḥadīth al-Mawḍū‘ regarding this narration:

الورد الأبيض خلق من عرقه صلى الله عليه وسلم، والأحمر من عرق جبريل، والأصفر من عرق البراق. مذكور في مسند الفردوس وغيره. قال النووي: لا يصح. وقال آخرون: موضوع. (المصنوع في معرفة الحديث الموضوع: ص ٢٠٣)

“The white rose was created from his   perspiration, the red rose from the perspiration of Jibrīl, and the yellow rose from the perspiration of the Burāq. This narration is mentioned in Musnad al-Firdaws and elsewhere. Imām Nawawī said: ‘It is not authentic,’ while others declared it fabricated.”

In his commentary on this passage, Shaykh ‘Abdul-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah   explains that Imām Nawawī  ’s statement “it is not authentic” and the judgement of other scholars that it is fabricated ultimately convey the same conclusion. Likewise, Sakhāwī   transmits from Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar   in al-Maqāṣid al-Ḥasanah that the narration is fabricated. Similarly, Zarqānī   writes:

إن الورد الأبيض خلق من عرقى إلى آخر الحديث موضوع. (مختصر المقاصد الحسنة: ص ٩١)

“The narration, ‘The white rose was created from my perspiration...’, is fabricated.”

It should be noted that this does not amount to criticism of the Akābir themselves, since they merely transmitted what they found in the books available to them. Therefore, when later scholars identify such a narration as fabricated, the criticism is directed toward the narration and its basis, not toward the Akābir who cited it.

Similarly, regarding the bones of the ‘aqīqah sacrifice, Ḥaḍrat Gangohī   wrote that there is no narration discouraging them from being broken. (Bāqiyāt Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah, p. 237)

However, a mursal narration concerning this is recorded in Marāsīl Abī Dāwūd (no. 379), while a weak narration also appears in al-Mustadrak of Ḥākim   (no. 7595). Thus, the intent of Ḥaḍrat Gangohī   was

most likely that no sound marfū‘ narration exists on the issue. (See: *Fatāwā Dār al-‘Ulūm Zakariyyā*, vol. 6, p.497)

Likewise, in *Bāqiyāt Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, Ḥaḍrat Gangohī ؒ appears inclined toward accepting the famous story of Hārūt and Mārūt. (*Bāqiyāt Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*, p. 514) Yet, other scholars such as Ḥaḍrat Thānawī ؒ and Bayḍāwī ؒ rejected the authenticity of this account. Hence, here too, the criticism is not directed toward the Akābir, but toward the report itself, since they merely transmitted what was found in earlier works.

For more details and examples of the above, refer to *Badr al-Layālī*, vol. 2, p. 257.

In conclusion, we cite the invaluable passage from *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān* by Mawlānā Zafar Aḥmad ‘Uthmānī ؒ, composed from the teachings of Ḥakīm al-Ummah Mawlānā Ashraf ‘Alī Thānwī ؒ. In it, he emphasizes that one should not rely solely upon historical reports, particularly in matters involving deviant sects such as the Rawāfiḍ. Mawlānā writes:

If one reflects upon the noble verses of the Qur’ān and the explicit, authentic aḥādīth that affirm the uprightness and integrity of all the Ṣaḥābah ؓ, as well as the forgiveness granted to them, and considers the consensus of the Muslim Ummah that they should only be mentioned with goodness, then one should not be deceived by reports found in historical works such as those of al-Ṭabarī, al-Kāmil of Ibn al-Athīr, and similar books. Such works are not free from distortions and fabrications that were introduced into historical narratives by the Rāwāfiḍ and the Khawārij.

Anyone familiar with transmitted reports knows with certainty that, although books of Islamic history are relied upon for recording general historical events, they are not suitable sources for establishing matters of belief or practice. Such matters can only be established through transmitted evidence from the Qur’ān and the Sunnah. For this reason, books of ḥadīth and Sunnah were compiled separately from books of history. Many of the scholars of ḥadīth authored works in both fields. Imām Bukhārī ؒ, for example, compiled a ḥadīth collection that is regarded as the most authentic book after the Qur’ān, while also authoring historical works that contain reports not used as evidence for any belief or practice, even though they may be accepted for the narration of general historical events.

This is particularly true regarding incidents that took place during periods of conflict and disagreement among the Ṣaḥābah ؓ. During those times, groups of Rāfiḍīs, Khawārij, and hypocrites were present among the people and inserted into historical accounts whatever suited their agendas. As a result, such reports cannot be treated as authoritative evidence in matters of belief or practice, since they remain vulnerable to doubt, deficiencies, and distortion.

As Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah ؒ states in al-‘Aqīdah al-Wāsiṭiyyah, historical reports are not a valid basis for establishing belief or rulings, especially in matters concerning the Ṣaḥābah ؓ and the disputes that occurred among them. This is due to the unreliable nature of many such narrations and the interpolations introduced into them by people of falsehood in accordance with their desires. (Aḥkām al-Qur’an by Mawlānā Zafar Aḥmad ‘Uthmānī, p. 274)²⁴

And Allāh ؒ alone knows best.

²⁴ ²⁴ Translated and prepared by Abdullah Hoosen. For corrections, please email: abdullhoosen@gmail.com