



Imam Husayn & Yazid

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The healthy mind is enamoured to such people who are pure and abstemious, whose entire life is dedicated to a great cause, whose presence is an origin of blessings and virtues, whose self is clean from vileness such as egotism, jealousy, selfishness, *etc.*, who appear upon the horizon of life as the illuminant sun and the luminous moon. Every moment of their hired out life is spent in the solicitude of the human race. When they eventually leave from here, they leave behind them, as a remembrance, such influence and ideas that become a beacon of light for generations to come.

However, when derangement captures the mind, perversity captures the vision, enmity captures the thought, then those people become a centre of its interest, but rather devotion, who are an embodiment of pride and arrogance, who become so blind by the pseudo-passion of leadership that they feel no hesitation in abandoning the decrees of justice and equity. They do not even abstain from ambuscading the nation's freedom and sense of honour. They appear as a storm of oppression and tyranny, and wherever they pass by create misery and ruin.

The insubordination (*fitna*) of the *Kharijiyya*, for many centuries has been falling as lightening upon the peaceful and cheerful nature of this nation. With its mischief making, it kept alight the flame of war and dispute, ravage and killing. In the end, upon the intellectual front the divine scholars defeated them and upon the war front the stone-splitting sword of the Muslim soldiers forced them to surrender their arms. Today, the same insubordination is once again rising up but this time their disciples and followers are two steps ahead of their predecessors. Previously the *Khawarij* were repugnant towards Sayyiduna 'Ali

(Allah be pleased with him) and his pure family and at the same time they were extremely hostile towards Yazid and those who shared the same thought. But, today's *Khawarij* are straining every nerve to prove that Yazid was a rightful Caliph, a Muslim warrior and a great hero of this nation. Behind this covering, there is a strong sentiment of diminishing the status of the *Ahl al-Bayt* especially the great Imam, Sayyiduna Husayn (Allah be pleased with him).

This movement, with regards to its effects and consequences, is dangerous beyond description. Up till today, it has been the state that whenever a tyrannical and despotic ruler is appointed over us, without giving any concern to the contrariness of the situation, by remembering the model of *Shabbir* (The appellation given to Imam Husayn) and by becoming carefree of the results, we raise the flag of mutiny against him and we jump on to the battlefield with all that we have. When the Islamic Philosopher Sir 'Allama Muhammad Iqbal called out to his nation - which was indigent and wretched economically, backward and lacking behind educationally and helpless and distracted politically - to break the chains of slavery, he presented the character of Sayyiduna Imam Husayn (Allah be pleased with him). He says:

Prophet Moses and the Pharaoh, Shabbir and Yazid, these two are the powers that become prominent in a struggling life.

The secret of the continuance of truth is hidden in the strength of Shabbir, and in the destiny of falsehood lies the death of regret and failure.

After expressing this reality that all colourful and

decorating associations in the workshop of life, in essence, are grateful to the favour of the strength of *Shabbir*, Iqbal mentions the perpetual heroic deed of Sayyiduna Imam Husayn (Allah be pleased with him):

When the Caliphate broke its relationship with the Qur'an, and dissolved poison in the goblet of freedom and liberty.

The honour of the best of nations was lifted, like the much needed clouds of rain.

This cloud rained above the land of Karbala and then left, it cultivated the tulip in the desolated land and then left.

By giving your head you struck at the root of oppression and despotism till the end of time, and the surge of your pure blood originated the flowerbed.

By sacrificing himself and his entire family, Sayyiduna Imam Husayn taught the Islamic Nation the following lesson:

Other than Almighty Allah, a Muslim is slave to no one; his head cannot bow down in front of any Pharaoh.

If these people make the life and flawless character of Hussain (Allah be pleased with him) – a fearless supporter of truth and honesty, a brave guardian of the dignity of mankind and a bold warrior of the freedom of thought – doubtful in the eyes of the youth then how would the passion of struggling ardently for the sake of truth, in a world that is helpless and lacking of means, be created in their hearts.

If Yazid is the rightly guided caliph then permanently end this fruitless fate that the political system of Islam is a proclamation of esteemed values such as superiority of truth, high acclamation of the truthful, justice, freedom and equality. An Islam in which Yazid is a rightly guided caliph and the likes of Ibn Ziyad, Shimar, Sinan ibn Anas and Khawli are the structure of the caliphate, to associate the destiny of humanity to that Islam is foolishness of the last degree. In reality, this is not the Islam that the beloved of Allah (most high) and the Prophet of

Mercy (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) brought with him. The beneficence of his training was able to create a federation of pure nature such as the respected Companions. He provided the history of mankind with just rulers such as the four Caliphs.

If these people unfortunately become successful in their contemptible purpose, by their speech and writing eclipse the character of Sayyiduna Husayn (Allah be pleased with him) and conquer the campaign of proving that a person such as Yazid is a hero of the nation; then the dangerous, but rather disastrous, effects that could appear have been mentioned above.

That is why it is necessary that reliable and credible sources of the history of the nation be referred to and whatever is established beyond doubt be presented to the nation, so that there is enough for the peace of mind of those people who are wandering in search of truth with the honesty of their hearts. Firstly, we will analyze the personal character of their praised one, Yazid, and will see what qualities and auspicious characteristics he possessed. Then we will look at what was the reality of the golden deeds that he carried out during his reign. Then we will review those qualities and praiseworthy attributes of him that his fanatics present with great enthusiasm. Finally, we will look at what was the view of the nobles of the nation regarding Yazid and how they saw his way of oppression and injustice. It would not be difficult for you, in the end, to decide what this person deserves; praise or reproach.

Personal Character

First of all, we will present the view of Ziyad ibn Samiyya, who was loyal, with his heart and soul, to Yazid and his family. Who, along with his sons, not only sacrificed his body, soul and wealth but his reputation as well and also surrendered his faith and belief for Yazid. Such a loyal and devoted person cannot be accused of enmity, prejudice, partiality, etc. Whatever he said regarding Yazid must have been said by placing the importunity of vigilance and carefulness before him. The famous historian Ibn Jarir Tabari has narrated the following event. By studying it, the view of Ziyad regarding Yazid will be clearly understood.

‘When Mu’awiyya (Allah be pleased

with him) [fearful of a future civil war] decided that people take the oath of allegiance with Yazid, he wrote to Ziyad asking for his opinion regarding this. Ziyad discussed this matter with 'Ubayd ibn Ka'b, in whom he had confidence, and informed him that the *Amir al-Mu'minin* ('Commander of the Faithful', title of Caliph) had written to him that he has decided that people swear allegiance to the caliphate of Yazid, at the same time he is fearful that people will view this with abomination, nevertheless, he wishes that people agree upon swearing allegiance to Yazid. Ziyad further said to 'Ubayd, "this is a very important issue, it is directly related to Islam, this and guaranteeing this is a great responsibility. Yazid possesses a very reckless temperament, negligence and scorn are his habits and other than that he is in love with hunting. You go and meet with the *Amir al-Mu'minin* and pass this message of mine on to him, inform him of the mischievousness of Yazid and ask him to be patient regarding this issue and not to jump to any quick conclusion because even if the desired pearl is attained late it is still better than a person rushing things up and losing his desired pearl in the process." [Tarikh al-Tabari, vol. 6, page 169]

'Allama Ibn Athir in his book of history, *al-Kamil*, has narrated this event with the same exact wording. It is as though according to even such a loyal person as Ziyad the character of Yazid is disliked and blemished. However, in the end it was decided that Amir Mu'awiyya (Allah be pleased with him) should not be made aware of the actual situation of Yazid, but Yazid should personally be advised to abandon his wrongdoings. This also highlights that Amir Mu'awiyya (Allah be pleased with him) was not fully aware of the conduct and practices of Yazid and also that his governors and dignitaries of the realm had lost the courage to make him aware of the actual state.

Observe the following narration; 'One day, in the presence of *Amir al-Mu'minin* 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, Yazid was mentioned. One of those present spoke

out, "*Amir al-Mu'minin* Yazid said..." Suddenly, 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz spoke out in anger, "How dare you call a [wicked] person such as Yazid the commander of the faithful." Then he ordered that the one who says *Amir al-Mu'minin* be lashed twenty times.' [Tahzib al-Tahdib, vol. 1, page 361]

Everyone is aware that the family of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz was from the tribe of Banu Umayya. However, he could not tolerate anyone calling Yazid with the blessed appellation of *Amir al-Mu'minin*. He not only expressed his disappointment at the person saying this but also gave him a punishment of twenty lashes so that in future no body even dares to call Yazid *Amir al-Mu'minin*. Therefore, do these research scholars who have come about thirteen hundred years later know the character and profile of Yazid better than 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz. When even he did not consider him to be worthy of such a post, what right do we and anyone else have in giving such a person the titles of *Amir al-Mu'minin* and rightly guided caliph and thus degrading these appellations of respect and honour?

Just before his martyrdom, Sayyiduna Imam Husayn (Allah be pleased with him) stood up on the burning ground of Karbala and in the middle of the scattered around corpses of his young children, brothers and relatives; he gave his last sermon in which he shed a light upon the character and profile of this artificial rightly guided caliph. He said:

"O people! Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated that he who sees such a tyrant ruler who makes the *haram* of Allah (most high) *halal*, who breaks the promise of Allah (most high), who opposes the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), who treats the people of Allah (most high) with sin and oppression, then that person who is seeing this does not attempt to change this through his sayings and actions, on the day of judgment he will be put in the same station of hell as that oppressive ruler. O people! Listen carefully, indeed they [Yazid and his henchmen] have made the following of Satan compulsory upon themselves, they have turned away from the obedience of the utmost Kind, they

have spread mischief, they have held the bounds of Islam in abeyance, they themselves embezzle the property of spoils (*fa'y*), they have made the *halal* of Allah (most high) *haram* and the *haram* *halal*. It is obligatory upon me that I raise the flag of rebellion against such an unjust ruler.” [*Tarikh al-Tabari*, vol. 6, page 229; *al-Kamil*, vol. 4, page 48]

In this sermon, Imam Husayn (Allah be pleased with him) has explained in great detail the reason why he raised the flag of Jihad against Yazid. No lie can ever be uttered by the tongue of such a personality as Imam Husayn (Allah be pleased with him), especially at the last instance of life when he is about to appear before the majesty of Allah (most high). Just pay a little attention and bring this scene before your imagination that the Shiites of Kufa, by sending hundreds of letters and messengers and by great imploration and adulation, call his eminence to their place. But when the whip of Ibn Ziyad flutters in the air ready to lash upon their backs, they break their oath of allegiance (*bay'at*). Not only do they draw back from helping Imam Husayn (Allah be pleased with him) but rather challengingly stand in opposition to him. Whilst observing this dreadful scene of the betrayal of his Shiites, what must have been going through the blessed heart and mind of Imam Husayn (Allah be pleased with him)? It was becoming clear to him that there was no deed of remedy other than drinking from the goblet of martyrdom. Before leaving this world and before presenting himself before the court of the all-powerful Lord, it cannot even be imagined for a moment that Imam Husayn (Allah be pleased with him) was calumnious and, therefore, falsely accused Yazid and the leaders of his regime. Even in any delicate and sensitive situation, it is very far from the dignity of Imam Husayn (Allah be pleased with him) that he leaves the way of honesty and truthfulness. Indeed the reasons for Jihad that he presented at that moment are in fact an interpretation of honesty and truthfulness. Be just yourself and realize that the person regarding whom this is the opinion of the great Imam (Allah be pleased with him), only those people will have the courage to call him the rightly guided caliph or *Amir al-Mu'minin* who are unaware of the grand status of the Imam (Allah be pleased with him).

Observe another testimony and this witness is

‘Abdullah. His father’s name is Hanzala who is a martyr of the battle of Uhud and was washed by the angels. To be the son of such a renowned father is not a small honour in itself, however, due to his own personal qualities, piety and asceticism, he was entitled with the appellation of *Rahib*. His interest to the world and worldly affairs was nominal. Most of his time was spent in the remembrance of Allah (most high) in utter privacy. This ‘Abdullah, along with a delegation from the people of Madina, went to meet Yazid. This delegation spent numerous days there. They became aware of the daily practices and customs of this person and when they came back they informed the people of Madina about the behaviour and affairs of Yazid. The people of Madina were astonished and bewildered after hearing of his sinfulness and impiety. Hence, all the people of Madina broke their allegiance (*bay'at*) to this sinful person. Review what this delegation told the people of Madina regarding Yazid:

‘We have come from such a person who has no faith, who drinks wine, who plays the tambourine, slave-girls sing before him, who plays with dogs, till late in the evening thieves and bad character people sit beside him chatting of fables, and O people of Madina! We make you witness that we have taken off and thrown away the collar of *bay'at* to that person.’ [*Tarikh al-Tabari*, vol. 7, page 4; *al-Kamil*, vol. 4, page 103]

One member of this delegation was the son of Zubayr, Munzir. He did not come back with the delegation but, from Damascus, he went to Kufa. From there he arrived at Madina. Regarding Yazid, consider his opinion as well:

‘By God! Yazid has given me a gift of one hundred thousand *dirhams*; nevertheless, this gift is not able to stop me from expressing the truth regarding him. By God! He is a drunkard and he drinks so much alcohol that he misses prayer due to its intoxication. – Whatever the other members of the delegation said about Yazid, he agreed to every single word.’ [*al-Kamil*, vol. 4, page 104; *Tarikh al-Tabari*, vol. 7, page 4]

At this moment, the fanatics of Yazid say that

‘Abdullah and his associates invited the offspring of ‘Ali (Allah be pleased with him), Muhammad ibn Hanafiyya (Allah be pleased with him), to participate in this religious war but he refused and when the members of this delegation talked about the uncultured character and manners of Yazid he spoke out in answer, “I have also stayed with Yazid and have never seen him drink wine.” These people, by taking this quote of Ibn Hanafiyya (Allah be pleased with him), become facile in proving the chastity and innocence of Yazid. Although if they thought this that in the presence of such a personality how was it possible that he drank wine or committed other acts of indecency. For him not to commit these acts during the presence of Ibn Hanafiyya (Allah be pleased with him) is not a valid proof that he did not pollute his self with these acts in the absence of Ibn Hanafiyya (Allah be pleased with him). Great boozers and libertines become chaste and pious for a temporary necessity and we have ample of evidences that testify to his misconduct.

Before we move on further, impress this point within your minds. *What roused the people of Madina in breaking their bay‘at and allegiance to Yazid?*

This event took place after the blood stained occurrence of Karbala in which the Yazidan army by neglecting the rights of apostleship, rights of kinship, kindness and benevolence, in short, all rights, devastated the garden of prophethood. There was undoubtedly no misconception in the minds of the people of Madina that Yazid will deal with them in the same despotic or even a much more terrible manner. They were also aware that the realm of Yazid had become established in many provinces of the Islamic dominion. The city of Madina, on its own, did not have the strength for a successful confrontation with his realm, as it had a great abundance of military, weapons and other resources. If all the young and old of Madina got together, they still could not even amount to a minute part of his army. They knew the end result of this Jihad very well. That is why it is connivance and overlooking true realities to say that ‘Abdullah desired to be the caliph himself and wanted to seize the throne of leadership and thus he did all this. There was no such thing as balance between his strength and the might of Yazid. This is why an unbiased observer becomes forced in saying that he took this courageous step only to protect the political system

of Islam and the sanctity of the system of *khilafa* (caliphate). After the event of Karbala, he wanted the world to truly believe that the servants of the Chosen One, Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), are not willing to accept as the leader of the Islamic dominion or the *Khalifat al-Muslimin* anyone who fits the aforementioned descriptions. This was the reason why the people of Madina, despite their small number, limited weaponry and lack of resources, along with their leader manly leaped upon the field of Jihad. The courage, spirit and devotion, with which these custodians of the *Hanifi* faith confronted the huge army of Yazid, reawakened the memory of Badr and Hunayn. ‘Abdullah fought with great determination. Furious fighting was occurring, he called out to his youthful children that come and fight with your lives and sacrifice your heads to safeguard the honour of the system of the Chosen One (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The fortunate children, answering the call of their struggling father, one by one moved forward, pounced upon the enemy like severe punishment, drank from the goblet of martyrdom and departed to the heaven above. One after the other, all of his seven sons offered their heads. At the instant when pieces of his liver were being cut and began falling, the splendour of his selflessness was worth seeing; a sword was in his hand that was moving fast as lightening, with great zeal and ardour he himself was reciting the following martial song and was giving warmth to the hearts of the fellow defenders:

‘That person be ruined who has intended of disturbance and mischief and has revolted, who has ignored and neglected the truth and the verses of guidance. The utmost Kind Lord destroys that person who revolts.’ [*al-Kamil*, vol. 4, page 117]

Whilst reciting this martial song, he surrendered his life to the Creator. By the wordings of this song that were echoed by his tongue just before death, his initial opinion regarding Yazid is again certified. Whatever a *Sahabi* (Companion of the Prophet) utters at the time when he begins his journey towards the hereafter, there can be no adulteration of falsity, hypocrisy and pretence in it, but, in reality, it is the voice of his heart. This song confirms his previous views concerning Yazid.

In the end, I present the view of ‘Allama Ibn Kathir concerning Yazid that he wrote in his history after studying, with deep penetrating vision, all of the sayings and traditions mentioned in praise and criticism of Yazid. The fanatics and eulogizers of Yazid also present this reference; however, they only limit it to the first few lines. I am writing the full reference and by studying it the reality of the situation will become clear:

‘Yazid possessed some great qualities such as generosity, affability, eloquence, fondness for poetry, bravery and had a favourable view in national matters. He was handsome and good socially. Apart from this, he had faults. He was captivated by desires, sometimes he would not pray and when he would, it would be after the time for prayer had passed.’ [*al-Bidaya wa’l-Nihaya*, vol. 8, page 230]

In this same book, on page 235, ‘Allama Ibn Kathir writes about Yazid:

‘Yazid was very famous for things such as song and music, drinking of wine and alcohol, singing, hunting, possessing slaves and slave-girls, rearing dogs, wrestling for amusement between rams, bears and monkeys. When he would wake up in the morning he would be in a state of intoxication and drunkenness.’ [*al-Bidaya wa’l-Nihaya*, vol. 8, page 235]

This was Yazid about whom the opinion of the most loyal Ziyad and the views of the others you have just read above. In the reflection of these sayings you can easily witness the features of the blemished character of Yazid. In the praise and commendation of such a person today books are being written, pamphlets are being published, speeches being made and above all – calamity upon calamity – an unsuccessful attempt is being made to give him superiority over such a personality whose name is Husayn (Allah be pleased with him), *fidahu abi wa ummi* (may my mother and father be sacrificed for him). Husayn (Allah be pleased with him) is he who by listening to his pure remembrance the dejected hearts become alive again, by studying his legend of Jihad the blighted courage and bleak enthusiasm

become alive again and the longing to confront falsehood makes one restless. That Husayn (Allah be pleased with him) about whom the Beloved of the Lord of all the Worlds (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated the following:

Usama ibn Zayd says that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would embrace Hasan and Husayn and would utter the following supplication; “O Allah! I love these two, You love them as well.”

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “In the garden of this world these two are my flowers.” [*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Chapter of *al-Manakib*, vol. 1, page 53]

From the many *ahadith* of *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, consider only the following:

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated, “Hasan and Husayn are the leaders of the youth of paradise.”

Here we have completed a section on the personal life of Yazid.

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