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إِمَامُ الْحُسَيْنِ عَلِيٍّ

**I M A M
AL HUSSAIN
BIN ALI** (AS)

Biographical Information In-
tentionally Kept out of Public
Knowledge/Awareness

FAWZI AL-SAIF

2024

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Public Knowledge/Awareness**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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preface

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1. The book in your hands, dear reader, is an abridgement of the biography of one of the fourteen infallibles in Shia Islam. Its pages constitute about 25% of the original book, which also bears the same title. With Allah's Grace and Will, the original book will be translated at a later date.
 2. This book, and the other books in the same series, are aimed at the young generation of Shia Muslims who do not have a good command of the Arabic language, in which the original book was written. It therefore assumes a basic knowledge of the concepts related to the Infallible and their life, and seeks to analyze and expand on them.

We note that there are very few translated books in English

on the lives of the Imams, especially for young English speakers. This is despite the importance of the topic, and it is one of the reasons that prompted this translation project.

3. Since this book and the rest of the series have been translated by multiple individuals and in different ways, it is natural that they will not all be in a consistent style. We would therefore be grateful if the reader would help us by pointing out any errors or observations they may have, so that they can be corrected in future editions.

I ask Allah Almighty to reward the reader, the author of these pages, and the translators with His recompense and blessings, and the intercession of the Infallibles, may peace and blessing be upon them.

Fawzi Muhammad Taqi Al Saif
Tarut - Qatif
20/09/1445 H

The Hussaini Biography: Between Revival and Neglect

The practice of commemorating and celebrating various occasions of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, and discussing their history and virtues is neither a socially-constructed tradition nor a popular folklore. Rather, it emanates from the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, through traditions narrated from several Imams. For instance, it is narrated that Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, said to al-Fudayl ibn Yasar: 'Do you sit and talk?' He replied: 'Yes, may I be sacrificed for you.' He said: 'Those are the gatherings I love!. Revive our matter, O Fudayl, and may Allah have mercy on those who revive our matter.' Also, it is narrated that Imam Ali ibn Musa al-Rida, peace be upon him: 'Whoever sits in a

gathering where our matter is revived, his heart will not die on the day when hearts die.⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

"Perhaps this is one of the reasons why these ceremonies have endured over time, despite the colossal hardships and enormous hateful and brutal hostilities they faced from both government and social forces. Antagonistic governments were not only intolerant of but violently resisted and crushed any type of commemoration of the Hussaini revival, Intolerant and extremist social and sectarian groups were sometimes harsher and more unmerciful toward the supporters of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, than the oppressive governments were!

The truth is that commemorating the Hussaini revolution means the world for those who commemorate it! It nourishes their souls, hearts, minds and their entire being. Some people, however, may be reserved about using the common expression that: 'The believers commemorate the Hussaini cause or the Hussaini event'; it is more accurate to say that the Hussaini event and the remembrance of Hussein sustains our life. The commemoration breathes life into us; it is akin to the oxygen we breathe."

"And this is the other reason why these commemorations live on. Each generation deeply believes that their religious and moral life is connected to and sustained by this commemoration. The remembrance and knowledge gained during this time recharge their 'faith battery' for an entire year and impatiently await the next commemoration season.

(1) Al-Hurr al-Amili, Wasail al-Shia, 14/501.

(2) Ibid, 14/502.

Believers wholeheartedly acknowledge that the great benefits and outcomes outweigh the time, money, and effort they spend commemorating the Husseini revival, and whatever they do is insignificant when compared to the sacrifices Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, gave for the sake of safeguarding Islam and the ummah.

The third reason is that reviving the Hussaini cause is the best peaceful expression of one's religious identity. The issue of identity and expressing it publicly is one of the major problems that can lead to political and possibly military conflicts. Currently, identity challenge is thought of as one of most vexing challenges facing human societies.

"To clarify the issue more, the word identity is known in language as a term derived from the pronoun (he) which means the attributes and essence of a person. The term identity is also used to refer to the features and characteristics that distinguish an individual personality. When applied to nations and communities, identity refers to the set of ideas and beliefs held by a society, including the distinctive features (such as language, historical personality, and religious or sectarian culture) that differentiates one society from another. These elements give a society its distinctive characteristics and unique image.

Defining Identity

One religious school of thought wants to express its beliefs and laws, while another does not accept or endorse them, leading, at times, to conflict between them. The followers of

this religion want to worship their Lord in the way they desire, but the group that is in power does not allow them to practice their beliefs freely thereby leading to potential unrest.

A group of people has its own unique language, culture, history and ethnicity. Ethnicity is expressed in statements like: "I am Arab," "you are Kurdish", "he is Persian", and that "one is Turkish". Each one favors his culture, language, and religion, as when we declare "I am Muslim, that one is Christian, and this one is Jewish." Each wants to express his culture, religion, or religious school of thought. The way people express their ethnic and religious sentiments potentially leads to conflict among them. When the expression of identities is peaceful, these problems do not occur." In Islam, acts of worship and religious practices are part and parcel of the identity of Muslims. Hajj is an expression of the unity of the ummah, and prayer is an individual and personal expression of a Muslim's faith which is at the heart of an adherent's identity.

The Hussaini commemoration is one of the highest peaceful expression of Shia Imamiyyah identity. When commemorating Imam Hussein's martyrdom, I cry but do not attack anyone. I mourn but do not harm anyone. I wear black, self-flagellate and beat my chest, hold mourning gatherings, and speak about the virtues of the Ahl al-Bayt and the history of Imam Hussein. I cry because I am full of tremendous sorrow over what happened to the family of Muhammad and the calamities that befell them, and this sorrow in my heart is expressed through hot tears.

Thus, this expression of identity is greater than any other sentiment because over a ten-day period, wherever Shia of Ahl al-Bayt reside around the world commemorate Ashura. By

doing so,they declare and express both their identity and very existence."

"The fourth reason for commemorating this event with all of its details is that it is a season for self-change and an opportunity for deep reflection. We should not imagine that those who attend the event are absent-minded or unaffected. Those who sit by the pulpit and listen to a preacher are affected by what they listen to, each according to their level of commitment, consciousness, and understanding. There are examples of individuals who have converted to Islam or to the school of Ahl al-Bayt as a result of learning more about the truth of Karbala and the heroic stance taken by Imam Hussein.

Imagine the extent of benefits that this commemoration imparts to its attendees. Over a ten-day period every year, tens of millions of Imamiyyah worldwide are exposed to historical, jurisprudential, theological, and other platforms of knowledge. This happens every year, and undoubtedly, the cumulative impact over the ten days of ashura over the years is both very monumental and very significant."

Does the Commemoration of Ashura Create Sectarian Tension?

Some individuals from the opposing school of thought argue that the commemoration of Imam Hussein by the Shia Imamate incites sectarian tension.. We respond and refute the argument in the following two points:

The first point emphasizes that the issue of Imam Hussein and all discussions surrounding it is not new. The issue of discussing future events that would occur in Ashura and Imam Hussein's martyrdom was initiated by our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family), and was followed by the Commander of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him). If mentioning this issue potentially leads to sectarian strife, most certainly the Prophet would not have started and sanctioned it.

It has been reported in the books of hadiths—the texts and sources will be mentioned later—that the Prophet used to raise and continually remind people about the issue of Imam Hussein. As he did this, he would weep over the tragedy that would befall his grandson Imam Hussein (peace be upon him). What the prophet did serves as an invitation for Muslims to follow the same practice, as they are required to emulate his example--words and actions.

The question that begs an answer is: why do some assert that discussing the crimes committed by the Umayyads fan the flames of sectarian sentiments? One wonders if some individuals consider themselves descendants of the Umayyads or inheritors of their legacy, and thus feel provoked by any mention of Umayyad crimes? Why is it that talking about the history of a group that perpetrated a heinous crime against the Prophet's (peace be upon him and his family) not concern and anger any Muslims!

The second point is encapsulated in this question that merits serious and deep reflection: Where exactly is this alleged

sectarian tension occurring during the commemoration of Imam Hussein?

By way of refuting the aforementioned argument, a question worth raising is: Have you ever seen or heard of a group leaving a Hussein commemoration engaged in attacks against anyone who differs with them in thought or religious school of thought? Have they assaulted others, fired shots, or carried out bombings? In fact, the opposite is what has happened and continues to happen every year! It is the participants in and followers of this commemoration who are often subjected to verbal and physical assaults, and sometimes death, by those who are fiercely bent on preventing and disrupting their religious observances. The commemorators have been subjected to violence historically and recently, including bombings of their Husseiniyats and shooting during their gatherings. It would suffice for the reader to turn to the news during the days of Ashura in several Muslim countries to learn about statistics and numbers of physical attacks and violence.

Another argument that needs to be addressed is that Imam Hussein does not need to be mourned, but rather celebrated, considering that he is a martyr and is alive in Paradise. Why must we weep, feel pain, and beat our chests while Hussein (peace be upon him) is happy and in eternal bliss in Paradise?

The rebuttal to this is: We firmly believe that Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) is indeed in Paradise, and he is the master of its youth. However, this does not take away from the recommendation to empathize and sympathize with him and weep over his tragic and gruesome killing by Yazid's murderous army. Otherwise, the same objection could be raised about

what Prophet Adam, Prophet Noah, Prophet Muhammad, and other prophets did. It is narrated that Prophet Adam cried for a long time over his son Abel's tragic death. The same question arises: why did prophet Adam cry knowing that his son Abel is joyful and happy in Paradise?

In summary, the act of mourning for Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) is a form of honoring and remembering the sacrifices he made, which is a practice rooted in the actions of the prophets themselves.

An additional related insight is derived from some narrations that since the killing of Abel by Cain, mourning for Abel became a tradition up to the time of Noah, which is a span of seven generations and seven prophets from Adam to Noah (peace be upon them). Some narrations point out that Prophet Noah was named so because of his continual weeping and lamenting. The same question can be posed: why do you cry and command mourning for Hamza⁽¹⁾, when Hamza is in Paradise, enjoying the highest ranks in paradise among the martyrs?

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- (1) Ibn Sa'd in his book, "Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra", said that: "The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) heard the mourning in Banu Abdul-Ashhal over their deceased, and said, 'But Hamza has no mourners.' Saad ibn Muadh then brought the women of Banu Abdul-Ashhal to the door of the Prophet, where they wept for Hamza. The Prophet heard them and prayed for them, and sent them back. From that day, no woman of the Ansar cried for their dead without first crying for Hamza and then for their own deceased." In Waqidi's Maghazi 1/290, he mentioned that : "When Hamza was killed, Safiyya bint Abdul-Muttalib came searching for him, but the Ansar stopped her. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said, 'Let her go,' and she sat beside the grave of Hamza and began to weep. When she wept, the Prophet wept, and when she lamented,

It is worth reiterating that Imam Hussein is in Paradise, but this does not prevent us from mourning the annual occasion of his tragic death since the Prophet commanded it, and Ahlul Bayt perpetuated it and urged their followers to uphold it. Mourning and grieving for Imam Hussein, in addition to other actions and obligations, is a means to achieving the reward of Paradise and being with him. Moreover, the tradition of mourning for those who have suffered great injustices is deeply rooted in Islamic history. It serves as a way to honor their monumental sacrifices and to keep their memory alive thereby preserving their principles and ensuring that their struggles are remembered and emulated.

Supporting Narrations for the foregoing rebuttal

The following narrations highlight that mourning for beloved figures, especially those in Paradise, is a practice established by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family). Therefore, mourning for Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) is not only justified but also an act of following the Prophet's example.

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Two Approaches

The author believes that there have been two distinct approaches within the Muslim community regarding the

the Prophet lamented as well. Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet, also wept, and whenever she cried, the Prophet cried too."

commemoration of Imam Hussein: the first is Preservation and Reverence and the second is Suppression and Oblivion. each is briefly elaborated next.

1. The First Approach: Preservation and Reverence

This approach seeks to keep the legacy and cause of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) alive in the collective conscience of the Muslim community. It encourages continuous memorializing and exalting of his ultimate sacrifice, and it elevates it as a source of inspiration and emulation for humanity. It is indeed a never-ending source of inspiration and illumination for individuals and communities.

- This is the approach that the Imams of Ahlul Bayt (peace be upon them) and the scholars of their school of thought have consistently emphasized and stood firm on.

2. The Second Approach: Suppression and Oblivion

This second approach has sought to erase the memory of Imam Hussein's legacy and noble cause using various methods to keep it from entering and influencing Muslim's collective consciousness. Unfortunately, it has succeeded in achieving its goal to some extent.

In the following pages, the reader will find an elaboration of how this suppressive approach worked to obscure and erase the memory and significance of Imam Hussein's legacy. Methods of suppression used will be examined. Additionally, the reader will gain insights into the life of Imam Hussein and the valuable lessons that can be drawn from it.

Distorting Sources to Obscure the Hussaini Cause

The above title implies a widely accepted notion that efforts to keep the Hussaini cause hidden from the people continue unabated. The act of concealing it is intentional and well-planned, and is not coincidental or innocent by any means. Should we continue to believe this point of view, or do we need to reconsider and be reluctant to believe that the Hussaini cause has indeed been obscured?

It is assumed that major events in the history of nations prompt them to celebrate and commemorate them generation after generation. This provides successive generations the opportunity to learn from these events and internalize their lessons. Hence, it is customary for people the world over to dedicate certain days for gatherings to remember and celebrate

significant events. These events vary (such as wars, victories, religious ceremonies, or founding day of a state), but they invariably share the common core concept of remembrance.

It can be confidently stated that the most important events in the history of the Islamic nation are those related to the message of the Prophet Mustafa (peace be upon him and his family). These events are significant because they are linked to God, Who sent His Messenger to humankind, and as thus derive their greatness from the Sender. They also gain importance from the Prophet's successful efforts of laying the foundation and establishing a nation that surpasses all nations.

Therefore, events associated with the Prophet, from his noble birth to his blessed mission and other significant aspects of his life, deserve the serious attention of every Muslim. From these events, one can glean lessons about life and success, while deepening their love and affection for the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family). The Quran urges reflection on the life of the Prophet by stating, "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah, you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much" (Quran 33:21).

After the events of the Prophet's life, the uprising and martyrdom of Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) in Karbala is the second most significant event in the history of the Islam. It is an extraordinary event considering the central figure involved in it—Imam Hussain, the grandson of the Prophet, the leader of the youth of Paradise, and the rightful Imam.

Moreover, the mission for which Imam Hussain sacrificed his holy soul was paramount to the level of the entire religion and the entire Islamic nation. His heroic actions transcend the specific timeframe it occurred in as they served to preserve and protect Islam from collapse forever. Had Imam Hussein not sacrificed his life, Islam would have faced the same fate as Judaism and Christianity, where tyrants, in collaboration with deceitful priests and monks, distorted the original religion of God and altered its scriptures. Thus, the mission that Imam Hussain undertook was of this great magnitude of saving Islam from the annihilative hands of despotic regimes and their deceitful clerics.

The final remark to underscore is that Imam Hussain's martyrdom (peace be upon him), and the tragedy that befell him, his family, his supporters, and even his women, are so horrific to capture in words.

The above three aspects require giving action-oriented attention to the Hussaini event and manifest it through commemoration, remembrance, study, and support for its life-giving objectives. Thus, Muslims should always be substantively memorializing the annual occurrence of Ashura. Further, it must always be remembered that Ashura is not merely a passing historical event; rather it is an enduring example for Muslims to follow whenever a tyrant arises in any era and violates God's prohibitions, breaks God's covenant, and acts sinfully and oppressively towards His servants.

When observing the state of the Islamic nation, one should distinguish between two scenes: one for the Shia of Ahl al-Bayt (particularly the Imamis) who dutifully follow the guidance of

their Imams, and diligently strive to revive the cause of Hussain (peace be upon him). They do so in myriad ways including financial contributions, speeches, dissemination of related information, emotional and psychological engagement, and moral and spiritual readiness. They seek to follow the example of the character of Imam Hussain and his companions. Anyone wishing to understand the various aspects of this revival needs to tune in to broadcasts on satellite channels and experience firsthand how profound and nuanced Ashura commemoration is.

However, when we consider the second scene, where the majority of Muslims are not Shia of Ahl al-Bayt (and constitute a large majority of the ummah, perhaps around 70% of Muslims, which amounts to at least one and a half billion people), one is met with nothing but silence. A young person may reach the age of twenty [4] or even older, without ever hearing about the cause of Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) and its details. They may study Islamic history and see no trace of that event or its repercussions included in official history books. They are likely to live their social lives without encountering anything noteworthy related to Imam Hussain (peace be upon him). If by chance, they come across something related to the commemoration of Hussain, they do not consider it Islamic and do not see it as relevant to themselves. As will be discussed later, efforts have been made to turn the ten days of Imam Hussain's martyrdom into days of joy, celebrations, and festivals to eliminate or reduce the chances for any emotional engagement with or learning from the event.

If we were to compare Ashura with the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) around the world, including

in Muslim countries, one would find no basis for comparison in terms of the scale and magnificence of the celebration of Christmas compared to the commemoration of Imam Hussain (peace be upon him). This leads us to believe that the obscurity of the Hussaini cause is the result of deliberate planning, not random chance or coincidence.

That is why main title of this section is "distortion" of the Hussaini cause, which the following pages are devoted to answering three related questions:

1. How was the Hussaini uprising obscured through the distortion of sources and the minimization of its various aspects?
2. How was the Hussein uprising obscured through the distortion of ideas related to it?
3. How was the uprising and tragedy of Imam Hussain obscured through the alteration of the date of the event?

As for the assertion that this was the result of deliberate planning and effort, it suffices to cite the statement of Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, who says: "It is forbidden for the preacher and others to narrate the story of the killing of Hussain and the disputes and conflicts that took place among the companions which potentially incites hatred towards the companions and causes them to be criticized", ⁽¹⁾

It is important to ask: How does mentioning the killing of Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) stir up enmity? And

(1) (Al-Sawa'iq Al-Muhriqa, 2/640).

against whom? And should prayers and blessings be invoked upon those who took part in the killing of Imam Hussain?

We believe that there was a concerted effort among the ruling authorities (the Umayyads, the Abbasids, the Turks, and later authorities) to cast a shadow over the Hussaini cause, each according to their motives. However, all were united in the belief that Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) represents the cry of the oppressed and serves as a model for revolutionaries against oppression and injustice. Publicity and visibility of Imam Hussein's character, words, and goals were and will continue to be a source of threat to despotic and unjust rulers. We will refer to this as the Umayyad Orientation; it is not meant to refer to a particular family, but rather a continuous path and trend that persists to this day. Efforts to conceal the Hussaini orientation which is embodied by Imam Hussein's character, heroism and victory of blood over the sword and their inspirational lessons have had a measure of impact and success so far.

This trend did not limit itself to political and authoritative aspects and use of coercion and brute force. It also utilized the weapon of the media and unscrupulous religious scholars who worshipped worldly gains and wealth for the same purpose. Detailed accounts of what transpired will follow.

In these pages, we will attempt to trace and document the actions taken by the Umayyad orientation to keep the masses from being impacted by the Hussaini cause. The process comprises of seven steps, to which we turn next.

The first step focuses on distorting the sources that chronicled all aspects of the tragedy of Karbala by "softening"

its impact through the deliberate and pointed omission of its emotion-provoking horrific details. This was accomplished either by purposefully overlooking the salient details or by portraying the perpetrators in a more "sympathetic" light. That is, the distortion takes the form of characterizing the culprit as not entirely premeditatively connected or committed to the crime, but were "gentler" or even, in some cases, acting in self-defense. This tactic was used to make the tragedy of Karbala seem normal. Later, the essence of the tragedy of Karbala was reduced to the bare minimum of details in a few pages of some historical sources--with the aforementioned distortions embedded in them.

To ensure that this softened and sanitized version of the events became the primary and accepted narrative, certain historical sources were emphasized and given more credence over others. For example, the work of Abu Mikhnaf ⁽¹⁾, known

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- (1) Abu Mikhnaf: His full name was Lut ibn Yahya ibn Sa'id ibn Mikhnaf al-Azdi al-Ghamidi, and his kunya (nickname) Abu Mikhnaf is more widely recognized than his name. Mikhnaf, meaning someone with a crooked or bent nose, was from Kufa and died in 157 AH. The scholars of biographical evaluation described him as a contemporary of Imam al-Baqir and Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon them), meaning he lived during their time. Sheikh al-Najashi described him as "the elder of the narrators in Kufa and their leader, and was trusted for what he narrated." Even those who disagreed with his sect acknowledged his comprehensive knowledge and that he had access to information unavailable to others, despite their general tendency to weaken and assail his credibility because of the religious sect he belonged to. Abu Mikhnaf significantly influenced his students, such as Hisham ibn Muhammad ibn al-Sa'ib al-Kalbi, who narrated the martyrdom, and Abu al-Hasan al-Mada'ini. He authored around 50 works, and the nature of these titles might explain why they were targeted and lost. Among his books were "The Book of Saqifah," "The Book

for documenting the martyrdom of Hussain (peace be upon him), which al-Tabari extensively used in his history, has all but vanished from the cultural landscape⁽¹⁾. Curiously, no complete copies of this work exist; what remains is only what al-Tabari included in his history.

of Apostasy," "The Conquests of Islam," "The Conquests of Iraq," "The Conquests of Khurasan," "The Book of Shura," "The Killing of Uthman," "The Battle of the Camel," "The Battle of Siffin," "The Battle of Nahrawan," "The Book of Arbitration," "The Book of Raids," "The Martyrdom of the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him)," "The Killing of al-Hasan (peace be upon him)," "The Killing of al-Hussain (peace be upon him)," "The Martyrdom of Hujr ibn Adi," "The News of Ziyad," "The News of al-Mukhtar," and others. Only excerpts from these works survive in some texts, like al-Tabari's history, which heavily relied on his accounts. While some researchers doubt his Shia affiliation, suggesting he was Shia in a broader political sense rather than an Imami, detailed studies by scholars like Sheikh al-Ghrawi and Sheikh Amer al-Jabari provide more insights into Abu Mikhnaf and his works.

- (1) The loss of manuscripts, despite knowledge of their authors and content, can often be attributed to wars, conflicts, and the accompanying destruction of civilization, including libraries and centers of learning. For instance, the Mongol invasions led to significant cultural losses. However, we believe another underappreciated factor was the intentional confiscation and destruction of books by ruling authorities (often in consultation with certain court scholars) to suppress ideas or information deemed unfavourable to the regime. In those times, when printing wasn't available, it was relatively easy to collect and destroy all copies of a book, leading to its disappearance. Researchers should examine what types of books were "lost" to understand better this systematic erasure. Regarding Abu Mikhnaf's martyrdom account, researchers note that it existed until the fourth century AH but then disappeared. The period marked by clear sectarian conflicts and sharp confrontations, combined with the sensitive nature of Abu Mikhnaf's book titles, offers additional clues as to why such works were "lost" or destroyed.

Features of the Book (Martyrdom of Imam Hussein) of Abu Mikhnaf⁽¹⁾ This book includes several important aspects that are worth giving attention to:

1. **Among the Earliest Accounts:** It is one of the earliest works on the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him), authored shortly after the event by Abu Mikhnaf al-Azdi, who passed away in 158 AH. He narrated the events of the martyrdom through one predominant or possibly two intermediary sources. This temporal proximity lends significant historical value to the book.
2. **Reliance on Eyewitness Narratives:** Abi Mukhnaf relied on direct eyewitnesses and contemporaries of the event for his account. Unlike others who compiled various narratives from different sources and individuals, he maintained the integrity of individual testimonies, allowing the reader to distinguish his specific narrative style and source. Despite the potential loss of chronological sequence, this approach enhances accuracy and allows for critical evaluation of each narration in its own context.

(1) It is crucial to distinguish this book from later printed works falsely attributed to Abu Mukhnaf al-Azdi, as acknowledged by scholars. The reference here pertains to the original writings documented by al-Tabari and others, which Sheikh Al-Gharaui has extensively studied and published. The first edition appeared in 1411 AH under the title "The Incident of Tif," printed by the Islamic Publishing House affiliated with the Hawza Teachers' Group in Qom, comprising 280 pages.

3. Rich in Detail: His narratives are rich in detail and intricacies due to being sourced directly from direct and primary eyewitnesses. This approach enriches the narrative with vivid details and comprehensive coverage of the events surrounding the martyrdom.

4. Compilation of Diverse Narratives: Abi Mukhnaf compiled a wide array of diverse narratives and accounts related to the same event, enabling readers to balance and discern the most accurate and reliable versions. This methodological approach highlights his efforts to distinguish primary from secondary details, ensuring that crucial aspects remain prominent while peripheral elements fade away over time, as noted by Dr. Baydoun.

In conclusion, "The Maqtal (or Killing) of Abu Mukhnaf al-Azdi" remains a pivotal source for understanding the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him), despite misattributions in later publications. The work's preservation and critical study, especially in relation to the original accounts as documented by scholars like al-Tabari, underscore its enduring significance in historical literature.⁽¹⁾

(The book "The Killing of Abu Mikhnaf" chronicles the deaths of significant individuals or their assassinations. It is notable for its early documentation of historical events, particularly its focus on the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) and other related figures.

(1) Baydoun; Dr. Labib, Encyclopedia of Karbala, 1/36.

Despite the important features of the author and the content of the book, Abu Mukhnaf's narrations regarding the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) are not prominently featured in most historical books that discuss the events of Karbala. On the contrary, scholars and historians from the official school of thought have criticized Abu Mukhnaf. Yahya ibn Ma'een said, "He is not trustworthy," and at another time remarked, "He is not reliable." Abu Hatim al-Razi stated, "His narrations are abandoned," and Ad-Daraqutni classified him as "weak."

Ibn 'Adi, after quoting Yahya ibn Ma'een's opinion on Abu Mukhnaf, commented that this view is supported by other scholars. Abu Mukhnaf, also known as Lut ibn Yahya, was recognized for transmitting reports from early pious predecessors, but his Shia affiliation and the questionable authenticity of his reports led scholars like Abu Hatim to reject his narrations.

In the category of weak narrators, Muhammad ibn Isa narrated from Abbas who said, "I heard Yahya saying: Abu Mukhnaf is not reliable," and in another place, "He is not trustworthy." Additionally, Muhammad narrated from Abbas who said, "I heard Yahya saying: Abu Mukhnaf, Abu Maryam, and Amr ibn Shimr are not reliable." These statements are recorded in various sources including Dhahabi's "Al-Muntaqa" and Ibn Kathir's commentary.

Ibn Kathir mentioned that Abu Mukhnaf was Shia and weak in Hadith according to the scholars, yet he was lauded as a preserver of historical reports. Despite his unreliability in

Hadith, some authors appreciated his unique access to certain historical events that were not available through other sources.

Due to his Shia affiliation, scholars generally did not rely on his narrations, which leads to a dismissal of his book and the narrations therein by extension. For instance, Ibn Tahir al-Barzinji in his *"Sahih wa Dha'if Tarikh al-Tabari"* commented critically on Abu Mikhnaf's narrations, indicating that they are unreliable due to the presence of Lut ibn Yahya, who is deemed unreliable.

This critical assessment of Abu Mikhnaf's reliability affects the credibility of his book and its contents in historical works like those of Tabari and Ibn al-Athir.

The text discusses strategies and approaches in historical books dealing with sensitive historical events such as the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him). Historians rely on their sources and references to present events, but they may follow specific patterns in transmission that align with their intellectual or political orientations.

1. Adoption of Alternative Narratives: Some historical books adopt alternative narratives to replace traditional accounts that may be available. This could result from adherence to political or religious agendas of governments or authorities.
2. Replacement of Distorted Materials: Some books may replace original historical materials with distorted versions, altering their accuracy and documentation to suit official or ideological stances.

3. **Reliance on Major Works:** There are key historical books like "Al-Tabaqat al-Kubra" by Ibn Saad, "Tarikh Dimashq" by Ibn Asakir, "Tarikh al-Islam" by al-Dhahabi, and "Al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya" by Ibn Kathir, which are used as primary and reliable references in studying historical events.
4. **Criticism and Analysis:** Scholars and historians engage in critical analysis of sources and narratives, leading to different interpretations and presenting multiple historical perspectives, particularly when dealing with controversial events like the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him).

These points illustrate how intellectual and political orientations influence historical books and their treatment of important events, such as the tragedy of Karbala, in ways that serve and align with specific agendas and positions.

"We will present the biography of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) from the book 'Tabaqat Ibn Saad al-Baghdadi' and highlight some of what is presented in that biography, given the importance of this text and its frequent occurrence, with or without abbreviation, in all the books that discuss the issue of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him). It has become an accepted model in the school of the Caliphs and among the followers of the ruling authority.

We say this regretfully because it has settled with its flaws and complexities, replacing the biography of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) authored by Abu Makhnaf, the characteristics of which have been previously mentioned.

We will rely on the edition published by the Al al-Bayt Foundation, edited by the late Sayyid Abdul-Aziz al-Tabatabai.

The author observed that the emphasis in this book and in what will be subsequently relied upon adopt the official perspective of the institutions of the Caliphs on a number of ideas that we see in the books:"

1. "Based on that emphasis, Ibn Saad focuses on the advice given to Imam Hussein not to leave. 'Ibn Umar used to say, 'We defeated Imam Hussein bin Ali in persuading him not to go out. By my life, he saw in his father and brother a lesson, and he saw from the fitna and people's abandonment of them what should have prevented him from moving as long as he lived, and he should have done entered what the people did, for indeed, the consensus is better!' We ask Ibn Umar when the allegiance to Yazid (what people pledged) was, and when was it considered the consensus of the people? Did Imam Hussein really see a lesson in his father's abandonment by the people, or was Abu al-Hussein the supreme example of applying religious teachings?'

Likewise, in his narration from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri: 'Hussein prevailed upon me to go out, and I said to him, 'Fear Allah for yourself! Stay in your house and do not go out against your leader!' If this is true about Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, we did not find it in any other source before him, nor did the biography of Abu Sa'id help him, so when did Yazid become Hussein's leader?"

This passage discusses the advice given to Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) by companions like Ibn Umar and Abu

Sa'id al-Khudri, urging him not to leave and highlighting the implications of his actions in the broader context of Islamic leadership and consensus.

"And likewise, what Ibn Saad claimed that 'Jabir bin Abdullah said: I spoke to Imam Hussein and said, 'Fear Allah! Do not pit people against each other! By Allah, you are not praised for what you have done, so disobey me!' This corresponds to what preceded, as we do not believe that Jabir al-Ansari uses this logic without mentioning his source or cite where he got this speech from?! Jabir's method and his affiliation to the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) prevent him from speaking in a way that 'do not cause people to harm each other!' or that he says, 'so disobey me!'

"And more surprising than all that is this 'Ummara bint Abd al-Rahman' who 'wrote to him, praising what he wanted to do, and ordering him to obey and adhere to the group! And she informs him that he is only being led to his demise.'

"Dear reader, pay attention to 'Ummara,' who is not supposed to have any influence or command over him, yet here she is 'ordering him to obey,' leaving nothing and daring to give orders of what to do and not to do!"

These passages continue to discuss advice and reactions toward Imam Hussein (peace be upon him), including the role of figures like Jabir bin Abdullah and 'Ummara bint Abd al-Rahman, highlighting their perspectives and interactions in historical accounts related to Imam Hussein's decision-making.

"And he did not forget to mention Amr ibn Sa'id al-Ashdaq in his advice to Hussein! Even to Yazid! 'But Hussein insisted

on going to Iraq,' Ibn Abbas said to him: By Allah, I fear you will be killed tomorrow in front of your women and children, just as Uthman was killed among his women and children. By Allah, I fear that what happened to Uthman will happen to you.'

"In this way, the movement of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) was distorted and presented, and the real reason for his uprising which was articulated by Imam Hussein as: 'to seek reform in my grandfather's Ummah, to command good and forbid evil, and to follow the path of my grandfather and father,' was concealed. Also, hidden from the masses are Imam Hussein's clear rejection of Yazid when he said, 'Yazid is a corrupt, sinful man, a drinker of wine, practicing immorality, and someone like me would not pledge allegiance to someone like him.' And other pronouncements of Imam Hussein like 'we are the family of prophethood through us Allah opened and through us He will conclude.' All of this was overlooked to summarize the matter according to Ibn Saad that the companions and others 'advised' Imam Hussein not to rise up, but he 'disobeyed' them, resulting in his (death).

The following excerpt discusses the advice given to Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) by various figures, including Amr ibn Sa'id al-Ashdaq and Ibn Abbas, highlighting their concerns and warnings regarding the potential danger Imam Hussein would face if he decides to march towards Iraq.

2. "We notice that Ibn Saad, in this lengthy, ninety-six-page biography, which includes a 43-page section expressly focused on killing, did not mention any of Imam Hussein's speeches except for a few lines from his address to the army of Umar ibn Saad ('Do not hasten until I inform you

of my news. By Allah, I did not come to you until similar letters reached me that the Sunnah has been killed, hypocrisy has flourished, and the boundaries (of religion) have been breached. So, I have come to you hoping that Allah, Blessed and Exalted, will reform through me the Ummah of Muhammad, peace be upon him. But if you dislike it, then I will leave you alone, and I implore you to ask yourselves if killing me is acceptable to you or my blood is lawful. Am I not the grandson of your Prophet's daughter, the son of your Prophet's cousin? Am I not the son of the first believer in faith? Are not Hamza, Abbas, and Ja'far my uncles? Or have you not heard what the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said about me and my brother: These two are the leaders of the youth of Paradise. If you believe me, then ask Jabir ibn Abdullah, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, Anas ibn Malik, and Zaid ibn Arqam:!) Despite the abundance of Imam Hussein's speeches and advice, starting from his departure from Medina, then his stay in Mecca and his speech there, his numerous sermons and sayings on the way, and his multiple speeches on the day of Ashura, we wonder what prompts Ibn Saad to mention the words of so-and-so to Hussein by his foes, opponents, or even his detractors in detail. He even mentioned in the context of Yazid's letter to Ibn Abbas detailed words and a lengthy poem! Whereas the matter concerning the words of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him), which clearly outlined the goals of his uprising and the purpose of his movement, are pared down. When discussing the 'killing of Imam Hussein,' Ibn Saad should have presented the speeches and words of the Imam, but

we do not find that he quoted even ten percent of those words and speeches! Thus, his portrayal of the killing is both incomplete and distorted, and presents the events as if they were unfolding and all the while Imam Hussein was silent, and did not utter a word or expressed what his stance was.

This excerpt critiques Ibn Saad's biography for its unbalanced representation of Imam Hussein's speeches and words compared to the detailed inclusion of statements from his adversaries, suggesting a skewed and clearly biased presentation of events surrounding Imam Hussein's tragic death.

"Therefore, we find that scholars who relied on Ibn Saad's narrative made the same error or perhaps (intentionally erred). Although they quoted from Ibn Saad, they also quoted from other sources some of Imam Hussein's speeches that clearly depicted his stance! Ibn Asakir did the same in the history of Damascus.

3. The focus is on the allegiance to Yazid being the consensus of the people, and that Imam Hussein was the exception and sole outlier! By taking the stance he took, Imam Hussein was made to look that he was outside the consensus. The same individuals forgot or overlooked that among the conditions of the reconciliation between Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) and Muawiya was that the rule would be for Imam Hasan, and if Imam Hasan passed away, then it would be for Imam Hussein. The upshot then is it was not permissible for Muawiya to pledge allegiance to Yazid! This was deliberately ignored and

considered normal and routine for Muawiya to appoint his son as his successor. Consequently, anyone who refuses to pledge allegiance to Yazid would be thought of as doing something wrong! This happened only under the glimmer of swords in the Prophet's Mosque in Medina! It was a campaign of assassinations that included the most prominent figures of that period, as we discussed in the chapter on the biography of Imam Hussein. As we find in this text they said: When Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan pledged allegiance to Yazid bin Muawiya, Hussein bin Ali bin Abi Talib was among those who did not pledge allegiance to him."

"And the people of Kufa were writing to Imam Hussein, inviting him to come out to them during the caliphate of Muawiya, all of which he refused... So, Imam Hussein stood firm in his resolve despite these anxieties, sometimes inclined to journey towards them and at other times preferring to stay put.⁽¹⁾ The worst part of this text is portraying Imam Hussein as being hesitant and anxious, sometimes wanting to march and at other times opting to stay, which is a blatant lie with no historical evidence to back it up. We have mentioned the steadfast positions of Imam Hussein in his biography; during the days of Muawiya, he

(1) Note here, dear reader, the depiction of Imam Hussein as a hesitant person, sometimes inclined towards revival and at other times abandoning it, as claimed by the speaker that he stayed firm in his anxieties, although historical facts refute this claim, as the words of Imam Hussein were consistent that each of you should be a shield for his household, just as the bed remains fixed in the house, so should you! This is justified by the covenant and pact made between Muawiyah and Imam Hasan."

declared to Muawiya and others that he was committed to the truce and what his brother Imam Hasan had pledged. However, after Muawiya, he took a different stance, stating, 'Yazid is a sinful, immoral man who drinks alcohol... and I will not pledge allegiance to someone like him.' What anxieties is Ibn Saad talking about? Where are they, and what and how were they manifested?

4. It is claimed that Yazid had informed his governor Walid ibn Utbah that his father had entrusted him to treat Imam Hussein with kindness and take care of his affairs, as mentioned in Al-Tabaqat: 'So Yazid wrote along with Abdullah ibn Amr ibn Uways al-Amri to Walid ibn Uqbah ibn Abu Sufyan while in Medina: 'Convince the people and take their allegiance, starting with the leaders of Quraysh, especially Hussein ibn Ali, for the Commander of the Faithful entrusted me with his matter to treat him with kindness and take care of his affairs.' This account is completely contrary to what other historians have reported, especially the reliable historian Abu Makhnaf, as transmitted by Tabari and Ibn Athir, where after the public letter it was stated: 'Take Hussein, Abdullah ibn Umar, and Abdullah ibn Zubair in allegiance strictly, without leniency until they pledge their allegiance, and the caliph's order ends with the customary phrase "and peace.' Where is this kindness and rectification in that?

5. "And among the ironies of time is what Ibn Saad mentioned in his book⁽¹⁾ about Marwan ibn al-Hakam's advice to Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad regarding Hussein, affirming that he is the son of Fatimah and no one is dearer to them than Hussein, and warning him not to provoke himself with something he cannot handle, meaning his killing or harm!

What's astonishing is that just a few pages earlier, he narrated that Marwan, who was accustomed to cursing Imam Ali, had a verbal altercation with Imam Hussein and exchanged insults, saying to him: 'You are from a cursed household!!' (Contrary to the Quran, which states they are purified from any impurity)! How can he say this here and that there?

Did Ibn Saad not notice, while citing from various sources including Abu Makhnaf, that Marwan had mentioned (as in Tabari) that Waleed, who wanted to conclude the meeting between him and Imam Hussein peacefully, faced Marwan telling him that Imam Hussein should submit, and if he refused, his neck should be struck? If he does not, Marwan himself would strike Imam Hussein's neck!! Would someone who displays such audacity towards Imam Hussein openly, with

(1) Ibn Saad: Biography of Imam Hussein, p. 62: Marwan wrote to Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad: 'After this, Hussein ibn Ali has approached you, he is the son of Fatimah, and Fatimah is the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). By Allah, no one is more beloved to us than Hussein! So, beware of provoking something against yourself that you cannot handle, and do not forget the general public or neglect mentioning him. Peace be upon you.' Amr ibn Sa'id ibn al-'As wrote to him: 'After this, Hussein has approached you, treat him with kindness or deal gently as you would with slaves.'

insults and threats of murder, advise Ibn Ziyad saying that no one is dearer to him than Imam Hussein?

This is the case with Amr ibn Sa'id al-Ashdaq, the gloating one, who revelled openly in the killing of Imam Hussein, and vilified him publicly in his speeches! However, contradictions have no bounds in Ibn Saad's biography! These are the inconsistencies that we see replicated in subsequent books that quoted him and were written after him!

6. If these were the sentiments of Marwan and his sympathy towards Imam Hussain (peace be upon him), what does Ibn Sa'ad say about Umar ibn Sa'ad al-Zuhri? It is noted that Umar ibn Sa'ad was compelled, because if he had not gone to fight Imam Hussain, Ibn Ziyad would have ordered his execution!

What is peculiar is that no historian before Ibn Sa'ad mentioned this. The part they detailed most was that Umar ibn Sa'ad would be removed from his position in Ray and deprived of leadership, but no one else mentioned a threat of death. It is only Ibn Sa'ad who said: "... He had previously been tasked with Ray and Humdan, and that duty was taken away from him. When he was ordered to march towards Imam Hussain, he refused and disliked it, and he resigned from it. Ibn Ziyad then said to him: 'I swear to God, if you do not go to him and present yourself, I will dismiss you from your position, demolish your house, and slit your neck!' He replied by saying: 'Then I will comply.'"

Historians recount that when Umar ibn Sa'ad resigned, he was asked to relinquish control over Ray. He was given until

nightfall to decide, and they reported his famous poetry, in which he finally chose the worldly side over religion. There was no mention of a threat of death except in terms of being deprived of leadership, which he equated with death.

7. In contrast to the historians who refute the claims that Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) offered Umar ibn Sa'ad to either fight in a battle or submit to Yazid by placing his hand in his, Aqabah bin Saman "the servant of Rabab", a reliable eyewitness, recounted a different narrative: "I accompanied Hussain and traveled with him from Medina to Mecca and then to Iraq. I did not part from him until he was killed. Never did I hear him utter a word in Medina, Mecca, on the way, in Iraq, or in any camp until the day of his death, except saying: 'By God, he never granted them what people talk about or claim, like placing his hand in the hand of Yazid ibn Muawiya or leading an army to any frontier.' Instead, he said, 'Leave me so I can wander this vast earth to see what happens to people.'"

This account contradicts Ibn Sa'ad's assertion that Imam Hussain indeed rejected placing his hand in Yazid's hand but was offered to place it in Ibn Ziyad's hand, which he refused. He further claims that when Ibn Ziyad was informed of this, he contemplated abandoning Hussain, stating, "By God, nothing of his intentions was offered to me, nor did he threaten me with anything. O' God, so where are his letters and orders to Omar bin Saad that if Hussein is killed, let horses trample his chest and back? As reported by most historians?

8. Blatant Lies Attributed to Imam Al-Sajjad (peace be upon him):

Ibn Sa'd proceeds to state: "Ali ibn Hussain said," as if he were sitting next to him as he was recounting the story! Then he narrates a baseless and fabricated tale, concocted by the Zubayris⁽¹⁾ [1], who, along with the Abbasids, assumed an active

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- (1) Ibn al-Jawzi, "Al-Muntazam," 5/344: Informed by Al-Hussain ibn Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahhab, who reported from Abu Ja'far ibn al-Muslimah, who reported from Abu Tahir al-Mukhlis, who reported from Ahmad ibn Suleiman al-Tusi, who narrated from Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar, who said: Mus'ab ibn Abdullah recounted: Ali ibn Hussain, who was with his mother and about twenty-three years old at the time, was sick when Hussain was killed. Umar ibn Sa'ad said, "Do not harm this sick one." Ali ibn Hussain said: A man from among them hid me and honored my stay. He would cry whenever he came and went, until I said, "If anyone had loyalty, it would be this man." Then a caller from Ubayd Allah ibn Ziyad announced: "Whoever finds Ali ibn Hussain, let him bring him, for we have set a reward of three hundred dirhams." By God, that man entered, crying, tied my hands to my neck, and said, "I am afraid." Then he brought me out to them, tied up, and handed me over while taking three hundred dirhams as I watched.

First, this story lacks a credible chain of transmission. There is approximately a 140 -year gap between Imam Al-Sajjad's martyrdom in 95 AH and the death of Mus'ab ibn Abdullah al-Zubayri in 236 AH. So, how can he recount the event as "Ali ibn Hussain said"?

Moreover, it overlooks the fact that Imam Al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) was responsible for the women and children after his father Imam Hussain (peace be upon him). He could not have been absent from them for this long while being at ease with someone treating him kindly and claiming that if anyone had loyalty, it would be this person. This narrative is evidently false and poorly fabricated.

role in distorting Islamic history, particularly anything related to Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them).

The fabricated story goes: "Ali ibn Hussain said: A man from among them provided me a place to hide in and treated me with hospitality. He would hug me and cry whenever he went out and came in, until I said, 'If anyone had loyalty, it would be this man.' Then a caller from Ibn Ziyad announced: 'Whoever finds Ali ibn Hussain must bring him, for we have set a reward of three hundred dirhams.' By God, that man entered, crying, tied my hands to my neck, and said, 'I am afraid.' Then, by God, he brought me out to them, tied up, and as he was handing me over, I watched him receiving three hundred dirhamsatched."

Upon close examination, it becomes clear that Ibn Sa'd likely borrowed this falsehood from Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar or his uncle Mus'ab⁽¹⁾, who, in another fabricated story, claimed

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- (1) Sayyid Abdul-Hussain Sharaf al-Din on Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar and his Uncle Mus'ab:

In his book "Abu Huraira" (p. 122), Sayyid Abdul-Hussain Sharaf al-Din states: "Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar was known for his enmity towards Ali and Ahl al-Bayt. He once took a false oath between the grave and the pulpit, which led to him being struck with leprosy. He often insulted the Alawites and their ancestor "Imam Ali", prompting them to plot his death. He fled to his uncle Mus'ab ibn Abdullah ibn Mus'ab, seeking his intervention with Al-Mu'tasim for protection, but found no help as his uncle did not share his view of confronting the Alawites (as mentioned by Ibn al-Athir in 'Al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh').

His father, Bakkar, was also known for his enmity towards the Alawites, and Imam Al-Rida (peace be upon him) cursed him, causing him to fall from a castle and break his neck. His grandfather, Abdullah ibn Mus'ab, advised Harun al-Rashid to kill

that the mother of Ali Al-Sajjad (peace be upon him) was alive and present with him in Karbala, despite the consensus among historians that she had died while giving birth. It is curious how Abu Mikhnaf al-Azdi, with his many narrators⁽¹⁾ who were present at the event, did not mention this incident.

Moreover, it is difficult to believe that Imam Al-Sajjad, who was responsible for the captives – being the eldest male among them – could have been absent from the women from Karbala to Kufa. The officials of the Umayyad army would not have allowed this, and the women and captives would not have ignored the matter as if he were lost. It is also illogical to think that Imam Al-Sajjad forgot that the women and children needed him, and was comfortably hosted and honored by someone else, even saying that if anyone had loyalty, it was this person. This narrative ends with Ibn Ziyad's announcement and the reward of three hundred dirhams, which is obviously meant to be demeaning, as this amount would not even buy a disabled slave. Thus, we say: may God curse the liars!

9. Where Are the Heads of the Martyrs of Karbala?

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Yahya ibn Abdullah ibn Hasan, saying, 'Kill him, O Commander of the Faithful, and I take the responsibility for his blood.' When Harun pointed out that Yahya had a document of amnesty, Abdullah tore it up in his presence, showcasing the inherited animosity passed down from generation to generation.

- (1) Al-Gharawi Al-Yousifi on Abu Mikhnaf: In the introduction to his book "Waqiq'at al-Taf (The Battle of Taf)", Al-Gharawi Al-Yousifi notes that Abu Mikhnaf, whose narrations are cited 65 times by Al-Tabari, transmitted these accounts directly and indirectly from 39 narrators. Al-Gharawi provided six detailed lists of the intermediaries between Abu Mikhnaf and the events.

In his narrative, Ibn Sa'd attempts to avoid the controversy surrounding the display and transportation of the severed heads from Karbala to various cities/countries, including their arrival in Damascus. By claiming that the heads were buried, he circumvents the implications of these disturbing and alarming processions. This version undermines the accounts of Imam Hussain's head being struck in the court of Ibn Ziyad or Yazid, which he also includes in his contradictory reports. It's unclear if Ibn Sa'd recognizes the inconsistency between these conflicting accounts.

He writes: "Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad ordered the remaining members of Hussain's entourage to be imprisoned in the palace. Then, Dhakwan Abu Khalid said, 'Let me bury these heads,' and he was permitted to do so. He shrouded and buried them in the cemetery, and then went to the bodies, shrouded, and buried them.

Zuhayr ibn Qayn was among those who were killed with Hussain, and his wife instructed a servant named Shajara to shroud her master. Shajara recounted, 'I came and saw Imam Hussain lying there. I thought, should I shroud my master and leave Hussain? So I shrouded Hussain first, then returned and reported this to her, and she said, 'You did well.'"

According to Ibn Sa'd, the Umayyads did the right thing by having Dhakwan shroud and bury the bodies and then bury the heads in the cemetery. Then Shajara's came and shrouded Imam Hussein as he said.

Ibn Sa'd's account is replete with inconsistencies, particularly regarding the burial of the heads of the martyrs of Karbala. He

initially stated that the heads were buried by Dhakwan Abu Khalid. However, he later contradicts himself by narrating that Hafiz ibn Thalaba brought Imam Hussain's head to Yazid, and that Yazid then sent it to Amr ibn Sa'id ibn al-As, his governor in Medina. This inconsistency calls into question the reliability of Ibn Sa'd's narrative.

10. Yazid's "Compassionate" Image

Ibn Sa'd also tries to cast Yazid ibn Mu'awiya in a sympathetic light, suggesting that if Yazid had been in control, the tragedy of Karbala would not have occurred. According to Ibn Sa'd, Yazid claimed that he would have prevented the killing of Imam Hussain if he had the power to do so, blaming Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad for the atrocity. (Restricting the case against the absent). This narrative aims at absolving Yazid of any responsibility, presenting him as regretful and compassionate!

He quotes Sakinah bint Hussain, who allegedly said to Yazid, "O Yazid, the daughters of the Messenger of Allah are captives!" Yazid supposedly responded, "O daughter of my brother, it is even harder for me than it is for you. I swear by Allah, if there had been any kinship between Ibn Ziyad and Hussain, he would not have dared to act against him. But Sumiya's relationship (Ibn Ziyad's mother) separated them."

Yazid is also quoted as saying, "I would have been satisfied with the obedience of the people of Iraq without the need to kill Hussain. May Allah have mercy on Abu Abd Allah, Ibn Ziyad killed him. By Allah, if I had been his companion and could not

prevent his death except by reducing my life span, I would have loved to save him. I wish he had been brought to me peacefully.”

Ibn al-Jawzi, “Al-Muntazam,” 5/344, has become the authoritative text for official historical accounts⁽¹⁾, with subsequent historians relying heavily on his narrative. This reliance has led to the dissemination and reinforcement of ideas that distorted the events related to Imam Hussain’s uprising while portraying the Umayyads in a more benevolent light.

Historians who followed Ibn Sa’d have used his work as the primary and leading source, and adjusted their own accounts to align with his perspectives. This trend is evident in various historical texts and biographical compilations, where the narrative has been increasingly manipulated to aggrandize the image of the Umayyads. As time progressed, the alterations became more pronounced, leading to further embellishments and modifications that increasingly diverged from the original events. Examples of such narrations and biographies that buttress the foregoing argument are provided next.

(1) “Tarikh Madinat Dimashq” by Ibn Asakir (d. 571 AH) and its Abridgement by Ibn Manzur: These works reflect the influence of Ibn Sa’d in their organization, details, and underlying themes, all of which often aim to present the Umayyads in a positive light.

“Al-Bidaya wa’l-Nihaya” by Ibn Kathir al-Dimashqi: This text similarly shows traces of Ibn Sa’d’s influence, indicating a trend where the narrative surrounding Imam Hussain’s uprising and martyrdom has been continually reshaped to fit a more pro-Umayyad narrative.

Analysis of the Account of Imam Hussain in Ibn Asakir's "History of Damascus"

Ibn Asakir's⁽¹⁾, "History of Damascus" dedicated a significant portion of its content to the biography and martyrdom of Imam Hussain; the section is 150 pages long and starts on page 111 and ends on page 261. Despite the extensive coverage, several observations should be made:

1. Adherence to the Umayyad Narrative: The biography and the account of Imam Hussain's death align with the Umayyad-Shami perspective. This perspective often exonerates Yazid ibn Muawiya of any responsibility for Imam Hussain's death, and places the blame on Ibn Ziyad instead. The text frequently mentions the incident of Ibn Ziyad striking Imam Hussain's head, with multiple narrations and chains of transmission.

2. Omission of Umayyad Atrocities: The account does not elaborate on the atrocities committed by the Umayyad army in the killing of Imam Hussain. Notably, it omits the events of Ashura, the day of Imam Hussain's martyrdom. Due to this omission, the text should not be considered a credible account of the martyrdom,

(1) ,Ibn Asakir's Background: Ali ibn al-Hasan ibn Hibat Allah ibn Asakir al-Dimashqi (d. 571 AH) was a prominent historian whose major work, "History of Damascus," was a lifelong project. The modern printed version falls in 70 volumes, with supplementary volumes bringing the total to 80. He is regarded highly by scholars from the Sunni tradition, praised for his vast knowledge, reliability, meticulousness, and piety.

despite Ibn Asakir referencing the work of Ibn Sa'd from page 205 onwards.

3. In Ibn Asakir's "History of Damascus," the portrayal of Imam Hussain starts with a misleading note, suggesting a favorable relationship between Imam Hussein and the Umayyad regime. The title itself reads: "He [Imam Hussain] came to Muawiya and went on an expedition to Constantinople in the army led by Yazid ibn Muawiya." This title sets the stage for a narrative that aligns with the Umayyad propaganda and omits key historical facts.

The narrative does not mention the killing of Imam Hussain by Yazid's forces or the delivery of his head and the women of his household to Yazid in Damascus.

4. As for what is clearly fabricated and made-up lies about Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, which Ibn Asakir judged as an objectionable hadith because its chain of transmission is not seen as connected to Imam Hussein; I do not know what the purpose of quoting it in his writings/narrations was since it is not connected to the chain of transmission (Isnad), and is of poor meaning and is objectionable! It is what was narrated from someone who falsely swore that he saw Al-Hussein with his own eyes and heard him with his ears, believing Muawiyah's statement that he is the "uncle of the believers" and that he is one of the Shiites of the family of Muhammad, to the end of the chain of lies! Similarly, the other hadith that he narrated from Al-Hussein (pbu), through his grandfather, as he claimed

in his book, but he did not comment on it, and about which he says: "Do not curse so and so and so and so, for they are masters of the elderly people of Paradise from the first and the last, except for the prophets and messengers!!"... although it is among the narrations of the Imams that were added to falsify and fabricate this hadith. It is a lie against the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his family.

Ibn Asakir includes questionable narrations that are both weak in both their chain of transmission and content. One such narration falsely claims that Imam Hussain acknowledged Muawiya as the "Uncle of the Believers" and as a supporter of the family of the Prophet. Another fabricated narration has Imam Hussain quoting his grandfather, the Prophet Muhammad, forbidding the cursing of certain figures and elevating them to the status of the foremost elders of paradise, a statement inconsistent with authenticated teachings of Ahlul Bayt.

Ibn Asakir's "History of Damascus" contains outrageous biases and inaccuracies in its portrayal of Imam Hussain. By omitting key events, including fabricated accounts, and distorting the historical narrative, it presents a twisted version of history that is sympathetic toward the Umayyad regime.

5. Ibn Asakir's representation of the events related to Imam Hussain and the tragedy of Karbala in "History of Damascus" is replete with flagrant biases and distortions. The following points highlight how his narrative has been shaped to serve a dubious agenda, often aligning with Umayyad propaganda and presenting a slanted version of history.

- Ibn Asakir repeatedly narrates that the head of Imam Hussain was brought to Ibn Ziyad, who desecrated it with a stick or a rod. This portrayal often includes the mention that Imam Hussain resembled his grandfather, Prophet Muhammad (pbu).
- Shift of Blame to Iraqis: There is a consistent emphasis on the narrative that it was the Iraqis who killed Imam Hussain, thereby displacing responsibility from Yazid and the Umayyads to others. This aligns with the broader historical theme that presents Iraq as a Shi'a and pro-Ahlul Bayt region, while depicting Syria (Sham) as a stronghold of Umayyad loyalty.
- Praising Sham/Syria: Ibn Asakir's work begins with extensive praise for Sham/Syria and its people, describing it as a sacred land from which a considerable number of people will enter paradise. This glorification serves to create a sharp contrast between the perceived holiness of Sham/Syria and the alleged treachery of Iraq.
- False Narratives of Generosity: Ibn Asakir includes fabricated stories where Imam Hassan and Imam Hussain are portrayed as being honored and rewarded generously by Muawiya. These stories lack historical evidence and serve to sanitize the image of the Umayyads.

- **Baseless Narrations:** Several narrations in Ibn Asakir's account are either weak in their chain of transmission or fabricated. These include statements falsely attributed to Imam Hussain acknowledging Muawiya in a positive light, which greatly differ with established historical records and the teachings of the Ahlul Bayt.
- **Historical Revisionism:** The deliberate omissions and distortions in Ibn Asakir's work represent a deliberate effort toward historical revisionism. Such revisions have far-reaching consequences, as they shape the perceptions and understandings of future generations.

6. In the translated version of Ibn Asakir's "History of Damascus," there are several instances where the narrative outwardly seems to be complimentary of Imam Al-Hussein, while in reality it is a condemnation of Imam Al-Hassan. The narrative includes a statement falsely attributed to Imam Ali, claiming that Imam Hasan is as ineffective in war as a bird caught in a trap. This is contradicted by historical records, such as Imam Hasan's bravery in the Battle of Jamal, where he is noted to have charged and stabbed the camel, demonstrating his valor.

Another fabricated story suggests that Imam Hasan praised Imam Hussain's courage while belittling his own, expressing a desire for some of Hussain's fearlessness. Conversely, Imam Hussain supposedly wished he had Imam Hasan's eloquence. These statements, though appearing as compliments, subtly

undermine the complete virtues of both Imams, implying they each lack in essential qualities. This appears to be praise on the surface, but its inner and deeper meaning is denouncement of both imams. A baseless narrative describes a supposed estrangement between Imam Hasan and Imam Hussain for three days. It is known that if a believer abandons his brother for three days, he must be absolved of him, as they reported. He is trying to insinuate that the Imams had a serious character flaw.

Another fabricated account depicts Imam Hasan criticizing Imam Hussain for giving generously to poets, to which Imam Hussain allegedly responded that the best wealth is that which protects one's honor. This narrative not only aims to show that there was discord between the brothers but also subtly questioning their judgment and character.

7. Ibn Asakir retains many of Ibn Saad's core ideas, such as the narrative of people pledging allegiance to Yazid while Imam Hussain resisted. He also includes objections from certain companions of the Prophet, mirroring the narrative structure found in Ibn Saad's account. However, Ibn Asakir modifies certain details that do not align with his viewpoints, even at the cost of distorting the original meaning. For instance, he changes Imam Hussain's famous declaration: "Indeed, the one whose ancestry is unknown, and the son whose ancestry is not known has firmly given the choice between two things: between dignity and humiliation. Far be it from us to accept humiliation"

He changed Imam Hussein's declaration into a nonsensical version: "the punk, has firmly stood between two things: between demand and humiliation" This phrase has no clear meaning. Also Ibn Asakir omitted seven pages of significant portions of Ibn Saad's account, especially the detailed description of Imam Hussain's martyrdom. He also avoided mentioning the transport of Hussain's family and the severed heads to Kufa and subsequently to Damascus. Additionally, Ibn Asakir excludes accounts of Yazid's desecration of Imam Hussain's head, such as striking his teeth with a rod/stick, an act that was reportedly condemned by the companion Abu Barza al-Aslami. He also omits Yazid's recitation of verses by Ibn al-Zubara, which celebrated the defeat of the Prophet's family. All of the above events are curiously not mentioned in Ibn Asakir's book.

8. Despite all the aforementioned details being overlooked and ignored, the false report that has been mentioned multiple times which claims that Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) was given the choice to either surrender to Yazid or be sent to the frontlines to fight, or other alternatives — was not forgotten by Ibn Asakir. He made sure to include and emphasize it. Even though Yazid's name is conspicuously absent from the account of Imam Hussain's martyrdom, as if he did not exist during that time period, Ibn Asakir did not forget to include the fabricated claim that Yazid had instructed Ibn Ziyad to be lenient with Imam Hussain.

Ibn Kathir's Account of Imam Hussain's Martyrdom

Another example of distorted narratives in historical sources regarding the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) can be found in Ibn Kathir's "Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya." Over time, this work has evolved into a kind of a holy text for the Salafi trend concerning Islamic history and continues to be highly regraded, as evidenced by the extensive efforts put into its verification, commentary, and studies.

When examining this account titled "The Story of Hussain bin Ali, the Reason for His Departure from Mecca in Pursuit of Power, and How He Was Killed," it is clear that the narrative's slant is quite obvious right from the title. According to this title, the reason for Hussain's departure from Mecca is noted as nothing more than a quest for power. The account takes up seventy pages (from 160 to 230). While it is not feasible to conduct a detailed study of it here, a few quick observations will suffice for the purpose of our discussion.

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Some observations on Ibn Kathir's account:

1. Reliance on Ibn Sa'd's "Tabaqat": The account relies heavily on the narrative found in Ibn Sa'd's "Tabaqat," and thus, shares the same fundamental issues previously noted. However, regarding the specifics of the martyrdom, the battle, the martyrs, the poetry (rajaz) they recited, and the speeches of Imam Hussain (peace be upon him), Ibn Kathir found Ibn Sa'd's "Tabaqat" to be severely lacking in detail. Consequently, he supplemented his account with information from Abu Mikhnaf al-Azdi's account, despite

his general and specific reservations about some of Abu Mikhnaf's narrations.

Ibn Kathir's general stance

Ibn Kathir's general stance is expressed in the following statement: "The Shia and the Rafidha have made up numerous lies and fabricated accounts regarding the martyrdom of Imam Hussain. What has been mentioned about Ibn Kathir is sufficient, but some of what we have cited requires scrutiny. Had it not been for the fact that Ibn Jarir and other reliable and credible historians and scholars mentioned it, I would not have included it here. Most of it is narrated by Abu Mikhnaf Lut bin Yahya, who was a Shia and considered unreliable by the scholars, although he was a historian who preserved so many narrations that others did not. For this reason, many later authors on this subject relied heavily on him. Allah knows best."

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It is evident that, like others, Ibn Kathir acknowledges that apart from Abu Mikhnaf, no one else provides the detailed account of Imam Hussein's martyrdom. Perhaps, this lack of detail is deliberate to avoid revealing the heinous crimes committed by the Umayyad rulers, given that there has always been concerted and concentrated efforts to downplay and deny these atrocities whenever possible.

However, without Abu Mikhnaf's descriptive narrative, this account remains bland and devoid of color, taste, or smell. A good example of that is what Ibn Taymiyyah⁽¹⁾ did in his

(1) Ibn Taymiyyah's Commentary

commentary on the martyrdom of Imam Hussain, which is ludicrous even to the most grief-stricken. It also reflects Ibn Taymiyyah's deficient historical knowledge or ulterior motives.

In his book "Raas al-Hussain," Ibn Taymiyyah stated on page 28: "When Hussain (may Allah be pleased with him) left, he sent his cousin Aqil to them, and a group followed him. When Ubayd Allah bin Ziyad arrived in Kufa, they sided with Ibn Ziyad, and Aqil (was killed again!) and others were killed. When Hussain learned about this, he wanted to return, but Umar bin Saad's army intercepted him. They demanded that he surrender, but he refused and asked to be taken to his cousin Yazid, so he could place his hand in his, or to return from where he came, or to go to some frontier post. Consonant with their tyrannical nature, they refused to grant him his wish. One of the most vehement instigators against him was Shimar bin Dhil-Jawshan. Imam Hussain was joined by a group of them, and they fought until Allah honored Imam Hussain and those of his family with martyrdom, may Allah be pleased with them and grant them His blessings."

This passage alone was enough to crown its author with the title of "Sheikh al-Islam," for it contains so many errors, distortions, concoctions and absurdities that it needs no further explanation.

But Ibn Kathir, who was captivated by the problem of the Shiites and influenced by his teacher Ibn Taymiyyah, could not reconcile between Ibn Sa'd's words in "Al-Tabaqat" and Abu Mikhnaf's narrations as they appear in Al-Tabari, although he cited him. Each of the two men has his own method and way of presenting events and whatever aims they intended them to

serve. Thus, Ibn Kathir's account of the martyrdom of Imam Al-Husayn came out outrageously and consistently contradictory, stating one thing at the beginning only to contradict it at the end, and presenting something here only to refute it there, and so on.⁽¹⁾

2. The Shiite issue represented the specter that haunted Ibn Kathir, so whenever he saw an opportunity to attack the Shiites and the Rafidah, he did not let it pass; rather it reinforced his beliefs about them, even if it involved blatant lies. That did not matter to him since he was writing for an audience that did not expect or demand evidence from him. He said:⁽²⁾

"And indeed the Shiites exaggerated on the day of Ashura, fabricating many outrageous lies, such as: the sun was eclipsed until the stars appeared; every stone that was lifted had blood underneath it; the sky turned red; the sun rose with a blood-like hue; the sky looked like a clot;; stars collided, sky rained red blood, the redness in the sky appeared for the first time, and so on. Ibn Lahia'a narrated from Abu Qabil Al-Maafari that the sun was eclipsed until the stars appeared at noon, and when Imam Al-Hussein's head was brought to the governor's palace,

(1) An example of this is his statement in "Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya," volume 8, page 186: "And this description of his martyrdom is taken from the words of the Imams of this field, not as claimed by the Shiites from lies." He quotes Abu Mikhnaf, who narrates from Abu Janab, from Adi bin Harmalah, from Abdullah bin Harmalah, from Abdullah bin Sulaim and Al-Mudharrib bin Al-Mushma'al Al-Asadiyin... And it is clear that Abu Mikhnaf was a Shiite, even in the general sense—as previously mentioned—even as Ibn Kathir himself described him!

(2) Ibn Kathir, "Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya," 8/219.

the walls dripped blood, the earth darkened for three days, saffron and spikenard burned upon contact, and every stone in Jerusalem revealed fresh blood underneath it. The camels looted from Imam Al-Hussein's camp became inedible like gall. These lies and fabricated hadiths have no basis."⁽¹⁾ And worse

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- (1) [No need to mention many non-Shiite sources that mentioned all of the above; it is enough to reference the biography of Imam Al-Hussein in "Tarikh Madinat Dimashq," where a considerable number of narratives about the supernatural phenomena accompanying Al-Hussein's martyrdom and what happened to those who participated in his killing were mentioned. Also, what was mentioned in "Al-Sawa'iq Al-Muhriqa" by Ahmad bin Hajar Al-Haytami Al-Makki on page 196. In his harshness against the Shiites and Shi'ism, he does not fall short of Ibn Kathir. He says in his book: "And among the signs that appeared on the day of his killing, the sky turned immensely black until the stars were seen during the day, and every stone lifted revealed fresh blood. Abu Sheikh narrated that the camels' fur in their camp turned to ash, and there was a caravan from Yemen heading to Iraq that met them when he was killed. Ibn Uyaina narrated from his grandmother that a camel herder whose camels' fur turned to ash told us about this. They slaughtered a camel in their camp, and its meat looked like rats, and when they cooked it, it turned out as bitter as gall. The sky turned red, and the sun was eclipsed until the stars appeared at midday. People thought that the Day of Judgment had come. No stone was lifted in Sham/Syria without seeing fresh blood was underneath it. Uthman bin Abi Shayba narrated that the sky remained red for seven days, resembling dyed cloths due to its redness, and the stars clashed. Ibn al-Jawzi narrated from Ibn Sirin that the world darkened for three days, then redness appeared in the sky. Abu Sa'id said that no stone was lifted in the world except that fresh blood was found underneath, and the sky rained blood, leaving traces on clothes until they wore out. Al-Tha'labi and Abu Nu'aym narrated that they were rained with blood. Abu Nu'aym added that we woke up with our buckets and jars filled with blood. In another narration, it rained blood on houses and walls in Khurasan, Sham/Syria, and Kufa. When Al-Hussein's head was brought to Ibn Ziyad's house, its walls dripped blood. Similar accounts were mentioned

than that is the bald-faced, glaring lie that no one before his mentor Ibn Taymiyyah had said, as Ibn Kathir stated: “This refutes the claim of the Rafidah that they were carried as captives on bare camels⁽¹⁾, even to the point where one of them falsely claimed that the two-humped camels grew humps that day to cover their nakedness from the front and back”⁽²⁾.

SubhanAllah! To this, it was exclaimed: Would you provide us with a single name of those you call the Rafidah who claimed this? Here are their books, biographies, and accounts of the tragedy, and you claim that they contain many exaggerations and lies regarding the martyrdom. Would you provide a single source mentioning this falsehood?

In truth, these words (and Ibn Kathir’s addition) only appear in what was mentioned by a questioner (who might be a hypothetical questioner) to Ibn Taymiyyah in his fatwas, and he also mentioned it in his book “Ra’s al-Husayn” (making us doubt the existence of a real questioner). In his book “Ra’s al-Husayn,” he said: “As for what is narrated by those who lack the intelligence to distinguish what they say and have no familiarity with the transmitted knowledge: that the Ahl al-Bayt were captured, and that they were carried on the two-humped

by Al-Dhahabi in his book “Tarikh Al-Islam” 5/15, known for his harshness against Shiites and Shi’ism.”]

- (1) They divide camels into two types: Arab and Bukht (Bactrian), with Arab camels being the well-known camels among Arabs, while Bukht camels are the two-humped camels.
- (2) They divide camels into two types: Arab and Bukht (Bactrian), with Arab camels being the well-known camels among Arabs, while Bukht camels are the two-humped camels.

camels, and that the two-humped camels grew humps from that time: this is clear and disgraceful falsehood to anyone who says it. For the two-humped camels do not cover a woman, and none of Ahl al-Bayt were captured, nor was any of them taken captive"⁽¹⁾.

And Ibn Kathir came to dance to this tune. The best response was given by Allamah Al-Amini, may Allah's mercy be upon him, who said, "I do not think that there is an insane Shiite who claims that the humps found on camels, whether Bactrian or Arabian, have appeared after the incident of Karbala. The Shiites do not say this; it was fabricated by liars who wanted to insult them by attributing absurdities to them. Shiites do not believe that the noble women of the Prophet's family, even if they were stripped of their jewelry, robes, skirts, and headscarves, went into captivity naked, and that they faced any form of humiliation. The sympathy of the Lord for them would have prevented all of that from happening.

Yes, they faced tribulations, hardships, and severe difficulties in their struggle, just as their men faced in their struggle. Anything that befalls those fighting in the path of Allah and for His cause is an honor, not a disgrace. They participated with the men in that sacred uprising, which exposed the Umayyads' plots, evil intentions towards the religion of Islam and the Muslims, and their desire to revert the religious community to the pre-Islamic era"⁽²⁾

(1) Ibn Taymiyyah; Ahmad: "Ra's al-Husayn," p. 36, similar to what is in "Majmoo' al-Fatawa," 4/506.

(2) Al-Amini, Abdul Hussein: Al-Ghadeer, 3/257.

3. Within this Umayyad-oriented direction, Ibn Kathir begins the story of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, with a series of ideas; one of them being that Imam Hussein was opposed to Imam Hasan's, peace be upon them, stance towards the Umayyads and the reconciliation agreement between them, and that Hasan wanted to imprison his brother Hussein!⁽¹⁾

And mentioned in the same ideas propagated by followers of the Umayyad faction is not only that the two Imams were in harmony with Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan, but also that Muawya was benevolent towards them, showing generosity and giving them substantial financial gifts!⁽²⁾ For instance, it is said that he gave them two hundred thousand in one day! More astonishing is the claim that after Imam Hasan's death, Imam Hussein visited Muawiya every year, receiving gifts and honors from him! This means that during that period, he visited him ten

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- (1) Read and wonder! The Master of the Youth of Paradise (Imam Hasan) wants to imprison the other Master of the Youth of Paradise (Imam Hussein) in honor of the Umayyads!! The truth is that their stances were in perfect harmony to the extent that Imam Hussein adhered to the agreement made by his brother Hasan, peace be upon him, even after Imam Hasan's martyrdom for ten years! Does anyone who performs this need imprisonment (Ibn Kathir) ?
 - (2) Ibn Kathir: Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya 8/161: "...When the caliphate was established for Muawiya, Hussein used to go to him with his brother Hasan, and Muawiya would honor them greatly, saying to them: 'Welcome and hello,' and giving them substantial gifts. He gave them two hundred thousand in one day, saying: 'Take it, for I am the son of Hind... And when Hasan died, Hussein would visit Muawiya every year, and he would give him gifts and honor him. He was among the army that invaded Constantinople with Muawiya's son, Yazid, in the year 51..."

times! I do not know whether that was to congratulate him on assassinating Imam Hasan or to commend him for his attempts to eradicate the Shiites of his father! ⁽¹⁾

4. Ibn Kathir also does not forget to include what Ibn Sa'd mentioned - in excruciating detail - about the (advice) of the Companions and others to Hussein, and even (the people), not to go out because his departure would cause turmoil. He said, "And when the people sensed his departure, they feared for him from that and warned him against it. Those among them who had wisdom and love for him advised him not to go to Iraq, and they implored him to stay in Mecca, reminding him of what had happened to his father and brother with them."⁽²⁾

5. Some of Ibn Kathir's "wonders" while he considers Ubaydullah bin Ziyad suitable to deliver an eloquent sermon⁽³⁾ by saying, 'Ubaydullah bin Ziyad delivered a powerful sermon to the people of Basra before leaving it, admonishing them, warning them, and cautioning them against discord, strife, and division, as reported by Hisham

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- (1) In the chapter on the Husayni biography, you will find details of Imam Hussein's stance towards Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan.
 - (2) Ibn Kathir: Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya 8/172.
 - (3) In the chapter on the Husayni biography, we have mentioned that Ibn Ziyad was well-known for his unclear and inarticulate tongue and Persian Accent, even though Ibn Kathir sees that Ibn Ziyad can deliver an "eloquent sermon" while Imam Hussein the son of Ali Ibn Abi Taleb who was able to give eloquent speeches all day long, Ibn Kathir sees that it is beyond Imam Hussein's ability to write such a letter !!!

bin Al-Kalbi and Abu Mukhnaf⁽¹⁾, he criticizes Imam Hussein (peace be upon him) for his speech to the people of Basra, saying: 'To the noble people of Basrah, as for what follows, Allah has chosen Muhammad among His creation and honored him with Prophethood, and selected him for His message, then He took him unto Himself after he provided counsel to the people and conveyed the message that Allah sent him with. We are his family, his protectors, successors, and heirs, and the most deserving among the people of his status. However, our people have seized it and appointed themselves as such. We reluctantly accepted as we despise division and disunity, and cherish well-being and general good. And we surely know that we are the most deserving of that right (leadership) which is due to us than those who assumed it, and they did good and reformed, and found the truth and followed it, so may Allah have mercy upon us and forgive us and them. I have sent to you this letter, and I call you to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet. Verily, the Sunnah has been annihilated and invention in religion "Bida'a البدعة" has been revived, If you heed my words and obey my command, I will guide you to the path of righteousness. Peace and mercy of Allah be upon you." Ibn Kathir views this narration as crafted by some Shia narrators, and he commented on the narration reported by Abu Mukhnaf, saying, "In my view, its authenticity concerning Hussain

(1) Ibn Kathir: Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya 8/170.

is questionable, and it appears to be embellished with additional statements by some Shia narrators."⁽¹⁾

6. "As has been mentioned, the confusing and chaotic style in Ibn Kathir's book/views is attributed to multiple factors, including the transmission from two conflicting systems and ideologies. The views/books of Abu Makhnaf al-Azdi and Ibn Saad al-Baghdadi, and the predominance of belief over historical narration, Ibn Kathir writes history according to his own subjective ideas and opposes and disagrees with the ideas of others regardless of whether historical narration helps or contradicts him. He selects narrations that support his points of view even if they are weak and lack evidence, and excludes narrations that do not align with his beliefs even if their chains of transmission are strong and credible their evidence is abundant! For example: At the beginning of the incident, it was reported by Zubair ibn Bakar, who was considered reliable, 'Yazid ⁽²⁾ wrote to Ibn Ziyad: It has come to my attention that Hussein has marched towards Kufa, and your time is troubled among times, your land among lands, and you are tested among workers. At this time, either you set yourself free or you will become a slave, That is why Ibn Ziyad killed him and sent his head to Yazid.'

(1) Ibn Kathir: Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya 8/170.

(2) In Ibn Saad's Tabaqat, it is reported that the one who wrote this was Amr ibn Sa'id al-Ashdaq.

Ibn Kathir added, saying: 'I say: The correct account is that his head was not sent to Sham/Syria, as will be mentioned.'⁽¹⁾

"However, thirty pages later, Ibn Kathir states: 'Scholars differed afterwards regarding where the head of Hussein ended up at, and whether it was sent by Ibn Ziyad to Syria to Yazid or not. There were two opinions, and the more compelling opinion of the two is that it was indeed sent to Yazid. There are many reports confirming this.'⁽²⁾ Allah knows best.' So, we don't know which of the two pages to believe?

It is conceivable that Ibn Kathir may have been influenced by the (opinion and belief) of his teacher Ibn Taymiyyah and the numerous converging narrations and abundant evidence that indicate that the head of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, was indeed taken to Sham/Syria and presented to Yazid and Yazid ibn Muawiyah's hit Imam Hussein's head with a stick, so what does he do? Does he deny the opinion of his teacher or deny the narrations? Especially since Ibn Taymiyyah's opinion is considered as definitive and conclusive, surpassing all the narrations and historians from both sides. So, what does he do? Ibn Taymiyyah does not object to dismissing the writings of al-Azdi, al-Tabari, Ibn Saad, al-Baladhuri, Ibn al-Jawzi, and others for the sake of the person he described. Al-Dhahabi has accused him of being unreliable in his transmission! It suffices to know the level of his reliability and truthfulness from his claim of 'consensus among those who wrote about the killing of Hussein' that the head was not taken, and if there was nothing

(1) Ibn Kathir: Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya 8/178.

(2) Same source, 8/209.

else but this statement, it would suffice to render his position as invalid. Ibn Taymiyyah used it as evidence that the head was not taken to Sham/Syria.””(1)

“And Ibn Taymiyyah claimed, in denial, that the head was carried and delivered to Yazid’s chambers and included the part about Yazid hitting Imam Hussein’s head with an Iron stick, and this was not transmitted through a known chain of narration. Rather, it is a disconnected chain, and it has been contradicted by what is more established and evident!!”(2) Because the issue is too significant to be patched up, the editor of the book, who is one of his intellectual disciples, found a way out by citing what Ibn Jarir al-Tabari affirmed in the margins of the book, confirming what Ibn Taymiyyah refuted! He did not say anything else!! Similarly, he quoted the words of al-Mas’udi in ‘Meadows of Gold’ (Morooj Al-Thahab) giving the same meaning.

I am bewildered by the extent of contradiction, even stubbornness, of this man’s character. On the one hand, he praises Muhammad ibn Saad, the author of ‘al-Tabaqat’ as he called him Katib Al-Waqidi, by saying: ‘It is known that al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar, the author of ‘Kitab al-Ansab’, and Muhammad ibn Saad, the author of ‘al-Waqidi’ (meaning ‘al-Tabaqat’) and others known for their knowledge, reliability, and expertise: I am most knowledgeable in this field, and I trust what they narrate from the unknown and the liars, and some historians who are not trusted for their knowledge nor do I trust them. A man may

(1) Ibn Taymiyyah: Rass al-Hussein, p. 25.

(2) Same source, p. 34.

be truthful but lacks experience in chains of transmission.⁽¹⁾ Yet, he does not investigate this matter which he dismissed with absolute certainty against what he claimed to be more knowledgeable, trustworthy, and reliable. If he looked into the biography of Imam Hussein in 'al-Tabaqat' by Ibn Saad, he would have seen this passage: 'Maḥfuz ibn Tha'labah al-'A'udhi, from the clan of Quraysh, presented the head of Hussein to Yazid, saying: 'O Commander of the Faithful, I have brought you the head of the most foolish and troublesome of people.' Yazid replied, 'The mother of Maḥfuz did not give birth to the most foolish and troublesome of people, but the man did not read the Book of Allah (Quran): 'You give sovereignty to whom You will and take sovereignty away from whom You will, and You honor whom You will and humble whom You will.' Then he called for the bamboo cane and began poking it between the lips of Hussein.'"

"He (Yazid) recited a poem;

'He (Hussein) was from among our noblest men,

yet they were the most rebellious and oppressive upon us.'

This poem was written by Ḥaṣīn ibn al-Ḥamām al-Marī. A man from the Ansar who was present said to him (Yazid), 'Lift this cane of yours, for I saw the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) kissing the very spot where you placed it.' Kuthayyir ibn Hishām informed us, he said: Ja'far ibn Burqān narrated to us, he said: Yazīd ibn Abī Ziyād narrated to us, he said: 'When Yazid ibn Mu'āwiyah was presented with the

(1) Same source, p. 26.

head of Hussein ibn Ali, he began poking it with a cane he had and said, 'I never thought Abu 'Abdullah (Hussein) would reach this age!'"⁽¹⁾

If Ibn Saad is as you described him, why did you not accept his words? Where is the broken chain of transmission? And where are the opposing narrations, which are more numerous and prominent?

The Chronicle of Deaths by Al-Dhahabi in his book (The History of Islam):⁽²⁾

1. It seems that Al-Dhahabi considered it excessive for Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, and his companions in their martyrdom and what happened to his womenfolk to allocate more than 15 pages of his book (The History of Islam), which consists of 52 volumes! Yet, the actual chronicle of the deaths itself is not more than five lines!⁽³⁾ How can this be called a chronicle of deaths!

(1) Translation of Imam Hussein and his Killing from Tabaqat Ibn Saad p. 82

(2) His biography has been mentioned previously.

(3) Al-Dhahabi, (The History of Islam), 5/9: "...and with him were nineteen men of his household, and most of his companions were killed with him, and that occurred on Friday, the day of Ashura. He spent most of the day without anyone approaching him. The infantry surrounded him, but he would charge at them, causing them to retreat, and they hesitated to approach him. Shimar shouted at them: 'May your mothers be bereft of you, what are you waiting for?' Then Sinan ibn Anas al-Nakha'i stabbed him in his collarbone, and then withdrew the spear and stabbed him in the chest, causing him to fall, may God be pleased with him. Khuli al-Asbahi severed his head. May

In my view, it is one of the worst writings about the incident of Karbala and its aftermath. You can imagine someone trying to write about the entire incident in fifteen pages. It is no wonder that the reader of his book will end up with an unclear and incomplete understanding of what happened, why it happened, and how it happened! The way the book is organized does not help the reader either as the author references and uses fragmented and haphazard reports. Sometimes, you find a report about the head of Imam Hussein and where it ended up, before describing and discussing the incident and the killing itself!

2. He begins the events by referencing what Ibn Saad mentioned in *Al-Tabaqat*, then proceeds with the same words and introductions, almost verbatim, particularly regarding the companions' advice to Imam Hussein not to leave. We have pointed this out when discussing the chronicle of Imam Hussein's death in *Al-Tabaqat* by Ibn Saad. We remind you that focusing on this aspect in all the chronicles, both brief and detailed, implicitly condemns Imam Hussein for (disobeying) the advice of the well-wishers and insisting on leaving! Naturally, anyone who reads the chronicle and sees the list of names in a way that suggests a contrary stance would think Imam Hussein should have listened to them! Especially when Imam Hussein's speeches and words, which clarify his position and his reasons for leaving, and the dangers threatening

God not have mercy on him or be pleased with him." This is all that Al-Dhahabi could narrate about the day of Ashura!!

Islam under Yazid's rule, are ignored. He, peace be upon him, said, "Farewell to Islam if the Ummah ... is tested with a ruler like Yazid." Imam Hussein's words, which highlight his goals and motives, were ignored, even his famous will to his brother Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah, in which he stated: "I did not leave out of insolence, arrogance, corruption, or oppression, but I left seeking reform in the Ummah of my grandfather. I want to enjoin good and forbid evil and follow the path of my grandfather and father." Instead, they narrate that Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah did not join Imam Hussein and prevented his sons from going out! This is to claim that Imam Hussein's (mistake) in his stance was evident even to some of his family members!

3. Emphasizing what the primary eyewitness Uqba ibn Siman denied, which is that Imam Hussein requested that he offer three options: as Al-Dhahabi claimed, quoting from Abu Masha'ar Najeeh⁽¹⁾ from some of his elders, that Hussein said to Umar ibn Sa'ad: "O Umar, choose one of three: either let me return, or take me to Yazid so I can place my hand in his, and he can decide on what I see, or if you refuse, then take me to the Turks, so I can fight

(1) It is mentioned in Siyar A'lam al-Nubala about him: Al-Bukhari said: "The Narration was rejected." Abu Dawood and An-Nasa'i said: "The narration is weak." Yazid said: "I heard Abu Juzz bin Tarif saying: 'Abu Masha'ar is the biggest liar on the face of the earth and sky!'" In Al-Kamil fi Du'afa' al-Rijal by Al-Jurjani: "Yahya would not narrate from Abu Masha'ar al-Madani and considered him very weak, and laughs every time his name was mentioned."

them until I die.” He supposedly meant either going to a border outpost or surrendering to Yazid.⁽¹⁾ The first issue with this report is Abu Masha’ar, who is described as weak and even a liar in the footnotes. He is quoting from some of his elders, whose identity are not known. Then Al-Dhahabi relies heavily on it as if Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, was desperate for them to accept any one of the options, all of which Imam Hussein undoubtedly rejected. This was denied by Uqba ibn Siman, Imam Hussein’s servant, as we mentioned in the section on Imam Hussein’s biography.

4. Historians of the official caliphate line, particularly those from Sham, emphasize Yazid’s regret and sorrow, even his weeping over Imam Hussein when the captives reached Sham! They rely on what Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar narrated, saying that Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Makhzumi told him: When the belongings of Hussein were brought before Yazid and Hussein’s head was placed in front of him, Yazid cried and said:

We crack the heads of men dear to us,

Yet they were the most disobedient and oppressive.⁽²⁾

Since this claim is repeated in all of these sources, it is important to note that Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Makhzumi, also known as Zubala, whom Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar relied upon,

(1) Al-Dhahabi, *The History of Islam*, 5/9.

(2) Same source, p. 18.

is described by scholars⁽¹⁾ as sometimes being a liar and other times as not a trustworthy narrator.

We also question whether crying over Imam Hussein's head is a meaningful gesture, or whether it is significant that Yazid told Zainab:⁽²⁾ "Your father and brother have left the faith."⁽³⁾

One of the features of this (Shami) line is that it exonerates Yazid of any responsibility to the extent that they claim he wept over Imam Hussein. It shifts the blame to Ibn Ziyad for hitting Imam Hussein's head with a rod. This is similar to Ibn Taymiyyah's effort to absolve Yazid of any responsibility for the killing of Imam Hussein! In this case, they also eagerly accept the narration of Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar, which asserts that Ibn Ziyad was the one who struck the head, whereas the Shami line, which is heavily biased towards the Umayyad perspective, prevails among historians. Even those who rely on Shami sources, such as Ibn Saad, have multiple accounts of Yazid hitting Hussein's head, yet they "overlook it and turn away from it"⁽⁴⁾.

(1) Al-Jurjani, Abdullah ibn Adi: *Al-Kamil fi Du'afa' al-Rijal*, 6/171: Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Zubala al-Makhzumi, a Madinan, was narrated by Muhammad ibn Ali, who said: I asked Yahya ibn Ma'in about Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Abi Hasan al-Makhzumi ibn Zubala, and he said: "He is not trustworthy." Ibn Hamad and Abdul Rahman ibn Abi Bakar said: We were told by Abbas about Yahya, who said: Ibn Zubala is not trustworthy; he used to fabricate hadith. His name was Muhammad ibn Hasan and he was a liar.

(2) Al-Tabari, 4/356.

(3) Same source, p. 353.

(4) Surah Yusuf: 105.

On the one hand, they strive as much as possible to obscure the atrocities and crimes committed by the Umayyad army. On the other hand, they actively downplay the severity of what was done to the Prophet's family, especially to the Leader of the Youth of Paradise. Therefore, they do not present a detailed account of what happened to Imam Hussein and his family. Instead, they reduce their coverage of the horrific event to few words, as done by Al-Dhahabi in his chronicle of Imam Hussein's death. Conversely, they emphasize Yazid's sorrow and weeping over the incident and place the blame on Ibn Ziyad!

The Martyrdom Chronicle of Al-Baladhuri⁽¹⁾ in Ansab al-Ashraf (The Origin of the Nobles):

1. This book can be considered one of the best accounts written by historians of the caliphal school regarding the martyrdom of Imam Hussein for several reasons. To begin with, it is quite detailed and contains 89 hadiths and is 87 pages long. This allows the author to provide a thorough account of the various aspects of the martyrdom. Additionally, it is organized in a way that surpasses the chronicles of Al-Tabari (Abi Mukhnaf), Ibn Saad, and other martyrdom accounts. It walks the reader step by step from the beginning of the departure from the city,

(1) Ahmad ibn Yahya ibn Jaber al-Baghdadi, who died in 279 AH, studied under al-Mada'ini and Ibn Saad al-Baghdadi. His works *Ansab al-Ashraf* (The Origin of the Nobles) and *Mu'jam al-Buldan* (The Dictionary of Countries) are considered significant in their respective fields.

and even before the days of Muawiya, until the return of the captives to the city.

The key points mentioned by Al-Baladhuri can be briefly highlighted. He starts with providing hadiths 1 to 13 about the treaty between Imam Hasan and Muwayia. Then, it proceeds to elaborating the opinions of the Shia regarding it, including their objections and incitement of Imam Hussein to rise after Imam Hasan's death. The book also focuses on Imam Hussein's insistence on adhering to the pact as long as Muawiya was alive.

Hadiths 14 to 18 are related to the death of Muawiya, Imam Hussein's departure from the city to Mecca, the arrival of letters from the people of Kufa, and Imam Hussein' sending of his envoy, Muslim ibn Aqil, to Kufa. Hadiths 19 to 24 draw on what Ibn Saad and others mentioned regarding the advice from some companions to Imam Hussein imploring him not to go to Iraq.

Hadith 25 focuses on Imam Hussein's departure from Mecca, his confrontation with the police of Amr ibn Sa'id al-Ashdaq, the case of Qais ibn Musheer al-Saidi and his arrest, and the joining of Zuhair ibn al-Qain with Imam Hussein on the road. It also describes the encounter between Imam Hussein's camp and the army of Al-Hurr ibn Yazid al-Riyahi, where Imam Hussein provided water for them and their horses.

It also covers Imam Hussein's arrival in Karbala, followed by the arrival of Umar ibn Sa'ad. In this context, it discusses Ibn Sa'ad's internal conflict and the advice from his close associates to avoid fighting Imam Hussein, noting that he chose the rule of

Rey. The author, however, failed to mention the mistake noted by others that Ibn Ziyad threatened him with death.

It further details Ibn Ziyad's mobilization for the war against Imam Hussein, including the summoning of Kufa's leaders such as Shibth ibn Rib'i, Asma' ibn Kharija, al-Hussain ibn Numair, Kuthayr ibn Shihab, Amr ibn al-Hajjaj, and others and sending them to Karbala.

It also mentions several other aspects including the call by Habib ibn Mazahir on the night of the tenth to the Asad tribe to support Imam Hussein, the results of this call, as well as the blockade of water to Imam Hussein's followers three days before Ashura, and the efforts of Abbas and the Banu Hashim to fetch water from the Euphrates under threat of the sword.

The Hadith also mentions the message brought by Shimar from Ibn Ziyad, in which he threatened to remove him from the army if he did not escalate the situation, and his call to Abbas and his brothers, asking them: "Where are the sons of our sister?"

In addition, it discusses the night of Ashura, offering Hussein's suggestion to his followers to disperse, their steadfast support for him, and some of their statements in this regard. Finally, it describes the events starting from the morning of Ashura, including a portion of Imam Hussein's first protest speech, the defection of Al-Hurr al-Riyahi to Imam Hussein's side and his conversation with Umar ibn Sa'ad's army, and it ends with a focus on the martyrdom of Imam Hussein.

The details of the battle are well covered, including the names of Imam Hussein's fighting supporters, their battle cries,

and poetry. It then describes the martyrdom of the Banu Abi Talib, including Abbas, his brothers, Ali al-Akbar, the sons of Hasan, the family of Aqil, and finally the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, with details found in al-Luhuf, al-Irshad, and other sorrowful accounts, which are not as thoroughly covered in Ibn Saad's Al-Tabaqat or other sources.

2. Despite the positive aspects of Al-Baladhuri's account, it is not free from errors. Like other works, he claimed that Imam Hussein "implored them to take him to Yazid so he could place his hand in Yazid's hand, but they refused and opted to consider and follow Ibn Ziyad judgment"⁽¹⁾.

Similarly, another narration suggests that when Imam Hussein met with Umar ibn Sa'ad, he said: "Choose between returning to the place I came from, or putting my hand in Yazid's hand, as he is my cousin, so he can decide my fate, or you can send me to a border outpost among the Muslims, so I can be one of them, with their rights and obligations"⁽²⁾. We have previously mentioned the error in this claim and the false source that propagated it. However, Al-Baladhuri did add that "it is said that Imam Hussein only asked to be sent to the city."

(1) Al-Baladhuri, Ahmad ibn Yahya: Ansab al-Ashraf, 3/173.

(2) Same source, 3/182.

Suspicious Ideas and the Erasure of the Hussaini Uprising

One form of erasing the Hussaini cause from the memory of Muslims and containing its presence among them is by interpreting it through a bundle of false ideas. Instead of it being a lofty model of heroism, sacrifice, religious support, and resistance to wrongdoing to be followed, it had been turned into a subject of debate and controversy: Was it justified or unjustified? Should Imam Hussein have done what he did, or should he have avoided it? Did it benefit or harm both him and the community? Obviously, all answers are more likely to incline toward the negative side! This aspect may have much more impact than the previous one, which is the distortion of sources directly related to the event. The reason is that

distorting of sources is dealt with by specialists and scholars of history. However, in the case of distorting the Hussaini uprising through spreading false ideas, they must deal with the general public.

The significance of an event lies in the lesson or idea that is derived and benefited from it, which is what the Qur'an refers to as a "lesson" (عِبْرَةٌ). The stories in the Qur'an, whether about prophets and messengers or tyrants and mischief makers, or about general societies, are meant to underscore the essence of the story and its underlying moral lesson. Allay says in the Qur'an, "Indeed, in their stories there is a lesson for those of understanding"⁽¹⁾.

In the following pages, we will point out some of the dubious ideas propagated by the Umayyad and official narrative⁽²⁾ about Imam Hussein's uprising:

1. The first claim is that Imam Hussein's movement was for the purpose of seizing power.

Some of the sources and statements related to this claim will be offered after highlighting the purpose behind spreading this questionable idea.

(1) Surah Yusuf, 111.

(2) We have repeatedly mentioned that when we refer to the Umayyad camp, we do not only mean the Umayyad state but also the ideology and policies it engendered and continues to breed up to our present day.

Distorting the truth about goals of the Hussaini uprising— which was to seek reform in the community and to remove the Umayyad injustices, as discussed in the section on the Hussaini biography— and framing the issue as a bid for power leads to the thinking that if this is the case, why should one empathize or engage with it? Why mourn and grieve for someone who rose for the sake of authority, leadership, and worldly which eventuated in his death?

Such a perspective compares Imam Hussein with others who sought power and worldly gains but failed to achieve their goals. What sets Imam Hussein apart from others to warrant such significant attention?

The upshot of this dubious argument is this: Just as Imam Hussein rose up to seize power and leadership, the vile acts committed by Yazid and Ibn Ziyad to consolidate their power are considered legitimate, and their killing of Imam Hussein was a logical consequence for his defiance! Given this twisted logic, Imam Hussein is the one who needs to be condemned, and not Yazid and his brutal proxy Ibn Ziyad!

When the issue shifts from being an uprising for the sake of saving Islam and combating deviation to a political movement for the sake of seizing power, it systematically moves it from the realm of noble values and martyrdom to the domain of trickery of politics and its deceitful machination. In the first scenario, the prevailing logic is: "What consoles me for the calamity that has befallen me is that I am under the protection of God!" Its motto is: "Complete contentment with Your decree and submission to Your command!" And, its foundational belief is: "Since we are

on the truth... we have no fear whether death comes upon us or we come upon it!"

Imam Hussein's pronouncements that explicated the goals and motives of his uprising were numerous and varied in style, and were communicated and delivered in different places including Medina, Mecca, on the way to Karbala, and in Karbala. If some people did not have the opportunity to hear Imam Hussein's speeches in one place, they were sure to have the chance to hear them in another place directly or indirectly. In Medina, for instance, Imam Hussein said: "I have surely risen for the sake of reforming the Ummah of my grandfather. I wish to enjoin good and forbid evil and to follow the path of my grandfather and father. Whoever accepts my call to the truth, then God is more deserving of the truth; and whoever rejects my call, I shall persevere and be patient." The term "إنها" (only) is a restrictive tool in Arabic, meaning "for this reason and nothing else."

In Karbala, Imam Hussein said: "O Allah, you know that what was done by us was not out of rivalry for power nor a quest for dominance, but to make clear the landmarks of Your religion, to enact reform in Your land, to provide safety and security for the oppressed among Your servants, and to act in accordance to Your commandments, traditions, and rulings."⁽¹⁾ Thus, the purpose of Imam Hussein's uprising was not for the sake of power, leadership, or authority.

(1) Al-Wafi, 15/179.

Interpreting the Hussaini uprising through a material and worldly political perspective is understandable if it comes from Western scholars who have studied this historical period. They usually approach these issues using methods that are detached from the realm of the sacred and spiritual values. However, it is difficult to comprehend why Muslim historians, who themselves know and refer to numerous Hadiths that Prophet Muhammad said in praise of Imam Hussein would interpret the uprising in this manner. Sayings and narration like the following are incompatible with their interpretations: "Hussein is the leader of the youth of paradise", that "the Prophet was seen weeping in a dream", and that "Gabriel or the angel of rain announced Imam Hussein's death to the Prophet and brought him soil from Hussein's grave."

The same historians also transmitted reports about cosmic phenomena that occurred after Imam Hussein's martyrdom, such as the sky raining pure blood and similar events.

Is it possible that the universe would react to the martyrdom of Imam Hussein if he rose up for the sake of seizing power and enjoy the advantages of leadership but failed to achieve it? Does such an individual deserve the Prophet's tears, the mourning of the angels, or cosmic reactions?

As yet another example of sympathizing with the Umayyad ideology and policy, is the title that Ibn Kathir al-Dimashqi gave to the account of Hussein's martyrdom in his book *Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya* (The Beginning and the End) which was: "The Story of Hussein ibn Ali and the Reason for His Departure from Mecca in Pursuit of Leadership and how he was Killed"

Worse than the idea that Imam Hussein's departure and subsequent martyrdom were for the sake of leadership and the struggle for power is the more alarming stance of some followers of the Umayyad camp among Muslims. They explicitly or implicitly suggest the following:

2. Imam Hussein's departure was an act of rebellion against the legitimate leader of Muslims!

The person who expressed this idea explicitly was Ibn al-Arabi al-Maliki in his book *Al-Awasim min al-Qawasim*⁽¹⁾ (The Defenses Against the Disasters). He believed that those who fought against Imam Hussein did so out of a religious intention and understanding of legal duties. In his view, Imam Hussein's departure was a *fitna* (trial) for the ummah which

(1) Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Ma'afiri, known as Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al-Arabi al-Maliki, died in 543 AH in Morocco. He studied under Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. He should not be confused with Muhyiddin ibn Arabi, the famous Sufi who died in Damascus in 638 AH, about a century later, and who differs markedly with Ibn al-Arabi. Ibn al-Arabi's most famous work is *Al-Awasim min al-Qawasim*, in which he positioned himself as a defender of the Umayyad state and its caliphs, exonerating them in ways that they themselves did not claim. He went to great lengths to deny established historical facts in order to "clear" these rulers from their corrupt and criminal deeds. He also attempted to exonerate the companions of the Prophet from their roles in the disputes and conflicts that they caused. Due to his apparent and deliberate disregard for historical facts, he faced pointed criticism from many scholars of his book, especially the methodology he used.

lead to division and dissention. According to the proponents of this line of thinking, the punishment for anyone who does this is derived from the Prophet's statement that anyone who causes division among Muslims should be killed by the sword, regardless of who the person is. Thus, those who fought against Imam Hussein did so not out of greed or expectancy of reward or fear of punishment from Ibn Ziyad, but rather their actions were driven by their need to safeguard and maintain unity.

Ibn Arabi's statements were understood by many scholars and historians to imply that Imam Hussein was killed by the sword of his grandfather, prophet Mohammed.⁽¹⁾ Although Ibn al-Arabi did not say this directly, the implication of his remarks is quite clear. Further, Ibn Arabi wrote, "may Allah deal with him (Imam Hussein) as he deserves".

He, peace be upon him, said, "No one went out against him except with a religious interpretation and understanding, and they did not fight him except based on what they heard from his grandfather, who was the overseer of the prophets, who cautioned against tampering with the situation and advised against creating and participating in conflicts and disputes. His sayings on this matter are numerous, including his statement, 'There will be trials and more trials. So, whoever wants to divide this unified ummah, strike him with the sword, whoever he might be.' Thus, the people enacted such statements and

(1) Abdul-Raouf al-Manawi mentioned in Fath al-Qadeer (5/246) that Ibn al-Arabi wrote a book about our master Imam Hussein, in which he claimed that Yazid killed him rightfully with the sword of his grandfather. May Allah protect us from such evil and delusion thinking.

other similar ones. Had the great and the noble people, the distinguished and their sons, such as Hussein, had the capacity to protect his house, his property, or his livestock—if the people came to him asking him to uphold the truth, including Ibn Abbas and Ibn Umar—he would have heeded them. But he was faced with what the Prophet, peace be upon him, had warned of, and saw that the situation was beyond his brother's control, with armies and the greatest of people seeking him. How could he then retreat from the mob of Kufa and the major companions who advised against him and distanced themselves from him?"

The leaders of this Umayyad camp are divided into two categories:

1. Those who openly criticize Imam Hussein and state that the legitimate Imam is Yazid ibn Muawiya. They view Imam Hussein's uprising as an act of rebellion and division, and believe that the right action was to kill the divisive rebel who was tearing apart the unity of the community. This view aligns with the interpretation of Ibn al-Arabi al-Maliki, who staunchly believe that Imam Hussein was killed by the sword of his grandfather, meaning he was killed according to the Prophet's guidance and instruction regarding perpetrators of acts of division.
2. Those who temper the view: These individuals consider the explicit criticism too harsh to sanction and thus embrace a more attenuated stance. They argue that Yazid was the legitimate Imam based on the allegiance he received after his father's death, and that Imam Hussein and a few others were unlawfully mistaken for not pledging allegiance. They claim that Imam Hussein was

deceived by his followers in Kufa and did not heed the advice of the Prophet's companions. Consequently, the state and its caliph waged an armed counter resistance against him after attempts at reconciliation failed, leading to his death either by the hands of Ubaid Allah ibn Ziyad or by his own followers in Iraq. The proponents of this view say, "we express sympathy for Imam Hussein and send blessings for his soul as he is the grandson of the Prophet. They continue mention some of his virtues and then say, "but we do not look favorably upon the Ashura practices and rituals of Shiites and "Rafidis" which is characterized by excessive mourning, and we believe such expressions of sorrow are inappropriate and unreasonable".

This is more clearly articulated in the words of Ibn Kathir: "Those who killed him (Hussein) interpreted his actions as an attempt to divide the unity of the Muslims after it had been established and his efforts to persuade people to disavow the allegiance they had pledged to Yazid. It is mentioned in Sahih Muslim, that there are strong rebuke, condemnation, and dire consequences for such actions. Even if some ignorant people misinterpreted Imam Hussein's actions and killed him without justification, they should have considered his requests for the three conditions previously mentioned. If a faction of tyrants is condemned, it reflects poorly on the entire community and casts aspersions on the Prophet (peace be upon him). The matter is not as they believed or acted upon. Most of the scholars, both ancient and modern, disapprove of what happened regarding his killing and the killing of his companions, except for a small group of people from Kufa who were despised and had written to him to achieve their wicked aims and objectives."

When Ibn Ziyad learned of their intentions, he informed them of what he wanted from them both in this world and the hereafter. He successfully compelled them through both incentive and intimidation to abandon and betray Imam Hussein, which eventually resulted in his death. Not all elements of the army was content with what happened to Imam Hussein, nor did Yazid ibn Muawiya approve of it, Allah knows best. It is almost certain that Yazid would have pardoned Imam Hussein before he was killed, as his father (Muawya) had instructed him to do. Yazid himself had expressed this in his statements. However, he did not remove Ibn Ziyad from his position or punish him or condemn his actions, Allah knows best ⁽¹⁾.

3.The Concept of Interpretation and Justification

Among the various arguments sanctioned by the followers of the Umayyad approach is the issue of justifying the killers of Imam Hussein. They claim that those who waged war against Imam Hussein did following an interpretation of a religious injunction. The obvious meaning of this view is that they killed Imam Hussein under a religious, legal pretext. They used a religious decree they had at their disposal as a guide for their action that were not taken for any worldly or material gains, nor for the sake of power. This justification applies to the leaders such as Yazid and Ibn Ziyad, as well as to the general fighters. Their claim is that the people went to fight Imam Hussein and his followers based on an interpretation and justification. This

(1) Ibn Kathir, (Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya), 8/221

was explicitly stated by Ibn al-Arabi, as mentioned earlier, and was timourously but equivocally alluded to by Ibn Kathir.

Here we say there is no room for such twisting and mincing of words! Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, confronted and judged them by saying:

"O people, recognize who I am, then go back and reproach yourselves. Consider whether it is permissible for you to kill me and violate my sanctity. Am I not the son of your Prophet's daughter? Am I not the son of his successor, his cousin, the first believer in God, and the one who confirmed the truth of His Messenger? Is not Hamza, the master of martyrs, my uncle? Is not Ja'far the one who flies in Paradise, my uncle? Have you not heard the saying of the Messenger of God about me and my brother: 'These two are the masters of the youth of Paradise'? If you believe what I am saying, and it is the truth—by God, I have never intentionally lied since I knew that God despises lies and harms those who fabricate them. And if you disbelieve me, there are among you those who, if you ask them, will inform you. Ask Jabir ibn Abd Allah al-Ansari, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, Sahl ibn Sa'd al-Sa'idi, Zayd ibn Arqam, and Anas ibn Malik. They will tell you that they heard this saying from the Messenger of God about me and my brother. Is this not sufficient to stop you from shedding my blood?"

Then Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, said: "If you doubt this statement, do you doubt that I am the son of your Prophet's daughter? By God, there is no other son of a Prophet's daughter from the east to the west but me among you or anyone else. Woe unto you! Do you seek to avenge the blood of someone among you who I killed, or for wealth that I consumed, or for an

injury for which you seek retribution?" They could not answer him⁽¹⁾.

After all this clarification and indeed a public hearing, what false meaning remains for discussing justification and interpretation? Before the masses, Imam Hussein said, "I am the son of the Messenger of God's daughter, and this is my lineage, so no one can claim ignorance of my identity!" He also said, "These people are killing me unjustly without for no crime I committed," so no deceitful person or group can come later and say, "You caused division in the nation and split it, so we are killing you with your grandfather's sword!"

Who says this nonsense?! It is said to him: "His killers justified their actions, so they killed him! Then they justified their actions and beheaded him! Then they justified their actions and trampled on his body with their horses' hooves! Then they justified their actions and captured his women, the daughters of the Messenger of God! Then they justified their actions and carried his head and the heads of his companions to Sham/Syria! Then they justified their actions and struck his teeth with a stick in front of the people! Then they justified their actions and demolished his house! What is left that they did not find a twisted justification for?!"

4. One of the ideas spread by the followers of the Umayyad approach to distort the

(1) Al-Muqarram, Abd al-Razzaq: The Martyrdom of Hussein, peace be upon him, p. 238.

image of the Imam Husayn's revolution, thereby erasing it from the consciousness of the masses as an ideal example, did it have any harmful results for the nation and did not bring any benefit!

This idea is expressed in different ways. Given its various levels of severity, each level requires its own specific expression:

When Ibn Taymiyyah discusses this idea (criticizing Imam Hussein and his movement!!), he says:

"... And there was no religious or worldly benefit in the rebellion. Instead, those tyrannical oppressors managed to kill the grandson of the Messenger of God, peace be upon him, oppressively as a martyr. His rebellion and killing caused more corruption than if he had stayed in his homeland. What he intended to achieve in terms of bringing about good and preventing evil did not materialize at all. On the contrary, evil increased with his rebellion and killing, and good diminished as a result. This became a cause of great evil."⁽¹⁾

This misrepresentation of the motives behind Imam Hussein's uprising by Ibn Taymiyyah uses tools of deception and evasion in a way that makes him appear as if he is not attacking Imam Hussein.. These individuals took note of what happened to Ibn al-Arabi when he noted that Hussein was killed by his grandfather's sword, which is truly shocking to readers. As a result, some of them felt obliged to express their

(1) Al-Harani: Ahmad ibn Taymiyyah: Minhaj al-Sunnah 4/531.

views in a less direct manner , which lead readers to arrive at the following conclusions: Imam Hussein's uprising had no worldly or religious benefit (meaning it was a futile rebellion void of any benefit or reward), and he should have stayed in his homeland. If he had stayed there, he would not have been killed! Indeed, this uprising increased the existing corruption, diminished the good, and became a cause of great evil! What do you understand from these words, dear reader? And to cover up these deliberate schemes, it is then said: "They killed him as an oppressed martyr!"

There is a more devious level of expression found in the statements of Sheikh Muhammad al-Khudari⁽¹⁾, who he said: "In general, Hussein made a grave mistake in this rebellion, which brought upon the nation the calamity of division and discord, and undermined its unity to this day. Many have written about this event with the sole intention of igniting fires in the hearts, thus increasing their separation. The essence of the matter is that the man sought something for which he was not prepared and did not go about it in the right way. He was thwarted in his desire and was killed because of it. Before that, his father was killed, yet the writers' pens unabashedly did not condemn his killing. On the contrary, they used the incident of his death to fan the flames of enmity."

"All have gone to their Lord, who will judge them for what they did. History derives an important lesson from this: that one who seeks great matters should not pursue them without

(1) Muhammad ibn Afifi al-Bajuri, known as Sheikh Muhammad al-Khudari Bek. He died in 1345 AH.

proper preparation. He should not draw his sword unless he has the power to ensure success or at least come close to it. Moreover, there must be genuine reasons for the benefit of the nation, such as intolerable oppression and undearable tyranny that threatens the safety and security of people. As for Hussein, he opposed Yazid, whom the people had pledged allegiance to, and there was no such oppression or tyranny during Yazid's reign and at the time of Hussein's opposition."⁽¹⁾

it must be stated here that anyone who believes that Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, made a "grave mistake" surely does not share and follow Imam Hussein's path and ideological position. If Imam Hussein is the master of the youth of Paradise, what is the level or standing of the one who considers him to have committed a grave mistake and sees Imam Hussein as having brought upon the nation the calamity of division and discord to this day? It is not surprising that someone with such ardent Umayyad inclination could not at least soften their position in the style of the individuals we have quoted before. While some may express blessings or mercy, this man has no room for such sentiments⁽²⁾

(1) Al-Khudari, Muhammad, *The Umayyad State*, p. 322.

(2) Islamic scholar Sheikh Zaki Al-Milad said in an article in *Al-Kalimah Journal*: "Al-Khudari dedicated the thirty-fourth lecture to discussing the era of Yazid ibn Muawiyah, introducing him. I tracked the number of times the name Hussein was mentioned in this lecture and found it to be thirty-two times. In all these instances, he never prayed for mercy upon him, greeted him, or blessed him. He repeatedly mentioned the name without any title—neither as Imam, martyr, nor grandson. Sometimes he referred to him as Hussein, and other times as Hussein ibn Ali."

In this view of “al-Khudari,” Imam Hussein made a grave mistake, and that Yazid was neither oppressive nor tyrannical. Imam Hussein and those who wrote about him and extolled his heroism are the ones who assaulted the unity of the nation and caused its division! In contrast, the Umayyads and their followers are portrayed as those who safeguard the unity of the nation. Their logic is “Those who seek truth and reform should not rise up; rather, it is the tyrants and those with power who should take action.

Dear reader, you can easily understand how a person today can be aligned with the Umayyads despite the more than thirteen centuries gap between them? Undoubtedly, such a person is guilty by association for their sins and love for them, and is implicated in their actions and crimes, even if he did not live during their time. Such an individual is an embodiment of the meaning of the hadith of the Prophet which was narrated by Jabir: “Whoever loves a people will be gathered (resurrected) with them, and whoever loves the deeds of a people will share in their deeds”⁽¹⁾

Muhb al-Din al-Khatib commented on Ibn al-Arabi’s book *Al-Awasim min al-Qawasim*, and republished and distributed it widely. The late Sheikh Muhammad Ghazali remarked about al-Khatib’s decision to republish and distribute Ibn al-Arabi’s book by saying, “It would have been better if Ibn al-Arabi’s ideas remained buried, and the attacks against Islam will end when

(1) Al-Suyuti, Jalal al-Din: *Al-Jami’ al-Kabir* 8/402 “Whoever loves the deeds of a people—whether good or evil—is like one who has done those deeds. Also, *Al-Jami’ Ahadith al-Shi’a* 13/434.

laws are legislated and enacted to put an end to the unjust rulers and their trampling over all rules of good conduct. The constant wicked schemes against Islam still are not a reason enough to convince some Muslims from publishing and publicizing such a divisive book."

Indeed, al-Khatib's criticisms of Imam Hussein's movement in his comments were worse than those that appeared in the original text of Ibn Arabi. Compared to Ibn Arabi, Al-Khatib's comments show less respect for the Imam and reveal not only an indignant but a poor grasp of the goals of Imam Hussain revolt.

It suffices to understand Al-Khatib's Umayyad inclination through his revival of an obscure book that should have remained buried deeply in the dirt. The Holy Quran reveals deviations of the enemies of the Prophets and their transgressions against its teachings and how some individuals consciously descend to the lowest of the low and start believing in things they ought to be ashamed. The author would have spared these pages from mentioning such names and the Umayyad tendencies they propagated, but felt obliged to rebut their arguments and draw attention to their evil ways.

Here, it is essential to point out the importance of the ziyarat (visitation supplication) and its role in redefining the Imam and his actions. For example, when the visitor recites (I bear witness that you established prayer, gave alms, enjoined what is right, forbade what is wrong, and obeyed God and His Messenger until certainty came upon you...), it becomes clear that those who oppose such views are seen as part of the group of criminals who viewed the Imam as a wrong doer. The

ziyarat phrases such as “God curse the nation that killed you”—referring to those who perpetrated the tragic killing of Imam Hussein; “God curse the nation that oppressed you”—referring to those who were involved and continue to be unjust; and “God curse the nation that heard about it and consented to it”—referring to those who, even if they did not directly participate but accepted what happened and did not denounce it, are included in this curse.

5. Exoneration of Yazid from the killing of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him:

It is almost unanimous among proponents of the Umayyad perspective to exonerate Yazid from any responsibility of killing of Imam Hussein. Why is that the case? And, if Yazid is exonerated, then who was responsible for the killing of Hussein?

The reason, as noted by several scholars, is that attributing the killing of Imam Hussein, peace be upon him, and the subsequent acts of beheading and capturing of the women, to Yazid would raise questions about the real criminal. That would, in turn, involve questioning the legitimacy of Yazid’s authority over the heads of Muslims. Also, it would effectively undermine the theory of the caliphate school, something they would not tolerate let alone accept. Some have stated this position directly by refraining from cursing Yazid, even if his role in killing Imam Hussein’s is prove beyond any shadow of doubt. They fear that cursing Yazid might be extended to his father, Muawiyah, who they refer to as the “Companions dam.”

What is more amusingly about the defensive posture of Yazid's proponents is captured in Al-Milani's remark: "It is not merely to avoid being elevated to the highest levels, but also to prevent descending to the lowest of the low. Their defense of Yazid and Muawiyah aims to preserve the tyrannical governments of their times as well. In this regard, it was reported that when the caliph Al-Nasir asked Abd al-Mughith al-Hanbali why he did not issue a decree legitimizing the cursing of Yazid. He answered by saying, "if this door is opened (if it is allowed), it would necessitate cursing our caliph—meaning Al-Nasir—and deposing him from the caliphate"⁽¹⁾.

According to their view, Yazid ibn Muawiyah did not kill Imam Hussein, peace be upon him. If Yazid did not do it, who did? To this question, a smattering of answers and explanations are offered. Some answer the question by claiming that Imam Hussein's killers were his own followers. In some other answers, the accusitive finger is raised at the people of the city of Kufa or the people of Iraq. This narrative, which is suspected to have been fabricated from the start, is considered almost as if it were a definitive Quranic verse.

Somebody asked a scholar, (sometimes said to be Ibn Abbas, and at other times said to Ibn Umar, and since the matter is fabricated from the start, it doesn't matter who it was) whether the blood of a mosquito was pure (طاهر) or impure (نجس) in the Islamic jurisprudence sense. Ibn Abbas or Ibn Umar, or whoever the story is attributed to, asked where the

(1) .Al-Milani, Sayyid Ali: Who Are the Killers of Hussein? Electronic version. <http://www.al-milani.com>

person asking the the question was from. By coincidence, he was from Iraq! The response was quite exclamatory: "He dares to ask me about the blood of a mosquito when they have killed Hussein ibn Ali!"

According to this narrative, the one who killed Imam Hussein was not Yazid, nor Ibn Ziyad, nor Umar ibn Saad al-Zuhri al-Qurashi, nor Harmala ibn Kahil al-Asadi, and so on, but rather the people of Iraq! It should be noted that the people of Iraq at that time were known for their loyalty to Ahl al-Bayt, unlike the people of Sham (Syria) who were supporters of the Umayyads.

Instead of stating what Imam Hussein said the following to his enemies and attackers, "O followers of the family of Abu Sufyan!," this designation "Family of Abu Sufyan" disappears and the killers become the people of Iraq and Kufa, specifically the followers of Imam Hussein!

For example, to absolve Yazid of any responsibility in the killing of Imam Hussein, Ibn Taymiyyah stated: "During his (Yazid) reign, significant events took place; one of which was the killing of Hussein, may Allah be pleased with him. Yazid did not order the killing of Hussein, nor did he express joy over his death, nor did he strike his teeth with a cane, nor did he bring Hussein's head to Damascus. Instead, he ordered that Hussein be prevented and repelled from taking action against the caliph; even if Yazid fought against him, his deputies are to be blamed for exceeding his orders.⁽¹⁾"

(1) Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmoo' al-Fatawa* 3/410-413.

To address the above view, what Sibt Ibn al-Jawzi⁽¹⁾ said is sufficient, some of which is quoted from his grandfather, the author of Al-Muntazam: "My grandfather said: The astonishing thing is not Ibn Ziyad fighting Hussein and giving authority to Umar ibn Saad and Shimr (shamir) to kill him and carry the heads to him(Ibn Ziyad). Rather, the astonishing thing is Yazid's betrayal, his hitting Hussein's teeth with a cane, carrying the family of the Prophet as captives on the backs of camels, his intention to give Fatima, the daughter of Hussein, to the man who requested her, and his recitation of Ibn al-Zubari's verses: 'I wish my ancestors at Badr could witness.' And returning the head to Al-Madinah, thinking that its smell had changed; his only purpose was to disgrace and reveal the smell of the head. Is it permissible to treat the Kharijites like this? Isn't it agreed upon by all Muslims that Kharijites and rebels are shrouded, prayed upon, and buried? Likewise, Yazid's statement, 'I would enslave you,' when the man requested Fatima, the daughter of Hussein, is a statement that suffices for who said and did it to be cursed. If he did not have pre-Islamic grudges and enmities from Badr in his heart, he would have respected the head when it reached him, would not have struck it with a cane, shrouded it, buried it, and treated the family of the Prophet with kindness."

I said, and the proof for this is that Yazid summoned Ibn Ziyad to him, gave him many gifts and great treasures, drew him closer in rank, raised his status, introduced him to his women, and made him his companion. One night, Yazid got intoxicated and said to the singer, "Sing." Then Yazid improvised:

(1) Yusuf ibn Qizoghli ibn Abdullah, Sibt Abu al-Faraj ibn al-Jawzi, died in 654 AH.

"Give me a drink that will quench my heart,
Then give a similar one to Ibn Ziyad,
The confidant and trustee of my secrets,
To secure my gains and my struggles.
The killer of the rebel, I mean Hussein,
And the exterminator of enemies and the envious."

Ibn Aqeel said: What also indicates that Yazid was both a heretic and an unbleiver, in addition to his cursing and slandering, are his poems that openly express impiety and reveal his malicious intentions and his sinister beliefs. Among them is his poem that begins with:

"Announce it and sing loudly,
For I do not enjoy secret conversations,
The talk of Abu Sufyan had long since named it,
Until it engendered mourners."⁽¹⁾

Then Yazid continued mentioning reciting poems, which further showed his disbelief in prophets and the Day of Judgment. Afterwards, he added: "I said: When my grandfather Abu al-Faraj cursed him from the pulpit in Baghdad in the presence of Imam al-Nasir and other eminent scholars, a group of unsympathetic individuals left his assembly. My grandfather then said, 'May the people of Madyan perish as the people of

(1) Sibt Ibn AlJawzi - Tathkirat Alkhawas 260.

Thamud did' One of my teachers told me about that day: a group asked my grandfather about Yazid, and he replied, 'What do you say about a man who ruled for three years? In the first year, he killed Hussein, in the second, he terrorized Al-Madinah and allowed it to be looted and pillaged, and in the third, he bombarded the Kaaba with catapults and destroyed it.' They said, 'We curse him.' He responded, 'Then curse him.'"

My grandfather said in the book "Al-Radd 'ala al-Muta'assib al-'Anid" (The Response to the Stubborn Bigot) that it has been mentioned in the hadith: Whoever carries out actions that do not approximate a tenth of what Yazid did is cursed; the hadiths he cited were narrated by al-Bukhari⁽¹⁾.

Moreover, in his ardent defense of Yazid ibn Muawiya, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali⁽²⁾ stated, as reported by Ibn Kathir and others, that while he prohibited cursing Yazid and viewed anyone who curses him is damned, he considered it desirable to pray for Allah's mercy for him! May Allah raise him on the Day of Judgment alongside Yazid ibn Muawiya! There is no doubt that this will happen, for "a person is raised with whom he loves." Those who view cursing Yazid as forbidden and those who curse him are damned, while considering praying for Allah's mercy for him are truly the supporters of Yazid. He was asked whether the one who explicitly curses Yazid should be judged as sinful or if it is permissible, and whether his intention was to kill Hussain (peace be upon him) or to repel him, and whether

(1) Source, p. 261.

(2) Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Ghazali (with a shadda on the zay), al-Tusi, died 505 AH.

praying for him is permissible or remaining silent is better. The answer was: "It is not permissible to curse a Muslim at all, and whoever curses a Muslim is condemned." It was added: "As for praying for him⁽¹⁾, it is permissible; indeed, it is desirable; we pray for him among the general Muslims and believers in our prayers."⁽²⁾

6. It is inappropriate to do what the Shia (and the Rafidah) do by reciting the martyrdom of Hussain (peace be upon him), for "it is prohibited for the preacher and others to narrate the martyrdom of Hussain and recount the disputes and conflicts between the companions, as it disparages and incites hatred toward the companions and the leaders of the religion. The disputes between them should be interpreted in a manner that gives them the benefit of the doubt. Perhaps conflicts happened by a mistake in ijtihad (independent judgment) rather than seeking authority and worldly gains,"⁽³⁾ as they attribute this prohibition to Al-Ghazali.

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Interestingly, these individuals prohibit cursing Yazid by name, advising instead to curse those who killed Imam Hussain, those who permitted the attack on Madinah, or those who bombarded the Kaaba, without specifying names. Why? The reasons were elaborated previously.

(1) Oh God, bear witness that we do not do that

(2) Ibn Kathir "Albidaya & Alnihaya" Hajar Printing 16/211

(3) Al-Sawaiq Al-Muhriqa 2/640

Without a doubt, this prohibition, if applied as suggest, would also include Prophet Muhammad⁽¹⁾ (peace be upon him) and Ali ibn Abi Talib⁽²⁾ (peace be upon him), since they both recounted—albeit briefly—the martyrdom of Imam Hussain. According to Al-Ghazali and those who support his view, the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Imam Ali (peace be upon him)—God forbid—would have thus committed a sin.

The most surprising thing mentioned is Al-Qahistani's Dislike: "If one wants to mention the martyrdom of Hussain, they should first mention the deaths of other companions to avoid resembling the Rafidah (Shia)."⁽³⁾ Should we, for instance, mention how Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan allegedly killed the companion Saad ibn Abi Waqqas, as reported by some historians? Or how he allegedly killed Abdul Rahman ibn Abi Bakr on the road to Makkah (with soldiers of honey)? Or how Imam Hasan ibn Ali (peace be upon him) allegedly killed someone?

And what if some companions died in their beds, "just as camels die"? What should we do then?

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- (1) Ibn Abi Shaybah, Abu Bakr: Al-Musannaf of Ibn Abi Shaybah 7/477: Umm Salamah said: "Hussain paid a visit to the Prophet (peace be upon him) while I was sitting by the door. I looked and saw something in the Prophet's hand that he was turning over while he was lying on his stomach. I said: 'O Messenger of Allah, I saw you turning something in your hand while the child was lying on your stomach and your tears were flowing.' He replied: 'Gabriel brought me the soil on which he will be killed and informed me that my nation will kill him.'"
 - (2) Same source, 7/478.
 - (3) Haqi, Ismail: Ruh al-Bayan 4/143.

The followers of the Umayyad perspective are aware of the impact that recounting and keeping alive the memory of Imam Hussein's martyrdom has including attracting Muslims to Imam Hussain's principles thereby causing them to condemn the actions of the Umayyads. Such impact severely undermines the foundations of the Umayyad school of thought. Therefore, they have prohibited and condemned everything related to mourning and the mention of this tragedy, to the point of delving into people's possible intentions to do so. For instance, Ibn Kathir and others stated that "what the Shia do in expressing grief and sorrow, much of which is perhaps feigned and for show," is not commendable.⁽¹⁾ While his predecessor Al-Ghazali claims that it is not possible to know whether Yazid killed Imam Hussain, despite this being a historical event confirmed by reliable reports and compelling and credible evidence, Al-Ghazali casts doubt on the possibility of knowing such historical matters. While Ibn Kathir, on the other hand, questions the intentions of the Shia, claiming that most of their display of grief is pretentious and for attracting attention, even though the matter of pretense pertains to the actions of the heart, which only its Creator truly knows.

What is surprising is their argument against reciting the account of the tragic killing of Imam Hussein by saying that someone who is better and higher in status than Imam Hussein is not commemorated by the Shiites as do for Imam Hussein. Neither the Messenger of God designated the day of his death as a day of mourning, nor did his father, who was better than him, designate the day of his death as a day of

(1) Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya*, 11/579.

special mourning, etc⁽¹⁾. This statement does not apply to the Shiites of Ahl Al-Bayt, but rather to others who are lukewarm and inattentive toward the Prophet, may God's peace and blessings be upon him, his family, and his successor. It does not apply to the Shiites, as they commemorate the day of the Prophet's death on the twenty-eighth of Safar every year and consider it as a day of mourning. Likewise, they commemorate the Commander of the Faithful's martyrdom on the twenty-first day of the month of Ramadan, and consider that day as a day of mourning and sorrow. Either Ibn Kathir did not know about this or did not dig deeply into this issue which in actuality does not require much effort to learn about. However, if he knew and concealed the truth, then that aligns rather well with his Ummayyad ideological propensities.

"If you do not know, then that is a calamity,

And if you do know, then the calamity is even greater."

The lines quoted are from the poem "In Praise of the Prophet" by the famous Arab poet Al-Mutanabbi. They translate to:

"If you do not know, then that is a calamity,

And if you do know, then the calamity is even greater."

These lines express the idea that ignorance of a problem is itself a misfortune, but knowing about it without taking action is an even greater misfortune.

(1) Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidaya wa'l-Nihaya, 11/579.

