

4. Malik Bin Nowaira

This man was a member of the Yarbou' tribe of the Tamim clan. He was known as Abu Hanzalah and his nickname was Jafoul.

Marzobani has recorded that Malik bin Nowaira was a learned poet, and an outstanding horseman in his tribe. After he embraced Islam, the Prophet appointed him as the tax collector for the family group. When the Prophet passed away Malik did not give his collection to the Government, but distributed it among his own family saying: "The money you gave me I shall return. Tomorrow's problem is not our concern, if someone, someday, tries to reinstate Islam, we will be loyal to that state."

Tabari, in vol.2, p.503 has recorded the story from Abdul Rahman Bin Abu Bakr as follows:

"When Khalid's army reached Botah, he sent a group of soldiers, under the command of Zerar Bin Azwar, to attack Malik's tribe overnight. Abu Qatada, a member of that army said later, 'When we took Malik's tribe by surprise overnight we frightened them. They put their armour on hurriedly, and declared that they were Muslims. Our commander asked them why they were armed, and they asked him the same question. We asked them to put down their arms, if they were Muslims, and they did so. We then said our prayers, and they did likewise.'"

Ibn Abilhadid in his book says, "When they relinquished their arms, the soldiers handcuffed them, and took them to Khalid."

In Kanzul Ommal, vol.3, p. 132 and in Ya'qoubi, vol.2, p. 110, the above story is recorded as follows: "Malik Bin Nowaira with his wife came to Khalid. Khalid on seeing the lady fell in love with her, and said to her husband, 'You shall never return home, by God, I will kill you.'"

In Kanzul Ommal, vol.3, p. 132, is written that Khalid accused Malik of heresy, which Malik denied and both Abdullah Bin 'Omar and Abu Qatada interposed on his behalf. But Khalid ordered Zerar Bin Azwar to behead him. Then Khalid took his wife Umm Tamim and slept with her.

In Abdulfada, page 158 and in Alwafayat it is recorded Abdullah Bin 'Omar talked unsuccessfully to Khalid concerning Malik, and Malik pleaded to be sent to Abu Bakr for his decision. Khalid said, "God will

not forgive me, if I forgive you," and he ordered Zerar to behead him. Malik looked at his wife saying, "You are the cause of my being killed." Khalid said, "God has caused your death because of your heresy." Malik said, "By God I am a Muslim and my faith is Islam." But Khalid ordered Zerar to behead him.

It is recorded in al-Esaba, vol.3, p.337 that Thabet Bin Qasim has written in al-Dalael that Khalid fell in love with Malik's wife at first sight, as she was very beautiful. Malik said to his wife, "You have killed me."

It is also written in al-Esaba that Zubair Bin Bakkar recorded from Bin Shahab that Khalid ordered Malik's head to be used as fuel for the cooking fire. But before the fire reached the skin of Malik's head, the food was cooked, Malik had abundant hair. Khalid, that very night, married the wife of the murdered Malik.

Abu Namir Sa'di has composed the following poems:- Do the horsemen who attacked us at night, know that we will never see the morning bright? Khalid had to get rid of Malik obviously, To possess the woman whom he loved previously, Khalid had not the will power to shun his desires, And to avoid the sin, he had not the piety required. In the morning of the night that poor husband vanished, his wife in Khalid's hand.

It is written in Esaba that Minhal saw the headless corpse of Malik and covered it.

That was the story of Malik. Let us now find out what was the reactions of the government towards its General.

Ya'qoubi has recorded that Abu Qatada reported the event to the Caliph Abu Bakr and said, "By God I will never go anywhere under Khalid's command. He has killed Malik, although he was a Muslim."

Tabari recorded from Ibn Abibakr that Abu Qatada swore that he would never fight under Khalid. Yaqubi has recorded that 'Omar Bin Khattab said to Abu Bakr, "O successor of the Prophet of God, Khalid fell in love with Malik's wife, and on the same day killed Malik who was a Muslim." Abu Bakr wrote to Khalid for an explanation, and Khalid came to Abu Bakr saying, "O successor of the Prophet of God, in killing Malik I made a rightful decision, but I also made a mistake."

Motammim Bin Nowaira, brother of Malik, composed a number of poems lamenting the murder of his brother. He went to Medina and joined in the congregational prayers lead by Abu Bakr. After the prayer Motammim leaned back on his bow, and addressing Abu Bakr he recited:-

O Bin Azwar, you threw the body of a noble man on the floor, Whilst the gentle morning breeze was caressing our door. You deceived him using the name of the Almighty God.

But faithful Malik had always honored his word. Abulfada has recorded that when the news of Malik reached Abu Bakr and 'Omar, 'Omar said to Abu Bakr, "Khalid has undoubtedly committed adultery; you should have him stoned." Abu Bakr replied, "I will not do that." 'Omar then said that Khalid had murdered

a Muslim, and therefore should be sentenced to death. Abu Bakr said that Khalid had carried out his duties and he understood them — but he had also made a mistake. ‘Omar asked Abu Bakr to dismiss Khalid. But Abu Bakr said, "I will never sheath the sword which God has taken from its scabbard."

Tabari has recorded from Ibn Abibakr that Khalid made an excuse to Abu Bakr saying that Malik had said to him, "I do not think that your companion (The Prophet) has said this and that." Khalid had replied, "Was not he (The Prophet) your companion?" and he had ordered him to be beheaded and all the men who were with Malik, to be beheaded also.

When the news came to ‘Omar he discussed it with Abu Bakr saying, "The enemy of God has killed a Muslim and, like an animal, has immediately molested his wife."

Khalid returned home, then went to the Mosque wearing a robe marked with rust from his armor, and a feather in his helmet like a Muslim soldier. He passed ‘Omar who furiously rushed at him, pulling the feather from his helmet saying, "Like a hypocrite you have killed a Muslim, and like an animal rushed at his wife, by God I will stone you to death. That is what you deserve."

Khalid kept quite thinking that Caliph Abu Bakr would also say that he was guilty. But when Khalid reported his successful expedition and confessed his mistake, Abu Bakr forgave him. On his way back from seeing the Caliph, Khalid passed ‘Omar again and shouted at him. "O son of Umm Shamlah — now tell me that which you wanted to say." ‘Omar understood that Abu Bakr had forgiven Khalid, and he left the Mosque and went home quietly.

This is the end of Khalid and Malik's story according to authentic sources. But Saif has told that story in seven events, each one complementary to the other, and Tabari has recorded it with the events of the year eleven Hijri as follows:—

Malik's story according to Saif

1) Tabari when recording Saif's saying about Bani Tamim and Sajah says, "When the Prophet of God passed away, his representatives in Bani Tamim disagreed with one another as to whom they must pay the tax they had collected. In fact the people of the land of Bani Tamim were divided, some remaining faithful, and arguing with those who did not submit to Abu Bakr. Malik was one of the opposition and did not pay the tax, which he had collected, to Abu Bakr."

Sajah, who claimed to be the prophet after the Prophet of God, wrote a letter to Malik requesting a meeting. Malik, Sajah and Waki' met and made a pact of non-aggression and mutual defense.

2) Saif recording the heresy of the inhabitants of Bahrain, says, "Ala' Bin Hazrami was sent to deal with the heretics at Yamama. They were divided into two parties — heretics and faithful, arguing with one another. The faithful— joined ‘Ala' Bin Hazrami. Malik and his companions were at Botah, and they had an argument with ‘Ala' Bin Hazrami."

3) Saif also, in relation to the above events, says, "When Sajah returned home, Malik was doubtful and a bit worried. Waki' and Sama'a admitted that they were wrong, so they repented sincerely, and gave the delayed tax at once to Khalid. There was nothing disorderly in the province of Bath Hanzala except for the behavior of Malik and those who were with him at Botah. Malik was not stable — one day he was normal, and the next day he acted strangely."

4) Saif again narrates that when Khalid cleared the districts of Asad and Gatafan of heretics, he set off for Botah where Malik lived. The Ansars were not sure about Malik, and did not accompany Khalid, saying that they had had an order from Caliph to remain at Bozakha. Khalid said it was his business to communicate with the Caliph, as he was the army commander.

He also said that he would never force anyone to accompany him on his mission to deal with Malik. Then off he went. The Ansars realized their mistake and following Khalid, they eventually caught up with him. Khalid continued until he reached Botah, and found no one was there.

5) Saif also narrated that Malik addressed his people as follows — " O Bani Yarbou' tribesmen, we opposed the officials and commandants, but we lost our campaign against them. I advise you not to stand in their way. Go to your cities and your homes. These rulers came to power without the people's consent." After this speech people scattered and Malik too went home.

So when Khalid arrived at Botah, he found no one was there. Khalid then sent his men as Islamic missionaries, to arrest those who did not accept their views, and to kill anyone who resisted. In fact Abu Bakr's order stated: "Say the call for prayers wherever you go.

If people do not join the call for prayer, attack them suddenly, and destroy them — by fire, or any other means. If they join the call to prayer put them to the test. If they agree to pay their tax, accept their Islamic faith, otherwise their reward is destruction."

Khalid's soldiers brought back Malik, his cousins, and some of his tribesmen, from their expedition. Abu Qatada and some other soldiers bore witness that Malik and his people had joined the call prayer, and had said prayer with them.

But because of the difference in the soldier's stories about Malik, he was imprisoned overnight with his people. But it was a very cold night, and Khalid ordered that the prisoners be kept warm. The words used by Khalid in giving this order, also means 'Killing' in the language of some tribesmen adfe'ouosara'akom' — so they killed Malik and his companions.

The executioner of Malik was Zerar Bin Azwar. The screams of the dying brought Khalid out of his house, where he learned of the execution. He said, "What God has decreed, has been done."

After this event Abu Qatada argued with Khalid, and went to Medina to report to Caliph. Abu Bakr heard the story but showed dissatisfaction to Abu Qatada. 'Omar inter-ceded, so Abu Bakr forgave Abu

Qatada, and sent him back to join Khalid on the battlefield. Khalid married Umm Minhal, the wife of the murdered Malik, but did not live with her until the end of the mourning period of her former husband.

‘Omar said to Abu Bakr — "There is some kind of disobedience in Khalid's sword — at least in the case of Malik." Abu Bakr did not take any notice as he never rebuked his men for their mistakes. So he ordered ‘Omar to stop slandering Khalid and said, "Khalid might have misinterpreted his mission." Abu Bakr then paid Malik's blood money, and wrote to Khalid telling him to come to Medina. Khalid reported this event to Abu Bakr who forgave Khalid's mistake, but reproached him for the marriage as it was against Arabic custom.

6) Saif, in another place, says that some soldiers witnessed Malik's prayers, but others denied this and justified his execution. Malik's brother composed some mourning poems, and asked for his brother's blood money, and the return of the prisoners. Abu Bakr granted the release of the captives. ‘Omar insisted on the dismissal of Khalid as he could not control his sword. But Abu Bakr said that he would not put the sword of God, which was against unbelievers, back in its sheath.

7) Saif in his last narration, says that Malik had an abundance of hair. When the heads of the executed were used as fuel for the cooking fire, the fire had reached the skin except in the case of Malik's head, because of his plentiful hair. Motammim had composed a poem, and had expressed admiration for the empty stomach of Malik as an example to all his warriors. ‘Omar who had seen Malik in the presence of the holy Prophet also admired Malik.

This is the last of the records which have been found in Saif's writings regarding Malik.

The source of Saif's narrations

According to Saif, the first three of the seven above quotations, were from Sa'ab, son of ‘Atyya, who in turn learned of them from his father. ‘Atyya son of Bilal. The fifth and the seventh quotations were passed on by ‘Othman, son of Sowaid, son of Math'abah.

Who are Sa'b, ‘Atyya and Othman?

There is no trace of Sa'b, ‘Atyya or ‘Othman, the three original story tellers; whom Saif has quoted, in any history book.

We can therefore say that these three are among the one hundred and fifty Sahabis (companions of the Prophet) invented by Saif.

Saif has in some cases in his stories, substituted imaginary characters, as in the case of ‘Othman, from whom he has recorded. There is no trace of ‘Othman in any book except in Saif's book. Sowaid the father, and Math'abah (Sho'bah) the grand-father of ‘Othman were living persons.

In the stories of the dogs at Haw'ab, the real woman Umm Qerfa is the mother of a fictitious character, Umm Zamal, and a real man, Hormozah, is the father of Qomaze-ban, also an imaginary character invented by Saif.

Why Saif's narrators are fictitious?

The biographers have compiled lists of all and each narrator who lived from the time of the Prophet, as far forward as the 'Abbasid dynasty, who ruled after Amawid dynasty. Those narrators who met the Prophet are the first group, are called Sahabis.

The second group are those who met Sahabis, and have obtained stories from them, these are called Followers, and lived till the year 126. The last group of followers have only collected facts from the early followers, and they lived until the year 132. These are fourteen groups in all, and the last is during the time of Mansoor the second 'Abbasid Caliph.

Other biographers have listed the narrators, who passed away in each ten years as one category. So accordingly, the first group are those narrators who died in the first decade, and the second are those who died in the second decade, and so on. The narrators were called 'Learned' and those who passed the stories to them were called 'Sheikh'.

The life of each and every Sheikh, and 'Learned' is recorded in detail, where they resided, and whether they were Shi'ah or Sunni, whether they were extremists in favor or against 'Ali, whether they were pro or anti-government.

The books compiled are differently catalogued — some in alphabetical order as Tarikh-Kabir, etc. Others according to time, as Ibn Athir, etc. Some biographers have arranged the names of the narrators according to their residence, Mecca, Medina, etc.

The science of narration was the most interesting and popular subject of the day, and different biographers have classified the names of the narrators in different ways, and have given their utmost care to record the particulars. Even so there are books written correcting the mistakes of biographers, such as al-Mukhtalif, etc., so there is not a single doubtful point as to the identity of the narrators.

Since the number of the narrators were limited at the time of Umayyeds, and Saif has written his two books to please the then rulers, Umayyeds, when we cannot find the names of the persons from whom Saif has recorded, on the basis of the above explanation, we can say that Saif has invented his narrators, and quoted from these fictitious characters.

The Text of Saif's stories

In some cases Saif has used the names of some real narrators in his fictitious stories, such as in the fifth and seventh episodes, we have mentioned previously. Careful and systematic study, according to the

rules of the science of the narration, reveals the invalidity of those quotations.

Comparison

Comparison between Saif's sayings and other narrators saying about Khalid shows that Saif has manipulated the event to clear Khalid of accusation, of his aggression against Malik, and the assault on Malik's wife. He prepares the background by; firstly accusing Malik of having doubts about Islam; secondly the arguments of the faithful with him and thirdly the return of Sajah, and the hesitation of Malik. Then because other sources have reported that Malik was alone, Saif suggests that Malik had troops with him, but he dismissed not because he repented but because of his fear. Saif thus declares that Malik was a heretic.

In other narrations Saif has suggested Malik's heresy without mentioning Khalid's name to distract readers' attention from Khalid's order of killing Malik and his association with Malik's wife.

Saif has invented the dispute of the soldiers regarding Abu Bakr's command, to destroy Malik, in the presence of Khalid so he clears the Abu Bakr as well as Khalid. Saif wanted to show that Khalid was unwilling to kill Malik — he just gave an order to keep the prisoners warm, but the soldiers thought he meant 'Kill' because of misunderstanding due to dialect difficulties, yet the one who gave the order, and the executors had the same dialect (Quraish and Bani Asad). The fact remains that assuming a misunderstanding caused the execution, then why were the heads used as fuel on a cooking fire.

Tabari has recorded Malik's story from Saif and Ibn Athir, Ibn Kathir, Mirkhand have quoted the 'facts' written by Tabari. If other historians documents, by other authors, who have mentioned Malik's story from other sources than Saif are examined, then discrepancies between Saif's 'Facts' and the truth emerges. Those other sources which state that Khalid gave an explicit order to kill Malik as follows:—

Fotoohol Boldan By Baladhori Page 105

Tahzib By Bin 'Asaker, Vol.5 Page 105, 112

Alkhamis By Diyar Bakri, Vol.2 Page 333 al-Nihaya By Bin Athir, Vol.3 Page 257 al-Sawa'eq almohreqa By Bin H ajar Makki Page 21 (Egypt edition)

Taj al-'Aroos By Zabidi, Vol.8 Page 75

The above was one of the wars under the title of Heresy (Fought by Abu Bakr). This war may be taken as an example.

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