

## Chapter 7: The Collapse of the Umayyad Government

Imam Musa, peace be on him, was in an early age during the violent revolution against the Umayyad government. His holy age, as the narrators say, was over four years. This period of time allows its owner to carry into his inner self many of the views and pictures that pass by him, especially when they are of the heavy events. For they, without doubt, affect his inner self and react with it and leave in it many impressions, just as the psychologists say.

In his early age, Imam Musa saw or heard the violent revolution against the Umayyad government that included all the Islamic regions. Many terrible events accompanied that revolution; for example, there were mountains of the corpses of the victims, and seas of blood were generously given to get rid of that black government standing on injustice, exploitation, and turning away from human's rights.

We are not busy with writing a research on the foundation of the Umayyad government and explaining the reasons for establishing it, for that is something hurts one's feelings and leaves the flames of sadness in hearts.

Surely this government was established to isolate Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, and remove them from leading the community, according to the results concluded from the Consultative Council designed for this purpose. Throughout its stages, this government was accompanied by many social problems that had an effect on the Islamic general life and losing the original objectives Islam seeks under its rule such as spreading justice, equality, welfare, and ease among men.

All Islamic, constructive concepts were completely freezed; the expectations of Islam in finding a society free from ignorance, dullness, miserly, and poverty were lost. The noble life for which Islam strove was changed into a dark life prevailed by pre-Islamic tendencies, dominated by oppression, tyranny, and deviation from humanitarian values.

It is necessary for us to pause to look for the reasons that folded that black government and removed its

detested existence from the Islamic world. Surely the speech of that has a close relationship, as we think, with the research on the Life of Imam Musa.

For it shows us that Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, during those terrible times, faced ordeals, suffered from bitter oppression and severe tyranny, that their followers suffered from massacres, prisons, pursuit, severe punishments, that all the Muslims met mass persecutions distinguished by depriving from freedom, paralyzing economy, spreading, misery, poverty, chaos in their regions.

It is natural that all these things had a great effect on forming Imam Musa's life and made it full of deep sadness and intense sorrow.

The following is a brief presentation on some of those events:

## **Ahl al-Bayt meet Severe Punishments**

The prominent thing in the Umayyads' policy is that they directed all their administrative, economic, and political organs of government to persecute Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on him, and to punish them severely; the following are some aspects of their policy:

1. They made it incumbent on all Muslims to curse and disparage Ahl al-Bayt; they made it a religious duty on Muslims; they asked and punished them if they did not curse them. So the orator began and ended his sermon with cursing the pure family (of the Prophet), who were equal to the Holy Qur'an.

Those ruling authorities were so mentally and socially low that the opportunists and those who sold their conscience sought nearness to them through disparaging and cursing the family of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. The historians have mentioned that an ugly person hurried to al-Hajjaj and raised his voice, saying:

"O Emir, my family has wronged me when they have named me 'Ali. I am poor and miserable. I am in need of the gifts of the Emir!"

Al-Hajjaj forced a laugh and said to him: "That is an act of gentleness through which you have gained access (to us). I have appointed you over the office so-and-so!"<sup>1</sup>

Surely the offices and the properties of the state were given to the bastards and the stupid without reckoning because they cursed Ahl al-Bayt, from whom Allah took away defilement and whom He fully purified.

That moved the hidden malice and fury in the souls of the believers and those committed by their religion, and they hurried to declare their displeasure with the Umayyads; among them was the inspired poet, Kathir b. Kathir, who has said:

May Allah curse him who curse 'Ali and Husayn, whether they are common or leaders.

Are those whose grandfathers pure and their uncle's noble cursed?

The birds and doves are safe whereas the Messenger's family is not safe at the Standing Place (of Ibrahim). O House, you are good and your owners are good! Welcome to the Household of the Prophet and Islam!

The mercy and peace of Allah be on them whenever one safely rises.[2](#)

These lines describe the general displeasure and deep sadness that resulted from disparaging Ahl al-Bayt; similarly they show the most truthful and purest affection toward them.

2. The authorities employed education as means to war against Ahl al-Bayt, and it was the most dangerous means on which they depended to support their purposes. They entrusted the school teachers with feeding the children on the spirit of hatred and enmity to the family of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and with going too far in planting this wicked tendency in their souls, that an offspring harboring malice against the family of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, might grow.

That was the most destructive and dangerous means to Islam, for it separated the Muslims from the family of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, to whom affection Allah has made obligatory in the firm text of His Book. The results of this bad policy are still standing until this day of ours.

3. The Umayyads formed committees to fabricate and embellish traditions on the defects of Ahl al-Bayt and to fabricate traditions on praising and lauding the companions (of the Prophet) and the Umayyads. Among the fabricated traditions are: The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, said: "Surely the family of Abi Talib are not my friends; my friend is Allah!"

Abu Hurayra, the head of these committees, narrated that the Messenger said: "Surely Abu Talib is in a shallow (place) of fire!" It was Abu Hurayra who narrated many traditions on the unbelief of Abi Talib, the believer of Quraysh, protector of Islam, and defender of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, during the most critical and difficult attitudes; the reason for that he wanted to decrease his importance and to degrade his achievements and outstanding qualities.

Any way, the Umayyad authorities took care of the committees of fabrication and spared no effort to spread their fabricated traditions against Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, that they might mislead the public opinion and turn it away from the family and progeny of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family.

4. The Umayyads went too far in killing the pure family (of the Prophet), for they stretched out their sinful hands to those pure souls to whom Allah has made affection incumbent on all Muslims. They had a role in assassinating Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, as I (the author) have established.

Mu'awiya assassinated the first grandson and plant of sweet basil of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, Imam al-Hasan, peace be on him. That was when he ordered his (al-Hasan's) wife, Ju'da daughter of al-Ash'ath,<sup>3</sup> to put poison into his food.

After him, (his son) Yazid committed the most horrible crime shook human conscience through his annihilating the pure family of (the Prophet) on the hills of Karbala". This horrible tragedy, with which the Islamic world was afflicted, brought about a general feeling of displeasure toward the Umayyads and gave rise to many violent revolts against that government that had the qualities of the pre-Islamic period.

The tyrant of the Banu Merwan, Hisham b. 'Abd al-Malik, killed Zayd b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on him. This dirty, wicked person ordered the head of Zayd to be put in his gathering and ordered those who came in to him to tread on the face of Zayd with their shoes, while Zayd was a piece of the liver of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family.

Hisham wrote to the governor of Kufa to let Zayd crucified and not to bring him down the gallows, that he might abase the 'Alawids and quench his thirst for revenge. The pure body of Zayd remained crucified on the gibbet; the sun melted it and the winds scattered dust over it. They put guards around it lest it should be taken and buried. Then the authorities ordered the great body to be burnt and scattered in the air.<sup>4</sup>

The Umayyads intentionally killed Yehya b. Zayd, the great revolutionary. The family of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, met in the way of Allah murder, severe punishment, injustice, humiliation from the Umayyads, who, through that, violated the sacredness of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, in respect with his family, who was worthy of care and sympathy.

Any way, the various kinds of disasters and misfortunes the pure family (of the Prophet) faced throughout the Umayyad reign brought about the displeasure of the good and the religious. Likewise, they gave rise to the unity of the forces and moved the Islamic peoples to declare their great revolt that overthrew the Umayyad government.

## **The Shi'a are persecuted**

During the Umayyad reign the Shi'a faced increasingly tyranny and persecution; the authorities wreaked their wrath upon them and met them with all kind of violence, for they were the aware force that urged the peoples to oppose injustice and to battle against oppression. All the bloody revolt that frightened the Umayyad authorities depended on the Shi'a, who led the struggle, summoned to social justice and inspired the peoples with the spirit of sacrifice for faith and thought.

During the most critical and intense of all conditions in crisis and complication, the Shi'a resisted injustice and combated tyranny and freed the society from abasement and enslavement; they, for the sake of that, faced the most violent problems and the most of them in anguish and bitterness.

Imam al-Baqir, peace be on him, talked about them, saying: "Our followers (Shi'a) in all cities were killed;

their hands and legs were cut off due to suspicion; whoever loves us and devotes himself to us is imprisoned, his property is plundered, and his house is demolished."5

After the Year of the Peace Treaty (with Imam al-Hasan), Mu'awiya wrote letters to all his governors in which he mentioned: "Look for him who loves 'Ali and his family; erase him from the Divan; cancel his salary and provision." Then he sent them another letter: "Whomever you accuse of following these people (i.e., the Shi'a), then punish him severely and demolish his house."6

The Shi'a faced tiredness and exhaustion to the extent that none can imagine it. The greatest of them in ordeal were the Shi'a of Kufa during the days of Mu'awiya, who appointed over them Ziyad Bin Abee, who had knowledge of them, so he spread among them killing and execution. He killed them everywhere, cut off their hands and their legs, knocked out their eyes, crucified them on the trunks of the date-palms, made them homeless, and dismissed them.7

This abominable policy spread displeasure and complaints among all the Muslims, for they had not been familiar with this policy and had not known it before, and for they had not met from the previous governments such persecutions and severe punishments. As the Shi'a faced such persecutions and tyranny, they spared no effort to overthrow the Umayyad government and to destroy its throne. They organized their ranks, formed secret organizations that did their best to enlighten the public opinion and send it to the fields of struggle and sacrifice, that they might get rid of the Umayyad government.

## **The Battle of al-Hurra**

The most important tragedies with which the Islamic world was afflicted was the Battle of al-Hurrah, at which the dignity of Islam and the sacredness of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, were violated. For the military leadership made lawful shedding blood and violating the honors after occupying Yethrib (Medina). The Umayyad arm went too far in that in a way which none had known in respect with using severity and rudeness. It made lawful killing women, innocent children, and violating honors.

The people of Medina resort to the tomb of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and sought refuge in it, for they thought that its sacredness would protect them from the aggression. However those wild people paid no attention to its sacredness and did not fear its greatness. They intentionally killed them and violated their honors in the Mesjid of the Prophet.

A European historian has commented on this sad event, saying: "Surely the effect of this event on the whole of the Islamic world was immense and terrible as if that the Umayyads wanted to settle their debts when the Messenger, while his army treated them with mercy and sympathy.

They made homeless and killed the best youths of Medina and its blessed men. They forced the rest of them to pledge allegiance to Yazid b. Mu'awiya on that they were slaves and on that he would rule over their blood, their properties, and their families. He (Yazid) ordered those prevented from that to be

branded in the neck.

"During the reign of the Umayyads, the City of the Messenger became like an oasis in a desert; gloomy depression and deep-black darkness surround it all around its four sides. Medina never regained its past times to the extent that it became during the time of the Umayyads the city of the ancient times."<sup>8</sup>

The Muslims were terrified by this abominable event at which none paid attention to the sacredness of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, in respect with his neighbors, who lodged him, supported him, and protected him during the ordeal and loneliness of Islam.

Nevertheless, their shedding blood was made lawful, their honors were violated, their properties were plundered, and they were forced to pledge allegiance to Yazid and to regard themselves as slaves to him. This painful disaster ended with waves of displeasure and complaints.

The people talked about it during their gatherings. It was among the firmest reasons that led to unifying the forces and mobilizing the public opinion for the great revolution that overthrew the Umayyad government.

## **The Policy of Unbelief and Oppression**

The certain thing over which the historians have not differed is that the Umayyads had no Islamic tendency; rather they had those tendencies in the pre-Islamic period. Islam did not penetrate their inner selves, rather it flowed on their tongues out of fear of the edge of the sword and the heads of the spears.

When they embraced this religion, they began scheming against it and waiting for opportunities to vengeance on it. When Uthman b. 'Affan, the chief of the Umayyads, undertook the affairs of the Muslims according to the terrible plan which was designed by the Consultative Council, Abu Sufyan, the leaders of the Umayyads hurried to the tomb of Hamza, the master of martyrs, and kicked, saying: "O Aba 'Ammara, the affair for which we yesterday engaged in a sword fight is in the hands of our boys, and they are playing with it."

Then he went happily; he came in to 'Uthman and said: "O Allah, make the power similar to that in the pre-Islamic period, make the kingdom belong to those who have usurped it, and make the projections of the earth belong to the Umayyads!"<sup>9</sup>

Certainly, Abu Sufyan said the words of unbelief before Uthman, who was the Caliph of the Muslims, but he did not blame him nor did he punish him. This atheistic tendency was standing in Mu'awiya, and he believed in it throughout his lifetime. He expressed this belief during his dangerous talk with al-Mughira b. Shu'ba; through it he revealed his pre-Islamic beliefs and his unbelief in Islam.

The following is the text of his talk as it was narrated by Mattraf b. al-Mughira, who said: "My father, al-Mughira, and I visited Mu'awiya. My father went to him frequently and talked with him. Then he came to

me and told me about Mu'awiya and his reason and admired what he saw from him.

One night he came and did not have dinner; he was very grieved. I waited him for an hour and I thought that (he was grieved) for something happened to us or to our work. So I asked him:

"-Why can I see you grieved this night?

"-O My little son, I have come from the most wicked of all the 'people.'

"- And what is that?

"I was alone with Mu'awiya and said to him: 'Surely you have attained your wishes, O Commander of the faithful; therefore, if you show justice and spread good, for you have become an old man, and if you take care of your brothers from among the Banu Hashim and their womb relatives.

By Allah, today, they have nothing of which you are afraid. And he said to me: 'How far! How far! The brother of Taym ruled and acted justly, and he did what he did, by Allah, but when he perished, his name perished except that a sayer says: 'Abu Bakr!' Then the brother of 'Adi ruled, so he strove and applied himself (to the office of the caliphate) for ten year, by Allah, but when he perished, his name perished except that a sayer says: 'Umar!'

Then our brother Uthman ruled, so he ruled as a man and none was like him in lineage. He did what he did and (the people) did what they did to him, by Allah, but when he perished, his name perished and what had been done toward him is mentioned.

And the brother of the Banu Hashim is mentioned five times a day: 'I bear witness that Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah!' So all deeds after this (call), may your mother lose you, will completely be buried!"<sup>10</sup>

This speech clearly indicates Mu'awiya's unbelief and his harboring malice against the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family. For he was terrified and disturbed by mentioning his name five times a day during the adhan.

If he had found a way, he would erase his name and efface the principle features of his religion.

Because of his strong hatred to the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, he did not call down blessings upon him for forty Fridays. He was asked about that and he answered: "Nothing prevents me from mentioning his name except that some men turn up their noses (at me)!"<sup>11</sup>

This atheistic phenomenon in all its dimensions was present in his son Yazid; that is because he declared unbelief and apostasy from the religion after he had taken the reins of government. He has declared the word of atheism when he said: Hashim played with the dominion so indeed, No news came, nor there was a revelation revealed.

And in this manner if we deal with the behavior of most Umayyad kings, we will find it full of unbelief and

malice against Islam. They all tried to efface its lines and to put out its light. Were it not for that there is abundant knowledge in its principles and the care of Allah, its standard would be folded and it would have neither a name nor a trace.

The Umayyads ruled the Islamic community with the atheistic policy having no faith in Islam as a basic rule in the fields of government, administrations, economy, and policy. They changed all the vital programs Islam had established to set right the society. They stopped the criminal punishments, regarded as lawful what Allah had made unlawful; they built their laws on judicial errors, killed (many people) due to doubt and accusation, plundered the properties and wealth of the Muslims.

Sadeef b. Maymun, a creative poet, has referred to that through his supplication against the oppression and tyranny of the Umayyads, saying: "O Allah, our fayya' has become alternation after the division! Our authority has become dominance after the consultation! Our covenant has become legacy after the choice of the community!

Amusement centers and stringed instruments have been bought for the portion of the orphan and the widow. The Zimmis have ruled the Muslims; the sinners from among the districts have undertaken their affairs. Therefore, no defender defends those oppressed. No compassionate one looks at them through the eye of mercy.

No deterrent deters him who wrongs them; no possessor of compassion satisfies their very thirsty livers; so they are the men of weakness and loss, the allies of depression and abasement; the plants of falsehood has ripened, reached its end, and contained grains, become well-arranged, firm and stable.

"O Allah, enable a hand of the truth to reap them, cut off their spikes, smash their stems, scatter their unity, and disunite them; that the truth may appear in the best manner, in the most perfect light, and in the greatest blessing!

"O Allah, we have known some qualities of ourselves that do not hold us back from responding to the summons! It is You Who do favors for all the creatures and undertake doing good to all those who ask from you!

Therefore, give to us of our affair according to Your generosity, Your munificence, and Your boons! For surely You decree what You please and do what You wish!"<sup>12</sup> Sadeef's supplication contains a wonderful description of the Umayyad policy that violated the Muslims' rights and denied all the high values Islam brought, warred against all its principles and teachings.

Any way, the Umayyads ruled the Islamic countries with a policy based on unbelief and deviation from the will of the community. The Muslims thought that the anti-Islamic won a victory when the Umayyads won the government. This meaning has been mentioned in what Fikelson has written:

"The Muslims regarded the victory of the Umayyads, headed by Mu'awiya, as a victory of the pagan

aristocracy that declared itself as the enemy of the Apostle and his companions, and against which Allah's Apostle struggled until he put an end to it. The Muslims were patient along with him for struggling against it and resisting it till Allah granted them a victory over it, and they put an end to it, and they built on its ruins the pillars of the Islamic religion, the tolerant religion that has regarded men as equal in sorrow and in joy and removed the control of a group of people who disparaged the poor, abased the weak, usurped the properties. For this reason we are not amazed when the Muslims hated the Umayyads, their haughtiness, their pride, their moving the past spites, and their inclination to the spirit of the pre-Islamic period."<sup>13</sup>

The Muslims have no doubt that the Umayyads were the enemies and opponents of Islam, that they did their best to die down its voice and to put out its light, and that they embraced it to undertake the authority and to achieve their private interests.

This has been emphasized by Allama Dozy, who has said: "Surely the general Muslim populace think that some Umayyads embraced Islam to achieve their own interests, and that they had no right (to undertake) the Caliphate nor other than it, for certainly the policy of the Umayyads aimed at making the Caliphate as a kingdom like that of Kasra (in Iran). There is nothing indicative of that more than the words of Mu'awiya: 'I remove the kings from office!'"<sup>14</sup>

Surely whoever runs over the Umayyad policy concludes that it aimed at spread atheism, make public unbelief, destroy the pillars of Islam, and remove its entity. That is because the Umayyads performed destructive operations against it such as annihilating its great figures: Hajar b. 'Adi, 'Amru b. al-Hamaq al-Khaza'i, Maythem al-Tammar, Rasheed al-Hajjri, and the like of them from among the leaders of the Islamic thought.

This anti-Islam policy required the uprising of the masses and their unanimous agreement on warring against the Umayyads and removing their state and authority.

## **Fiscal Policy**

Islam has a creative economy that refreshes peoples, increases their individual income, and removes from them poverty and deprivation. It has made it incumbent on the state to observe the general economy, to increase production, and to spend the public treasury on the vital interests. It has made it unlawful to spend little or much of the money of the community on other than its economic and industrial development, according to the well-known plans of the fiscal policy in Islam.

The Umayyads turned away from this brilliant policy and went far away from it. 'Uthman b. Affan was the first to deviate from it, for he spent the money in the public treasury on the Umayyads and the family of Abi Mi'yat. He singled the notables, the nobility, and the influential men with great gifts and immense wealth; meanwhile he deprived the general populace of spending on them.

Accordingly, these crooked policies led to his failure and the good and those religious were displeased

with him. They demanded him to refrain from it, but he paid no attention to them and insisted on carrying out his policy, so the Muslims revolted against him. They knocked him down and he weltered in his blood. 'Uthman exhausted the Muslims and made them face intense tiredness throughout the days of his government; similarly, he strained them after his death, according to the unanimous agreement of the historians!

Throughout their reign, the Umayyads followed 'Uthman's policy; they singled themselves and their followers with properties and wealth, but they deprived the community of enjoying welfare; they chose all its wealth and economic sources and left the image of poverty standing in all the houses of the Muslims.

An example of that is that the Egyptian governor resorted to the Umayyad King, Sulayman b. 'Abd al-Malik and complained to him of the sufferings of the Egyptians such as persecution and the heavy taxes imposed on them, saying to him: "O Commander of the faithful, I have come to you because the subjects have become exhausted and overstrained.

I see that you have to treat them with kindness and to reduce the land taxes due on them, that they may be able to build their own country and to improve their livelihood. Therefore, do that because you will attain it in the next year."

This is the right and just thinking, but the tyrant (i.e. Sulayman b. 'Abd al-Malik) did not understand that and answered him through his wicked tendencies, saying: "May your mother lose you! Take the milk! If it stops, then take the blood and the skin!"[15](#)

Is there oppression more excessive and severer than this one?

Is there disdain in human's rights and dignity like this one?

Sulayman b. 'Abd al-Malik intended to destroy the society and deprived it of life and elements. When this excessive oppression spread, the governors sought nearness to the Umayyad kings through exposing the subjects to oppression and tyranny.

The historians have reported that 'Ubayd Allah b. al-Hajib, the collector of the land taxes in Egypt, wanted to seek nearness to Hisham b. 'Abd al-Malik. He wrote to him that it was likely to increase the land tax on the Egyptian land, and he commanded him to add a qirat to a dinar![16](#)

In this manner the Islamic lands sank under heavy poverty and deprivation; they were deprived of all their elements and were owned by such rouses, who spend the land taxes on dissoluteness, prostitution, and despoiling morals, and who did not spend such properties on the general interests.

## **Additional Taxes**

The Umayyad authorities went too far in exhausting and straining the subjects; they deprived them of their fates and their economic abilities that was through their imposing on them taxes the Muslims had

never known nor their religion had decided. The historians have mentioned different kinds of those severe taxes of which are the following:

1. Taxes on industries and crafts. [17](#)
2. Taxes on marriage and on writing a proposal. [18](#)
3. Taxes on the rents of houses. [19](#)
4. A tax on Nawruz; Mu'awiya was the first to legislate it and it reached ten million dirhams. [20](#)
5. The tax on those who became Muslims. [21](#)

The reason for that is that the Umayyad kings wanted to paralyze the Islamic movement and to prevent it from spreading.

The important thing in these additional taxes is that they were not limited, rather their affair was in the hands of the governors and the collectors; it was they who estimated it according to their wishes and inclinations. Bendili Jawza has talked about those heavy and intense additional taxes, saying:

"They (the additional taxes) were greater in pressure than land and poll taxes, for they were not fixed nor were they based on an acceptable rule; rather their amount depended on the governors' wish." [22](#)

Sahib Akhna, who was in Egypt, asked 'Amru b. al-'Ass to tell him about the amount of the toll tax due on him, and he answered him: "If you gave me (a toll tax extending) from the ground to the ceiling, I would not tell you about what is due on you. You are a treasury for us. If he (the king) increases (the tax) due on us, we will increase it on you; and if he reduces it for us, we will reduce it for you." [23](#)

In the concepts of social oppression there is no concept greater in pressure than this oppression on the human society, for the peoples were treasury or a garden of these rulers, as 'Amru b. al-'Ass said.

Mu'awiya has said: "The earth belongs to Allah, and I am the vicegerent of Allah; therefore, if I take of the property of Allah, then it belongs to me; and what I leave, it will be permissible to me!"

Surely this abominable policy moved the displeasure of the society and inflamed the sentiments and feelings with the essence of revolt and struggle for overthrowing that government and removing its existence and traces.

### **The Choice of the Properties**

The Umayyad government spared no effort to make the Muslims poor and hungry, so it followed all ways leading to spreading neediness and poverty among them; among the ways the Umayyads followed to make the Muslims poor is choosing properties. An example of that is that Mu'awiya wrote to Ziyad b. Abeeh, his governor over Iraq, to choose him the yellow and the white (lit. gold and silver). [24](#)

Accordingly, Ziyad commanded his governors not to divide among the Muslims neither gold nor silver. Mu'awiya wrote to Wardan, his governor over Egypt: "Add a qirat (to the tax due on) each Egyptian." So Wardan wrote him back: "How can I add (it) on them while they are in a time when it is impossible to add it on them?"

The rest of the Islamic countries faced the same condition. An example of that is that a brother of al-Hajjaj's confiscated the properties of the people in the Yemen.<sup>25</sup> The Umayyads circulated the property of Allah and enslaved His servants, just as the Truthful One and the Trusted One (the Prophet), may Allah bless him and his family, had predicted in respect with that which his community would be afflicted under the Umayyad, tyrannical government.

This policy moved the displeasure of the general populace and they decided to declare the revolution against the Umayyads and to overthrow their oppressive, tyrannical government.

### **The People refuse their own Possessions**

As the taxes were heavy, the weak farmers refused and abandoned their own farms; some of them registered them in the name of an Arab personality or in the name of a statesman, that they might protect them. They gave them a portion of their agricultural crops.<sup>26</sup>

During the reign of al-Hajjaj, a great number of them registered their lands in the name of Muslima b. 'Abd al-Malik. During those dark times the Muslim peoples met the most difficult wrong and persecution. They toiled and gave the fruit of their efforts to those tyrants who spent them on impudence, prostitution, and pleasures.

This bitter condition continued until the reign of the noble one, 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz, who ordered those additional taxes to be canceled,<sup>27</sup> and the society felt in his time a kind of ease and welfare. When his reign came to an end, unhappiness returned to the people. For Yazid b. 'Abd al-Malik ordered those taxes to be returned.

He wrote to his governor a letter in which he has mentioned: "Now then, for surely 'Umar was vainglorious; so leave what you came to know during his reign and return the people to their first class whether they are fertile or infertile, like or dislike, live or die!"<sup>28</sup>

When this royal decree reached the governors, they oppressed the people and harassed them through returning the taxes to their first condition.<sup>29</sup> The Umayyads deviated from the right path, turned aside from justice, and separated themselves from the straightway; this is the reason for that the Muslims unanimously agreed on hating them throughout the periods of the Islamic life.

### **The Governors and the Tax collectors**

The Umayyads chose governors and collectors from among the foreigners such as Ziyad b. Abeeh, al-

Mughira b. Shu'ba, Bisr b. Abi Artat, Samra b. Jundub, Khalid al-Qasri, al-Hajjaj b. Yousif al-Thaqafi, and the like from among the tyrannical oppressors. Through their political and administrative activities they established that they were the enemies of mankind and that they knew neither mercy nor compassion nor any noble quality by which man is distinguished from grazing livestock.

The Umayyads empowered those rude rouses over the necks of the Muslims, and they went too far in wronging them, violating their sacred things, and taking their properties. Al-Nimri explained to 'Abd al-Malik b. Merwan the tyranny of his governors and their persecuting his people to the extent that they became poor and escaped in the desert, and that there was nothing with them except weak camels, saying:

O Vicegerent of the Most Merciful One, surely we are true people who prostrate in the early morning and the late afternoon.

Surely the governors disobeyed you on the day when you commanded them, and brought, if you knew, low misfortunes. They took the noble master standing and shackled, and cut off the middle of his chest with the whip. When they left nothing of his flesh on his bones and nothing reasonable in his heart, they brought their title deed to a plump one whom the whips made cowardly and fearful.

They took his camels, and he became sitting and cannot leave the houses.

He calls the Commander of the faithful and in front of him is a wide desert through which the winds draw tails.

He is like the hoopoes whose wings the shooters have broken and that coo in the middle of the road.

O Vicegerent of the Most Merciful One, surely the livestock of my clan have become defeated groups.

They (my clan) have taken care of Islam; they have not left their paying Zakat, nor have they lost saying: There is no god but Allah.

They covered al-Yamama; they were driven away as if that they were people who hit oppressors with something.

For two spring months their milk ewes have tasted nothing but bitter, salty, bad, and withered trees.

Yehya have come to them and made firm a contract the Muslims regard as heavy.

Letters have left their rich poor after the riches and their poor emaciated.

I have left my people. Shall they entrust their affairs to you or shall they wait for a short time?[30](#)

In these poetry lines al-Nimri has described the frightful tyranny and the horrible persecutions the governors poured upon his people. This oppression also lasted to the time of 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz, who

was the most just of the Umayyad kings, as they say. That is because his governors spared no effort to take unjustly the properties of the people. Addressing him, Ka'ab al-Ash'ari said:

If you protect what follows you, then the governors of your land are wolves in the country.

They do not respond to that to which you summon unless you cut off heads with the sword.

In the hands of brave ones endowed with insight; in their striking there are restraints and punishment.<sup>31</sup> While 'Umar (b. 'Abd al-'Aziz) delivering a sermon on the pulpit, a man interrupted him, saying: Surely those whom you have sent in its countries have left your letter and regarded as lawful the unlawful. Those whose clothes are dirty (are sitting) on the pulpits of our land; all of them tyrannize (the people) and all of (the people) complain (of them).

You want a just one from among them to undertake the trust. How far is the trustworthy Muslim!<sup>32</sup> The governors and the collectors went too far in persecuting the Islamic society and depriving it of its economic elements. They did not do that willingly; rather the Umayyad kings commanded them to do it; it was they who urged them to plunder and shared them with that which they took from the people.

This meaning has frankly been mentioned in what Fanflotin has said: "And instead of that the Caliphs—the Umayyad Caliphs—took measures to punish the governors and to prevent them from oppression, we find them shared with them in their interests of the properties which they collected through those exposed ways.

This means that the Caliphs were consent with the bad behavior of the governors toward the people of the country, as well it is a proof of that some of them was at first interested in the interests of the central treasury."<sup>33</sup>

Certainly the Umayyad kings did not punish their governors and their collectors for what they committed such as excessive oppression, and plundering the properties of the community in a horrible way. It was they who urged them to do that; the more oppressive and tyrannical the governor was, the more close to them he was.

For example, Ziyad b. Abeeh was the closest of all the people to Mu'awiya, to the extent that he made him belong to him in lineage. That was due to his violence, tyranny, quick assassinating the Muslims.

Yet another example of that is al-Hajjaj b. Yousif al-Thaqafi. He was the nearest of all the governors to 'Abd al-Malik (b. Merwan) and the most preferred of them to him, to the extent that he entrusted the affair of Iraq to him and he acted freely wherein and in whatever a way he wished. That is due to his violence and his going too far in shedding blood.

Any way, the tyranny and oppression of the governors toward the Muslims was among the reasons for the great revolt that overthrew the regime of the Umayyad government and folded its authorities.

## Showing Despise toward the Peoples

The prominent thing in the Umayyad policy is showing disdain toward the Islamic peoples, for the Umayyad kings went too far in disparaging the rights of their peoples. For example, al-Walid b. Yazid has said:

Leave your mentioning the family of Sa'd, for we are greater (than them) in number and properties. We rule the people by force, humiliate them, and punish them severely. We take them to the pools of humiliation to abase them; we do not fall short of inflicting loss upon them. This poet has described the excessive disdain in the right of the community and making light of its will and values.

In his speech he gave before the children of the Emigrants and the Ansar in Yethrib (Medina), 'Abd al-Malik b. Merwan said: "I cure the affair of this community with nothing except with the sword, that your spear may be straight. You retain the early emigrants' deeds but you do not perform anything like them; you order us to fear Allah but you forget that in respect with yourselves. By Allah, after this station of mine, if someone orders me to fear Allah, I will cut off his head!"<sup>34</sup>

This severe, terrible thinking is full of sinful tyranny toward the community, for he thought that he had to look after it through spreading killing, fear, terrorism, and not through spreading justice and welfare among it. Ibn al-'Ass has said: "Al-Sawad (Iraq) is a garden belongs to Quraysh!"

This means that al-Sawad was owned by the Umayyads and not by its inhabitants, for they were as their slaves who had neither freedom nor choice. This was the thinking of the Umayyad policy in all its periods; it paid no attention to the existence of the community; and this was among the most important reasons for overthrowing and collapse of the Umayyad government.

## Their Persecuting the Non-Muslims Subjects

In its wonderful, genuine legislation, Islam has required showing respect toward all the religions and securing the dignity of their followers and granting them full freedom, for they have the right to enjoy the same rights of the Muslims as long as they are under the protection of Islam.

Surely it is not an act of Islam to persecute any person whatever his or her inclinations and beliefs are unless he or she makes a discord or mischief in the land. Imam 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, the pioneer of the great justice during his international time, has said: "People are of two kinds: They are either your brother in religion or your like in creation."

Islam has positively adopted the slogan of justice and equality among men within its Islamic frame, but the Umayyad policy through all its plans carried the pickaxe to destroy what Islam adopted in the fields of the social reform. So it treated the non-Muslim subjects (Zimmis) with a severe treatment that did not agree with the essence and guidance of Islam.

The historians have narrated that Usama b. Zayd al-Tenwakhi, who was appointed by Yazid b. 'Abd al-Malik over collecting land taxes, attacked the Zimmis and exhausted them; he took their properties and branded them in the hand.<sup>35</sup> 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Merwan made poll tax obligatory on the monks; and it was the first poll tax to be taken from them.<sup>36</sup> Surely the tyranny and oppression of the Umayyads included all the citizens and not the Muslims only. This affair required all the people to harbor malice and hatred against their government.

### Their Oppressing Non-Arab Muslims

The Umayyad policy decided to deprive the non-Arab Muslims of all the natural rights of man. So it treated them as grazing animals and met them with increasingly violence and persecution, though they embraced Islam, which has declared human rights and just equality among all classes. As well as there was among them a great class of Muslim great figures and thinkers, and that a great part of the Islamic conquests were achieved through their efforts and struggles.

Unfortunately, the Umayyads did not fall short of abasing and exhausting them. The historians have narrated detested kinds of that tyranny. Mu'awiya, the Kasra of the Arabs, opened a door to oppression and tyranny towards them. He violated their sacred things and unjustly shed their blood.

He summoned both al-Ahnaf b. Qays al-Temimi and Samra b. Jundub al-Hilali and said to them: "I think that these red ones (Persian Muslims) have become greater in number, and that they have turned away from the ancestors. I see as if that they would revolt against the Arabs and their supreme authority. So I have decided to kill part of them to build a market and a road; what do you think?" Samra confirmed him; al-Ahnaf opposed him and convinced him not to do that.<sup>37</sup>

The Umayyad kings after him followed this wicked plan; they abased the non-Arab subjects and deprived them of salaries and provision. A person from Khuresan came to 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz and asked him for justice and equality, saying: "O Commander of the faithful, twenty thousand non-Arab subjects made military campaigns but they take neither salaries nor livelihood. A similar number of them from among the Zimmis has become Muslim but they still pay toll taxes."<sup>38</sup>

The Umayyad authorities met them with deprivation and injustice. They deprived them of salaries and daily bread, though they were like the rest of the fighters in making military campaigns and conquering countries. This (treatment) made them displeased (with the Umayyads), showed wide enmity toward them, and joined all the revolts against them.

In his book al-Arab wa al-Mawali, al-Jahiz has said: "'Abd al-Rahman b. al-Ash'ath revolted against al-Hajjaj b. Yousif. He warred against him. Al-Hajjaj b. Yousif met what he met from the reciters (of the Qur'an) from among the people of Iraq.

Most those who fought against him were from among the people of Basrah, so he gathered them together after his suppressing that revolt and said to them: 'You are unbelievers and non-Arabs; your

reciters (of the Qur'an) are more entitled to you!' Then he scattered them wherever he wished in the remote countries and engraved in the hand of each man of them the name of the city to which he was sent."[39](#)

The Umayyads were so blindly fanatic that they did not regard the non-Arab subjects as equal to them. So they called them by their names and surnames. They did not call them by kunyas, for the kunyas had the sense of equality. They did not let them walk in front of them or with them in the same line except behind them.

They did not appoint any of them as a commander over an Arab army; and they did not permit any of them to be an Imam and to pray over the corpse of an Arab. When they invited a non-Arab subject due to his knowledge or excellence, they made him sit down at the dining table in the way to the baker, that whoever saw him came to know that he was a non-Arab.

When an Arab returned from market carrying something, he gave it to a non-Arab to carry it, and he had not to refuse it. When he saw him riding (an animal) and wanted him to dismount, he did.[40](#)

The historians have mentioned many examples of this collective persecution toward the non-Arab subjects, so this treatment of the Umayyads opposed Islam, which ordered its follower to spread justice and equality among men whether they are Arabs or non-Arabs, white or black.

This racial discrimination divided the word of the Muslims, spread spites and differences among them; likewise, it urged the non-Arab subjects to be in the vanguard of those who revolted against the Umayyads and destroyed their government and kingdom.

## **The Dissoluteness of the Umayyad Kings**

The Umayyad kings indulged in prostitution and impudence. They threw themselves into pleasures, desires, and disdaining moral values. Accordingly, neglect and weakness spread throughout their days; drinking wine and gambling became public. The government spent much money on the singers, the dissolute, and the mischievous; it brought all the instruments of amusement and singing.

The following are some of their dissolute kings:

### **Yazid Bin 'Abd al-Malik**

Yazid b. 'Abd al-Malik devoted himself to wine and songstresses; he was called the dissolute of the Umayyads; he fell in love with two of his female slaves: one was called Habbaba and the other was called Sallama. He spent the days of his lifetime with them. One day Habbaba sang him:

There is heat between the throat and the palate! It does not become calm nor does it go down, that it may be cold! He was so delighted that he lost his mind. He began flying in the air and she sneeringly

said to him: "O Commander of the faithful, I have a need with you."

He unconsciously said: "By Allah, I will fly!" She began making fun of him and sneering at the community that empowered him over it, saying to him: "To whom will you entrust this community?" "To you," he replied.

Then he turned to her and began kissing her hand, while she was playing with him and making fun of him. One day he went for a walk in one of the Jordanian districts. His female slave Habbaba was with him. He and she drank wine. When he became drunk, he threw a grape at her. The grape entered her mouth. She choked to death on it.

He lost his mind due to the death of this songstress. He left her for three days. He did not bury her to the extent that she became bad-smelling. He smelt her, kissed her corpse, and wept over her, while she was a motionless corpse. One of his special group talked to him concerning her and he permitted her to be buried. He sadly returned to his palace and heard one of his female slaves say:

Enough for sadness that the lover who is madly in love sees the houses of his lover left and deserted! He wept bitter tears; sadness and sorrow controlled him. He stayed for seven days in his palace; he did not meet the people as a sign of mourning and sadness for this sinful female slave.

Then his brother Muslima advised him to go out to meet the people lest he should be famous for this evil deed, and they would turn away from him. He responded to his advice and went out to meet the people.<sup>41</sup> This deed is a proof of the immorality of this sinful person. Islam was indeed afflicted with this person and the like of him from among the sinful who took the reins of government.

## [Al-Walid Bin Yazid](#)

An authentic tradition has been narrated on the authority of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family that he said: "A man called al-Walid will be among this community. He will be more wicked toward this community than Pharaoh toward his people." Al-Awzaa'i confirmed that he was al-Walid b. Yazid.<sup>42</sup>

This dissolute tyrant (al-Walid) went too far in prostitution; he was the first to bring singers from other countries; he sat with the amusers; he spread wine, amusement centers, and playing on musical instruments; corruption spread and the people drank wine during his time. He was fond of wine, so he described it with an exact description, saying:

May a (wine) as yellow as saffron the traders bring to us from 'Asqalan

It shows you fine dust; and the width of the vessel is a veil for it without the touching of the fingertips.

It has bubbles; whenever it decanted, you see it like the flash of Yemeni lightning.<sup>43</sup> Al-Walid b. Yazid was so dissolute that he wanted to build on the Kaaba a dome where he intended to drink wine and to look down upon the circumambulation of the Kaaba.<sup>44</sup>

But Allah came between him and that; He broke his back and punished him with the punishment of One Almighty. That was when Yazid b. al-Walid along with a group of his household overcame; they killed him, cut off his head and installed it in Damascus.[45](#)

Another example of this dissolute, reckless person is that Bin 'Aisha al-Qarashi[46](#) sang him through his words:

In the morning of immolation I saw some Houris negating the resolution of patience.

They looked like the stars in their rising places going round the full moon in the evening.

I went out and expected seeking reward, but I came back heavily loaded with sin.[47](#)

Al-Walid became so delighted that he went crazy. He turned to Bin 'Aisha and said to him: "You have done the Commander of the faithful a favor! Repeat it by the right of 'Abd Shams! Repeat!" He repeated it to him and he said to him: "By Allah, you have done well! Repeat it by the right of Umayya!"

He mentioned his forefather's one by one saying by the right of so-and-so, that he might repeat it to him. He repeated it to him several times while he was drunk and did not understand anything. The wine spoiled his reason and he occupied himself with kissing Bin 'Aisha's limbs and organs one by one, to the extent that he reached his private part.

After a conflict lasted for a long time between them, this dissolute person, so-called the Commander of the faithful and Caliph of the Muslims, was able to kiss Bin 'Aisha's private part in a disgraceful way. Then he took off his clothes and put them on him. He was naked and his private part was apparent. They brought him clothes and he put them on.

Then he gave him a thousand dinars, gave him his mule, and ordered him to ride it on his carpet. Then he said good-bye to him saying to him: "You have left me on tenterhooks!" This is a brief outline on the prostitution and dissoluteness of the Umayyad kings and their going too far in amusement and corruption. This matter brought about spreading malice against them and hatred toward their government.

### **The Fanaticism between the Yemenis and the Nazaris**

Among the most important factors that led to the vanish of the Umayyad government is that a conflict broke out between the Yemenis and the Nazaris and an enmity among them increased. This matter brought about the weakness of the state. That is because the Yemenis joined the 'Abbasid State. This conflict was found by the 'Alawids.

That was when al-Kumayt, the great poet of Islam composed his poem called al-Hashimiya and praised Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, through it. Then he went to 'Abd Allah b. al-Hasan, and he asked him to write poetry to move spites among the Arabs, that a discord might happen and be a reason for removing

the Umayyad government.

Al-Kumayt responded to him and composed wonderful, enthusiastic poetry in which he mentioned the outstanding qualities of his people, the Yemenis, and prepared them to the Qahtanis.

The following is part of what he has written:

To us belong the moon of the heaven and all the stars to which the rightly-guided indicate with their hands.

I have found Allah when He has made the Nazaris exalted and made them live in Mecca.

He has appointed the noble qualities only for us, the back for the people, and the forehead for us.

His poetry had a great impression on the hearts, to the extent that spites arose among the two tribes; hatred and enmity spread between them. Meanwhile, Di'bil al-Khaza'i, the poet of Ahl al-Bayt, supported the Qahtanis.

I (the author) think that there was an agreement between the two poets on that, for they were both among the poets of Ahl al-Bayt, and they both set a record in the deepest affection and friendship toward them. Among what Di'bil said in response to al-Kumayt is the following:

Recover from your blame, O Da'ina! The passage of the forty (days) is enough for you (to stop your) blame.

Have you not been grieved by the events of the nights that cause to turn white the forelocks and the tufts.

I greet the distinguished from among the leading members of my people; you have greeted (them) on our behalf, O Medina.

Israel's family belongs to you, and you boast of the non-Arabs.

The demand of al-Kumayt is not a demand of vengeance, but we have been satirized due to our supporting (the Prophet).

Nazar knows that my people boast of their supporting the Prophet.

The two tribes vied with each other for their outstanding qualities and their noble deeds, to the extent that the hostility between them became wide and included the inhabitants of the villages and the deserts; it spoiled their hearts.

These two families disunited, while they had been regarded as the greatest of the inhabitants of the Arab Peninsula in number and influence. As a result, Merwan b. Muhammad al-Ju'di, the last Umayyad

Caliph, sided with the Nazaris; and this urged the Yemenis to deviate from them and joined the summons to the 'Abbasids. Accordingly, the entity of the Umayyad government became very weak.[48](#)

## **The Results of the Events**

The Islamic world was afflicted with the terrible events resulted from the tyrannical Umayyad policy in economy and administration.

They are as follows:

### **1. The Local Revolts**

Many local revolts broke out in most Islamic countries as a sign of vengeance on the authorities and of hatred toward them, such as the revolts of the 'Alawids and of the Kharijites. Those revolts were connected, stunned the authorities, and undermined their economic and military entity.

Of course these revolts resulted from spreading social oppression, losing justice and equality among the Muslims. If the Umayyad governments had followed, in their internal policies, the high object Islam sought under its government, they would not have been afflicted with disasters and disorders.

### **2. The Summons to the 'Alawids**

Secret parties were formed in Kufa and Medina (Yethrib), and they, through their organs, summoned the people to al-Ridha' from among the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family, and intended to return the Islamic Caliphate to Aal al-Bayt, peace be on them.

The program of the summons was full of the following:

A. They spread among the Muslims the verses and the traditions that talked about the excellence of the pure family of the Prophet. It is worth mentioning that these verses and traditions made it incumbent on Muslims to take care of the family of the Prophet, to show love to them, and to resort to them. Among the ways the summoners followed is the following:

-Is there anyone among you who doubts that Allah, the Great and Almighty, had not appointed Muhammad as a prophet and had not chosen him?

-No.

-Do you doubt that Allah had not revealed to him His Book in which are the things made lawful and unlawful by Him and His laws?

-Do you think that his successor is not from among his family and his household?

-Do you doubt that Ahl al-Bayt are not the origin of knowledge and owners of the legacy of Allah's

Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, which Allah taught to him?

-No. [49](#)

This way made the people follow Ahl al-Bayt and yearn for the days of their government.

Al-Mansur al-Dewaniqi traveled through the countryside and sought praising Ahl al-Bayt.

I (the author) think that he was entrusted with task.

B. They propagated the disasters and misfortunes the family of the Prophet, May Allah bless him and his family, met. Such disasters and misfortunes were so painful that they made the people harbor malice against the Umayyads and revolt against the then regime.

C. They gave good news of the genuine objectives and ideals the Prophet's pure family sought such as spreading security, ease, welfare among the people, putting an end to all kinds of social deception and oppression. They also propagated that there was no government could guarantee the dignity of the Muslims, kept their rights, and achieved their hopes except that of Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, that followed the government of Islam and put into practice its justice and equality.

D. They made the people understand that they met ordeals and disasters during the Umayyad government because the Caliphate was separated from Ahl al-Bayt, the guardians over the revelation and equals to the Holy Qur'an. They showed them that the first Companions of the Prophet gave an opportunity through their shelter (saqifa) to the anti-Islam forces to take the reins of authority and to go too far in abasing the Muslims and forcing them to follow what they disliked.

The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, took precautionary measures: He entrusted the caliphate to the great figures from among his family, that he might protect the community from deviation and mischief, and that he might make it socially developed.

If the early Muslims had followed him in this respect, those ordeals and misfortunes would not have happened in the Islamic world, and that it would not have been afflicted with the Umayyad government that enslaved the servants of Allah and usurped His property.

This creative summons made progress in the atmospheres of the Islamic world, invaded sentiments and feelings, for the Muslims believed in it as a basic rule for their social development and for saving them from the tyranny, oppression, and dictatorship of the Umayyads.

The summons to the 'Alawids was based on religious and social awareness. This was affirmed by al-Qasim b. Mujashi', a leading member of the 'Abbasid state, when he sent a letter of witness to al-Mahdi, saying: "Allah bears witness that there is no god but He, and (so do) the angels and those possessed of knowledge, maintaining his creation with justice; there is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise.

Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam. I bear witness for that; I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger; I bear witness that 'Ali b. Abi Talib, peace be on him, is the testamentary trustee of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and inheritor of the Imamate after him."

When al-Mahdi read the last statement in the letter, he threw it away and angrily looked at him. So al-Qasim asked him: "We revolted against the Umayyads according these conditions, didn't we?" Al-Mahdi answered him that they departed from that when the affair went well with them and only they ruled the kingdom.

This clearly indicates that they summoned the people to that 'Ali, the Commander of the faithful, peace be on him, was the testamentary trustee of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, his successor after him over his community, and that he was among the progeny of those who inherited the knowledge of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, and were the lifeboats of this community.

Therefore, there was no escape from their being the leaders of the community and from returning the Islamic, supreme authority to them.

### 3. The General Disorder

The general disorder and discords spread all over the Islamic world, for terror and fear of the standing government prevailed it. Al-Harith b. 'Abd Allah al-Ju'di, a famous poet, has described the existing state of affairs throughout the country, saying:

I stay overnight standing to observe the stars when the first of them go higher and run.

That is because of the discord that has included all those who pray.

Those who are in Khuresan, Iraq, and Syria are sad because it has occupied them.

Because of it (the faces of) the people look like a deep-dark night.

The foolish scold both the ignorant and the sane.

The people are in an anguish because of which the pregnant are about to miscarry their babies.[50](#)

The poet wonderfully and exactly described the conditions of the people, for he has mentioned all the discords and the disorders that befell them. Al-'Abbas b. al-Walid, a poet, has described the conditions of the society, saying:

Surely I seek refuge for you with Allah from discords that become high and then rush.

Surely the people have become tired of your policy; therefore hold fast to the pillar of the religion and be deterred.

Do not offer yourselves as meat to whose people who are like wolves, for surely when wolves are given meat, they enjoy it.

Do not split your own bellies with your own hands, and then neither regret nor impatience benefit (you).[51](#)

Al-Walid has said: "The discords were as big as the mountains. They were poured down upon the people due to the Umayyad policy based on oppression and severe punishment. Accordingly, those discords brought about a general revolt before which no force in the Islamic world could stand.

## **The Great Revolt**

All Muslim peoples violently revolted, destroyed all the shackles and the barriers on whom they were laid, called out to the overthrowing of the Umayyad government, and summoned (each other) to follow al-Ridha' from among the family of Muhammad, may Allah bless him and his family. Thus, the local authorities were unable to suppress the revolt that widened and increased.

## **The Founder of the Revolt**

The certain thing is that the 'Alawids were the first to plan the revolt and to design its programs and ways. That is because they suffered from the tyranny and oppression of the Umayyads. So they spared no effort to overthrow the Umayyad government, while, in the first place, the 'Abbasids took no part in it.

They were apart from taking in any political act; rather they were submissive to the state and supported its policies. Meanwhile the Umayyads granted them gifts and secured for them more salaries, that they might win their affection and undermine the entity of the 'Alawids and the Muslims might look at them with a normal look. That is because they performed no positive deed for the interests of the Islamic society.

The 'Abbasids adopted the revolt when weakness and collapse appeared in the Umayyad government and when they were sure of the successful of the revolt. So they joined the 'Alawids. The historians have differed over how they joined the revolt.

A party of them has maintained that when Sulayman b. 'Abd al-Malik was afraid of Abu Hashim b. Muhammad b. al-Hanafiya- an 'Alawid, prominent leader- he attracted him through the summons to him, and he responded to him. When he went to him, he showed him affection and met him with more magnifying and honoring.

But he managed his killing. He put some poison into (his food) on his way to al-Hamimiya where the 'Abbasids lived. When he felt the nearness of his fixed term, he entrusted his affairs to his brother Muhammad b. 'Ali, revealed his secrets to him, and made him know the names of the summoners in the countries.

Some historians have maintained that Abu Hashim did not entrust his affairs to Muhammad b. 'Ali. But when he stopped at him, and he saw his critical condition, he asked him gradually until he told him about that which was with him. When Abu Hisham died, Muhammad b. 'Ali found the files in which were the secrets of the summons and the names of the summoners.<sup>52</sup>

Any way, the 'Abbasids adopted the affairs from that moment and began harmonizing and organizing the revolt.

### The Center of the Revolt

The summons to the revolt against the Umayyad government was hold in Yethrib (Medina). When Abu Hashim was assassinated, the center of the revolt was transferred to al-Hamimiya, in the Balqa' of al-Sham; it became the center of the revolt. In it the plans were drawn, the revolutionary programs were designed and sent to the summoners in Kufa, the homeland of the 'Alawid summons; it was also sent to the summoners in Khuresan, which was famous for showing enmity toward the Umayyads, who persecuted the Persians who inclined to Shi'ism.

The summoners were sent to Khuresan as traders, and they propagated the evil deeds of the Umayyads and mentioned the misfortunes and disasters that befell Ahl al-Bayt. The people of Khuresan responded to the summons and joined it.<sup>53</sup> Muhammad b. 'Ali described the Khuresanis and asked them to be more active wherein, saying to them: "Stick to Khuresan, for there is a great number (of people) in it, and apparent steadfastness.

There are sound chests and empty hearts have not been divided by low desires and not distributed by creeds. They are fighters who have bodies, shoulders, upper parts of the back, and frightful voices. Now then, surely I can see a good omen in the East and the rising place of the lamp of the world and the creatures."<sup>54</sup>

The summoners gave much more activity in Khuresan until the summons appeared and became strong in it, for the people of Khuresan spared no effort to protect and keep it. They firmly believed that it would protect them from the tyranny and exploitation of the Umayyads.

### Al-Abwa' Conference

The Hashimites held a conference at al-Abwa'; at the conference they discussed the affairs of the summons and appointing the candidate from among them to the caliphate. The conference was attended by Ibrahim, the Imam, al-Saffah, al-Mansur, Salih b. 'Abd Allah, 'Abd Allah b. al-Hasan, his two sons Muhammad and Ibrahim, Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah, and others. Salih b. 'Ali delivered a sermon among them, saying:

"You are the people to whom the eyes of the people stretch out. Allah has brought you together at this place; therefore, have a unanimous agreement on one of you; and then scatter in the cities and

supplicate Allah, may Allah grant you a victory and help you..."

Abu Ja'far al-Mansur retorted: "Why do you deceive yourselves? By Allah, you know that the people incline and quickly respond to this young man—he indicated with his hand to Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah b. al-Hasan."

"You are right; surely we know that!" they all answered. They rose and pledged allegiance to Muhammad; then he was given a pledge of allegiance by Ibrahim the Imam, al-Mansur, al-Saffah, and the rest of those who attended that meeting.[55](#)

However, the 'Abbasids were not loyal to this pledge of allegiance; they broke their promise and violated their covenant. They secretly worked for their own interests. They made the summoners understand that and asked them to keep that secret lest the 'Alawids should revolt against them and the people should not respond to them, for they had no social base and no clear history.

For this reason they advised the summoners to work secretly and ordered them to summon the people to al-Ridha' from among the family of Muhammad. Anyhow, the 'Abbasids used the summons to the 'Alawids as a slogan to attain the trust of the community and to win the affection and sympathy of Ahl al-Bayt.

### **Abu Muslim is elected**

Ibrahim al-Imam, the chief of the 'Abbasid family, elected his retainer Abu Muslim al-Khuresani as a general leader for the revolutionary movement and made it incumbent on the summoners and the Shi'ites to obey him.

He has mentioned the following in his letter he sent to the Shi'ites in Kufa and Khuresan: "Surely I have appointed Abu Muslim (as a commander over you); therefore listen to him and obey him. I have appointed him as a commander over Khuresan and what it has overcome."[56](#)

The historians have unanimously agreed on that Abu Muslim was then 19 years old, that he was alert, sensitive, iron-willed, murderous, treacherous, and merciless, and that he was the most skillful of the politicians in weaving conspiracies and plots. All the people were astonished when Ibrahim al-Imam nominated him to this important office, for he was still young and had few experiences.

Accordingly, some of the summoners refused to obey him or to yield to his commands.[57](#) But Ibrahim made it obligatory on them to listen to him and obey him. After that, they had no escape from following him.[58](#)

### **Ibrahim's Teachings to Abu Muslim**

Ibrahim al-Imam required his retainer Abu Muslim to follow the following instructions full of sins, detested things, and violating the religion: "O 'Abd al-Rahman, you belong to us Ahl al-Bayt. So follow my

teachings: Look at this district of the Yemen; honor them, be among them, for surely Allah will not complete this affair except through them.

Look at this district of Rebi'a and accuse them of their affairs. Look at this district of Mudar; they are the enemy near in house; therefore kill him about whose affair you doubt or of whom you have something in yourself. If you are able not to let an Arab-speaking person, then do. Kill those children who are five spans of the hand."[59](#)

If these teachings were correct, then they would indicate that Ibrahim al-Imam had no knowledge of the humanitarian ideals and had no relationship with Islam that has forbidden shedding blood unjustly.

Abu Muslim put Ibrahim's instructions into practice and went too far in shedding blood and violating the sacred things. He unjustly killed six hundred Arabs apart from those who were killed at the war, according to the texts of the historians. So he spread sadness, mourning, and losing children in the country of the Muslims. These deeds are not performed by those who have religious or humanitarian tendency.

### In Khuresan

When Abu Muslim was appointed as a military commander by the 'Abbasids, he immediately headed for Khuresan to lead the combatants to the field of the war to put an end to the Umayyad government.

When he arrived there, he met with the summoners and the leaders and delivered a speech, saying: "Let your hearts feel bravery, for it is of the reasons for victory. Mention spites very much, for they urge (you to stick to) boldness; stick to obedience, for it is the fortress of a warrior."[60](#)

He skillfully and wonderfully organized the movement. He described to the people the corruption of the Umayyad government that ruled them through oppression and exhaustion. He told them that he would spread justice, ease, and welfare among them. So the hearts responded to him, the masses of Khuresan welcomed him, and surrounded him. Through that the first core of the 'Abbasid army was formed.

The only thing through which Abu Muslim could win a victory and overcame the events was tribalism in Khuresan. For the Yemenis disagreed with the Mudaris. Abu Muslim fed and kindled this enemy phenomenon. He aroused anger in their hearts when they were about to unite to war against him. He urged them to take vengeance on each other. In this manner he was able to distract them from warring against him.

### With Nasar Bin Sayyar

When Nasar b. Sayyar came to know that Abu Muslim became strong and his influence became firm, he sent a letter to Merwan, the Umayyad king, asking him to help him before his government would be burnt with the fire of the revolt.

In his letter he wrote the following poetry lines:

I can see the remains of the ash look like the gleam of a fire that is about to have a flame.

For surely a fire is kindled with some sticks, and the beginning of a war is a speech.

So, if the wise of a people do not put it out, then its wood would be bodies and heads.

I say out of amazement:

I wish I knew whether the Umayyads were awake or asleep.

If they have been sleeping up till now, then say to them: Wake up! It is time (for you) to wake up!

Merwan was unable to answer him; he wrote to him and told him about his weakness and incapability of putting out that fire, saying to: "The witness can see what the absent cannot see!"

When Nasr was hopeless of his help, he sought help from the ruler of Iraq, Yazid b. 'Amru b. Hubayra.

He wrote him a letter and ended the letter with these poetry lines:

Inform Yazid and the best saying is the most truthful; I have come to know that there is no good in lying.

I have seen some eggs in the land of Khuresan. If they are hatched, they will bring about something wonderful.

They are two –year–old young birds; they have grown up and grown features, but they do not fly.

If they fly and none wangles toward them during this period, they will kindle the fires of a terrible war.

Yazid said to the carrier of the letter: "Say to your leader: There is no victory but through a large number (of fighters); and I have no man with me."[61](#)

Nasr thought of a way to get rid of the crisis, so he sent to al–Kirmani and Shayban al–Khariji the following poetry lines:

Inform Rabi'a in Maru and those in the Yemen to be angry before that anger will not profit (them).

And to declare war, for the people has declared a war in whose edges wood is burnt.

What is the matter with you that you fight one another as if that the men with intelligence were absent from your opinion?

And you leave an enemy who has encompassed you and who has neither religion nor lineage?

We do not know Arabs similar to you among the people, nor (do we know) pure non–Arabs if their ancestry is traced back.

They are the people who narrate from the Prophet sayings of which I have never heard, and which the Books have never mentioned.

Whoever asks me about the origin of their religion, surely their religion is that the Arabs should be killed.[62](#)

Nasr's attempts for overcoming the events were useless, for the revolt widely spread, the cities of Khuresan surrendered one by one, Abu Muslim was delighted at the victory he won and recited the following:

Through firmness and secrecy I have attained that before which the Umayyad kings are feeble when they mobilize (their fighters).

With my efforts I still striving (to shed) their blood, while the people have heedlessly slept in Sham (Syria).

Until I stroke them with the sword, and they woke up of a sleep which none before them had slept.

Whoever grazes sheep in a land with lions and neglects them, a lion will undertake grazing them.[63](#)

The troops of Abu Muslim occupied the cities and the fortresses and inflicted heavy damages on the enemy in souls and properties. As for Nasr, he was unable to stand before those immense forces. So he rode his horse and ran away; he passed through the desert between al-Ray and Hamadan and died of sadness in its unknown regions.[64](#)

Abu Muslim occupied Khuresan and the neighboring towns and villages. Then headed for Iraq to occupy it; his troops walked like waves; over them waved black standards that were the symbol of the 'Abbasids. They occupied Iraq without any resistance. In this manner the government of the 'Abbasids appeared at the hands of Abu Muslim.

We will talk about the end of the Umayyad government, the murder of its king Merwan, the different kinds of exhaustion and severe punishment the Umayyads met from the 'Abbasids when we talk about the time of (Abu al-'Abbas) al-Saffah.

Surely the talk about the factors that led to the overthrowing of the Umayyad government is necessary to the research on the life of Imam Musa, peace be on him, for he spent part of his life hearing of those social crises that changed the course of the general life. He was twenty-one years old when the Umayyad government was overthrown.

This period allowed him to convey to his inner self many views and pictures that passed by him. He saw that the revolt deviated from its course, for it was returning the government to Ahl al-Bayt, peace be on them, that the community might enjoy justice, welfare, ease, and tranquility.

Unfortunately, it conveyed the caliphate to the 'Abbasids, who went too far in killing the 'Abbasids, pursuing them, punishing them severely, filling their houses with sorrow, losing children and mourning. Of course, these things had strong effects on the soul of Imam Musa, peace be on him, to the extent that it was full of intense sorrow and deep sadness.

- [1.](#) Hayat al-Imam al-Husayn b. 'Ali, vol. 2, p. 336.
- [2.](#) Ibn Abi al-Haddeed, Sharh Nahj al-Balagha, vol. 3, p. 336.
- [3.](#) Hayat al-Imam al-Husayn.
- [4.](#) 'Aqaa'id al-Zaydiya.
- [5.](#) Ibn Abi al-Haddeed, Sharh Nahj al-Balagha, vol. 3, p. 15.
- [6.](#) Ibid.
- [7.](#) Hayat al-Imam al-Husayn b. 'Ali, vol. 2, p. 348.
- [8.](#) Mukhtasar Tarikh al-'Arab, p. 75.
- [9.](#) Ibn 'Asakir, Tarikh, vol. 6, p. 407.
- [10.](#) Ibn Abi al-Haddeed, Sharh Nahj al-Balagha, vol. 2, p. 357.
- [11.](#) Hayat al-Imam al-Husayn b. 'Ali, vol. 2, p. 149.
- [12.](#) Tabaqat al-Shu'ara', pp. 37-38.
- [13.](#) Tarikh al-Islam al-Siyasi, vol. 1, p. 398.
- [14.](#) Muluk al-Tawa'if wa Nazarat fi Tarikh al-Islam, p. 381.
- [15.](#) Al-Jahshyari, pp. 51-52.
- [16.](#) Tarikh al-Harakat al-Fikriya fi al-Islam, p. 42.
- [17.](#) Ibid.
- [18.](#) Al-Tabari, Tarikh, vol. 8, p. 129. Ibn al-Athir, Tarikh, vol. 5, p. 23.
- [19.](#) Al-Wizara' wa al-Kittaab, p. 24.
- [20.](#) Tarikh al-Harakat al-Fikriya fi al-Islam, p. 42. Tarikh al-Tamaddin al-Islami, vol. 2, p. 22.
- [21.](#) Tarikh al-Tamaddin al-Islami, vol. 2, p. 21.
- [22.](#) Tarikh al-Harakat al-Fikriya fi al-Islam, p. 42.
- [23.](#) Tarikh al-Tamaddin al-Islami, vol. 4, pp. 79-80.
- [24.](#) Ibid., p. 79.
- [25.](#) Tarikh al-Islam, vol. 1, p. 474.
- [26.](#) Al-Wizara' wa al-Kittaab, p. 118.
- [27.](#) Al-Tabari, Tarikh, vol. 8, p. 129.
- [28.](#) Al-Idara al-Islamiya, p. 114.
- [29.](#) Al-Ya'qubi, Tarikh, vol. 2, p. 55.
- [30.](#) Hayat al-Imam al-Hasan, vol. 2, p. 202.
- [31.](#) Al-Jahiz, al-Bayyan wa al-Tabiyyin, vol. 3, p. 358.
- [32.](#) Ibid., 359.
- [33.](#) Al-Siyada al-'Arabiya, p. 28.
- [34.](#) Nizam al-Hukum wa al-Idara fi al-Islam, p. 285.
- [35.](#) Al-Maqreezi, Khutat, vol. 1, p. 395.
- [36.](#) Ibid.
- [37.](#) Al-'Aqd al-Farid, vol. 2, p. 270.
- [38.](#) Al-Tabari, Tarikh, vol. 8, p. 134. Ibn al-Athir, Tarikh, vol. 5, p. 19.
- [39.](#) Al-'Aqd al-Farid, vol. 2, p. 271.
- [40.](#) Duha al-Islam, vol. 1, pp. 18-34.
- [41.](#) Ibn al-Athir, Tarikh, vol. 5, p. 57.
- [42.](#) Al-Murtada, Amali, vol. 1, p. 79.
- [43.](#) Al-Mas'udi, Murujj al-Dhahab, vol. 1, p. 147.

- [44.](#) Al-Murtada, Amali, vol. 1, p. 89.
- [45.](#) Al-Ya'qubi, Tarikh, vol. 3, p. 73.
- [46.](#) Bin 'Aisha is 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Ubayd Allah. His mother 'Aisha is the mother of Muhammad b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Ubayd Allah. He was a Temimi belonged to Quraysh. His kunya was Abu Sa'eed. Sumayya, the mother of Ziyad b. Abeeh was among his grandmothers.
- [47.](#) Al-Mas'udi, Murujj al-Dhahab, vol. 3, p. 148.
- [48.](#) Ibid., pp. 159-163.
- [49.](#) Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil, vol. 5, p. 17.
- [50.](#) Al-Tabari, Tarikh, vol. 9, p. 38.
- [51.](#) Ibn al-Athir, Tarikh, vol. 5, p. 105.
- [52.](#) Al-Imama wa al-Siyasa, vol. 2, pp. 140-141.
- [53.](#) Al-Fekhri, pp. 122-123.
- [54.](#) Ahsan al-Taqaaseem fi Ma'rifat al-Aqaleem, pp. 293-294.
- [55.](#) Maqatil al-Talibiyin, p. 256.
- [56.](#) Al-Tabari, the Events of the Year 128 A. H.
- [57.](#) Ibn al-Athir, Tarikh, vol. 4, p. 295
- [58.](#) The historians have said: "Abu Muslim killed all those who opposed him."
- [59.](#) Ibn al-Athir, Tarikh, vol. 4, p. 295.
- [60.](#) Al-'Aqd al-Fareed, vol. 1, p. 158.
- [61.](#) Ibn al-Athir, Tarikh, vol. 4, p. 305.
- [62.](#) Ibid. p. 304.
- [63.](#) Wafayat al-A'yan, vol. 1, p. 282.
- [64.](#) Al-Mas'udi, Murujj al-Dhahab, vol. 204.

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