

Installation of Yazid as Ruler

Before Yazid's reign in 60 A.H., his father, Muawiya bin Abi Sufyan, ruled over the Muslims. Both, the father and the grandfather, accepted Islam *only as a measure of last resort*, after the recapture of Mecca and their defeat as leaders of intense opposition against Prophet Muhammad (S).

This is the same Muawiya who, not only rebelled and waged a war against "The Fourth Caliph" (Imam Ali bin Abi Talib a. s.), who had been elected by the Muslims to be their Caliph, but also opposed and fought Imam Hasan (the brother of Imam Husayn a. s.), who, according to Sheikh Abdallah S. Farsy, "was murdered by being poisoned" by Yazid, the so called *Amirul Mu'minin!* (Refer Sheikh Abdallah S. Farsy's book *Maisha ya Sayyidnal Hasan* (**The Biography of Sayyidna Hasan**) p. 24, 1999 ed., published by Adam Traders, Mombasa.

Ten years before he was poisoned, Imam Hasan had signed a ceasefire agreement with Yazid's father, Muawiya, after an intense battle. In his book, on page 16, Sheikh Abdallah S. Farsy states that one of the conditions of this ceasefire agreement was that Imam Hasan would cede Caliphate to Muawiya. However, on the death of Muawiya, the Caliphate would revert to Imam Hasan (a.s.), if he were still alive, or else, it would revert to Imam Husayn (a.s.).

Sheikh Abdallah S. Farsy continues to explain on page 24 of the same book that "Yazid realized the fact that on the death of his father, he would lose the opportunity to inherit his rulership, which would pass on to Hasan, as per the treaty. He decided to murder him (Hasan) by poisoning him. He sent some trusted individuals secretly to Sayyidnal Hasan's last wife, Jaada binti Asha-ath, who had no children with him. She was promised that if she murdered her husband, Yazid would marry her and that she would be given one hundred thousand Dirhams in advance, and much more, if she so wished. She was overcome by this temptation and poisoned her husband, who suffered for forty days, and passed away, a martyr..."

On page 18 of his book titled **The Biography of Sayyidina Husayn**, Sheikh Abdallah S. Farsy says: "Before the death of Sayyidina Hasan, Muawiya *had made up his mind to unbind himself from his treaty to let Al Hasan*, or any one else, to succeed him. He decided to *make his favorite son, Yazid, heir-apparent to his throne*. He would let the public know that on his death, *there would be no nomination, except that his son, Yazid would become the Caliph*. This would be done regardless of *Hasan's consent*

or not, and in face of acceptance or rejection by all and sundry.” He concludes thus: “*So that they should continue to stay in their positions*, most of his governors strongly supported this idea despite the fact that it was un-Islamic...”

After the martyrdom of Imam Hasan that resulted from him being poisoned, Muawiya planned his strategy to establish his son Yazid’s succession. But to do this was not easy. According to what Sheikh Abdallah S. Farsy states in his book **The Biography of Sayyidina Husayn** on page 18, “(Muawiya) perceived the difficulties in breaching the covenant and planned to execute his stratagem stealthily by *prompting his governors to air this view and thus create an impression that this idea was not his but that of his governors*. He instructed his governors to promote this idea in their domains of authority casually, in the initial stage.”

Having done so, he then assembled them all at one venue and as preplanned, made each of them, one after the other, propose Yazid’s succession. However, all of them did not comply; among those who opposed this idea was Al Ahnaf bin Qays, who, according to Sheikh Abdallah S. Farsy (refer his book Page 20), said: *‘No! We, the people of Iraq, and the people of Hijaz, too, are not in agreement with this. We are not satisfied with the prospect of having Yazid as the Caliph of Muslims. And you, more than any one else, know that your son is unfit (for this position). Do not purposely condemn yourself to Hell. As for us, we shall not be satisfied unless we see this position goes to one from the progeny of Ali.’*”

There ensued a commotion. Sheikh reports (page 20): “Abu Khunayf *unsheathed his sword*...Addressing Muawiya, he said, *‘Let him who opposes me taste this: he will then come to his senses.’* Preparing to go away, Muawiya said: *‘Indeed, this is a true patriot, one who is man of action, not mere words, one who is the best of all who are present here.’* The assembly then dispersed.”

Sheikh Farsy continues (page 21) saying that when Bibi Aisha, the Prophet’s wife, came to know about this, “*she was very angry because Muawiya was going back on his promises given to Sayyidnal Hasan...*”

This matter ended at that, and no further action was taken. However, after a while, (in 50 A.H.), Muawiya went to Medina, in the words of Sheikh Farsy, “to send out his feelers.” There, “he had a meeting with the sons of prominent companions (of the Prophet, (S)), namely, Abdullah bin Abbas bin Abdil Muttalib, Abdullah bin Ja’far bin Abi Talib bin Abdil Muttalib, and Abdullah bin Zubair bin Awam; he did not call for Sayyidinal Husayn.” He talked with them very graciously so as to win their approval, *but all of them turned him down*, and he went home empty handed!

“On the death of Sayyidnal Hasan,” says Sheikh A.S. Farsy (page 22), “Muawiya *ordered* people of Syria to *accept Yazid* as their Caliph after him. *They complied unanimously.*” He then ordered the governor of Medina to force all people of Medina to accept Yazid (as their next Caliph). According to Sheikh A. S. Farsy (page 23), “he (the governor of Medina) was *deeply agitated*, seeing no reason why a *depraved young man* should rule over the elders and the companions of the Prophet (S).” Therefore,

he let Muawiya know his stand; Muawiya responded immediately, “writing him a letter to terminate his services as governor.”

On receiving this letter, the governor (Merwan bin Hakam) “was furious, and accompanied by elders of his maternal relatives and members of his clan (Bani Kinana), he went to Syria to meet Muawiya with a threat of a coup. Thus threatened, *Muawiya treated the governor and his relatives with soothing words, plenty of cash and a life-long pension comprising three hundred pounds per month for him, and fifty pounds per month for each of his relatives...*”

Back in Medina, the new governor implemented Muawiya’s orders fully, and reported to him those who were in the front line opposing this order. In turn, Muawiya dispatched to him individual letters for each one of them, and ordered him to extract from each of them a response. The addressees of these letters were: Abdullah bin Abbas bin Abdil Muttalib, Husayn bin Ali bin Abi Talib bin Abdil Muttalib, Abdullah bin Ja’far bin Abi Talib bin Abdil Muttalib, and Abdullah bin Zubair bin Saffiya bint Abdil Muttalib.” Sheikh A. S. Farsy reports in his book on page 24, that “the content of this letter was very harsh, *warning the addressees that he would kill them if they refused to accept Yazid’s succession to Caliphate after his death.*”

As per Sheikh A. S. Farsy (page 24), these dignitaries “responded in sharp and stern words. The longest reply was from Sayyidinal Husayn.”

On receiving these replies, Muawiya instructed his governor, once more, to put “*severe pressure on them to make them comply*. The governor did so, but with no success,” says Sheikh A. S. Farsy (page 24). He, therefore, advised Muawiya to go to Medina to meet them personally.

Muawiya went to Medina and “after resting, he met secretly with each one of them separately, so that they should not give him one reply unanimously,” says Sheikh A. S. Farsy (page 25). The first one he talked to was Imam Husayn a. s. “He told him, ‘My son! Do not create division in the community of your grandfather. Every one is satisfied that Yazid should succeed me as the Caliph. There are no opponents to this except you and those whom you lead. They have told me that as soon as you have agreed, they, too, will be satisfied.’ He (Imam Husayn) replied, ‘Bring them here and let them say so in my presence. For I do not believe that they have really told you so. However, if they truly reiterate what they have told you I, too, will, comply, but I’m certain that they will not concur.’ Muawiya retorted: ‘Fine, you can go, but do not disclose to any one any thing that transpired in the course of our conversation.’ This is what Sheikh A. S. Farsy has recorded in his book on page 25.

After Imam Husayn a. s., Muawiya called Abdullah bin Zubair, and then Abdullah bin Umar bin al Khattab. They, too, gave the same reply as that of Imam Husayn a. s. – “*verbatim*”. Here, Sheikh A. S. Farsy, adds (page 25–26), Muawiya sent for Abdul Rahman bin Abi Bakr bin Sidiqq. They had an *intensively bitter exchange of words*. As they both were of the same age, their exchange of words was at par with each other, with anger.”

After that, Muawiya had to change his strategy. “On the next day,” says Sheikh A. S. Farsy (page 26), “he called for Sayyidinal Husayn and Abdullah bin Abbas.” After inquiring about “them and their families, he began to praise his son, Yazid, attributing to him *qualities that he had, and ones that he did not have*. Having done so, he told them, ‘For this reason he deserves to become the Caliph of Muslims...’” Sheikh A. S. Farsy says on page 26 that, Imam Husayn retorted by describing *Yazid’s viciousness* and then added, “Do not add more sins to what you have already accumulated for yourself. Enough is enough. *You are violating Islamic values and Muslims’ rights. by imposing on them your whims.*”

When this strategy also failed, Muawiya ordered that all the three dignitaries be presented to him: they being Abdur Rahman bin Aby Bakr, Abdullah bin Umar and Abdullah bin Zubair. (See Sheikh A.S. Farsy, page 27). “He welcomed them collectively, and then told them, ‘This issue of Yazid’s succession *is the choice of Allah* and acceptable to all except you three. Be careful not to cause a calamity. Or else, you will incur both Allah’s and *my* wrath...’ *All of them contradicted* him... He decided to talk in confidence with Adur Rahman bin Abi Bakr. On hearing this talk about Yazid’s succession, Abdur Rahman said: ‘*We don’t want that to happen*. And if you implement your decision by force, *we shall re-enact the first battle fought by the Muslims, you and those who share your views being on the side of polytheists, the way your father was then.*’” So saying, Abdur Rahman walked out.

After three days, all the people of Medina were ordered to assemble. Muawiya kept close to himself all those who were opposing him; announced to those present that every nook and corner of his empire had accepted Yazid as their next Caliph except the people of Madina, and that if he knew of any other person better qualified than Yazid, he would have paved way for that person’s succession, but there was no such person. Then he warned them all that he did not want to hear any opposition. He adjourned the assembly, to resume it again in the evening.

Sheikh Abdallah narrates (page 28–29) that prior to going to this meeting, Muawiya “assembled all his opponents and went with them to the meeting. When he arrived there, he said, ‘*I have arranged for hired killers* to be present at the assembly. I shall announce to the public that *you have now agreed with the succession of Yazid*. He who does not value his life should raise his objection. For no sooner does he do so, than people will see his head rolling on the ground.’ And he had instructed his soldiers to *instantly kill anyone who dared oppose him*. Besides that, he made this threat known to all those who were present there, so that *all of them remain in a state of fear.*”

Now, this is Muawiya and this is how he planned his son’s succession — that son, Yazid, whom the Wahabis regard as *Amirul-mu’minin* (the Prince of Believers), May Allah forgive us!

At this public assembly, assuming the same threatening posture that he had used in warning Imam Husayn and others, Muawiya mounted the pulpit and said, “Be my witness that those who had been opposing me (regarding Yazid’s succession) are now in agreement (with my proposal); and they are all present here. They are the patriots of Madina and the companions (of the Prophet (S)). All is now well.” This is what Sheikh Abdallah S. Farsy narrates in his book, page 29. He then adds, “After that, he

distributed *large sums of money to the elders of each clan belonging to Muhajirs and Ansars, and others...*” This is how Yazid secured his Caliphate in the month of Rajab, A.H. 60, on the death of his father.

O my Muslim brothers! If this is how things were, as portrayed by Sheikh Abdallah Saleh Farsy, then would any genuine Muslim, who truly understands his religion, and who wishes to protect the honor of Islam, ever perceive a man like Yazid to be among the leaders of Islam, let alone accept him as *Amirul Mu'minin* or the Prince of the Believers? Bear in mind that these are not the direct acts of Yazid as such; they were perpetrated by his father, Muawiya. However, the heinous acts that he himself committed after his succession surpasses those of his father.

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