

[Home](#) > [Tragedy of al-Zahra': Doubts and Responses](#) > [Part 3- Digression: Khalid ibn al-Walid and his Father](#) > Story of al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah

Part 3- Digression: Khalid ibn al-Walid and his Father

Here, we divert the attention to narrate to him a page of history with which not many Muslims are familiar. Many Muslims have heard the name "Khalid ibn al-Walid" but seldom have they been told who he was and who his father was; therefore, we would like to take the reader back to the early days of Islam in order to introduce him to Khalid's father, al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah:

Now the reader comes to know who Khalid is and later who his cursed father was.

Khalid ibn al-Walid

His full name is: Khalid ibn al-Walid ibn al-Maghirah of Banu Makhzum. He is given by "Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'a" the title of "The Sword of Allah."

His father was one of the wealthiest men whose wealth was immeasurable and is condemned in the text of the Holy Qur'an as you will come to know later in the next excerpt.

Khalid's father thought that he deserved to be prophet more than Muhammed (S); he used to say, "Should the Qur'an and Prophetic Mission be revealed unto Muhammed (S) the indigent while I, the master of and the greatest among Quraish, be left out?"

On such a doctrine did his son, Khalid, grow up bearing animosity towards Islam and the Prophet of Islam who ridiculed his father's dreams and undermined his power base. Khalid, therefore, participated in each and every war waged against the Messenger of Allah.

Khalid undoubtedly used to share his father's belief that the latter was more worthy of Prophetic Mission than Muhammad (S), the indigent orphan. Since Khalid, like his father, was one of the most prominent figures in Quraish, if not the very most prominent one, he felt he should have had the lion's share of the Qur'an and the Prophetic Mission had they only been his father's lot, and he would have inherited

Prophetic Mission and authority just as prophet Solomon had inherited David. It is in reference to such belief that Allah, Glory to Him, says,

When the truth came to them, they said: This is sorcery, and in it are we disbelievers. And they said: Why was this Qur'an not revealed to a man of importance in both towns [Mecca and Medina]? (Holy Qur'an, 43:30-31)

No wonder, then, to see how he tried all he could to put an end to Muhammed (S) and his mission. We find him raising a huge army financed from his wealth during the Battle of Uhud, lying in ambush to the Prophet in an attempt to finish him. During the year of the Hudaibiya treaty, which was signed on Thul-Qi'da 4, 5 A.H./March 27, 627 A.D. he also tried to assassinate the Prophet (S), but Allah, Glory to Him, foiled all his schemes, rendering them a failure, while supporting His Prophet on all occasions.

When Khalid came to know, as did other prominent members of Quraish, that the Messenger of Allah (S) was invincible, seeing how people were accepting the religion of Allah in large numbers, it was then that he surrendered to reality while suppressing his sighs. His acceptance of Islam, therefore, came as late as the eighth year after the Hijra (630 A.D., though some say it took place one year earlier, i.e. in 629 A.D.), only four months before the conquest of Mecca which took place in 8 A.H./630 A.D.

Khalid inaugurated his acceptance of Islam by behaving contrarily to the orders issued by the Messenger of Allah (S) not to kill anyone. Khalid entered Mecca on the conquest day after having killed more than thirty men who belonged mostly to Quraish although the Prophet had clearly instructed them not to kill anyone.

No matter how many excuses some people may find for Khalid by saying, for example, that he was banned from entering Mecca, and that they faced him with their weapons, he was not justified in killing anyone after having been prohibited by the Prophet from doing so; he could have gone to another gate to enter the city without a fight as others did, or to send a message to the Prophet seeking his advice with regard to those who were prohibiting him from entering. But none of that happened. Rather, Khalid followed his own opinion, challenging what he had clearly heard from the Messenger of Allah (S).

Since we are talking about those who follow their own opinions at the expense of contradicting the available text, something which gained many supporters and enthusiasts, or say it acquired a school of its own from which many great *sahaba* and legislators graduated, a school which was later called the school of the caliphs, we cannot avoid pointing out here to the fact that *ijtihad* in such sense is nothing other than disobedience of Allah and His Messenger (S).

We have become accustomed to seeing references made to *ijtihad* versus the available texts, so much so that it appears as though it is perfectly legitimate. In fact, we have to say that Khalid disobeyed the Prophet's order instead of saying that he followed his own view in the face of an existing text. This is what the Qur'an teaches us to do; Allah says, "Adam disobeyed his Lord, so his life became evil to him...." (Holy Qur'an, 20:121). This is so because Allah had prohibited him from eating of the forbidden

tree. Since Adam did eat of it, we must not say: "Adam followed his own *ijtihad* as opposed to the available text."

Each and every Muslim has to keep himself at his limit rather than transgress and voice his own view in an issue regarding which an order permitting or prohibiting it had already been issued by Allah or His Messenger (S), for that will be obvious apostasy. Allah said to the angels,

"Prostrate to Adam." This is an order. "So they prostrated" (Holy Qur'an, 20: 116);

this is a positive response, an act of submission, an expression of obedience. The exception was Eblis: He followed his own view, so he said, "I am better than him; why, then, should I prostrate to him?!" Here we encounter a rebellion, a mutiny, regardless of who is better than who: Adam or Eblis. This is why the most Glorified One says,

"It does not behoove any believing man or woman to make any choice in their matter once Allah and His Apostle have decided it, and whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger (S) surely strays off a manifest straying" (Holy Qur'an, 33:36).

It is to this fact that Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) referred when he said once to Abu Hanifah, "Do not apply *qiyas* (analogy), for if it is applied to the Shari'a, it will be obliterated, and the first person to apply *qiyas* was Eblis when he said,

'I am better than him; You created me of fire while creating him of dust' (Holy Qur'an, 7: 12 and 38:76)."

His statement that "... If it is applied to the Shari'a, it will be obliterated" is the best expression of the invalidity of *qiyas*. If people follow their own diverse views in the face of available texts, there will be no Shari'a at all.

"Had the truth followed their own (low) desires, the heavens and the earth and all those therein would then have perished" (Holy Qur'an, 23:71).

Having made this brief express the principle of *ijtihad*, let us see how Khalid ibn al-Walid disobeyed the order issued by the Messenger of Allah (S) on another occasion when he was sent by the Prophet to Banu Juthaymah to invite them to Islam. The Prophet did not order Khalid to fight anyone.

Yet Khalid went there and afflicted them with treachery even after their declaration of acceptance of Islam, killing some of them in cold blood, so much so that Abd al-Rahman ibn 'Awf, who was an eye witness to that incident, said that Khalid had killed them only out of his desire to seek revenge for both of his uncles whom Banu Juthaymah had killed¹. When the Messenger of Allah (S) heard about that shameful treachery, he thrice dissociated himself before Allah from what Khalid ibn al-Walid had done. Then he sent them Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) carrying with him a lot of money to pay their blood money, the blood spilled by Khalid.

No matter how many excuses "Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'a" may find for Khalid ibn al-Walid, the pages of history are full of the tragedies which he inflicted and of his violations of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (S). Suffices the researcher to read his biography and what he did in the Yamama during the time of Abu Bakr, how he betrayed Malik ibn Nuwayrah and executed his men in cold blood although they were Muslims then "married" Malik's wife and cohabited with her on the same night of her husband's murder, discarding Islam's Shari'a with regard to the *'idda* and the Arabs' principles of valor and manliness.

Even "Umar ibn al-Khattab, despite his reluctance to enforce Islam's injunctions, exposed him and called him an enemy of Allah, promising to stone him to death, which he never carried out.

Researchers are obligated to review history with keen eyes from the stand of constructive criticism which leads them to the truth without any abstraction or bias. Nor should they be overtaken by sectarian fanaticism, so they evaluate individuals based on fabricated *ahadith* attributed to the Prophet. "Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'a," who, in fact, are Banu Umayyah, wiped out all historical events with one single tradition which they themselves fabricated in order to thus stop the researchers short of reaching the truth.

How easy it is for one of them to say, "The Messenger of Allah said to Khalid ibn al-Walid, 'Welcome, O Sword of Allah!'" so this false tradition takes control of the hearts of innocent Muslims who think well of others and who do not know what others hide and what schemes the Umayyads plot! Based on this fabricated tradition, they interpret all facts about Khalid and find excuses for him. This is called the psychological effect on people, and it is the acute ailment obstructing one from reaching the truth, turning the facts upside down.

History is the best witness of deeds through which we evaluate anyone; we do not hold in high esteem anyone about whom falsehood is uttered. This, in fact, is exactly what Imam Ali (as) has said: "If you want to know the truth, you must know who follows it." Since we have studied history and come to know what Khalid ibn al-Walid had done and come to distinguish the truth from falsehood, we cannot call him "The Sword of Allah." We have also the right to ask on what occasion did the Messenger of Allah (S) ever called him the "Sword of Allah"?! Did he call him Allah's sword when he killed the people of Mecca on the conquest day, having come to know that he had prohibited him from fighting anyone? Or was it when he sent him with the army commanded by Zayd ibn al-Harithah and dispatched to Mu'ta, saying, "If Zayd is killed, then Ja'far ibn Abu Talib (should take the command), and if Ja'far is killed, then Abdullah ibn Ruwahah [should lead]," without nominating him except in the fourth position to lead the army, yet after all these three men were killed, Khalid fled from the battle field accompanied by the remnant of that army...? Or did he give him that title when he accompanied him to attack Hunayn in twelve thousand warriors? There, too, he fled, leaving behind him on the battle grounds the Messenger of Allah (S) who had no more than twelve men who stood steadfastly with him?

I personally think that Khalid, in the first place, never knew this title as long as the Prophet was alive, nor

did the Messenger of Allah (S) ever call him so. Rather, Abu Bakr was the one who bestowed this "badge of courage" on him when he sent him to silence those who revolted against him and opposed his caliphate, so he did to them what he did, so much so that "Umar ibn al-Khattab (because of what Khalid had done) said to Abu Bakr, "Khalid's sword is quite excessive," and he surely knew him best. It was then that Abu Bakr responded to "Umar by saying, "Khalid is one of the swords of Allah which He unsheathed against His foes," which is a totally erroneous way of looking at things ___ hence the title.

In his book *Al-Riyad al-Nadira*, al-Tabari indicates that Banu Saleem had reneged, whereupon Abu Bakr sent them Khalid ibn al-Walid who gathered some of their men inside animal sheds then set them to fire. [Islam prohibits burning humans or animals or even green plants.] When "Umar ibn al-Khattab came to know about this incident, he went to see Abu Bakr and said, "Why do you let a man employ the same method of torture employed by Allah, the Most Exalted One, the Great [i.e. burning with fire]?" Abu Bakr answered him by saying, "By Allah! I shall not shame a sword which Allah unsheathed against His foes till He Himself shames it," then he ordered him to leave, whereupon he instantly went out to see Musaylamah the Liar. This is how "Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'a" came to call Khalid "The Sword of Allah" even though he had disobeyed the order of the Messenger of Allah (S) and burnt people with fire, thus totally discarding the Sunnah.

In his *Sahih*, al-Bukhari indicates that the Messenger of Allah (S) had said, "Nobody employs the fire for torture except Allah," and also, "None torments with the fire except the fire's God." And we have already indicated how Abu Bakr used to say before his death, "I wish I never burnt al-Salami!"

We say: We wish there had been someone to ask "Umar ibn al-Khattab, "Since you already knew that none torments with the fire except Allah, why did you swear after the death of the Prophet to burn the house of Fatima al-Zahra' and everyone inside it if they refused to swear the oath of allegiance [to Abu Bakr]? Had Ali (as) not surrendered and ordered everyone to go out to swear it, you would certainly have carried out your threat."

Sometimes I doubt whether "Umar opposed Abu Bakr and whether the latter did not heed his opposition, for this would be quite unusual. We have already seen how Abu Bakr did not stand in the face of "Umar, nor did he maintain his stand in the face of his opposition.

More than once did he say to him, "I had already told you that you are stronger than me in handling this matter, but you subdued me." On another occasion, when he complained to him about those whose hearts could be won towards Islam and what "Umar did to the covenant which he had written for them, how he spat on it and tore it to pieces [a reference to the Fadak property deed], he was asked, "Are you the caliph or is it "Umar?" He answered, "He, Allah willing, is." For this reason, I say that the one who opposed Khalid's ugly deeds may have been none other than Ali ibn Abu Talib (as), but the early historians and narrators used to quite often avoid mentioning his name, so they substituted it with that of "Umar as testified by several narrations traced back to "Zainab's father" or to "a man," meaning Ali (as) but not openly revealing his name.

Actually, this is not a mere probability, or we may accept what is stated by some historians who write saying that "Umar ibn al-Khattab used to hate Khalid and could not stand looking at him in the face because he was jealous of him: Khalid had won people's hearts because of his victories. It is also said that Khalid had wrestled with "Umar during the days of *jahiliyya*, winning the match and breaking "Umar's leg.

What is important is that once he became caliph, "Umar deposed Khalid but did not carry out his threat of stoning him. The result: Khalid and "Umar ibn al-Khattab vied with one another in their toughness and arrogance; each one of them was stone-hearted, and each deliberately violated the Prophet's Sunnah and disobeyed the Prophet during his life and after his death.

Moreover, both hated the Prophet's *wasi* and tried very hard to distance him from public life. Khalid plotted with both "Umar and Abu Bakr to assassinate Ali (as) shortly after the death of the Prophet (as the reader will come to know later), but Allah, Glorified and Exalted is He, saved him from their mischief so that he might carry out something which He had decreed.

The following text is excerpted from the Translator's book *Allah: The Concept of God in Islam* (Volume Two) (Bloomington, Indiana, U.S.A., Authorhouse, 2013):

Story of al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah

Al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah, father of Khalid ibn al-Walid, was a man of experience and cunning, a senior among Arab seniors of his time, a man of great wealth according to the testimony of the Holy Qur'an as we read in Surat al-Muddaththir (Chapter 74 of the Holy Qur'an). All the clans of Quraish used to collectively share the expense of the covering sheet of the Ka'ba one year, and in the next year, al-Walid would pay the entire expense all by himself. In Mecca alone, he had ten sons and ten slaves, and each one of his slaves used to trade in a merchandise valued at one thousand dinars, each dinar weighing one *qintar*, talent, of gold (equivalent to four thousand dinars).

He used to always ridicule Prophet Mu'ammed (S). The Prophet (S) used quite often to recite the Holy Qur'an (and sometimes he would ask others to recite it in his presence). The Quraishis assembled at the house of al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah and said to him, AO Abd al-Shams! What is this that Mu'ammed is saying? Is it poetry, sorcery, or oratory?!" ALet me hear it myself," said he, going close to where Mu'ammed was as he recited the Qur'an. AO Mu'ammed! Said al-Walid, ARecite to me some of your poetry." The Prophet (S) said, Alt is not poetry; it is the speech of Allah with which He blessed His angels and prophets." ARecite some of it for me," said al-Walid. The Messenger of Allah (S) recited these verses of Surat *mu-Meem* (Chapter 32 of the Holy Qur'an):

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الم ﴿٩﴾ تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ؟! بَلْ هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لِتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أَتَاهُمْ [مِنْ نَذِيرٍ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١١﴾ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ؛ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا شَفِيعٍ؛ أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ؟ ﴿١٢﴾ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿١٣﴾ ذَلِكَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٤﴾ الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنْسَانِ مِنْ طِينٍ ﴿١٥﴾ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِّنْ مَّاءٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ سَوَّاهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِنْ رُّوحِهِ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ، قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾ وَقَالُوا: أَإِذَا ضَلَلْنَا فِي الْأَرْضِ، أَإِنَّا لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ؟! بَلْ هُمْ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ كَافِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾ قُلْ: يَتَوَفَّاكُم مَّلَكُ الْمَوْتِ الَّذِي وُكِّلَ بِكُمْ، ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٩﴾ وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ الْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُو رُءُوسِهِمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ: رَبَّنَا أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَارْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدًى، وَلَكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي: لِأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ]

In the Name of Allah, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful.

Aleef Lam Meem. (This is) the Revelation of the Book in which there is no doubt, from the Lord of the worlds. Or do they say, "He has forged it"?! Nay, it is the truth from the Lord of the Worlds so that you may admonish (thereby) people to whom no warner has come before you in order that they may receive guidance. It is Allah Who has created the heavens and the earth, and all between them, in six days, and He is firmly established on the throne (of authority): You have none, besides Him, to protect or intercede (for you): will you then not receive admonishment? He regulates (all) affairs from the heavens to the earth: In the end (all affairs) will go up to Him, on a Day the span whereof will be (as) a thousand years of your reckoning. Such is He, the One Who knows all things, the hidden and the open, the One Exalted (in power), the Merciful One; He Who has made everything which He has created excellently. He began the creation of man with (nothing more than) clay, and made his progeny from a quintessence of the nature of a despised fluid: He then fashioned him in due proportion and breathed into him of His spirit. And He gave you (the faculties of) hearing and sight and feeling (and understanding): Small thanks do you grant! And they say, "What?! When we lie, hidden and lost, (buried) in the ground, shall we indeed be in a renewed creation?!" Nay, they deny the meeting with their Lord! Say, "The angel of death, (the one who is) in charge of you, will (duly) take your souls (away at the time of death); then you shall be brought back to your Lord." If only you could see when the guilty ones bend their heads down before their Lord (saying,) "Our Lord! We have seen and we have heard: Now, then, do send us back (to the world): We will do righteous deeds, for we do indeed believe (now)." If We had so willed, We could certainly have brought every soul its true guidance: But the word from Me will come true: "I will fill Hell with jinns and men all together." (Qur'an, 32: 1-13)

When the Prophet (S) finished reciting the last verse quoted above, al-Walid shuddered and his hair stood up. He went home without giving Quraish an answer.

Quraish, therefore, went to Abu Jahl and said, AO Abu al-μakam! Abd al-Shams is inclined towards Mu'ammed's creed; have you seen how he did not come to us with a follow-up? Abu Jahl went to him and said, AO uncle! You have caused our heads to stoop down in humiliation and have exposed us and

made our enemies happy on our account by you inclining towards Mu'ammed's creed. al-Walid said, Al have not inclined to his creed, but I heard something he said which is quite weighty, a speech because of which the skins shudder. Als it an address that he delivered? asked Abu Jahl. al-Walid said, ANo, it is not, for an address is a continuous speech, and this is prose some parts of which are not similar to others. Als it poetry? asked Abu Jahl. ANo, al-Walid answered, Afor I have heard all types of the Arabs' poetry; it is not poetry. AThen what is it? asked Abu Jahl. ALet me think about it, answered al-Walid. On the next day, he was asked again, AO Abd al-Shams! What do you say about our query? He said, ATell people that it is sorcery, for this will affect people's hearts better. It is then that the Almighty revealed the following verses to express His Wrath at what al-Walid had attributed to Him and to His Prophet:

ذَرْنِي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ۖ وَجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَالًا مَمْدُودًا ۖ وَبَنِينَ شُهُودًا ۖ وَمَهَّدْتُ لَهُ تَمْهِيدًا ۖ ثُمَّ يَطْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ ۖ]
 كَلَّا! إِنَّهُ كَانَ لِآيَاتِنَا عَنِيدًا ۖ سَأَرْهِقُهُ صَعُودًا ۖ إِنَّهُ فَكَرَ وَقَدَّرَ ۖ فَقَتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۖ ثُمَّ قُتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ۖ ثُمَّ نَظَرَ ۖ ثُمَّ
 عَبَسَ وَبَسَرَ ۖ ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ۖ فَفَالَ: إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ يُؤْتَرُ ۖ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ ۖ سَأُصْلِيهِ سَقَرَ ۖ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ
 مَا سَقَرُ ۖ لَا تُبْقِي وَلَا تَذَرُ ۖ لَوَاحِشٌ لِّلْبَشَرِ ۖ عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةُ عَشَرِ

Leave Me and him whom I created alone and gave vast riches, and sons dwelling in his presence, and I adjusted affairs for him adjustably, yet he desires that I should add more! By no means! Surely he opposes Our Signs. I will make a distressing punishment overtake him. Surely he reflected and guessed, but may he be cursed how he guessed! Again, may he be cursed how he guessed! Then he looked, then he frowned and scowled, then he turned back and was big with pride, then he said: This is naught but sorcery narrated (from others); this is naught but the word of a mortal. I will cast him into hell. and what will make you realize what hell is? It leaves naught, nor does it spare aught. It scorches the mortal. Over it are nineteen (keepers). (Qur'an, 74: 11-30).

¹. On p. 61, Vol. 2, of his Tarikh, al-Ya`qubi says that Abd al-Rahman said, "By Allah! It is Khalid who killed these people though they are Muslims." Khalid responded by saying, "Rather, I have killed them to avenge your father `Awf ibn Abd `Awf!" Abd al-Rahman then said to him, "No, you did not avenge my father, but you avenged your uncle al-Faqih ibn al-Maghirah." See how Khalid did not deny that he killed those people although they were Muslims but rather admitted that he killed them seeking revenge for `Awf, Abd al-Rahman's father. Does this, according to Allah's creed, permit him to massacre a group of people for the murder of one single man? Is it permissible to kill several Muslims for the killing of one kafir?

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/tragedy-al-zahra-doubts-and-responses-jafar-murtadha-al-amili/part-3-digression-khalid-ibn-al-walid#comment-0>