

The Household Of Al-Husayn (as) in Sham (Syria)

Thereafter, Ibn Ziyad summoned Zahr bin Qais¹, with whom were Abu Bardah bin 'Auf al-Azdi and Tariq bin ²abyan al-Azdi, and sent them with the head of al-Husayn (as) and those of his companions to Yazid bin Mu'awiyah.²

He then ordered for the womenfolk of al-Husayn and his children, so they got ready. Shackles were put on the neck of 'Ali bin al-Husayn (as) on his order. Then he sent [the caravan] under the command of Muhaffaz bin Tha'labah al-'A'idhi [al-Qarashi]³ and Shamir bin Dhi al-Jaushan. So they set out with them [towards Sham] and entered upon Yazid.⁴

In the Court of Yazid

When the heads of al-Husayn and those of his family members and companions were placed in front of Yazid, he recited:

The swords have splitted the heads of people who were dear to us, but they were most rebellious and unjust.^{5,6}

Yahya bin al-Hakam⁷, the brother of Marwan bin al-Hakam, recited [in objection]:

On the bank [of the river] lies a head which is closer in kinship to us than Ibn Ziyad, the slave with a false lineage.

The offspring of Sumayyah has largely increased, while the daughter of the Prophet of Allah remains without offspring!

Yazid bin Mu'awiyah struck his hand against the chest of Yahya bin al-Hakam and said: "Be quiet!"⁸

Then he granted permission to the people, so they entered [the court]. The head [of al-Husayn] was

placed before him. He had a cane with him by which he was poking at the teeth [of al-Husayn]. Abu Barazah al-Aslami⁹, one of the companions of the Messenger of Allah (S), said:

“You are poking with your cane at the teeth of al-Husayn! Indeed you have placed your staff at a point where I have often seen the Prophet of Allah (S) sucking it. O Yazid! You will indeed come on the Day of Judgment while your intercessor will be Ibn Ziyad, whereas [al-Husayn] will come on the Day of Judgement with Muhammad (S) as his intercessor.” He then stood and went away.

Hind, the daughter of ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amir bin Kuraiz¹⁰, [the wife of Yazid], heard their conversation. So she put on her veil and came out. She said [addressing Yazid]: “O commander of the faithful! Is this the head of al-Husayn, son of Fatimah, daughter of the Prophet of Allah?!”

He said: “Yes! So lament on him and mourn over the son of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah and the succor of the Quraish! Ibn Ziyad dealt with him hastily and killed him. May Allah kill him!”

Yahya bin al-Hakam said: “You will be distanced from Muhammad on the Day of Resurrection. I shall never work together with you again.” Then he stood up and went away.¹¹

[Before] Yazid bin Mu’awiyah took his place, he summoned the noblemen of Sham and seated them around him. Then he called in ‘Ali bin al-Husayn and the children and womenfolk of al-Husayn (as). They were brought in, while the people were looking [at them]. They were seated in front of [Yazid]. When he saw their disheveled state, he said: “May Allah disgrace Ibn Marjanah! If there was any relation or kinship between you and him, he would not have done this to you, nor would he have sent you in this condition!”

Yazid then said to ‘Ali [bin al-Husayn (as)]: “O ‘Ali! Your father cut the bond of kinship with me and showed ignorance of my rights and contested my leadership. So Allah treated him in the way you have seen.”

‘Ali (as) replied: “No affliction visits the earth or yourselves but it is in a book before We bring it about.”¹²

So Yazid said to him: “Whatever affliction that may visit you is because of what your hands have earned, though He excuses many [an offense].”^{13,14}

Fatimah, daughter of ‘Ali¹⁵ (as) says: “When we were seated before Yazid bin Mu’awiyah, a man with a red face from the people of Sham stood up and said: “O commander of the faithful! Give me this one as a gift”, and he meant me. I shuddered and became afraid, thinking that it is allowed for them to do that. So I caught hold of the garment of my sister, Zainab. She was [then] older and more matured than I was, and she knew that that would not happen. She said to [the man]: “You are a liar –by Allah– and have showed your lowliness! Such a thing is neither for you [to decide] nor for him.”

Yazid was enraged and said [to Zainab]: “By Allah, you are a liar! That is for me [to decide]. If I wish to do that, I can do it!”

She said: “No by Allah! Allah has not given you that [right], unless if you were to leave our faith and profess belief in another religion.”

[Hearing this] Yazid became distraught with anger and was agitated. He said: “Are you saying this in front of me? It is your father and brother who have left the religion!”

She said: “It is through the religion of Allah and the religion of my father, brother and my grandfather that you, your father and grandfather have been guided aright.”

Yazid said: “You are lying, O enemy of Allah!”

[Zainab] said: “You are a ruler who holds power, [yet] you vilify unjustly and you have become oppressive with your authority!”

[Yazid was ashamed and] thus became silent.

The Syrian man repeated [his request] and said: “O commander of the faithful! Give me this slave girl.”

[Yazid] shouted: “Go away! May Allah grant you death!”¹⁶

He then ordered the women to be lodged in a separate house, with them [he sent] ‘Ali bin al-Husayn and [they were provided with] all that they needed. So they came out [of the court] and entered [that house]. There was no woman from the family of Mu’awiyah except that she came to receive them, weeping and bewailing al-Husayn (as). They mourned him for three days.

¹. Al-Tabari: [Zahr bin Qais] al-Ju’fi al-Kindi. He was one of those who testified against Hujr bin ‘Adiyy al-Kindi (5:270). He was with Ibn al-Muti’ against Mukhtar in the year 66 H, and was sent against [Mukhtar] with a cavalry to the cemetery of the Kindah (6:18). He fought until he and his son were severely wounded near Furat (6:51). In the year 67 H, he was with Mus’ab bin al-Zubair in his battle against Mukhtar, and he was sent with a cavalry to the cemetery of the Murad (6:105). He stopped at a place where the blacksmiths used to work, near a point where animals were given out on hire (6:106). He was among those people of Iraq to whom ‘Abd al-Malik bin Marwan had written a letter in the year 71 H. [He was asking them to abandon Mus’ab and] they answered his call and betrayed him (6:156). In the year 74 H, he was leading the Madhhij and Asad in the battle against the Khawarij (6:197). In 76 H, Hajjaj sent [Zahr] with 1,800 horsemen, who were riding on fine horses, to fight Shabib, the Khariji. They met and Shabib fought him [bravely] until he wounded him and he fell to the ground. Zahr was then taken to Hajjaj while he was wounded (6:242). This is the last information we have about him. May Allah curse him.

². Al-Tabari (5:460): “Hisham says: “Abdullah bin Yazid bin Rauh bin Zanbagh al-Judhami related to me from his father, who narrated from al-Ghaz bin Rabi’ah al-Jirshi –who was from the Himyar– that: ‘By Allah, I was with Yazid bin Mu’awiyah in Damascus when Zahr bin Qais entered upon Yazid bin Mu’awiyah. Yazid said to him: ‘Woe upon you! What is behind you? What have you got?’ He said: ‘O commander of the faithful, I bring good news of Allah’s victory and support! Al-Husayn bin ‘Ali (as) came against us with eighteen men of his house and sixty of his followers. We went out to meet them and we asked them to [either] surrender and submit to the authority of the governor, ‘Ubaidullah bin Ziyad, or to fight. They chose to fight rather than to surrender. We attacked them as the sun rose and surrounded them on every side. Eventually, [our] swords took their toll of the heads of the people until we [killed] the last of them. Their bodies were [left] naked, their clothes were blood-stained and their faces thrown in the dust. The sun is melting their [bodies], the wind is scattering [dust] over them, and their visitors at Qayy Sabsab are eagles and vultures. See also al-Irshad (pg.254) and al-

Tadhkirah (pg.260).

3. Al-Tabari (3:465–477): Muhaffaz participated in [different] battles since the year 13 H, including that of al-Qadisiyyah. The events of these battles have been narrated from him. Regarding his going to Sham with the captives, see al-Irshad (pg.245).

4. Al-Tabari (5:459): “Abu Mikhnaf reports...”

5. This is part of the Mufadhdhaliyyat poems by Husayn bin Hamam al-Mariyy. See Diwan al-Hamasah (1:193).

6. Al-Tabari (5:460): “[Abu Mikhnaf says:] ‘Saq’ab bin Zuhair has narrated to me from Qasim bin ‘Abd al-Rahman, the slave of Yazid that...” See also al-Irshad (pg.246; Najaf edition), Muruj al-Dhahab (3:70) and al-Tadhkirah (pg.262).

Sibt bin al-Jawzi narrates in al-Tadhkirah (pg.261) from al-Zuhari that: “When the heads arrived, Yazid was in his watch-tower at Jairun. He recited:

When those litters appeared and those suns shone on the hill of Jairun,

The crow croaked, so I said: whether you croak or not, I have [already] settled my debt with my adversary!

Ibn al-Jawzi further says: “What has commonly appeared in all narrations regarding what Yazid said, is that: ‘When the head [of al-Husayn] was brought before him, he gathered the people of Sham and began poking at it with a cane as he recited the verses of Ibn al-Zab’ari:

Had my elders at Badr witnessed the anguish of Khazraj at the striking spears.

Indeed we have killed a person from their chiefs, and have equaled by it [the loss at] Badr and so it is equalled.”

Ibn al-Jawzi says: “And al-Sha’bi has added [the following]:

The Hashimites played with the kingdom, for no news [from Allah] has come nor did revelation descend.

I will not be of the Khunduf, if I do not avenge the sons of Ahmad for what they have done.”

Then [Ibn al-Jawzi] narrates on the authority of Qadhi Ibn Abi Ya’la from Ahmad bin Hanbal that he said: “If this is true of Yazid, then he is indeed a sinner (fasaqa).” According to Mujahid, Ibn Hanbal said: “...then he has indeed become a hypocrite (nafaqa).”

7. Al-Tabari: He was with his brother, Marwan bin al-Hakam, in the battle of Jamal in Basrah. He fled defeated [from the battlefield] after he was wounded. He joined Mu’awiyah in Sham in 37 H (5:535). [Yahya] was the governor of Madinah for his nephew, ‘Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, in the year 75 H (5:202). He remained in this position until the year 78 H, when ‘Abd al-Malik sent him on a military expedition (6:321). This is the last information we have about him. Hisham bin ‘Abd al-Malik had married [Yahya’s] daughter called Umm Hakam (7:67).

8. Al-Tabari (5:460): “[Abu Mikhnaf says:] ‘Abu Ja’far al-‘Absi has related to me from Abu ‘Amarah al-‘Absi that...” See also al-Irshad (pg.246; Najaf edition) and al-Aghani (12:74) of Abu al-Faraj al-Isfahani. Ibn al-Jawzi relates in al-Tadhkirah (pg.262) from Hasan al-Basri that: “Yazid hit the head of al-Husayn and the part which the Prophet of Allah (S) used to kiss.” Then Hasan al-Basri recited:

The offspring of Sumayyah has largely increased, while the daughter of the Prophet of Allah remains without offspring.

9. Al-Tabari: He was together with the Messenger of Allah [s] during the conquest of Makkah. He helped in killing ‘Abdullah bin Khatal, the apostate whose blood had been declared by the Prophet of Allah [s] as lawful [i.e. it was allowed for a Muslim to kill him] (3:60). Abu Barazah participated in the conquest of Egypt as well, under [the command of] ‘Amru bin al-‘Ass in the year 20 H (4:11). Tabari also has narrated Abu Barazah’s objection to Yazid in his Tarikh (5:390), from Abu Ja’far al-Baqir (as) on the authority of ‘Ammar al-Duhani. Al-Mas’udi writes in Muruj al-Dhahab (3:71) that [Abu Barazah] said: “Keep away [the] cane! By Allah, I have often seen the Prophet of Allah (S) placing his mouth on his and kissing it.” Sibt bin al-Jawzi also has narrated this report. He then quotes al-Baladhari saying: “The person who was present in Yazid’s [court] and said these words was Anas bin Malik.” Ibn al-Jawzi comments on this and says: “This is not correct, since Anas was in Kufah with Ibn Ziyad as we mentioned.” See al-Tadhkirah (pg.262; Najaf edition).

10. Al-Tabari: Uthman had sent him to Kabul from Sajistan and he conquered it in the year 24 H (4:244). He then dismissed him from [Kabul] and appointed him as the governor of Basrah in 29 H, after Abu Musa al-Ash’ari. [‘Abdullah] was then 25 years old, and he was the son of ‘Uthman’s maternal uncle (4:264). [While he was the governor of Basrah], he [also] conquered Persia (4:265). In the year 31 H, he set out to Khurasan and conquered Abrashhu, Tus, Abiward, and Nassahati. He reached up to Sarakhs and signed a peace treaty with the people of Marw (4:300). He appointed Ziyad bin Sumayyah as his deputy over Basrah [while he was away] (4:301). In the year 23 H, Ibn ‘Amir conquered Marw, Taliqan,

Faryab, Juzjan and Takharistan (4:309). He [also] conquered Herat and Badghis (4:314). ‘Uthman sought his advice in the year 34 H concerning those who revolted against him. Ibn ‘Amir advised him to send them on military expeditions (4:333). In 35 H, ‘Uthman wrote to him asking him to mobilize the people of Basrah to come to defend him. He read the letter to them and people rushed to his aid. When they reached al-Rabadhah, they received the news that [‘Uthman] was killed, so they returned [to Basrah] (4:368). Ibn ‘Amir was [still] the governor of Basrah when ‘Uthman was killed in 35 H (4:421). He [later] went to Hijaz and met Talhah, Zubair, Sa’id bin al-‘Ass, Walid bin ‘Uqbah and the rest of the Banu Umayyah. After long deliberations, they [all] decided to go to Basrah. Earlier they were about to go to Sham, but ‘Abdullah said to them: “The man in charge of Sham [i.e. Mu’awiyah] will take care of that place. Come to Basrah, for there are traders in [Basrah] who are inclined towards Talhah.” ‘Aishah and Hafsa [also] accepted their [decision], but ‘Abdullah bin ‘Umar prevented the latter [from joining them]. Ibn ‘Amir told [those who were ready to go with him]: “I have so-and-so much with me, so get yourselves prepared with it” (4:451). He was wounded in the battle of Jamal and fled to Sham (4:536). He was the one sent by Mu’awiyah to Madain to sign the peace treaty with al-Hasan (as) (5:159). Mu’awiyah reinstated him as the governor of Basrah (5:212). Mu’awiyah married him his daughter, Hind bint Mu’awiyah. ‘Abdullah [once] debased Ziyad because of his lineage. So Mu’awiyah became angry on him, but Yazid pleaded with [Mu’awiyah] on his behalf (5:214). Although Tabari does not mention when [exactly] Yazid married [Ibn ‘Amir’s] daughter, Hind, it appears that the marriage must have taken place when [Ibn ‘Amir] took the hand of Yazid’s sister, Hind. [Hind, daughter of Ibn ‘Amir], bore ‘Abdullah for Yazid. She used to be known as Umm Kulthum (5:500). In the year 64 H, after Yazid died and Ibn Ziyad fled from Basrah, a group from the people of Basrah chose [Ibn Amir’s] son, ‘Abd al-Malik bin ‘Abdullah bin ‘Amir, as their governor. He held the position for a month, before the governorship of Ibn al-Zubair (5:527).

[11.](#) Al-Tabari (5:465): “[Abu Mikhnaf says:] ‘Abu Hamzah al-Thimali narrated to me from Qasim bin Bukhait, on the authority of ‘Ubaidullah al-Thimali that...”

[12.](#) Qur’an, 57:22. Abu al-Faraj relates in al-Maqatil (pg.80) the remaining part of the verse also: “...That is indeed easy for Allah, so that you may not grieve for what escapes you, nor exult for what comes your way, and Allah does not like any swaggering braggart.” Ibn al-Jawzi has narrated the whole verse and says: “‘Ali bin al-Husayn and the women were tied up in ropes. So ‘Ali called out Yazid: ‘O Yazid! What will the Prophet of Allah think [of you] if he was to see us [in this state], tied up in ropes and uncovered on the hump of the camels?!’ There was no one among the people [who heard this] except that he wept.” See al-Tadhkirah (pg.262).

[13.](#) Qur’an, 42:30. According to Abu al-Faraj: “Yazid first recited this verse, and thereafter Imam al-Sajjad (as) replied him with the verse 57 of Surat al-Hadid [Ch.57].” This seems to be more appropriate.

[14.](#) Al-Tabari (5:461): “Abu Mikhnaf says...” See also al-Irshad (pg.246; Najaf edition).

[15.](#) This is how it has appeared in the text. However, al-Mufid in al-Irshad (pg.246) and Ibn al-Jawzi in al-Tadhkirah (pg.264) say: “[Fatimah,] daughter of al-Husayn...”

[16.](#) Al-Tabari (5:390) narrates this report from Imam al-Baqir (as) on the authority of ‘Ammar al-Duhani.

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