

In Syria

When they were near Damascus, Umm Kulthum sent a message to al-Shimr asking him to let them enter the city from the least crowded highway, and to take the heads out so that people might be diverted by looking at them rather than looking at the women. He escorted them as they were in a condition from which skins would shiver and senses quiver.

Al-Shimr instead ordered his men to take the captives for display before onlookers and to place the severed heads in their midst.^{[1](#)}

On the first day of Safar, they entered Damascus^{[2](#)} and were stopped at the Clocks Gate.^{[3](#)} People came out carrying drums and trumpets in excitement and jubilation.

A man came close to Sukayna and asked her, “What captives are you all from?” She said, “We are captives belonging to the family of Muhammad (S).”^{[4](#)}

Yazid was sitting at a surveillance outpost overlooking the mountain of Jayrun. When he saw the captives with the heads planted atop the spears as their throng came close, a crow croaked, whereupon he composed these verses:

When those conveyances drew nigh
And the heads on the edge of Jayrun,
The crow croaked so said I:
Say whatever you wish to say
Or say nothing at all,
The Messenger this very day
What he owed me he did repay.^{[5](#)}

It is due to these verses that Ibn al-Jawzi and Abu Ya'li, the judge, as well as al-Taftazani and Jalal al-

Suyuti permitted cursing Yazid and labelling him as *kafir*.[6](#)

Sahl Ibn Sa'd al-Sa'idi came close to Sukayna daughter of al-Husayn ('a) and asked her, "Is there anything I can do for you?"

She asked him to pay the man who was carrying the head some money and to ask him in return to stay away from the women so that people would be distracted by looking at the head instead of looking at the women. Sahl did so.[7](#)

An elderly man came near al-Sajjad and said, "Praise be to Allah Who annihilated you and Who granted the governor the upper hand over you!"

At such a juncture, the Imam poured of his own kindness over that poor [ignorant] man who was brainwashed by falsehood in order to bring him closer to the truth and to show him the path of guidance.

Such are the Ahl al-Bayt ('a): their light shines over those whom they know to be pure of heart and pure of essence and, as such, who are ready to receive guidance.

He ('a), asked the man, "Have you read the Qur'an, O *shaikh*?" The man answered al-Sajjad in the affirmative. "Have you read," continued al-Sajjad, "the verse saying, '**Say: I do not ask you for a reward for it [for conveying the Islamic Message to you] except that you treat my kinsfolk with kindness,**' (Qur'an, 42:23), the verse saying, '**And give the [Prophet's] kinsfolk their due rights,**' (Qur'an, 17:26), and the verse saying, '**And be informed that whatever you earn by way of booty, for Allah belongs the fifth thereof and for the Messenger [of Allah] and for the [Prophet's] kinsfolk**' (Qur'an, 8:41)?"

The man answered by saying, "Yes, I have read all of them." He ('a) then said, "We, by Allah, are the kinsfolk referred to in all these verses." Then the Imam ('a) asked him whether he had read the verse saying,

"Allah only desires to remove all abomination from you, O Ahl al-Bayt, and purifies you with a perfect purification" (Qur'an, 33:33).

"Yes" was the answer. Al-Sajjad ('a), said to him, "We are Ahl al-Bayt whom Allah purified." "I ask you in the Name of Allah," asked the man, "are you really them?" Al-Sajjad ('a), said, "By our grandfather, the Messenger of Allah, I swear that we are, without any doubt."

It was then that the elderly man fell on al-Sajjad's feet kissing them as he said, "I dissociate myself before Allah from whoever killed you." He sought repentance of the Imam ('a) from whatever rude remarks he had earlier made. The encounter involving this elderly man reached Yazid who ordered the man to be killed.[8](#)

What miracle will Yazid bring
On the Day the Books of deeds are read
When the Lord of 'Arsh will recite
And in denial stunned will be every being?[9](#)

Before they were brought to Yazid's court, they were tied with ropes. The beginning of the rope was around the neck of Zayn al-'Abidin ['Ali son of Imam al-Husayn ('a), also called al-Sajjad, the one who prostrates to Allah quite often], then around the necks of Zainab, Umm Kulthum, up to all the daughters of the Messenger of Allah (S).

Whenever they laxed in their walking, they were whipped. This went on till they were brought face to face with Yazid who was then sitting on his throne. 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn ('a) asked him, "What do you think the reaction of the Messenger of Allah might have been had he seen us looking like this?" Everyone wept. Yazid ordered the ropes to be cut off.[10](#)

They were lined up on the stairs to the gate leading to the [Umayyad Grand] mosque as was their custom with all captives, and the sacred head was placed in front of Yazid who kept looking at the captives and reciting these verses:

We took to patience, and on patience we set our minds,
While our swords chopped off heads and hands.
We were splitting heads of men held by us as dear
But they to unkindness and injustice were more near.

Then he turned to al-Nu'man Ibn Bashir and said, "Praise to Allah Who killed him [al-Husayn]." Al-Nu'man said, "Commander of the faithful Mu'awiyah used to hate killing him." Yazid said, "That was before he rebelled. Had he rebelled against the commander of the faithful, he would have killed him."[11](#)

May the heavens crush the earth
And may annihilation or resurrection overwhelm the world.
The veils of 'Ali 's daughters, the best of all women,
Are made freely accessible to the *da'is*.
Captives on lean beasts of burdens were they conveyed,
With heads uncovered, a country bids them farewell
As another, bemused, eyes them.
So should their eyes be tearful,
Or should they of exhaustion be unable to walk,
The chambered lady that she is,

With cruelty the Shimr of prostitution would whip her,
 And with his cruelty agonize her as he
 In his grudge would rebuke her.
 She has none to protect her except a haggard
 Ailing, with sickness afflicted and in pain,
 A sick man suffering nightly from cuffs and chain,
 Conveyed on a conveyance of hardship and cruelty.
 They took him at night, handcuffed, into the depths
 Of a plain he never before traversed.
 Iron consumed his flesh
 And affected him so his blood in his neck overflowed.
 He sees children cry and women wail,
 And livers from fear almost soar.
 As the head of his father, Muhammad's grandson
 Is hoisted before the captives on a spear.
 They took him to Syria unwelcome
 As its people celebrated their "victory".
 They took him to the court of Hind's son
 Pleased with his "victory".
 And Marwan with pleasure is elated
 And the head of his father, the grandson of the *nabi*,
 Is presented in a gold washbowl before a *da'i*
 Overtaken by pleasure and arrogance,
 One who used to hide his apostasy.
 But when he to his fathers at Badr referred
 Exposed his apostasy most manifestly. [12](#)

Yazid Meets al-Sajjad ('a)

Yazid turned to al-Sajjad ('a) and asked him, "How did you, 'Ali, see what Allah did to your father, al-Husayn?" "I saw," answered al-Sajjad ('a), "*what Allah, the One and Only God, the most Exalted One, had decreed before creating the heavens and the earth.*" Yazid consulted those around him as to what to do with al-Sajjad ('a), and they advised him to kill him.

Imam al-Sajjad, Zayn al-'Abidin ('a), said, "*O Yazid! These men have advised you to do the opposite of what Pharaoh's courtiers had advised Pharaoh saying: 'Grant him and his brother a respite.' The ad'iya'* [13](#) *do not kill the prophets' sons and grandsons.*" This statement caused Yazid to lower his head and contemplate for a good while. [14](#)

Among the dialogue that went on between both men is Yazid quoting this Qur'anic verse to 'Ali Ibn al-Husayn ('a):

“Whatever misfortune befalls you is due to what your hands commit” (Qur'an, 45:22).

'Ali Ibn al-Husayn ('a) responded by saying, “This verse was not revealed in reference to us. What was revealed in reference to us was this verse:

‘Whatever misfortune befalls the earth or your own selves is already in a Book even before we cause it to happen; this is easy for Allah, so that you may not grieve about what you missed nor feel elated on account of what you receive’ (Qur'an, 57:23). [15](#)

We do not grieve over what we missed nor feel elated on account of what we receive.”[16](#) Yazid then cited the following verse by al-Fadl Ibn al-'Abbas Ibn 'Utbah:

Wait, O cousins, wait, O masters, do not hurry!

Do not bring to surface what we did bury.[17](#)

Al-Sajjad ('a) sought permission to speak. “Yes,” said Yazid, “provided you do not utter verbal attacks.” He ('a) said, “*I am now standing like one who ought not verbally attack anyone, but tell me: How do you think the Messenger of Allah (S) would have felt had he seen me looking like this?*” Yazid ordered him to be untied.[18](#)

Yazid ordered the person who used to recite the Friday *khutba* to ascend the pulpit and to insult 'Ali and al-Husayn ('a), which he did. Al-Sajjad ('a) shouted at him saying, “*You have traded the pleasure of the creature for the Wrath of the Creator, so take your place in the fire [of hell].*”[19](#)

Should you on the pulpits publicly taunt him on demand,
While through his sword did these very pulpits stand?!

He asked Yazid saying, “Do you permit me to ascend this pulpit to deliver a speech that will please Allah Almighty and that will bring good rewards for these folks?” Yazid refused, but people kept pleading to him to yield, yet he was still relentless.

His son, Mu'awiyah II, said to him, “Permit him; what harm can his words cause?” Yazid said, “These are people who have inherited knowledge and oratory[20](#) and are spoon-fed with knowledge.”[21](#) They kept pressuring him till he agreed.

The Imam (‘a) said:

“All Praise is due to Allah for Whom there is no beginning, the ever-Lasting for Whom there is no end, the First for Whom there is no starting point, the Last for Whom there is no ending point, the One Who remains after all beings no longer exist. He measured the nights and the days.

He divided them into parts; so, Blessed is Allah, the King, the all-Knowing... O people! We were granted six things and favoured with seven: We were granted knowledge, clemency, leniency, fluency, courage, and love for us in the hearts of the believers.

And we were favoured by the fact that from among us came a Prophet, a Siddiq, a Tayyar, a Lion of Allah and of His Prophet (S), and both Masters of the Youths of Paradise from among this nation. O people! Whoever recognizes me knows me, and whoever does not recognize me, let me tell him who I am and to what family I belong: O people! I am the son of Mecca and Mina; I am the son of Zamzam and al-Safa; I am the son of the one who carried the rukn on his mantle; I am the son of the best man who ever put on clothes and who ever made tawaf and sa’i, of whoever offered the Hajj and pronounced the talbiya.

I am the son of the one who was transported on the buraq and who was taken by Gabriel to sidrat al-muntaha, so he was near his Lord like the throw of a bow or closer still. I am the son of the one who led the angels of the heavens in the prayers.

I am the son to whom the Mighty One revealed what He revealed. I am the son of the one who defended the Messenger of Allah (S) at Badr and Hunayn and never disbelieved in Allah not even as much as the twinkling of an eye.

I am the son of the best of the believers and of the heir of the prophets, of the leader of the Muslims and the noor of those who offer jihad and the killer of the renegades and those who deviated from the straight path and who scattered the ahzab and the most courageous one, the one with the firmest determination: such is the father of the grandsons of the Prophet (S), al-Hasan and al-Husayn (‘a), such is ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a).

I am the son of Fatima al-Zahra’ (‘a), the Head of all Women, the son of Khadija al-Kubra. I am the son of the one with whose blood the sand mixed. I am the son of the one who was slaughtered at Karbala’. I am the son of the one for whom the jinns wept in the dark and for whom the birds in the air cried”.

Having said this much, people's cries filled the place, and Yazid feared dissension, so he ordered the mu'aththin to call the athan for the prayers. The latter shouted: *Allahu Akbar!* The Imam (‘a) said: *“Allah is Greater, more Magnanimous, and more Kind than what I fear and of what I avoid.”* The prayer caller now shouted: *Ashadu an la ilaha illa–Allah!* He (‘a) said, *“Yes, I testify with everyone who testifies that there is no god besides Him nor any other Lord.”* The caller shouted: *Ashahadu anna Muhammadan rasul–Allah!*

The Imam (‘a) said to the prayer caller, *“I ask you, by Muhammad, to stop here till I speak to this man,”* then he turned to Yazid and asked him, *“Is this great Messenger of Allah (S) your grandfather or mine? If you say that he is yours, everyone present here, as well as all other people, will come to know that you are a liar.*

And if you say that he is mine, then why did you kill my father unjustly and oppressively and plundered his wealth and took his women captive? Woe unto you on the Day of Judgment when my grandfather will be your opponent.”

Yazid yelled at the prayer caller to start the prayers immediately. A great deal of commotion now could be heard among the people. Some people prayed whereas others left.[22](#)

The Most Sacred Head

Yazid ordered al-Husayn's head to be brought to him. He put it in a gold washbowl.[23](#) The women were behind him. Sukayna and Fatima stood and tried anxiously to steal a look at it as Yazid kept hiding it from them. When they did see it, they burst in tears.[24](#) He then permitted people to enter to see him.[25](#) Yazid took a rod and kept hitting al-Husayn's lips with it²⁶ saying, “A day for a day: this day is [in revenge] for Badr”.[27](#) Then he cited these verses by al-Hasin Ibn al-Hamam:[28](#)

Our folks refused to be to us fair
So swords dripping with blood were to them fair;
We were splitting heads of men held by us as dear
But they to unkindness and injustice were more near.

Yahya Ibn al-Hakam Ibn Abul-’As, brother of Marwan Ibn al-Hakam, who was sitting near him, recited these verses:

A head at the *Taff* is closer in kinship
Than Ibn Ziyad, slave of a mean and lowly descent;
Sumayya's offspring count as many as the stones
But the Progeny of the Chosen One now have no offspring.

Having heard and understood them, Yazid hit him [with the iron rod still in his hand] on his chest saying, “Shut your mouth, motherless man!”[29](#)

Abu Barzah al-Aslami said, "I bear witness that I saw the Prophet (S) kissing his lips and those of his brother al-Hasan ('a) and say to them: 'You are the Masters of the Youths of Paradise; may Allah fight whoever fights you; may He curse him and prepare hell for him, and what an evil refuge it is!'"

Yazid became angry and ordered him to be dragged out of his court.[30](#)

A [Christian] messenger sent by Caesar was present there; he said to Yazid, "We have in some islands the hoof of the donkey upon which Jesus rode, and we make a pilgrimage to it every year from all lands and offer *nathr* to it and hold it in as much regard as you hold your sacred books; so, I bear witness that you are wrongdoers."[31](#)

This statement enraged Yazid who ordered him to be killed. The messenger stood up, walked to the head, kissed it and pronounced the *kalima*. At the moment when that messenger's head was cut off, everyone heard a loud and fluent voice saying: ***La hawla wala quwwata illa billah!*** (There is neither power nor might except in Allah).[32](#)

The head was taken out of the court and hung for three days on the mansion's gate.[33](#) When Hind daughter of 'Amr Ibn Suhayl, Yazid's wife, saw the head on her house's door[34](#) with divine light emanating from it, its blood still fresh and had not yet dried, and it was emitting a sweet fragrance,[35](#) she entered Yazid's court without a veil crying, "The head of the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S) is on our door!"

Yazid stood up, covered her and said, "Mourn him, O Hind, for he is the reason why Banu Hashim are grieving. ['Ubaydullah] Ibn Ziyad hastily killed him."[36](#)

Yazid ordered the heads to be hung on the land's gates and on the Umayyad Mosque, and his order was carried out.[37](#)

Marwan [Ibn al-Hakam] was very happy about al-Husayn ('a) being killed, so he composed this poetry:

Dawser hit them with such a blow
That firmed authority's foundations,
So authority now is stable.

Then he kept hitting al-Husayn's face with a rod as he was repeating these poetry lines:

How I wish your garment were on your arms

And redness were on your cheeks,
Looking like pieces of gold twain,
How happy I am today having killed Husayn!

A Syrian Encounters Fatima

Historians record that a Syrian looked at Fatima daughter of 'Ali (‘a)³⁸ then asked Yazid to give her to him to serve him. This daughter of the Commander of the Faithful (‘a) was terrified; she clung to her sister Zainab and said, “Serve him?! How could I do that?!” Zainab said to her, “Do not be concerned; this shall never happen at all.” Hearing her, Yazid said, “It could if I would!” She said to him, “Not unless you renege from our religion.”

He answered her by saying, “Those who reneged from the religion are your father and your brother.” Zainab said, “By Allah's religion and the religion of my grandfather do I swear that it was through my father and brother that you and your father received guidance, had you been a Muslim at all.”

He said to her, “You lie, you enemy of Allah!” She, peace be upon her, toned down her language and said to him, “You are an *Amir* over the destiny of people; you oppressively taunt and subdue others.”³⁹ The same Syrian repeated his plea to Yazid who now rebuked him and said, “May Allah grant you a fate that will put an end to you!”⁴⁰

Zainab's Speech

Both Ibn Nama and Ibn Tawus⁴¹ say that Zainab daughter of 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib⁴² (‘a) heard Yazid quoting the following verses by Ibn al-Zub'ari:⁴³

I wish my forefathers at Badr had witnessed
How the Khazraj are by the thorns annoyed,
They would have Glorified and Unified Allah
Then they would make *tahlil* and say in elation:
May your hands, O Yazid, never be paralyzed!
We have killed the masters of their chiefs
And equated it with Badr, and it was so, indeed;
Hashim played with the dominion so
No news came, nor a revelation descended.
I do not belong to Khandaf if I do not

Seek revenge from Ahmad's offspring
For what he had done.

She reacted to these lines by stating the following:

“All Praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Allah has blessed His Messenger and all His Messenger's Progeny. Allah, Glory to Him, has said the truth when He said,

“Then the end of those who committed evil was that they disbelieved in Allah's Signs and they were ridiculing them” (Qur'an, 30: 10).

Do you, O Yazid, think that when you blocked all the avenues before us, so we were driven as captives, that we are light in the sight of Allah and that you are superior to us? Or is it because you enjoy with Him a great status, so you look down at us and become arrogant, elated, when you see the world submissive to you and things are done as you want them, and when our authority and power became all yours? But wait! Have you forgotten that Allah has said,

“Do not regard those who disbelieved that We grant them good for themselves? We only give them a respite so that they may increase their sins, and for them there is a humiliating torment”? (Qur'an, 3: 178).

Is it fair, O son of *taliqs*, that you keep your free and slave women in their chambers and at the same time drive the daughters of the Messenger of Allah (S) as captives with their veils removed and faces exposed, taken by their enemies from one land to another, being viewed by those at watering places as well as those who man your forts, with their faces exposed to the looks of everyone near or distant, lowly or honourable, having none of their protectors with them nor any of their men?

But what can be expected from one [descended from those] whose mouths chewed the livers of the purified ones and whose flesh grows out of the blood of the martyrs? How can it be expected that one who looks at us with grudge and animosity, with hatred and malice, would not hate us, we Ahl al-Bayt ('a)? Besides, you, without feeling any guilt or weighing heavily what you say, recite saying:

Then they would make *tahlil* and say in elation:
May your hands, O Yazid, never be paralyzed!

How dare you hit the lips of Abu 'Abdullah ('a), the Master of the Youths of Paradise? But why should you not do so, since you stirred a wound that almost healed and all mercy is removed from your heart when you shed the blood of the offspring of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his Progeny, and the stars on earth from among the family of 'Abd al-Muttalib?

Then you cite your mentors as if you speak to them... Soon shall you be lodged with them, and soon shall you wish you were paralyzed and muted and never said what you said nor did what you did.

O Allah! Take what belongs to us out of his hands, seek revenge against all those who oppressed us, and let Your Wrath descend upon whoever shed our blood and killed our protectors! By Allah! You have burnt only your own skin!

You have cut only your own flesh! You shall come face to face with the Messenger of Allah, peace of Allah be upon him and his Progeny, bearing the burdens of the blood which you have shed, the blood of his offspring, and of his sanctities which you violated, the sanctities of his women, his kinsfolk, his flesh and blood, when Allah gathers them together and seeks equity on their behalf.

“And do not reckon those who are slain in the Way of Allah as dead. Nay! They are living with their Lord, receiving their sustenance” (Qur’an, 3: 169).

Allah suffices you as your Judge and Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny, as your opponent, and Gabriel as your foe. All those who instigated you to do what you did and who put you in charge so that you might play havoc with the lives of the Muslims: how evil the end of the oppressors is and which of you shall have the worst place and will be the least protected?

Although calamities have forced me to speak to you, I nevertheless see you small in my eyes and find your verbal attacks great, and I regard your rebuke too much to bear, but these eyes are tearful, and the chests are filled with depression.

What is even stranger is that the honoured Party of Allah is being killed by the *tal'eeq* party of Satan. Such hands are dripping with our blood; such mouths are feeding on our flesh, while those sacred and pure corpses are offered as food to the wild beasts of the desert and are dirtied by the brutes.

If you regard us as your booty, you shall soon find us as your opponents, that will be when you find nothing but what your hands had committed, and your Lord never treats His servants unjustly. To Allah is my complaint, and upon Him do I rely.

So scheme whatever you wish to scheme, and carry out your plots, and intensify your efforts, for by Allah, you shall never be able to obliterate our mention, nor will you ever be able to kill our inspiration, nor will your shame ever be washed away. Your view shall be proven futile, your days numbered, and your wealth wasted on the Day when the caller calls out, “The curse of Allah be upon the oppressors.”

All Praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, Who sealed the life of our early ones with happiness and forgiveness, and that of our last with martyrdom and mercy. We plead to Allah to complete His rewards for them and grant them an increase and make succession good for us; He is the most Merciful, the most Compassionate. Allah suffices us, and how great He is!

Yazid responded to her speech by first quoting this poetic verse:

O cry, a praiseworthy one,
How easy it is for the mourners to mourn!

Anyone who is familiar with Yazid and with his misguidance cannot be surprised at all to hear him asking with a big mouth the Syrian jackals around him: “Do you know where Fatima's son came from, and what prompted him to do what he did and fall into the pitfalls of what he committed?” They answered in the negative.

Said he, “He claims that his father is better than my father, that his mother Fatima (‘a) daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S) is better than mine, that his grandfather (S) is better than mine, and that he is more worthy than me of taking charge. As regarding his saying that his father is better than my father, my father had asked Allah, the Great, the Sublime, to arbitrate between them, and people know best in whose favour He ruled.

As regarding his saying that his mother is better than mine, by my life, Fatima (‘a) daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S) is better than my mother. As regarding his saying that his grandfather (S) is better than my grandfather, by my life, nobody who believes in Allah and in the Last Day can find anyone among us equal to the Messenger of Allah But he speaks with a little understanding of what he says and has not read the verse saying,

‘Say: Lord! Owner of the domain! You grant authority to whomsoever You please, and you take the authority from whomsoever You please; You exalt whomsoever You please, and You abase whomsoever You please’ (Qur’an, 3:26),

and he did not read the verse saying,

‘Allah grants His domain to whomsoever He pleases’ (Qur’an, 2:247).’[44](#)

The House of Ruins

The speech quoted above, which Zainab delivered, shook the very foundations of Yazid's court, and people started discussing with one another as to what extent they had been misled, and in what valley of abyss they had been hurled.

Yazid had no choice except to get the women out of his court and to lodge them at a house of ruins that could not protect them against any heat or any cold. They remained there weeping and wailing,

mourning al-Husayn ('a)⁴⁵ for three days.⁴⁶

One day, al-Sajjad ('a) went out for a walk. Al-Minhal Ibn 'Umar met him and asked him, "How have you received the evening, O son of the Messenger of Allah (S)?" "We have received the evening," the Imam ('a) answered, "like the Israelites among the people of Pharaoh: they kill their sons and take their women captive."

The Arabs brag before the non-Arabs saying that Muhammad (S) was one of them, while Quraish boasts before the rest of the Arabs of Muhammad (S) belonging to it. We, his Ahl al-Bayt ('a), are now homeless; so, to Allah do we belong, and to Him shall we all return."⁴⁷

Al-Minhal is quoted as saying, "While he was thus talking to me, a woman came out after him and said, 'Where are you going, O best of successors?' He left me and hurried back to her. I inquired about her, and I was told that she was his aunt, Zainab ('a)."⁴⁸

¹. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 99. Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, p. 53. 'Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, Maqtal al-'Awalim, p. 145.

². Such is recorded on p. 331 of the offset edition of al-Biruni's book Al-Athar al-Baqiya, al-Baha'i's book Al-Kamil, on p. 269 of Misbah al-Kaf'ami, and on p. 15 of al-Fayd's book Taqwim al-Muhsinin. According to p. 266, Vol. 6, of al-Tabari's Tarikh, the time from their imprisonment till the post coming from Syria informing them of their arrival at Syria in the beginning of the month of Safar must have been a lengthy one except if birds had been used to carry such mail.

³. According to p. 61, Vol. 2, of al-Khawarizmi's book Maqtal al-Husayn, they were brought to Damascus through Toma's Gate. This Gate, according to p. 109 of Al-Maqasid, was one of the ancient gates of Damascus. Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad Ibn 'Ali Ibn Ibrahim, who is known as Ibn Shaddad and who died in 684 A.H./1286 A.D., says the following on p. 72, Vol. 3, of A'laq al-Khatira: "It was called the Clocks Gate because atop that gate there were clocks marking each hour of the day: small copper sparrows, a copper raven and a copper snake marked the timing: at the end of each hour, sparrows would come out, the raven would let a shriek out, and one (or more) stone would be dropped in the copper washbowl [making it sound] ."

⁴. as-Saduq, Al-Amali, p. 100, majlis No. 31. al-Khawarizmi, Maqtal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 60.

⁵. According to p. 161 of the offset Damascus edition of Ibn Hawqal's book Sourat al-Ard, there is none in the Islamic world better than it. It used to be a temple for the Sabeans, then the Greeks used to worship in it, then the Jews as well as Pagan kings. The gate of this mosque is called Jayrun's Gate. It is over this gate that the head of John the Baptist (Yahya son of Zakariyya) was crucified. It was on this same Jayrun's Gate that the head of al-Husayn Ibn 'Ali Ibn Abu Talib ('a) was crucified in the same place where the head of John the Baptist had been crucified. During the reign of al-Walid Ibn 'Abd al-Malik, its walls were covered with marble. It seems that this is the same as the Umayyad Mosque.

⁶. al-Alusi, Ruh al-Ma'ani, Vol. 26, p. 73, where the verse "So do you wish, if you take charge... etc." is explained. The author says, "He meant, when he said, 'I have taken back from the Messenger (S) what he owed me,' that he avenged the loss which he had suffered during the Battle of Badr at the hands of the Messenger of Allah (S) when his grandfather, 'Utbah, his uncle, and others were killed. This is nothing but obvious apostasy. Such was the similitude struck by Ibn al-Zub'ari before accepting Islam."

⁷. 'Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, Maqtal al-'Awalim, p. 145.

⁸. Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 100. According to p. 112, Vol. 4, of Ibn Kathir's Tafsir, p. 31, Vol. 25, of al-Alusi's Ruh al-Ma'ani, and p. 61, Vol. 2, of al-Khawarizmi's book Maqtal al-Husayn, al-Sajjad ('a) had recited the verse invoking compassion (for the Prophet's family) to that old man who accepted it as a valid argument.

⁹. According to p. 31, Vol. 25, of al-Alusi's voluminous book Ruh al-Ma'ani, these verses were composed by Sayyid 'Umar al-Haythami, one of the author's contemporary relatives. The author expresses his admiration of these verses.

[10.](#) al-Yafi'i, *Mir'at al-Jinan*, p. 341. On p. 35, Vol. 4, of his book *Al-Tarikh al-Kamil*, Ibn al-Athir, as well as [al-Mas'udi] the author of *Muruj al-Thahab*, both indicate that when the head was brought to Yazid, the latter kept hitting it with a rod in his hand as he cited these verses by the poet al-Hasin Ibn Hamam:

Our people refused to be fair to us, so
Swords in our hands bleeding did so,
Splitting the heads of men who are to us dear
Though they were to injustice and oppression more near.

On p. 313, Vol. 2, of *Al-'Iqd al-Farid* (by Sayyid Muhammad Riḡa al-Asterbadi al-Hilli), where Yazid's reign is discussed, the author says, "When the head was placed in front of him, Yazid cited what al-Hasin Ibn al-Hamam al-Mazni had said." He quoted the second verse [in the above English text, the last couplet]. Ibn Hajar al-Haythami al-'Asqalani, on p. 198, Vol. 9, of his book *Mujma' al-Zawa'id*, quotes only the second verse.

On p. 61, Vol. 2, of his book *Maqatal al-Husayn*, al-Khawarizmi contents himself by simply saying that they stood on the steps of the mosque's gate. These verses are cited by al-Amidi on p. 91 of his book *Al-Mu'talif wa al-Mukhtalif*. Then he traces the lineage of the poet al-Hasin Ibn Hamam Ibn Rabi'ah, citing three verses, including these couplets, from a lengthy poem. On p. 151 of *Al-Shi'r wa al-Shu'ara'*, three verses are cited which include this couplet. On p. 4 of *Al-Ashya' wal Nada'ir*, where immortalized ancient poems and those composed during the time of jahiliyya are cited, only the second verse is quoted. On p. 120, Vol. 12, of the Sassi edition of Abul-Faraj al-Isfahani's voluminous book *Al-Aghani*, thirteen lines are quoted, including this couplet.

[11.](#) al-Khawarizmi, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Vol. 2, p. 59.

[12.](#) Excerpted from a poem by the 'Allama shaikh 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Fartusi.

[13.](#) Ad'iya' is plural of da'iy, someone adopted and given the last name of the person who adopted him as though he had been the latter's own biological offspring in contradiction to the Islamic tenets. N. Tr.

[14.](#) al-Mas'udi, *Ithbat al-Wasiyya*, p. 143 (Najafi edition).

[15.](#) Sayyid Muhammad Riḡa al-Asterbadi al-Hilli, *Al-'Iqd al-Farid*, Vol. 2, p. 313. *Al-al-Tabari, Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 267.

[16.](#) 'Ali Ibn Ibrahim, *Tafsir*, p. 603, where the Chapter of al-Shura is discussed.

[17.](#) al-Raghib al-Isfahani, *Al-Muhadarat*, Vol. 1, p. 775, in a chapter about those who boast of antagonizing their kinsfolk. This is one of five verses by al-Faḡl Ibn al-'Abbas Ibn 'Utbah Ibn Abi Lahab recorded by Abu Tammam in his book *Al-Hamasa*. Refer to p. 223, Vol. 1, of *Sharh al-Tabrizi*.

[18.](#) Ibn Nama, *Muthir al-Ahzan*, p. 54.

[19.](#) Shaikh 'Abbas al-Qummi, *Nafs al-Mahmum*, p. 242.

[20.](#) *Kamil al-Baha'i*.

[21.](#) al-Qazwini, *Riyad al-Ahzan*, p. 148.

[22.](#) Shaikh 'Abbas al-Qummi, *Nafs al-Mahmum*, p. 242. This lengthy sermon is quoted on p. 69, Vol. 2, of al-Khawarizmi's book *Maqatal al-Husayn*.

[23.](#) al-Yafi'i, *Mir'at al-Jinan*, Vol. 1, p. 135.

[24.](#) Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Tarikh al-Kamil*, Vol. 4, p. 35. Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, *Mujma' al-Zawa'id*, Vol. 9, p. 195. Ibn al-Sabbagh, *Al-Fusul al-Muhimma*, p. 205.

[25.](#) Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Tarikh al-Kamil*, Vol. 4, p. 35.

[26.](#) al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 267. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Tarikh al-Kamil*, Vol. 4, p. 35. *Tathkirat al-Khawass* of Ibn al-Jawzi, the grandson, p. 148. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa*, p. 116. Ibn Muflih al-Hanbali, *Fiqh al-Hanabillah*, Vol. 3, p. 549. Ibn Hajar al-Haythami al-'Asqalani, *Mujma' al-Zawa'id*, Vol. 9, p. 195. Ibn al-Sabbagh, *Al-Fusul al-Muhimma*, p. 205. al-Maqrizi, *Khutat*, Vol. 3, p. 289. Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya*, Vol. 8, p. 192. al-Sharishi, *Sharh Maqamat al-Hariri*, Vol. 1, p. 193, at the end of the 10th maqam. Muhammad Abul-Fadl and 'Ali Muhammad al-Bijawi, *Ayyam al-'Arab fil Islam*, p. 435. Ibn Shahr Ashub, *Al-Manaqib*, Vol. 2, p. 225. According to p. 23 of *Al-Ithaf bi Hubb al-Ashraf* (of al-Shabrawi), Yazid kept hitting al-Husayn's front teeth, and the same is stated by al-Biruni on p. 331 of the offset edition of his book *Al-Athar al-*

Baqiya.

[27.](#) Ibn Shahr Ashub, *Al-Manaqib*, Vol. 2, p. 226.

[28.](#) Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Tarikh al-Kamil*, Vol. 4, p. 35. Ibn al-Sabbagh, *Al-Fusul al-Muhimma*, p. 205. The first line, according to p. 135, Vol. 1, of al-Yafi'i's *Mir'at al-Jinan*, is:

We took to patience, and on patience we set our minds,
While our swords chopped off heads and hands.

It is narrated by Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzi on p. 148 of his book *Tathkirat al-Khawass* with some variation in its wording. A host of historians have contented themselves by citing only the second verse. Among them is al-Sharishi who does so on p. 193, Vol. 1, of his book *Sharh Maqamat al-Hariri*. So does al-Andalusi on p. 313, Vol. 2, of his book *Al-Iqd al-Farid*. So does Ibn Kathir on p. 197, Vol. 8, of his book *Al-Bidaya*. So does the mentor, Shaikh al-Mufid, in his book *Al-Irshad*, and so does Ibn Jarir al-Tabari on p. 267, Vol. 6, of his *Tarikh*, adding that the verse was composed by al-Hasin Ibn al-Hamam al-Marri.

[29.](#) al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 265. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Tarikh al-Kamil*, Vol. 4, p. 37. The second portion (the 'ajz) of the second verse is cited on p. 198, Vol. 9, of Ibn Hajar's book *Mujma' al-Zawa'id*, and by Ibn Shahr Ashub on p. 226, Vol. 2, of his book *Al-Manaqib*. According to p. 193, Vol. 8, of Ibn Kathir's book *Al-Bidaya*, al-Hasin was a poet; then the author cites the second verse which is the same as stated in *Mujma' al-Zawa'id* of Ibn Hajar al-Haythami al-'Asqalani. On p. 54 of his book *Muthir al-Ahzan*, Ibn Nama narrates saying that al-Hasan Ibn al-Hasan was al-Hasan II, and that when he saw al-Husayn's head being thus hit, he said, "O what humiliation!"

Sumayya's offspring now count as many as the stones
Whereas the daughter of the Messenger of Allah has no offspring.

According to p. 49 of *Tathkirat al-Khawass* of Ibn al-Jawzi, the grandson, when al-Hasan al-Basri came to know what Yazid had done to the head, he cited the second verse. According to p. 71, Vol. 12, of *Al-Aghani*, these verses were attributed to 'Abdul-Rahman Ibn al-Hakam to which a third verse is added. On p. 56, Vol. 2, of al-Khawarizmi's book *Maqatal al-Husayn*, they are attributed to 'Abdul-Rahman Ibn al-Hakam, Marwan's brother.

[30.](#) Ibn Tawus, *Al-Luhuf*, p. 102. This incident is abridged on p. 205 of *Al-Fusul al-Muhimma*, on p. 267, Vol. 6, of al-Tabari's *Tarikh*, and on p. 26, Vol. 2, of Ibn Shahr Ashub's book *Al-Manaqib*.

[31.](#) Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa*, p. 119.

[32.](#) 'Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, *Maqatal al-'Awalim*, p. 151. Ibn Nama, *Muthir al-Ahzan*. On p. 72, Vol. 2, of his book *Maqatal al-Husayn*, al-Khawarizmi states the dialogue between the Christian [envoy] and Yazid and how the first was killed, but he does not indicate that the most sacred head spoke.

[33.](#) al-Maqrizi, *Al-Khutat*, Vol. 2, p. 289. al-Shabrawi, *Al-Ithaf bi Hubb al-Ashraf*, p. 23. al-Khawarizmi, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Vol. 2, p. 75. Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya*, Vol. 8, p. 204. al-Thahabi, *Siyar A'lam al-Nubala*, Vol. 3, p. 216.

[34.](#) 'Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, *Maqatal al-'Awalim*, p. 151. In the Introduction to this book, her father is introduced to the reader and so is her husband.

[35.](#) al-Maqrizi, *Al-Khutat*, Vol. 2, p. 284.

[36.](#) al-Khawarizmi, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Vol. 2, p. 74.

[37.](#) Shaikh 'Abbas al-Qummi, *Nafs al-Mahmum*, p. 247.

[38.](#) al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6. Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya*, Vol. 8, p. 194. al-Saduq, *Al-Amali*, p. 100, majlis 31. Both Ibn Nama, on p. 54 of his *Muthir al-Ahzan*, and al-Khawarizmi, on p. 62, Vol. 2, of his *Maqatal al-Husayn*, say that she was Fatima daughter of al-Husayn ('a).

[39.](#) Ibn al-Athir, Vol. 4, p. 35.

[40.](#) al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 265.

[41.](#) This sermon is documented on p. 21 of *Balaghat al-Nisa* ' (Najafi edition), and on p. 64, Vol. 2, of al-Khawarizmi's book *Maqatal al-Husayn*.

- [42.](#) In his book Maqtal al-Husayn, al-Khawarizmi identifies her mother as Fatima ('a) daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S).
- [43.](#) These verses are attributed by Ibn Tawus to Ibn al-Zub'ari, as he so states on p. 102 of his book Al-Luhuf, but they are not all his. Al-Khawarizmi on p. 66, Vol. 2, of his book Maqtal al-Husayn, Ibn Abul-Hadid on p. 383, Vol. 3, of his book Sharh Nahjul Balagha (first Egyptian edition), and Ibn Hisham in his Sirat, where he discusses the Battle of Uhud, all state sixteen lines which do not include except the first and the third lines mentioned by Ibn Tawus. Al-Biruni cites all of them on p. 331 of the offset edition of his book Al-Athar al-Baqiya, excluding the fourth line.
- [44.](#) al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 266. Ibn Kathir, Al-Bidaya, Vol. 8, p. 195.
- [45.](#) Ibn Tawus, Al-Luhuf, p. 207. As-Saduq, Al-Amali, p. 101, majlis 31.
- [46.](#) al-Khawarizmi, Maqtal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 34. About this shed, or say jail, as stated on p. 146, Vol. 4, of al-Yunini's Mir'at al-Zaman, where the events of the year 681 A.H./1283 A.D. are discussed, the author says, "On the eleventh night of the month of Ramadan, the felt market in Damascus caught fire and was burnt in its entirety, and the fire engulfed the Booksellers' Bridge, the fountain square, and the cloth market known as Suq 'Asa-Allah, as well as the watering area of Jayrun. The fire reached the 'Ajam Street in the midst of Jayrun, scorching the wall of the 'Umari Mosque adjacent to the jail where Zayn al-'Abidin ('a) had been imprisoned."
- [47.](#) Ibn Nama, Muthir al-Ahzan, p. 58. al-Khawarizmi, Maqtal al-Husayn, Vol. 2, p. 72.
- [48.](#) Al-Anwar al-Nu'mainiyya, p. 340.

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