

At The Governor's Mansion

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Having returned from his camp at Nakhila, [‘Ubaydullah] Ibn Ziyad went straight to his mansion.² The sacred head was brought to him, and it was then that the walls started bleeding³ and a fire broke out from one part of the mansion, making its way to the place where Ibn Ziyad was sitting.⁴

He fled away from it and entered one of the mansion's rooms. The head spoke out in a loud voice that was heard by Ibn Ziyad as well as by those who were present there and then. It said: “Where do you flee to?”

If fire does not catch you in the life of this world, it shall be your abode in the hereafter.” The head did not stop speaking till the fire was out. Everyone at the mansion was stunned; nothing like this had ever taken place before.⁵

Yet Ibn Ziyad was not admonished by an incident such as this, so he ordered the captives to be brought to him. The ladies of the Messenger of Allah (S) were brought to him, and they were in the most pathetic condition.⁶

She was brought with nothing to cover her head
In a condition that left no patience for the skin.
With nothing to cover her face;
Did they keep any cover for the ladies of guidance?
No, by the One Who outfitted her with His Light,
They robbed her even of her cover.
May those hands be forever
Paralyzed; they left no veil for them at all.⁷

Al-Husayn's severed head was placed in front of him, so he kept hitting its mouth with a rod which he had in his hand for some time. Zayd Ibn Arqam said, "Stop hitting these lips with your rod, for by Allah, the One and Only God, I saw the lips of the Messenger of Allah (S) kissing them," then he broke into tears.

Ibn Ziyad said to him, "May Allah cause you never to cease crying! By Allah, had you not been an old man who lost his wits, I would have killed you." Zayd went out of the meeting place saying, "A slave is now a monarch ruling them, treating them as his property. O Arabs! Henceforth, *you* are the slaves!

You have killed Fatima's son and granted authority to the son of Marjana who kills the best from among you and permits the evil ones to be worshipped. You have accepted humiliation, so away with whoever accepts humiliation."⁸

Zainab daughter of the Commander of the Faithful ('a) kept a distance from the women as she remained disguised, but she could not disguise the prestige of being brought up in the lap of prophethood and in the glory of Imamate, so she attracted Ibn Ziyad's attention.

He inquired about her. He was told that she was Zainab, the wise lady, daughter of the Commander of the Faithful ('a). He wanted to tell her how rejoiced he was at what had happened. Said he, "Praise be to Allah Who exposed you to shame, Who killed you and proved you liars."

She, peace be upon her, responded with: "Praise be to Allah Who honoured us by choosing Muhammad [from among us] as His Prophet and purified us with a perfect purification. Rather, only a debauchee is exposed to shame, and a sinner is proven to be a liar, and we are neither."

Ibn Ziyad asked her, "How have you seen what Allah has done to your Ahl al-Bayt ('a)?" She, peace be upon her, said, "I have seen Him treating them most beautifully.

These are people to whom Allah prescribed martyrdom, so they leaped from their beds welcoming it, and Allah shall gather you and them, and you shall be questioned, and your opponents shall charge you;⁹ so, you will then find out whose lot shall be the crack of hell, may your mother, O son of Marjana, lose you."¹⁰

This statement enraged Ibn Ziyad, and her words incinerated him with ire, especially since she said it before such a huge crowd. He, therefore, was about to kill her when 'Amr Ibn Harith said to him, "She is only a woman; can she be held accountable for what she said? She cannot be blamed when she thus prattles."

Ibn Ziyad turned to her one more time and said, "Allah has healed my heart by letting me seek revenge against your tyrant and against the rebels and mutineers from among his Ahl al-Bayt!" The wise lady calmed herself and said, "By my life! You have killed my middle-aged protector, persecuted my family,

cut off my branch and pulled out my roots; so, if all of this heals your heart, then you are indeed healed.”¹¹

He then turned to ‘Ali son of al-Husayn (‘a) whom he asked what his name was. “*I am ‘Ali son of al-Husayn (‘a),*” came the answer. Ibn Ziyad asked ‘Ali, “Did not Allah kill ‘Ali (‘a)?” Al-Sajjad (‘a) answered, “*I used to have an older brother, 12 also named ‘Ali, whom [your] people killed.*”

Ibn Ziyad responded by repeating his statement that it was Allah who had killed him. Al-Sajjad, therefore, said, “*Allah takes the souls away at the time of their death; none dies except with Allah’s permission*”.

Ibn Ziyad did not appreciate him thus responding to his statement rather than remaining silent, so he ordered him to be killed, but his aunt, the wise lady Zainab, put her arms around him and said, “O Ibn Ziyad! Suffices you what you have shed of our blood..., have you really spared anyone other than this?¹³ If you want to kill him, kill me with him as well.”

Al-Sajjad (‘a) said [to Ibn Ziyad], “*Do you not know that we are used to being killed, and that martyrdom is one of Allah’s blessings upon us?*”¹⁴ Ibn Ziyad looked at both of them then said, “Leave him for her. Amazing is their tie of kinship; she wishes to be killed with him.”¹⁵

Al-Rubab, wife of Imam Husayn (‘a), took the head and put it in her lap. She kissed it and said,

O Husayn! Never shall I ever forget Husayn!
Did the foes' lances really seek him?
They left him in Karbala' slain,
May Allah never water Karbala's sides.¹⁶

When it became clear to Ibn Ziyad that there were many people present who were voicing their resentment of what he had committed and how everyone was repeating what Zainab had said, he feared an uprising, so he ordered the police to jail the captives inside a house adjacent to the grand mosque.¹⁷

Ibn Ziyad's doorman has said, “I was with them when he issued his order to jail them. I saw how the men and women assembled there weeping and beating their faces.”¹⁸ Zainab shouted at people saying, “Nobody should tend to us except either a bondmaid, a freed bondmaid, or *umm walad*,¹⁹ for they were taken captive just as we have been.”²⁰

What Zainab meant is that only a female captive is familiar with the pain and humiliation of captivity; therefore, she would be sympathetic and would not rejoice nor enjoy seeing them in captivity. This is undeniable. It is reported that when Jassas Ibn Murrah killed Kalib Ibn Rabi’ah, it happened that his sister was in the company of Kalib at the time.

When the women of the quarter met for the funeral ceremony in Kalib's memory, they said to the latter's sister, "Get Jalila (Jassa's sister) out of this ceremony; her presence causes her to rejoice, and it is a shame among the Arabs; she is the sister of one who has killed one of us." The woman voluntarily left as Kalib's sister said, "This is the departure of the aggressor and the parting of one who rejoices on account of our misfortune."²¹

Ibn Ziyad again called them to his presence. When they were brought to him, their women saw al-Husayn's head in front of him with its divine rays ascending from its curves to the depth of the heavens. Al-Rubab, al-Husayn's wife, could not check herself from falling upon it and kissing it as she said:

The one that was in Karbala' a luminary
Is now slain but not buried at all
O grandson of the Prophet! May Allah reward you
On our behalf with goodness and may you
Be spared the shorting of the scales.
To me you were a mountain, a refuge
And you used to be our companion in lineage and in creed
Who will now help the orphans and those in need?
To whom shall the needy go for help?
By Allah! I shall never exchange your kinship with anyone else
Till I am lost between water and mud.²²

Ibn 'Afif

Hamid Ibn Muslim has said, "Ibn Ziyad ordered to hold a congregational prayer service. They assembled at the grand mosque. Ibn Ziyad ascended the pulpit and said, 'All Praise is due to Allah Who manifested the truth and elevated those who act according to it and Who granted victory to the commander of the faithful Yazid and to his party, and Who killed the liar and the son of the liar, al-Husayn son of 'Ali, and his Shi'as.'²³

Nobody among that crowd that had sunk in misguidance objected to such a preposterous statement except 'Abdullah Ibn 'Afif al-Azdi and also one of the sons of Walibah al-Ghamidi who both stood up and said to him, 'O son of Marjana! The liar and the son of the liar is you and your father, and so is everyone who accepts your authority and his son!

O son of Marjana! Do you really kill the offspring of the prophets and still talk about who is truthful and who is a liar?!

²⁴

Ibn Ziyad asked who the speaker was. Ibn 'Afif answered by saying, 'I am the speaker, O enemy of Allah! Do you really kill the righteous offspring from whom Allah removed all abomination then claim that you are a follower of the Islamic creed?! Oh! Is there anyone to help?!

Where are the sons of the Muhajirun and the Ansar to seek revenge against your tyrant, the one who and whose father were both cursed by Muhammad (S), the Messenger of the Lord of the Worlds?' Ibn Ziyad's anger now intensified. He ordered him to be brought to him. The police grabbed him.²⁵

It was then that Ibn 'Afif shouted the slogan used by the Azdis that was: '*Ya Mabroor!*' This caused a large number of the Azdis present there to leap to his rescue and to forcibly free him from the police and take him safely home."

'Abdul-Rahman Ibn Mikhnaf al-Azdi said to him, "Woe unto someone else other than you! You have surely condemned yourself and your tribe to destruction!"²⁶

Ibn Ziyad then ordered a number of men from the Azd tribe, including 'Abdul-Rahman Ibn Mikhnaf al-Azdi,²⁷ to be jailed. During the night, a band of men working for Ibn Ziyad went to the latter's house to bring him intelligence of what the Azd tribesmen were discussing.

When these tribesmen came to know about such spying, they gathered their fighting men, as well as the fighting men of their allies in Yemen, together. Ibn Ziyad came to know about such assembling of troops, so he sent Mudar tribesmen headed by Muhammad Ibn al-Ash'ath²⁸ to fight them.

A fierce battle broke out, and many men from both sides were killed. Wasil Ibn al-Ash'ath reached the house of Ibn 'Afif. He and his men broke its door open. His daughter screamed warning her father saying, "The people have come to you!" He said to her, "Do not be concerned, just hand me my sword" with which he kept defending himself as he was reciting these lines:

The son of the honoured, the clement, and the pure am I
Clement is my mentor and the son of Umm 'Amir
How many of you shielded or did not shield,
How many a hero left slain on the battlefield?

His daughter kept saying, "How I wish I had been a man so that I could defend you against these sinners, the killers of the righteous Progeny of the Prophet (S)!"

For some time, no man was able to come close to him due to the fact that his daughter kept warning him about the direction from which they were attacking him since he was blind. In the end, however, they overwhelmed him.

His daughter cried out: "What humiliation! My father is surrounded and there is none to help him!" He kept circling with his sword in his hand as he repeated this line:

I swear, should I am permitted to see,
Unable to face my might shall you be.
By Allah do I swear! Had I been able to see
You wouldn't know whence and how I attack thee!

Once they overpowered him, they arrested him and brought him to Ibn Ziyad who started by saying to him, "Praise be to Allah who subjected you to such humiliation!" Ibn 'Afif asked him: "What did He humiliate me for?!" Then he recited this line of poetry:

By Allah do I swear! Had I only been able to see
You wouldn't know whence and how I attack thee!

Ibn Ziyad asked him, "O enemy of Allah! What do you think of 'Uthman [Ibn 'Affan]?" Ibn 'Afif verbally abused 'Uthman then said to Ibn Ziyad, "What do you have to do with 'Uthman whether he was good or bad?"

Allah, the most Praised and Exalted One, is in charge of His creatures; He judges between them and between 'Uthman with justice and equity. You should instead ask me about your father and about Yazid and his father." Ibn Ziyad said, "I shall not ask you about anything; rather, you shall taste of death one choking after another."

Ibn 'Afif said, "Then Praise to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds! I have been for years praying my Lord to grant me the honour of martyrdom even before your mother gave birth to you, and I prayed Him to let it be at the hands of one whom He curses and hates the most!"

When I lost my eyesight, I lost hope of attaining martyrdom, but now I praise Allah Who has blessed me with it though I had lost that hope, responding to my supplications of old!" Ibn Ziyad ordered his neck to be struck with the sword and to crucify him in the salty tracts of the land.²⁹

Ibn Ziyad ordered Jandab Ibn 'Abdullah al-Azdi, who was an old man, to be brought to him. He said to him, "O enemy of Allah! Did you not fight on Abu Turab's side during the Battle of Siffin?"

The old man answered, "Yes, and I love him and am proud of him, while I despise you and your father especially after you have killed the grandson of the Prophet (S) and his companions and the members of his family without fearing the One and Only God, the Great Avenger."

Ibn Ziyad said, "You have less feeling of shame than that blind man, and I seek nearness to Allah through shedding your blood." Jandab said, "In that case, Allah shall never bring you closer to Him." Ibn Ziyad, on a second thought, feared the might of the man's Azd tribe, so he left him alone saying, "He is

only an old man who has lost his mind and wits.” He released him.³⁰

al-Mukhtar al-Thaqafi

At the same time when Ibn Ziyad ordered the captives to be brought to his meeting place, he also ordered al-Mukhtar son of Abu ‘Ubayd al-Thaqafi to be brought to him, too. Al-Mukhtar had been in prison since the assassination of Muslim Ibn ‘Aqil.

When al-Mukhtar saw that horrific and most deplorable scene, he sighed loudly and an exchange of harsh words took place between him and Ibn Ziyad wherein the harshest words were al-Mukhtar's. Ibn Ziyad became burning with outrage and ordered him to be sent back to jail.³¹ Some say that he whipped him, blinding one of his eyes.³²

After the execution of Ibn ‘Afif, al-Mukhtar was released due to the interference of ‘Abdullah son of ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattab who asked Yazid to have him released. Yazid was the husband of al-Mukhtar's sister, Safiyya daughter of Abu ‘Ubayd al-Thaqafi. But Ibn Ziyad postponed carrying out Yazid's order for three days.

Having ordered the execution of Ibn ‘Afif, Ibn Ziyad delivered a speech wherein he abused the Commander of the Faithful (‘a), causing al-Mukhtar to denounce and to taunt him to his face saying, “You are the liar, O enemy of Allah and enemy of His Messenger! Rather, Praise to Allah Who dignified al-Husayn and his army with Paradise and with forgiveness just as He humiliated Yazid and his army with the fire and with shame.”

Ibn Ziyad hurled an iron bar at him that fractured his forehead, then he ordered him to be sent back to jail, but people reminded him that ‘Umar Ibn Sa’d was the husband of his sister while another brother-in-law was none other than ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar [Ibn al-Khattab].

They reminded him of his lofty lineage, so he changed his mind of having him killed, yet he insisted on sending him back to prison. For the second time did ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Umar write Yazid who in turn wrote ‘Ubaydullah Ibn Ziyad ordering him to release the man.³³

Al-Mukhtar incessantly kept after that informing the Shi’as of the merits which he knew of the companions of the Commander of the Faithful (‘a), of how he rose seeking revenge for al-Husayn (‘a), and how he killed Ibn Ziyad and those who fought al-Husayn (‘a).³⁴

One incident he narrated was the following that he recollected about the time when he was in Ibn Ziyad's jail:

‘Abdullah Ibn al-Harith Ibn Nawfal Ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib and Maytham al-Tammar were among his

cellmates. ‘Abdullah Ibn al–Harith asked for a piece of iron to remove the hair in certain parts of his body saying, “I do not feel secure against Ibn Ziyad executing me, and I do not want him to do so while there is unwanted hair on my body.”

Al–Mukhtar said to him, “By Allah he shall not kill you, nor shall he kill me, nor shall you face except very little hardship before you become the governor of Basra!”

Maytham heard their dialogue, so he said to al–Mukhtar, “You yourself will rise seeking revenge for al–Husayn's blood, and you shall kill the same man who wants us to be killed, and you shall trample on his cheeks with your very foot.”³⁵

This came to be exactly as these men had said. ‘Abdullah Ibn al–Harith was released from jail after Yazid's death and became the governor of Basra.

After only one year, al–Mukhtar rose seeking revenge against the killers of al–Husayn (‘a), killing Ibn Ziyad, Harmalah Ibn Kahil, Shimr Ibn Thul–Jawshan and a large number of the Kufians who had betrayed al–Husayn (‘a).

As Ibn Nama al–Hilli tells us, he [and his army] killed eighteen thousand Kufians, then almost ten thousand³⁶ of them fled away from him and sought refuge with Mis’ab Ibn al–Zubayr. Among them was Shabth Ibn Rab’i who reached him riding a mule whose ears and tail he had cut off and who was wearing a torn outer garment and shouting, “Help! Lead us to fight this debauchee who demolished our homes and killed our honourable men!”³⁷

The Sacred Head Speaks

My heart goes for your head atop a spear
Outfitted with its own lights with an attire,
Reciting the Book from the top of the spear,
Through him did they raise the Book even higher.³⁸

The martyred grandson of the Prophet (S) remained an ally of the Qur’an since his early childhood. Thus were he and his brother (‘a), for they were the legacy of the Messenger of Allah, his vicegerents over his nation. The greatest Prophet (S) had stated that they and the Holy Qur’an would never part from one another till they meet him at the Pool of Kawthar.

Al–Husayn (‘a), therefore, never ceased reciting the Qur’an all his life as he taught and cultivated others, when he was at home or when travelling. Even during his stand in the Battle of *Taff*, though surrounded

by his foes, he used the Qur'an to argue with them and to explain his point of view to them.

Thus was the son of the Messenger of Allah (S) energetically marching towards his sacred objective, so much so that his sacred head kept reciting the Qur'an even as it stood atop a spear, perhaps someone among the people would be enlightened with the light of the truth. But this lamp-post of guidance did not see except people whose comprehension was limited, whose hearts were sealed, and whose ears were deafened:

“Allah sealed their hearts and hearing, and over their vision there is a veil” (Qur'an, 2:7).

This must not surprise anyone who comprehends divine mysteries. The Lord, Praise to Him, mandated upon the Master of Martyrs ('a) to rise in order to close the gates of misguidance in that particular fashion defined by the circumstances, place, and method.

He did so for the achievement of certain objectives set by the Great One. He had inspired His holiest Prophet (S) to recite this particular page to his son, al-Husayn ('a); so, there is no way other than its acceptance and the submission to whatever best pleases the Lord of the Worlds:

“He is not asked about what He does, whereas they are asked” (Qur'an, 21:23).

The Omnipotent and the Exalted One wanted such a sacred uprising to make the nation then, as well as the successive generations, to become acquainted with the misguidance of those who deviated from the Straight Path and who played havoc with the *Shari'a*.

He liked any and all deeds that would firm the foundations of this martyrdom whose epic was recorded by al-Husayn's pure blood, bringing about shining pages narrating the deeds of those who rose against abomination. This became enshrouded with many extra-ordinary events that most minds could not comprehend.

One such strange event was the recitation by the great head of the sacred verses of the Holy Qur'an. The speech of a severed head is a most eloquent means to drive the argument home against those who were blinded by their own desires.

It underscores the fact that his stand was right, a stand which he never undertook except in obedience to the Lord of the Worlds and to the detriment of those who in any way harmed or oppressed al-Husayn ('a). It drew the nation's attention to the misguidance of those who dared to oppress.

Divine Providence did not do something for the first time when it enabled al-Husayn's head to speak in order to serve the interests the essence of which many fail to comprehend. It had enabled a tree³⁹ to speak to Moses son of Imran [Amram], prophet of Allah ('a), and how can a tree be compared to a severed head in as far as obedience to the most Merciful One, Praise to Him, is concerned?

Zayd Ibn Arqam has said, "I was sitting in my room when they passed by, and I heard the head reciting this verse:

'Or do you think that the fellows of the cave and the inscription were of Our amazing Signs?' (Qur'an, 18:9).

My hair stood up, and I said, 'By Allah, O son of the Messenger of Allah! Your head is much more amazing!'"⁴⁰

When the holiest of severed heads was placed at the money changers' section of the bazaar, there was a great deal of commotion and noise of the dealers and customers. The Master of Martyrs ('a) wanted to attract the attention to him so that people would listen to his terse admonishment, so his severed head hawked quite loudly, thus turning all faces to it.

Never did people hear a severed head hawking before the martyrdom of al-Husayn ('a). It then recited Surat al-Kahf from its beginning till it reached the verse saying,

***"They are youths who believed in their Lord, and We increased their guidance" (Qur'an, 18:13) ,
"... and do not (O Lord!) increase the unjust in aught but error" (Qur'an, 71:24).***

The head was hung on a tree. People assembled around it looking at the dazzling light that emanated from it as it recited the verse saying,

"And those who oppressed shall come to know what an end they shall meet" (Qur'an, 26:227)⁴¹

Hilal Ibn Mu'awiyah said, "I saw a man carrying the head of al-Husayn ('a) as it [the head] was saying, 'You separated between my head and my body, so may Allah separate between your flesh and bones, and may He make you a Sign for those who shirk from the Straight Path.' He, therefore, raised his whip and kept whipping the head till it ceased."⁴²

Salamah Ibn Kahil heard the head reciting the following verse from the top of the spear where it had been placed:

"Allah shall suffice you for them, and He is the Hearing, the Knowing" (Qur'an, 2:137).⁴³

Ibn Wakida says that he heard the head reciting Surat al-Kahf, so he was doubtful whether it was, indeed, the voice of the Imam ('a), whereupon he ('a), stopped his recitation and turned to the man to say, "O son of Wakida! Do you not know that we, the Imams, are living with our Lord receiving our sustenance?"

He, therefore, decided to steal and bury the head. It was then that the glorious head spoke again to him saying, "O son of Wakida! There is no way to do that. Their shedding my blood is greater with Allah than

*placing me on a spear; so, leave them alone, for they shall come to know when the collars are placed around their necks and when they are dragged with chains.”*⁴⁴

Al-Minhal Ibn ‘Amr has said, “I saw al-Husayn's head in Damascus atop a spear and in front of it stood a man; the head was reciting Surat al-Kahf. When the recitation came to the verse saying,

‘Or did you reckon the fellows of the Cave and the Inscription among our amazing Signs?’
(Qur’an, 18:9),

the head spoke in an articulate tongue saying, ‘More amazing than the fellows of the cave is killing me and thus transporting me.’”⁴⁵

When Yazid ordered the killing of a messenger sent by the then Roman [Byzantine] emperor who resented what Yazid had committed, the head loudly articulated these words: *La hawla wala quwwata illa billah!* (There is no power nor might except in Allah).⁴⁶

Is it your soul or the soul of Prophethood that does ascend
From the earth to Paradise as the *huris* prostrate?
Is it your head or the head of the Messenger atop the spear
Repeating the *ayat* of the fellows of the cave?
Is it your chest or the reservoir of knowledge and wisdom
That crushed a host of the ignorant attempts?
Is it your mother or the Mother of the Book that did sigh
So her sighing heart did indeed melt,
And the earth echoes the heavens in its sighs
So while one wails, the other cries?
The *Wahi* held a mourning of its own
At his house, and the one solaced is Muhammad,
Seeing the Two Weighty Things: One to pieces torn
With arrows, and the other with the sword to pieces sawn,
So his *‘Itrat* some killed by the sword and some by the arrows,
Some martyred and some expelled in the plains full of sorrows.
What a martyr whose body did the sun bake?
Though from its very origin did its own rays take?
And what a slain save one whose body the horses crushed
Though from his mention their riders freeze and are hushed.
Did you know that Muhammad's very soul,
Like his Qur’an, is in his grandson personified?
Had those horses, like their riders, only come to know

That the one under the hooves was in fact Ahmad,
They would have against their riders declared a mutiny
Just as they against him revolted and declared.
Injustice slit a throat the moon's light does envy
And in each of his veins for the truth there is a star
And crushed ribs wherein compassion does reside
And stopped breathing wherein the Truth is Glorified.
Yet the greatest calamity of all
Is the suffering of his free ladies' every soul.
Oppressed they were as their only protector is tied
Some were handcuffed complaining from their pain,
While other ladies were being slapped and in chain,
As if said to his people the Messenger of Oneness:
Seek revenge against my *'lirat* and with cruelty oppress.⁴⁷

Oppression of al-Ashdaq

Ibn Jarir [al-Tabari] narrates the following:

Ibn Ziyad wanted to send 'Abd al-Malik Ibn al-Harith al-Salami to Medina in order to inform 'Amr Ibn Sa'id al-Ashdaq⁴⁸ of the killing of al-Husayn ('a), but he sought to be excused of such an undertaking, claiming to be sick. Al-Ashdaq refused to accept his excuse. Ibn Ziyad was described as very heavy-handed, nobody could tolerate his ire.

He ordered the man to rush and to buy another she-camel if the one he was riding was not fast enough, and not to let anyone reach the destination before him. He, therefore, rushed to Medina. A man from Quraish met him and asked him why he seemed to be in such a hurry. 'The answer rests with the governor,' was his answer.

When Ibn Sa'id was informed of al-Husayn ('a) having been killed, he was very happily excited and was subdued with elation. He ordered a caller to announce it in the city's alleys, and before long, the cries and the wailing coming from the Hashemite ladies mourning the Master of the Youths of Paradise ('a) were heard like never before.

Those cries reached all the way to the house of al-Ashdaq who laughed and quoted a verse of poetry composed by 'Amr Ibn Ma'di-karib saying,

Noisy with grief were the women of Banu Ziyad

As noisy as our women on the Rabbit Day.

He maliciously added saying, “A wailing noise like the one we raised when ‘Uthman was killed.”⁴⁹ Then he turned to the grave of the Messenger of Allah (S) and again maliciously said, “Now we have gotten even with you, Messenger of Allah, for what you did to us during the Battle of Badr.” A number of men from the Anar rebuked him with shame for having made such a statement.⁵⁰

He ascended the pulpit and said, “O people! It is a blow for a blow, and a crushing for a crushing! A sermon followed another! This is sound wisdom, so no *nathr* can do any good. He condemned us as we praised him, cut off his ties with us though we did not, just as it was his habit, and just as it was ours, but what else can we do to a man who drew his sword with the intention to kill us other than to put an end to the danger to which he exposed us?”

‘Abdullah Ibn al-Sa’ib stood up and said to him, “Had Fatima (‘a) been alive, and had she seen al-Husayn's [severed] head, she would have wept for him.” ‘Amr Ibn Sa’id rebuked him and said, “We are more worthy of Fatima than you: Her father was our uncle, her husband was our brother, his mother was our daughter. And had Fatima been alive, she would have cried but would not have blamed those who killed him in self defense.”⁵¹

‘Amr was very crude and uncouth, a man of legendary cruelty. He ordered ‘Amr Ibn al-Zubayr Ibn al-Awwam,⁵² head of the police force, after al-Husayn (‘a) had been killed, to demolish all the houses of Banu Hashim [the Prophet's clansmen]. He did, persecuting them beyond limits... He also demolished the home of Ibn Muti’ and beat people with cruelty.

They fled from him and went to [‘Abdullah] Ibn al-Zubayr.⁵³ The reason why he was called “al-Ashdaq” [one whose jaws are twisted to the right or to the left] is due to the fact that his jaws were twisted after having gone to extremes in taunting Imam ‘Ali Ibn Abu Talib (‘a).⁵⁴

Allah, therefore, punished him [in this life before the hereafter] in the worst manner. He was carried to ‘Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan in chains; once he had profusely remonstrated with the latter, he was ordered to be killed.⁵⁵

Escorted by a number of women from her kinsfolk, the daughter of ‘Aqil Ibn Abu Talib went out to visit the grave of the Prophet (S) where she threw herself on it, burst in tears then turned to the Muhajirun and the Anasr and came forth instantaneously with these verses:

What will you on the Judgment Day
To the Prophet stand and say?

Surely what you will hear will be true:
Those who betrayed his Progeny were you.
Were you present, or were you not there at all
And justice is combined in the Lord of all...?
You handed it over to those who are never fair
So your intercession with Allah will go nowhere.
Though on the *Taff* Day absent was he,
Yet all the dead did your very eyes see.
You saw all those who did die
So to Allah you shall never come nigh

All those present wept. There was no such weeping ever before.⁵⁶ Her sister, Zainab, kept mourning al-Husayn (‘a) in the most somber manner while repeating these verses:

What will you say when the Prophet to you will say:
How did you fare, since you are the last of nations,
With my Progeny and family after my demise?
Some of them were taken captives and some in blood stained.
That was not my reward for having advised you
That you should succeed me in faring ill with my family.⁵⁷

Umm Al-Baneen

I could not find any reliable reference clearly stating that Umm al-Baneen⁵⁸ was alive during the Battle of *Taff*, and there are three theories refuting anyone's claim to the contrary:

First: ‘Allama Muhammad Hasan al-Qazwini says on p. 60 of his book *Riyad al-Ahzan*, “The mourning of that tragedy was held at the house of Umm al-Baneen, wife of the Commander of the Faithful (‘a) and mother of al-‘Abbas and his brothers.”

Second: On p. 31 of the second edition of al-Samawi's book *Ibsar al-‘Ayan*, it is stated that, “I find my heart pouring out for the eulogy of his mother Fatima, Umm al-Baneen, which was recited by Abul-Hasan al-Akhfash in his book *Sharh al-Kamil*.

She used to go to al-Baqi’ [cemetery] daily in order to mourn him, and she would carry his son ‘Abdullah. The people of Medina used to assemble and listen to her eulogies. Among them was Marwan Ibn al-Hakam. They would all weep for the grief in her mourning.”

Third: Abul-Faraj [al-Isfahani] in his book *Maqatil al-Talibiyyin* says the following when he discusses

how al-'Abbas was killed: "It is reported from Muhammad Ibn 'Ali Ibn Hamzah who quotes Hammad Ibn 'Eisa al-Juhni citing Mu'awiyah Ibn 'Ammar citing Ja'far saying that Umm al-Baneen was the mother of four brothers who were all killed. She used to go out to al-Baqi' to mourn the death of her sons in the most sad of tones and the most burning to the hearts. People would assemble to listen to her.

Marwan used to go among those who went there; he listened to her mourning."

This is all I could find indicating that she was alive during the Battle of *Taff*. But the first quotation contains no proof; all it says is that the mourning was held at the house of Umm al-Baneen. There is no clue in it to her being present there and then, and it is no more than a tale recorded by Abul-Faraj that he accepted without conducting the least amount of investigation regarding its authenticity.

The second statement is clearly a quotation of what Abul-Faraj has written. Al-Samawi's *Ibsar al-'Ayan* contains pretty much what is included in *Maqatil al-Talibiyyin*, hence it cannot be regarded as a second independent opinion.

As to the text in *Sharh al-Kamil*, which is attributed to al-Akhfash, I could not find even one single biographer referring to it, although I examined the biographies of everyone named "al-Akhfash" As regarding *shaikh* al-Samawi, I personally quite often asked him about the source of the said *Sharh*, but he always met me with silence.

I even told him frankly that the verses of poetry in it must be his own, and that he built his tale around them; so, his reward will nevertheless be with the Almighty, all Praise to Him. Such is the case with al-Majlisi who quotes Abul-Faraj on p. 201, Vol. 10, of his encyclopedia *Bihar al-Anwar*. The narrative by Abul-Faraj with regard to this incident is faulty due to the following:

1. Nobody pays attention to the men upon whom he relies for his *isnad*. Yazid Ibn al-Mughirah Ibn Nawfal Ibn al-Harith Ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib Ibn Hashim al-Nawfali is mentioned on p. 347, Vol. 11, of Ibn Hajar's book *Tahthib al-Tahthib* where Ahmad is quoted as saying that the man has much to be criticized for. Abu Zar'ah describes his traditions as weak and affirms that most of what he narrates is not known to others.

Abu Hatim has said, "His traditions are very bad." Al-Nasa'i says that the traditions he narrates should be discarded. On p. 214, Vol. 10, of Ibn Hajar's book titled *Tahthib al-Tahthib*, Mu'awiyah Ibn 'Ammar Ibn Abu Mu'awiyah cites Abu Hatim saying that his traditions are not to be used as arguments; besides, he is not well known [to other scholars of traditions].

2. Umm al-Baneen quotes a great deal of spiritual knowledge and prophetic ethics from the master of *wasis* as well as from the Masters of the Youths of Paradise ('a), so much so that what she learned lifted her to the highest degrees of conviction.

She could not have said anything contradictory to the canon of the *Shari'a* that prohibits a woman from being exposed in any way to strangers either through prohibition or as a precaution so long as there was no extreme necessity for it.

It goes without saying that when a woman mourns someone she has lost, she ought to sit in her house and fortify herself against being seen by strangers or her voice being heard by them as long as there was no urgency for it.

Al-Sajjad ('a), once said to Abu Khalid al-Kabuli who expressed his astonishment at finding the Imam's door open, "O Abu Khalid! One of our neighbours has just left our house and was not aware of the door not shutting properly. It does not fit the daughters of the Messenger of Allah (S) to go out and [noisily] slam the door behind them."⁵⁹

So, whoever grows up at their homes and learns their ethics does not deviate from their path. There is no room to charge Umm al-Baneen of having crossed the divine boundaries legislated by the *Shari'a* for women.

As regarding the truthful lady, al-Zahra' ('a), Medina's elders forced her to go out to the Baqi' cemetery to mourn her father (S), so the Commander of the Faithful ('a) built her a shed of palm leaves to shield her from the strangers, a shed which he called "*Bayt al-Ahzan*" (the house of griefs).⁶⁰

Historians never say that people used to go there to hear her mourn the setting of the sun of Prophethood, the cessation of the heavens' *wahi*, and the obliteration of the divine counsels.

3. A woman mourns her lost one at the cemetery where he is buried. Nobody has written saying that a woman went out to a cemetery to mourn her dear one who is buried somewhere else. Such is the case in all generations. The claim made by Abul-Faraj that Umm al-Baneen used to go to al-Baqi' cemetery is an evident fabrication since there is no proof for it.

His objective was to say that Marwan Ibn al-Hakam was kind of heart, for weeping is a sign of grief caused by oppression inflicted upon a dear deceased person to whom one is linked by a certain tie, so his heart gets excited and the emotion overflows, hence the tears pour down from his eyes when he weeps.

Marwan Ibn al-Hakam was the one who rejoiced at the killing of al-Husayn ('a), and he demonstrated his elation and happiness about such a calamity when he looked at al-Husayn's head then instantly came forth with these verses:

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!

4. Abul-Faraj, in his book *Maqatil al-Talibiyyin*, contradicts himself when he discusses the martyrdom of al-'Abbas ('a) then comments by saying, "He was the last to be killed from those among his full-blooded brothers whom he inherited."

Such narrative agrees with what Mis'ab Ibn al-Zubayr has recorded on p. 43 of *Nasab Quraish* where he says, "Al-'Abbas inherited his brothers who did not have offspring, and al-'Abbas inherited his son 'Ubaydullah.

'Umar and Muhammad were both alive; so, Muhammad handed over his inheritance from his uncles to 'Ubaydullah whereas 'Umar did not till someone mediated, and he accepted his share."

Abu Nasr al-Bukhari has said on p. 89 of *Sirr al-Silsila al-'Alawiyya* (printed at Najaf by the Hayderi Press), "On the *Taff* Day, al-Husayn ('a) advanced the brothers of al-'Abbas, namely Ja'far, 'Uthman, and 'Abdullah, who were all killed, so al-'Abbas inherited them. Then al-'Abbas was killed, so his son 'Ubaydullah Ibn al-'Abbas inherited them all."

This confirms our belief that Umm al-Baneen was dead during the Battle of *Taff*. Had she been alive, she would have inherited the wealth that belonged to al-'Abbas's brothers, being their mother, and they would not have been inherited by al-'Abbas till the inheritance is transferred to his son 'Ubaydullah.

Muhammad Ibn al-Hanafiyya did not dispute with 'Ubaydullah about his uncles' inheritance, in accordance with the *Shari'a*, because al-'Abbas was related through both his father and mother to his brothers who had by then been martyred, whereas Muhammad was related to them only through his father. A full-blooded brother is given priority in as far as inheritance is concerned over his half-brother.

'Umar al-Atraf did not understand the problem although he was the son of 'Ali ('a), the gateway of the City of Knowledge (S), and he should have referred to the nation's Imam, Zayn al-'Abidin, in order not to fall in perdition.

The dispute attributed to him was true. What is stated in *'Umdat al-Talib* (Najaf's edition) confirms the existence of such a dispute: He went out to people wearing red-dyed clothes and made a statement wherein he said, "I am the wise man who did not go out to fight."

The contradiction in what Abul-Faraj says becomes obvious: To say that Umm al-Baneen went out to al-Baqi' cemetery to mourn her sons is to say that she was alive then, whereas his discussion of al-'Abbas's estate being inherited by his brothers testifies to the fact that she was actually dead by then... How often he [Abul-Faraj al-Isfahani] has fallen in error!

‘Abdullah Ibn Ja’far

Ibn Jarir [al-Tabari] has said that when the news of al-Husayn's martyrdom was announced, ‘Abdullah Ibn Ja’far held a mourning *majlis*, so people came to him to offer their condolences. His slave, Abul-Lislas,⁶¹ said to him, “This is what we got from al-Husayn!” He hurled his sandal at him as he said, “O son of the stinking woman!

How dare you say something like that about al-Husayn (‘a)?! By Allah! Had I been with him, I would not have liked to part with him before being killed defending him. By Allah! What consoles me is that both my sons were martyred in his defense together with my brother as well as my cousin who all stood firmly on his side.”

Then he turned to those in his presence and said, “Praise to Allah! It surely is very heavy on my heart to see al-Husayn (‘a) get killed, and that I could not defend him with my life, but both my sons have.”⁶² It is truly amazing to read in the books of history how al-Balathiri⁶³ and al-Muhsin al-Tanukhi⁶⁴ claim that ‘Abdullah Ibn Ja’far went to meet Yazid, and that the latter was generous to him more than his father Mu’awiya had been!

Anyone who studies the psychology of Ja’far's son will find it evident that this incident, which is taken for granted by al-Mada’ini and upon which al-Balathiri and al-Tanukhi depend, is simply a lie. Anyone who sees how those men lost their loved ones cannot help concluding that their fires were full of nothing but grief over such a loss as they waited for the opportunity to seek revenge.

This is proven by the statement made to the Prophet (S) by ‘Abdullah Ibn Ubayy Ibn Salul. When Ubayy did something because of which the Qur’anic verse saying, **“Should we return to Medina, the mighty ones shall get the weak out of it” (Qur’an, Al-Munafiqun [The Hypocrites]:63)**, ‘Abdullah came to the Prophet of Islam (S) and said, “You have heard this statement made by Ubayy, have you not?”

The Prophet (S) said, “I have.” The man then said, “You know very well that there is nobody more kind than me to his father, yet if you want him killed, then order me to do it, for I am afraid you will order someone else to do it, and I hate to look at the face of my father's killer then attack and kill him and get myself thrown into the fire [of hell]...”⁶⁵

This incident gives us a glorious idea about the human nature, about how the relatives of someone killed feel, and how they wait for the opportunity to seek revenge, even when such killing throws them into the pitfalls of *shirk*.

Such is the nature of all people. ‘Umar Ibn al-Khattab used to say to Sa’id Ibn al-’As, with whom he met one night in the company of ‘Uthman, ‘Ali (‘a), and Ibn ‘Abbas, “Why do you thus turn away from me as if I killed your father?! I did not kill him; al-Hasan's father [Imam ‘Ali, as] did.”

The Commander of the Faithful ('a) said, "O Allah! I seek Your forgiveness! *Shirk* and everything else therein is by now gone, and Islam obliterated whatever was before it; so, why do you, O 'Umar, thus stir old hostilities?" It was then that Sa'id said, "The man who killed him was apt to it, a man of nobility, and it is dearer to me that he killed him than anyone else who did not descend from 'Abd Manaf."⁶⁶

It was not easy for Sa'id to remember how his father had been killed even though the latter was an apostate whom the sword of Muhammad's Call killed, and even though the killer ['Ali] is a man of honour whose feats are numerous, and even though the latter did not kill him except in obedience to the Order of the Lord, the Mighty One, as the *wahi* was brought from the heavens by the "messenger of the heavens" [Gabriel].

But his fear of the sword of justice obligated him to pretend to be satisfied, although the fire was burning inside him as he kept waiting for an opportunity to seek revenge. Such fire of animosity manifested itself by his son, 'Amr Ibn Sa'id al-Ashdaq, on the same day when he was appointed by Yazid as Governor of Medina.

He looked in the direction of the Prophet's grave and, with such a big mouth, loudly said, "This day do we seek revenge for the Battle of Badr, O Messenger of Allah!" And when he heard the wailing of the women of Banu Hashim mourning the Master of the Youths of Paradise, he said, "Mourners mourning: thus did we mourn 'Uthman."⁶⁷

The heart of 'Abdullah Ibn Ja'far was burning against Maysoon's son, and he very much hoped for an opportunity to annihilate him, to finish him, as well as his family and kinsfolk. No matter how forgetful he may have been, he could not have forgotten that he killed the "Father of the Oppressed" and the stars on earth belonging to 'Abd al-Muttalib as well as the peerless from among his companions.

He hit with his rod the lips of the fragrant flower of the Messenger of Allah (S)! Could Ja'far's son, since the case was as such, look at Yazid in the eyes as his sword was dripping with their own blood, and as he was deafened by hearing one who felt rejoiced at the calamity that befell the Prophet of Islam? Yazid had said this line:

The cream of their crop have we killed
Then did we turn and set the record for Badr straight.
He denied the Islamic Message altogether saying:
Banu Hashim with authority played,
No message came, nor any revelation revealed.

Could the son of Ja'far possibly forget how the ladies who descended from the Prophet (S) stood with their faces unveiled, exposed to the looks of those who were near as well as those who were distant, knowing that they were the source of all honour, the fortress of the creed?

What makes things more tolerable is the fact that the person who accepts this tradition is none other than al-Mada'ini who is well known for his loyalty to the Umayyads, and his book is full of "traditions" raising the status of Banu Umayyah and lowering that of the 'Alawides. Anybody who is familiar with the biographies of notable men and with the personalities of the narrators pays no attention to such "traditions".

'Abdullah Ibn Abbas

Having come to know that 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas refused to swear the oath of allegiance to Ibn al-Zubayr, Yazid wrote him saying,

"It has come to my knowledge that the atheist son of al-Zubayr invited you to swear the oath of allegiance to him and to be obedient to him so that you might support him in his wrongdoing and share his sins, and that you refused and kept your distance from him because Allah made you aware of our rights we, family members of the Prophet (S); so, may He grant you the rewards due to those who maintain their ties of kinship, who are true to their promise.

No matter what I forget, I shall never forget how you always remained in contact with us, and how good the reward you have received, the one due to those who obey and who are honoured by being relatives of the Messenger of Allah (S).

Look, then, after your people, and look at those whom the son of al-Zubayr enchants with his words and with his promises and pull them away from him, for they will listen to you more than they will to him; they would hear you more than they would that renegade atheist, and peace be with you."

Ibn 'Abbas wrote Yazid back saying,

"I received your letter wherein you mentioned Ibn al-Zubayr's invitation to me to swear the oath of allegiance to him, and that I refused due to recognizing your right. If that is the case [as you claim], I desire nothing but being kind to you.

But Allah knows best what I intend to do. And you wrote me urging me to encourage people to rally behind you and to discourage them from supporting Ibn al-Zubayr...

Nay! Neither pleasure nor happiness is here for you; may your mouth be filled with stones, for you are the one whose view is weak when you listened to your own whims and desires, and it is you who is at fault and who shall perish! And you wrote me urging me to hurry and to join my ties of kinship.

Withhold your own, man, for I shall withhold from you my affection and my support. By my life, you do not give us of what is in your hand except very little while withholding a lot; may your father lose you!

Do you think that I will really forget how you killed Husayn ('a) and the youths of Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib, the lanterns that shone in the dark, the stars of guidance, the lamp-posts of piety, and how your horses trampled upon their bodies according to your command, so they were left unburied, drenched in their blood on the desert without any shrouds, nor were they buried, with the wind blowing on them and the wolves invading them, and the hyenas assaulting them till Allah sent them people who do not have *shirk* running through their veins and who shrouded and buried them...?

From me and from them come supplications to Allah to torment you!

No matter what I forget, I shall never forget how you let loose on them the *da'iyy* and the son of the *da'iyy*, the one begotten by that promiscuous prostitute, the one whose lineage is distant, whose father and mother are mean, the one because of whose adoption did your father earn shame, sin, humiliation and abasement in the life of this world and in the hereafter.

This is so because the Messenger of Allah (S) said, "The son is begotten by wedlock, whereas for the prostitute there are stones." Your father claims that the son is out of wedlock, and it does not harm the prostitute, and he accepts him as his son just as he does his legitimate offspring! Your father killed the Sunnah with ignorance while deliberately bringing to life all misguidance.

And no matter what I forget, I shall never forget how you chased Husayn ('a) out of the sanctuary of the Messenger of Allah [Medina] to that of Allah Almighty [Mecca], and how you dispatched men to kill him there.

You kept trying till you caused him to leave Mecca and to go to Kufa pursued by your horsemen, with your soldiers roaring at him like lions, O enemy of Allah, of His Messenger (S), and of his Ahl al-Bayt ('a)! Then you wrote Marjana's son to face him with his cavalry and infantry, with spears and swords.

And you wrote him ordering him to be swift in attacking him and not to give him time to negotiate any settlement till you killed him and the youths of Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib who belong to Ahl al-Bayt ('a) with him, those from whom Allah removed all abomination and whom He purified with a perfect purification.

Such are we, unlike your own uncouth fathers, the livers of donkeys! You knew fully well that he was most prominent in the past and most cherished now, had he only sought refuge in Mecca and permitted bloodshed in its sanctuary.

But he sought reconciliation, and he asked you to go back to your senses, yet you went after the few who were in his company and desired to eradicate his Ahl al-Bayt ('a) as if you were killing dynasties from the Turks or from Kabul!

How do you conceive me as being friendly to you, and how dare you ask me to support you?! You have killed my own brothers, and your sword is dripping with my blood, and you are the one whom I seek for revenge.

So if Allah wills, you shall not be able to shed my blood, nor shall you be faster than me in seeking revenge so you would be more swift in killing us just as the prophets are killed, considering their blood equal to that of others. But the promise is with Allah, and Allah suffices in supporting the wronged, and He seeks revenge for the oppressed. What is truly amazing is your own transporting the daughters of ‘Abd al-Muttalib and their children to Syria.

You see yourself as our vanquisher, and that you have the right to humiliate us, although through me and through them did Allah bestow blessings upon you and upon your slave parents. By Allah! You welcome the evening and the day in security indifferent to my wounds; so, let my own tongue wound you instead, and let my tying and untying not provoke you to argue.

Allah shall not give you a respite following your killing of the Progeny of the Messenger of Allah (S) except for a very short while before He takes you as a Mighty One does, and He shall not take you out of the life of this world except as an abased and dejected sinner; so, enjoy your days, may you lose your father, as you please, for what you have committed has surely made you abased in the sight of Allah.⁶⁸

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1. According to p. 8 of Siffin, a book written by Nasr Ibn Muzahim and printed in Egypt, when ‘Ali (‘a) entered Kufa, he was asked, “Which [prison] house do you prefer?” He said, “Do not lodge me at the house of oppression and corruption.” He, therefore, remained in the custody of Ja’dah Ibn Habirah al-Makhzumi.
 2. According to p. 142, Chapter 9, of al-Tha’alabi’s book *Lata’if al-Ma’arif*, ‘Abd al-Malik Ibn ‘Umayr al-Lakhmi has narrated saying, “I saw the head of al-Husayn Ibn ‘Ali Ibn Abu Talib (‘a) at the government mansion of ‘Ubaydullah Ibn Ziyad placed on a shield, and I saw the head of al-Mukhtar with Mis’ab Ibn al-Zubayr on another shield. I saw the head of Mis’ab in front of ‘Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan on yet another shield! When I told ‘Abd al-Malik [Ibn Marwan Ibn al-Hakam] about that, he regarded it as a bad omen and left the place.” The same is narrated by al-Suyuti on p. 139 of his book *Tarikh al-Khulafa’*, and by Sibt Ibn al-Jawzi on p. 148 of his book *Tathkirat al-Khawass* (Iranian edition).
 3. Ibn ‘Asakir, *Tarikh*, Vol. 4, p. 329. Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, *Al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqa*, p. 116. Thakha’ir al-‘Uqba, p. 145. Ibn Tawus, *Al-Malahim*, p. 128 (first edition).
 4. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, Vol. 4, p. 103. Ibn Hajar al-Haythami al-‘Asqalani, *Mujma’ al-Zawa’id*, Vol. 9, p. 196. al-Khawarizmi, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Vol. 2, p. 87. al-Turayhi, *Al-Muntakhab*, p. 339 (Hayderi Press edition). Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya*, Vol. 8, p. 286.
 5. *Sharh Qasidat Abi Firas*, p. 149.
 6. “Abul-Abbas” Ahmad Ibn Yousuf Ibn Ahmad al-Qarmani, *Akhbar al-Duwal*, Vol. 1, p. 8.
 7. Excerpted from a poem by Sayyid ‘Abd al-Muttalib al-Hilli recorded on p. 218, Vol. 3, of *Shu’ara’ al-Hilla*.
 8. Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, *Al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqa*, p. 118. al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 262. Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya wal Nihaya*, Vol. 8, p. 190. Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, *Mujma’ al-Zawa’id*, Vol. 9, p. 195. Ibn ‘Asakir, *Tarikh*, Vol. 4, p. 340. These authors have expressed their disbelief of what he has said. The fact that he was blind does not necessarily render his statement inaccurate for it is quite possible he had heard the same. Ibn ‘Asakir’s statement that Zayd was present then and there supports his.
 9. al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 262.
 10. Ibn Tawus, *Al-Luhuf*, p. 90.
 11. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, Vol. 4, p. 33. al-Khawarizmi, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Vol. 2, p. 42. al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 263. al-Mufid, *Al-Irshad*. al-Tabarsi, *l’lam al-Wara*, p. 141. According to p. 145, Vol. 3, of *Kamil al-Mibrad* (1347 A.H./1735 A.D. edition), Zainab daughter of ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib (‘a), the eldest of those taken captive to Ibn Ziyad, was quite eloquent, driving

her argument against the latter home. Ibn Ziyad, therefore, said to her, "If you achieved your objective behind your oratory, your father was an orator and a poet."

She said to him, "What would women do with poetry?" Ibn Ziyad, in fact, used to stutter, and he had a lisp; his speech had a heavy Persian accent.

12. Such is the statement of Muhammad Ibn Jarir al-Tabari in his book *Al-Muntakhab* in a footnote on p. 89, Vol. 12, of his *Tarikh*. So does Abul Faraj al-Isfahani on p. 49 of the Iranian edition of his book *Maqatil al-Talibiyyin*, and al-Dimyari in his book *Hayat al-Hayawan*, as well as al-Turayhi's book *Al-Muntakhab*, p. 238 (Hayderi Press edition). It is also indicated on p. 58 of Mis'ab al-Zubayri's book *Nasab Quraish*.

13. al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 263.

14. Ibn Tawus, *Al-Luhuf*, p. 91. al-Khawarizmi, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Vol. 2, p. 13.

15. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, Vol. 4, p. 34.

16. These lines are recorded on p. 148 of *Tathkirat al-Khawass* of Ibn al-Jawzi, the grandson. Due to confusion and absence of verification, these same verses are recorded under No. 18, p. 314, Vol. 1, or *Al-Hamasa al-Basriyya*, in a chapter dealing with eulogies, attributing them to 'Atika daughter of Nufayl, al-Husayn's wife! Not even one reliable historian has ever indicated that al-Husayn (a) had ever married her!

17. Ibn Tawus, *Al-Luhuf*, p. 91. al-Khawarizmi, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Vol. 2, p. 43.

18. al-Naishapuri, *Rawdat al-Wa'izin*, p. 163.

19. "Freed umm walad" is a bondmaid who bears sons by her master and who is set free on that account but remains in the latter's custody as his wife. N. Tr.

20. Ibn Tawus, *Al-Luhuf*, p. 92. 'Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, *Maqatal al-'Awalim*, p. 130.

21. Abul-Faraj al-Isfahani, *Al-Aghani*, Vol. 4, p. 150.

22. These verses are recorded on p. 158, Vol. 14, of Abul-Faraj al-Isfahani's book *Al-Aghani* (Sassi Press edition).

23. Ibn al-Athir, *Al-Kamil*, Vol. 1, p. 34.

24. al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 263.

25. Ibn Tawus, *Al-Luhuf*.

26. al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 263.

27. al-Qazwini, *Riyad al-Ahzan*, p. 57, citing *Rawdat al-Safa*.

28. According to Ibn Nama al-Hilli's book *Muthir al-Ahzan*, Ibn Ziyad had dispatched Muhammad Ibn al-Ash'ath. Since he was killed on 'Ashura as a consequence of Imam al-Husayn's curse upon him when a scorpion bit him, the person dispatched in this account should instead be one of the offspring of al-Ash'ath.

29. Ibn Nama al-Hilli, *Muthir al-Ahzan*, p. 50. Ibn Tawus, *Al-Luhuf*, p. 92. al-Khawarizmi, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Vol. 2, p. 53. Al-al-Tabari, on p. 263, Vol. 6, of his *Tarikh*, abridges his story. Ibn Habib, on p. 480 of his book *Al-Mahbar*, and Shaikh al-Mufid in his book *Al-Irshad*, agree on the fact that he was crucified on the garbage collection site. al-Irbili mentions him on p. 116 of his book *Kashf al-Ghummah*.

30. Ibn Nama, *Muthir al-Ahzan*, p.51. al-Khawarizmi, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Vol. 2, p. 55. al-Qazwini, *Riyad al-Ahzan*, p. 52.

31. al-Qazwini, *Riyad al-Ahzan*, p. 52.

32. Ibn Rastah, *Al-A'laq al-Nafisa*, p. 224.

33. al-Khawarizmi, *Maqatal al-Husayn*, Vol. 2, pp. 178-179. Al-Qazwini, author of *Riyad al-Ahzan*, briefly narrates it on p. 58.

34. al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar*, Vol. 10, p. 284, citing Ibn Nama's book *Akhth al-Thar*.

35. Ibn Abul-Hadid, *Sharh Nahj al-Balagha*, Vol. 1, p. 210 (Egyptian edition). al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar*, Vol. 10, p. 284. al-Mufid, *Al-Irshad*.

36. al-Dinawari, *Al-Akhbar al-Tiwal*, p. 295.

37. al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 7, p. 146.

38. According to p. 36 of Sayyid Musin al-Amin's book *Al-Durr al-Nadid*, these verses were composed by Sayyid Ri'aa al-Hindi.

39. al-Suyuti, *Al-Durr al-Manthur*, Vol. 2, p. 119, in the explanation of the verse saying, "Lord! Grant me to look at You!"

al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, Vol. 5, p. 278, citing Al-Muhaj. al-Tha'alabi, Qisas al-Anbiya', p. 120, chapter 8, where the exit of Moses ('a) from Midian is detailed.

40. al-Mufid, Al-Irshad. Al-Khasa'is al-Kubra, Vol. 2, p. 125. On p. 362, Vol. 1, of Sharh Nahj al-Balagha, Ibn Abul-Hadid says, "Zayd Ibn Arqam was one of those who deviated from the line of the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali ('a). He was reluctant to testify that the Commander of the Faithful ('a) was appointed [by the Prophet] to take charge of the nation after him, so he ('a) condemned him with blindness. He, indeed, became blind till his death. According to Ibn al-Athir, who indicates so on p. 24, Vol. 4, of his book Al-Kamil, Ibn Ziyad ordered the head of al-Husayn ('a) to be paraded throughout Kufa. The same is stated by Ibn Kathir on p. 191, Vol. 8, of his book Al-Bidaya, and also by al-Maqrizi on p. 288, Vol. 2, of his Khutat.

41. Ibn Shahr Ashub, Vol. 2, p. 188.

42. Sharh Qasidat Abi Firas, p. 148.

43. Sayyid Ka'qim al-Rashti al-Ha'iri, Asrar al-Shahada, p. 488.

44. Sharh Qasidat Abi Firas, p. 148.

45. al-Suyuti, Al-Khasa'is, Vol. 2, p. 127.

46. al-Bahrani, Maqatal al-'Awalim, p. 151.

47. Excerpted from a poem by Sayyid 'Ali son of the 'Allama Sayyid Mahdi Bahr al-'Ulum.

48. According to p. 240, Vol. 5, of Ibn Hajar al-Haythami al-'Asqalani's book Mujma' al-Zawa'id, and also according to p. 141 of his other book titled Al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqa, Abu Hurayra is quoted as saying, "I have heard the Messenger of Allah, peace of Allah be upon him and his progeny, saying, 'One of the tyrants of Banu Umayyah shall have a nosebleed on my pulpit, and his blood will flow thereupon.'" 'Amr Ibn Sa'id did, indeed, have a nosebleed as he was on the pulpit of the Messenger of Allah (S), staining it with his blood.

49. al-Tabari, Tarikh, Vol. 6, p. 368.

50. Shaikh 'Abbas al-Qummi, Nafs al-Mahmum, p. 222.

51. 'Abdullah Nur-Allah al-Bahrani, Maqatal al-'Awalim, p. 131.

52. According to p. 23, Vol. 4, of al-Balathiri's book Ansab al-Ashraf, the mother of 'Amr Ibn al-Zubayr was Asma' daughter of Khalid Ibn Sa'id Ibn al-As. Her father was in command of an army which 'Amr Ibn Sa'id al-Ashdaq dispatched to Mecca to fight 'Abdullah Ibn al-Zubayr. Abdullah's army captured 'Amr Ibn al-Zubayr, so 'Abdullah ordered everyone who had suffered an injustice at his hand to whip him. The whipping caused his death.

53. Abul-Faraj al-Isfahani, Al-Aghani, Vol. 4, p. 155.

54. al-Mirzabani, Mu'jam al-Shu'ara', p. 231.

55. Abu Hilal al-'Askari, Jamharat al-Amthal, p. 9 (Indian edition).

56. Shaikh al-Tusi, Al-Amali, p. 55. On p. 227, Vol. 2, of his book Al-Manaqib, Ibn Shahr Ashub says it was Asma' who had composed those verses.

57. These verses verbatim are recorded on p. 51 of Ibn Nama's book Muthir al-Ahzan, on p. 96 of Ibn Tawus's book Al-Luhuf, and on p. 36, Vol. 4, of Ibn al-Athir's book Al-Tarikh al-Kamil, but the latter concedes that they were by [Zainab] the daughter of 'Aqil Ibn Abu Talib, and so does Abul-Rayhan al-Biruni who states so on p. 329 of his book Al-Athar al-Baqiya. The same is stated by Ibn Jarir [al-Tabari] on p. 268, Vol. 6, of his Tarikh, but he quotes only two lines. Ibn Qutaybah, on p. 212, Vol. 1, of his book 'Uyun al-Akhbar, says that there is a disagreement among the scholars about these verses. On p. 76, Vol. 2, of al-Khawarizmi's book Maqatal al-Husayn, it is stated that they were by Zainab daughter of 'Aqil Ibn Abu Talib.

58. "Umm al-Baneen" literally means: "mother of the sons." Such was called any bondmaid who was freed after giving birth to a son by her master and who remained in her husband/master's custody thereafter as his wife. It carries the same meaning as "umm walad." N. Tr.

59. Sayyid Hashim al-Bahrani, Madinat al-Ma'ajiz, p. 318, hadith 86.

60. The following is recorded on p. 93 of Al-Isharat li Ma'rifat al-Ziyarat, where the author, Abu Muhsin 'Ali Ibn Abu Bakr al-Harawi, says, "Bayt al-Ahzan at the Baqi' belongs to Fatima ('a)." Ibn Jubayr is quoted on p. 103, Vol. 2, of the 1316 A.H./1899 A.D. Egyptian edition of al-Samhudi's book Wafa' al-Wafa', saying, "Near al-Abbas's dome is Bayt al-Ahzan to which Fatima ('a) used to retire after the demise of her father (S), and she spent her grieving time there." Al-Khawarizmi,

on p. 191 of the first 1310 A.H./1893 A.D. edition of his book *Hamish al-'Ulum*, says that 'Ali ('a) built a shed of palm leaves in the [then] outskirts of Medina for al-Zahra' ('a) to mourn her father (S)." On p. 328, Vol. 2, of *Fath al-Qadir* by Ibn Humam al-Hanafi, it is stated that prayers are offered at the masjid of Fatima ('a) daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S) at the Baqi', and it is the one called Bayt al-Ahzan."

61. His name as stated on p. 194 of al-Irbili's book *Kashf al-Ghummah* was "Abul-Salasil," the man of chains.

62. al-Tabari, *Tarikh*, Vol. 6, p. 218.

63. *Ansab al-Ashraf*, Vol. 4, p. 3.

64. *Al-Mustajad min Fi'lat al-Ajwad*, p. 22.

65. *Usd al-Ghabah*, Vol. 3, p. 97.

66. Ibn Abul-Hadid, *Sharh Nahjul Balagha*, Vol. 3, p. 335 (first Egyptian edition). *Tahthib Tarikh Ibn 'Asakir*, in the biography of Sa'id Ibn al-'As.

67. Refer to the chapter in this book titled "Amr al-Ashdaq."

68. We have compiled this text from the contents of p. 250, Vol. 7, of *Mujma' al-Zawa'id* of "Abu Bakr," namely Ibn Hajar al-Haythami al-'Asqalani, p. 18, Vol. 4 (first edition), of al-Balathiri's book *Ansab al-Ashraf*, p. 77, Vol. 2, of al-Khwarizmi's book *Maqtal al-Husayn*, p. 50, Vol. 4, and of Ibn Kathir's book *Al-Tarikh al-Kamil*, where the events of the year 64 A.H./684 A.D. are detailed, an account which agrees with what is recorded in al-Mas'udi's book *Muruj al-Thahab*.

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